

ACCA members can now meet many of their CPD requirements online, thanks to a new course delivered by the Open University, reports Claudia Riley.

## a new CPD partner



'The flexible, online delivery means that members can undertake the course anywhere in the world and easily balance the time spent learning with their existing work and personal commitments.'



The Open University

**Signing on the dotted line:**

Michelle Nicolson – Marketing Manager, ACCA, Clare Minchington – Managing Director - Education, Learning & Development, ACCA, Charles Edwards – Director, Centre for Continuing Professional Development, OU and Dr David Robinson – Business Development Manager – Professional Bodies, OU

■ **ACCA is delighted to announce an agreement with The Open University (OU) to provide web-based learning opportunities for ACCA members.**

The first course – *Influencing Strategic Thinking for Finance Professionals* – has been designed to enable finance professionals to address the strategic scenarios that they encounter in their work.

The course explains why a strategic approach is necessary for organisations, and will enable delegates to play a more effective role in contributing to strategic thinking within their organisation. It has been designed so that delegates can work at their own pace, with a variety of activities that examine strategic thinking, strategic analysis, strategic options and strategic decision-making.

Simon King, Professional Development Adviser at ACCA, states: "It's our job to know and respond to the constantly changing needs of our members. This online course from the OU offers our members an alternative way of meeting some of their continuing professional development needs. The flexible, online delivery means that members can undertake the course anywhere in the world and easily balance the time spent learning with their existing

work and personal commitments. Above all, practical application is built into course design and completion."

**benefits**

This OU course offers a variety of benefits to ACCA members, including:

- the flexibility to complete the course within their own timescales
- access to an electronic forum to share with other professionals
- the ability to bring what they have learned into the office the next day and instantly apply it to their job
- a 10% discount on standard OU fees.

In addition, expert support and feedback online are available from the course learning advisers, such as Open University lecturer Kathy Knowles. Kathy provides valuable and beneficial individual development feedback and coaching.

"These courses are designed for CPD rather than as part of a formal academic qualification," said Knowles. "This means we can focus on development rather than assessment. So when the learner sends in their work-based activity, our role is to give them individual development feedback, not a numerical mark."

Furthermore, for members who are achieving their annual CPD by following the unit route, successful completion of this course (within one CPD year) means that they will have automatically met their full CPD requirement for the year – provided it is relevant to their career.

The course also gives delegates the opportunity to learn with the UK's largest university, with The Open University proudly having 200,000 students across the world. The University's expertise is further highlighted by the fact that it offers courses and qualifications in 360 subjects and has so far helped to develop the skills and knowledge of more than 2m people.

"Our CPD course provides members, their employers and ACCA with the evidence of the quality, relevance and application of their CPD activity," said Charles Edwards, the OU's CPD director. ■

To find out more about The Open University's *Influencing Strategic Thinking for Finance Professionals* course, visit [www.accaglobal.com/members/cpd/learning\\_opportunities/partner\\_resources](http://www.accaglobal.com/members/cpd/learning_opportunities/partner_resources)

Claudia Riley – Business Partnership Co-ordinator, ACCA