

# Q&A

It's never too late to study for the AMCT. Dominic Heaton, FD of Innovia Films, tells *The Treasurer* how the qualification is benefiting his career



## What does your current role entail?

I am FD of Innovia Films, a €400m turnover division of banknote substrate maker Innovia Group. We manufacture and

distribute polypropylene film and cellulose film to more than 100 countries from five manufacturing sites in the UK, Australia, Belgium, Mexico and the US.

My role involves acting as a key business partner within the divisional executive team and across the business. In addition, I assist the wider group management and stakeholders, and actively support corporate transactions and treasury activities.

## Why did you decide to study for the AMCT qualification?

For a number of different reasons. Firstly, I was looking for alternative development courses from the normal, and fairly predictable, continuing professional development (CPD) training courses currently offered in the market. Secondly, I found that my current and previous roles often took me into corporate finance and funding, and various treasury matters with internal and external stakeholders across the group for which I had no formal training or expertise.

In the past two years, I have been heavily involved with banking facility arrangements, acquisitions, divestments and bond placements. Lastly, and what got me 'across the line' with the ACT rather than with the other courses,

was my boss, who is an MCT and has been associated with the ACT for many years.

## Did anything surprise you about the course?

Yes – the breadth of the CertITM and CertCFF syllabuses, which covered a wide range of topics. The ACT made the subject matter more relevant by continually applying it to real business cases and recent media news. I was also surprised by the varied backgrounds of the other students.

I have found the course intellectually challenging and not something that should be taken on lightly. I liked the fact that you can tailor the hours to suit your pace and lifestyle. With three young children, I wanted a course that was flexible and where I could spread the work over a longer period of time while still achieving a recognised business qualification at the end of it.

## What have you learned on the course that is most relevant to your current role?

My role is quite varied, so there was a good alignment with the AMCT syllabus. I have learned about new concepts and developed new techniques to supplement my business toolbox. There are also subjects that bring back fond memories of past studies and remind me just how long ago that was. The most relevant topics so far have been the risk management, cash management, debt issuance and shareholder value topics. I have recently used the risk management framework



to implement a risk register and a wider enterprise risk management framework at Innovia.

## How do you think you will benefit from having attained the AMCT?

I am still one module (CertRM) away from completing the course. While I have benefited enormously already, I'm confident that attaining the AMCT will enable me to further develop my toolbox beyond accounting.

From the ACT seminars I have attended so far and from reading its publications, my sense is that the AMCT qualification is not a finishing line, but something that keeps evolving as the business world continues to seek world-class solutions. It is the positive wrap-around framework with the qualification, such as the networking opportunities and technical support, which stands out for me.

## Would you recommend the AMCT to other FDs?

Definitely. It's a great addition to the business toolbox and it covers a wide breadth of corporate issues. It is also accredited for CPD hours under many of the professional accountancy bodies.

## What would be your advice to other FDs thinking of studying for the AMCT?

Allow plenty of time for each module on the course. There will inevitably be unplanned business and personal demands that take away large chunks of your time. ♥