

## **JOHNSTON CARMICHAEL PLANTS SEEDS OF FUTURE SUCCESS IN STUDENT TRAINING**

Recruiting the best talent for a business doesn't necessarily mean employing those who already have an established career and years of experience within the industry. Investing time and effort in students and graduates and helping to develop their training and skills can be just as rewarding and successful a path for recruiting and retaining talented employees.

Chartered accountancy firm Johnston Carmichael is reaping the rewards from its investment in new talent. The firm is currently supporting thirty seven students through The Institute of Chartered Accountants Scotland (ICAS) training; a three-year training programme which sees students work towards a Chartered Accountant qualification.

Nine of these students, based in the company's Aberdeen (2), Inverness (3), Glasgow (1), Edinburgh (1), Inverurie (1) and Elgin (1) offices, recently sat the Test of Professional Expertise (TPE) examination; the final exam in ICAS training. All nine Johnston Carmichael students passed - a remarkable achievement, as at a 100% pass rate, this sees the firm achieve pass marks that are consistently above ICAS' average.

Learning and Development Director, Iain Abernethy, said: "The recent successes of our students in the TPE examinations are testament to the positive impact created by our student support systems.

"We are highly active in the student recruitment market, seeking to ensure that we bring the best possible candidates onboard. We look for enthusiastic people that are good communicators, numerate, ambitious and importantly who we feel will 'fit' into the 'Johnston Carmichael' family. Securing the right candidates is essential, but we recognise that each of our students will need support and guidance through their studies and this is where our student model 'Care Support Succeed' comes in.

"We believe that an investment in our students is also an investment in the firm. By committing significant time, effort and resource into looking after our students, we can guide them through their studies, professional development and help them prepare for becoming a fully qualified Chartered Accountant. We recruit students with the intention that they will further their careers within the firm beyond their studies and progressing through our Career Maps, and we have a high success rate for doing this."

Johnston Carmichael's support for its students is focussed on individual contact with students, having regular meetings and contact designed to review progress and provide assistance. Collectively the firm's TPE students come together for a session that concentrates solely on the TPE exam. The participants are taught techniques for gaining marks in the exam and the type of answers that examiners favour.

Iain said: "We offer students valuable work experience and opportunities within our offices and departments and we believe that the variety is something which sets us apart from other firms. This variety also gives our students an excellent grounding for the TPE exam, which requires students to complete a multi-purpose case study that can place them in the position of an accountant offering business advice to a client.

In the long term, it means that students can make an informed decision on which area they would like to specialise in, whilst still having a comprehensive understanding of other accountancy-related services.”

Sandy Manson, Chief Executive at Johnston Carmichael, added: “At Johnston Carmichael we are always looking for the best talent and this means recruiting the right people from the very beginning of their careers and investing significant time and effort in developing their abilities and guiding them through to Chartered Accountant status.

“The level of support and the opportunities that we offer to all our employees means that our students gain considerable experience in the extensive range of services that we offer as a firm and this helps them to determine where their real talents lie. We find that many of our students choose to stay on with the firm after they qualify and further develop their careers and that is why we take a long-term outlook on the investment in training and development of all our people from an early stage.”