

Our resources and relationships

CIMA relies on a range of resources and relationships to achieve success. Here we discuss three of them: our people, our partnerships, and our research.

Our people

A motivated and diverse workforce means a more successful organisation. CIMA takes several steps to ensure colleagues are content and productive:

- Fair and equitable pay. We use salary benchmarking to ensure we pay employees between 80% and 120% of the median pay for equivalent roles, allocating pay within that bracket based on skills and experience.
- Commitment to diversity. Tone from the top is important; of the eight people who served on CIMA's senior leadership team in 2016, three are women, and two are from non-white ethnic backgrounds. This is not yet fully representative of all the communities we serve – but it represents a more diverse executive board than most comparable public organisations. Likewise, CIMA analyses its relative pay for men and women and is content that no women within the organisation are earning less than men with equivalent roles and skills.
- Regular staff surveys. CIMA frequently polls its workforce to get data helping us objectively understand staff behaviour, attitude and satisfaction. Where problems are identified – such as when staff are unsettled by a business decision – the organisation takes corrective action, which may include better communication, or altering policy in consultation with our staff.
- "Town hall"-style meetings. CIMA holds regular meetings where top management can update all staff on strategy and decisions, and staff can ask questions – anonymously if necessary. These meetings were increased in 2016 as we introduced staff to the Association.
- Aligning appraisals and remuneration to organisational objectives. All objectives are aligned with our business model, so staff remain focused on the contribution of their work towards overall strategy.

85%

Staff retention rate is 85% against a 2016 target of 87%

189

CIMA headcount outside UK

269

CIMA headcount in UK

In any time of organisational change, staff retention rates can be expected to drop. As a result, CIMA has missed its target by two percentage points. However, given the context of organisational change, CIMA remains satisfied with this result – particularly as it represents a one percentage point increase against the previous year.

Looking forwards

CIMA's wider workforce has been involved in all aspects of planning for the new Association. Town hall meetings were scheduled so senior management can update staff on progress and take questions. Likewise, a network of "culture champions" was set up, involving people from all levels of the business, who have been responsible for creating and agreeing the new Association's behaviours.

Our partnerships

As an international organisation working with students, members and employers, CIMA relies on a wide variety of stakeholders. These include:

Other industry bodies

Our growing reputation means we continue to build our influence with other organisations and industry bodies. These include peers that we collaborate with, such as the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, and institutes that seek CIMA's advice before developing their curricula, such as Oxford and Harvard Universities.

Pearson VUE

In 2015 CIMA moved to a computerised exam system, allowing students to take their exams in a format that is closer to most accountant's day-to-day jobs, and at a time which suited their diaries. In order to do this, CIMA partnered with Pearson VUE, the world leader in computer-based testing. As a result, CIMA students now have access to more than 5,000 test centres, meaning facilities are likely to be closer to their home or place of work.

Many of CIMA's main competitors are now copying the move to computer-based testing, indicating that it was the correct choice. But above all, CIMA's partnership with Pearson VUE makes exams simpler and more convenient for students.

The Hackett Group

CIMA and The Hackett Group have worked together to provide the world's first suite of professional development qualifications for the global business service sector. While the first of three qualifications was launched in 2015, the full range became available in 2016, allowing global business service professionals for the first time to study for a structured qualification which provides objective international recognition of their skills. CIMA brings to this partnership a knowledge of global business qualifications; The Hackett Group brings world-leading knowledge of this sector.

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Tuition providers

CIMA relies on valued partners to teach many of our students, and guide them through the route to qualification. Of these third-party providers, the strongest relationships are with Kaplan and BPP – of the colleges offering CIMA education, the vast majority use material from these two firms alone.

During 2016, CIMA undertook an analytics project with both Kaplan and BPP, the aim of which was to better understand student behaviour, and increase the number of students progressing to membership. CIMA will involve both firms closely as we refresh our syllabus and assessment.

We also worked with Kaplan, CIMA’s official publisher of its study materials, on developing online practice questions for the objective tests assessment.

CIMA has a contract with BPP for the delivery of continuous professional development to members. This is growing across the regions as a result of the development of online classroom technology.

Our research

If our members and students are to thrive in today’s uncertain world, they need to be briefed on best practice and latest developments so they can help chart the right course – for themselves, and for their employers.

CIMA’s research department provides members with this knowledge.

In 2016 the department created 15 different research-based outputs, which were accessed online 701,364 times in total. The work produced ranged from the technical and practical (including tools and briefings on business continuity management, CFO competencies and more) to higher-level, strategic outputs (such as reports on decision-making and a white paper on the business model), and four papers written by academics.

As well as helping our members and students at all levels with their day-to-day work and with this organisation’s strategy, this research ensures CIMA meets its Royal Charter responsibilities to promote the science of management accountancy.

For more information on our reports, see www.cgma.org/resources and www.cimaglobal.com/Research-Insight/.