



# International success for students

**It was a tight squeeze at the top of the league table for delegates completing the Institute of Management Services Certificate course during 2015.**

Claiming the title of Student of the Year for 2015 were two people, both from the public sector: Paul McCaffery from the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) in Scotland and Alison Fox from the Valuation Office Agency (VOA).

And very close behind the joint winners were three people declared as runners up to the Student of the Year: Davy Cowie from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Bill Purewal from Royal Mail and Todd Davis from bed manufacturer Harrison Spinks.

All five students had completed their training with Scott-Grant in Manchester and so came back in early February with their managers to the training centre, to celebrate their success and receive their certificates and gifts from both the Institute and Scott-Grant.

On behalf of the IMS, Treasurer, David Blanchflower presented both Paul and Alison with a certificate, cheque and an engraved crystal trophy.

## **Good for the Institute**

As the leading provider of productivity training in the UK, Scott-Grant's managing director Richard Taylor was delighted with the results achieved by all these delegates – and with the increasing popularity of the Certificate course. "We had a record year for training in 2015, with a significant increase in bookings on the previous year. We ran even more IMS courses last year, adding another five extra weeks to our published course schedule. We had more multiple bookings from companies wanting to send more than one delegate. And it was significant that a large percentage of bookings came from companies who had previously sent other delegates on IMS courses, so they believe in our Certificate syllabus and endorse the value of our content to their business.

"It was also good for the Institute because a large number of those who successfully completed the course applied for and gained life membership and get the ability to include AMS after their name. This is testimony to the stature of the professional qualification."

Paul McCaffery from COPFS was himself a qualified trainer before becoming a project manager with the Police Reform Team. He admitted that "Modules 1 and 2 of the IMS Certificate programme were all we originally signed up to do with Scott-

Grant but to be honest, we enjoyed it so much that I and other colleagues came back to complete the remaining two modules to get the full productivity qualification. The course gave me a great foundation to move forward with confidence in the drive for continuous improvement. As an organisation MOST® is our preferred measurement technique and it has been so very useful. I really enjoy applying it and seeing how it delivers accurate data for us to work with."

Alison Fox from the VOA had a lot to live up to as her colleagues from the activity costing team have been runners up for the same award for the past two years. She scooped the top prize this year, and naturally was delighted. "I was shocked and very surprised at the news. I've been so fortunate to get this qualification with such amazing results. My colleagues were delighted I'd 'kept up the standard', as three of them have been to this event in previous years. It shows the commitment and drive of the team."

Alison has since been promoted to a higher executive officer role in the VOA and continues to use her newly acquired skills and knowledge and apply the same principles of continuous improvement.

### An industry standard qualification

There is no doubt that the IMS Certificate is an industry standard qualification in every business sector nowadays; productivity is a significant theme and focus in all kinds of businesses.

John Tannahill from COPFS, who is Paul McCaffery's manager, explained about the growth and credibility of his comparatively new team in the organisation: "My process review team is now at the centre of everything COPFS is involved in and we have at least two years' work ahead just with current projects. I have a further two staff on my team who are underway with Scott-Grant training. We all identify the need for change and COPFS knows to expect that with us, change will be for the better!"

There have been similar circumstances in the Valuation Office Agency. Ian Chilton-Merryweather started the activity costing department in recent years from a clean sheet, and now has a thriving and busy team full of qualified productivity professionals. And the DWP is a further example of similar growth over recent years with IMS qualifications now a stated requirement for work study and costing roles.

Commenting on the range of industry sectors, Richard Taylor said: "In recent years, we've found that retail and distribution was a more dominant sector among the winners, but this year we see the majority are from the public sector (especially if you include Royal Mail), with only one manufacturing company representing a different sector in the winning line-up. All of our winners here today are in a privileged position in that they are the people who can make a difference in their business – a difference to the performance and processes because of the skills and knowledge they now have to improve productivity. The national minimum wage ruling is putting real pressure on productivity in many sectors, influencing people coming to do this training. The project and contract people we continue to supply are also in significant demand across the UK and overseas. It will be interesting to see how 2016 pans out."

### A great history

Recognition was also given to the instructors and trainers from Scott-Grant and in particular to Colin Moran, who worked with



all this year's winners. After about 15 years with Scott-Grant, Colin's wife has now decided (!) it's time for him to hang up his boots and retire. He has helped so very many people through the IMS Certificate course, not just in the range of open courses but on many in-company courses too in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Taylor said: "We invariably get really good feedback from our delegates about his knowledge, his experience and his humour. Like all our instructors and trainers, Colin has a wealth of practical experience applying all the theory he teaches and our delegates always appreciate the insight he brings to the learning experience. Steve Heathcote is poised to run many such courses for us and he too comes into the training room with solid practical experience in industry applying his IE skills and knowledge over a number of years.

"It is good to know that in this, the 75th anniversary of the Institute of Management Services, we have been training for 30 of those years either as Scott-Grant or in the early days as Aldwark Training in York, until they became part of Scott-Grant around 1987."

David Blanchflower added: "Scott-Grant always set a high standard and we're most grateful for all that they do with and for the Institute. Each winner should be very proud of their tremendous achievement in attaining such a standard in their professional qualification."