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ICAS'S NEW ELECTRONIC ACHIEVEMENT LOG DEMONSTRATES THE FLEXIBILITY OF AXIA INTERACTIVE MEDIA'S NOW.net PLATFORM

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland (ICAS) launched on an Electronic Achievement log on 25th February. The log is part of the process by which accountants become fully qualified. Student members are now able to create an electronic record of their work experience and demonstrate how they have achieved the necessary competencies required for full membership.

The benefit to ICAS is that a process, which previously demanded significant resources to create paper records and then track them, has been replaced by one that is fully online. As a result, there are significant savings in the amount of staff time devoted to chasing paper records and in monitoring whether members have met the requirements.

Furthermore, student members benefit because the system guides them through the process, removing any possibility that they may inadvertently make mistakes in choosing their competencies and creating the necessary records.

Those tasked in accountancy firms with authenticating the evidence that is submitted also have a stripped down version of the site from which they can easily access the records of student accountants assigned to them.

Richard Etheridge, Technical Services Director for AXIA Interactive Media, explained some of the challenges in delivering this project:

"ICAS have clearly defined rules about the number of competencies members are allowed to choose and from which sections. Our challenge lay in flexing the NOW.net platform so it could accommodate such an approach. In the process, we have been able to add some new functionality to the platform. We have also adapted the home page so it operates as a 'dashboard' where ICAS members can see at a glance the progress they are making and access all the key sections."

One of the other challenges that AXIA Interactive Media faced, was to reflect the fact that all of the major accountancy firms have different competencies that their employees can achieve. This challenge was met by providing different versions of the site for them.

Although, it is considered too early to assess the impact of the online site; however, the response to date has been very encouraging.