

Training ACA students with Chartered Accountants Ireland

CASE STUDY

Chartered 
Accountants
Ireland



About

At DBASS, we support owner-managed businesses and growing organisations across Ireland. Established in 1988 and now a team of over 30 people, we provide a complete range of services including accountancy and audit, tax planning and compliance, corporate finance, and strategic business advisory. Our client base spans SMEs through to more established businesses, and we work with them at every stage—from early growth through to succession and longer-term planning. What really defines how we work is how closely these services are connected. Rather than treating audit, tax and advisory as separate disciplines, we work alongside our clients as trusted partners—helping them interpret their numbers, plan ahead, and make better commercial decisions. For us, every engagement is the start of a long-term relationship.



Award
Winning



Strong
Relationships



Training
Quality

What do you feel makes you stand out from other firms?

What genuinely sets us apart is how we build relationships—with both our clients and our people. A large proportion of our work comes through referrals, which reflects the trust we've built over time. Our clients don't see us as merely a service provider—they see us as part of their team, and that's how we approach every interaction.

Internally, the same thinking applies. We've always believed that if you invest in your people, everything else follows. We focus on creating an environment where people can develop, feel supported, and build long-term careers with us. Many of our senior team members started here as trainees, which says a lot about the culture we've built.

This approach was recognised when we were named **Employer of the Year at this year's Irish Accountancy Awards**. For us, the award reflects what was already there—a strong people-first culture, a supportive environment, and a genuine focus on long-term development.

What prompted you to train Chartered Accountants in-house?

For us, training Chartered Accountants in-house was a natural progression rather than a single decision point. As the firm grew, it became clear that maintaining the quality of our work and the consistency of our client service depended on developing people within that environment from the outset.

Our approach has always been relationship-led, and that applies just as much internally as it does with clients. Training in-house allows us to bring people through the business in a way that reflects how we actually operate—giving them early exposure, responsibility, and support, rather than trying to build that in later.

It also creates continuity. Many of our team have progressed from trainee level into senior roles, strengthening both our internal culture and the relationships we have with our clients.

What areas are the trainees exposed to?

We take a more tailored approach when it comes to trainee development. During the recruitment process, we ask candidates which area they are most interested in—whether that's audit, tax, or accounts—and align them to that team for the duration of their training contract. This allows them to build real depth and confidence in their chosen area, rather than moving between departments without fully embedding in any one discipline.

Regardless of the team they join, trainees gain meaningful, hands-on experience from an early stage. A consistent piece of feedback we receive is how much responsibility and exposure they're given, often exceeding expectations.

Client interaction is a key part of that experience. Trainees are involved in day-to-day communication through emails and phone calls, and they are regularly invited to attend client meetings. This gives them a practical understanding of how we work with clients and helps build their confidence alongside their technical development.

Many of our trainees continue to progress within the same area post-qualification, further strengthening their expertise and the continuity we can offer our clients.

We operate a genuine open-door environment, so trainees have direct access not just to their immediate team, but also to Directors.

Trainees are involved in day-to-day communication through emails and phone calls, and they are regularly invited to attend client meetings.

How does your training programme work?

Our training programme is built around giving people support from day one, while also helping them build confidence and real experience as early as possible. From the outset, each trainee is assigned a work buddy to help them settle in, understand how the firm operates, and feel supported as they start their career with us.

Day-to-day, learning happens through close interaction with managers and senior team members. We operate a genuine open-door environment, so trainees have direct access not just to their immediate team, but also to Directors. With fewer layers, questions are answered quickly, knowledge flows more easily, and trainees get a real sense of how decisions are made in practice.

Alongside on-the-job experience, we provide full study support in line with Chartered Accountants Ireland guidelines. This combination of practical exposure and structured support allows trainees to develop both technically and professionally in a way that reflects how we work as a firm.

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Overall, what benefits has the company seen, training Chartered Accountants?

Training Chartered Accountants in-house has had a very positive impact across the business. One of the most significant benefits has been retention. Because trainees develop within the firm and understand how we operate from an early stage, many choose to stay with us as they qualify and progress into more senior roles.

It has also strengthened the consistency and quality of our client service. As trainees develop, they carry that approach through into their work, and clients benefit from dealing with people who already understand their business and have often been part of their journey over a number of years.

From a longer-term perspective, it plays an important role in succession planning. By developing our own people, we are building a pipeline of future managers and leaders who are aligned with our values and our approach. That gives us a strong platform for continued growth while maintaining the culture that has been central to the firm's success.

Would you recommend Chartered training to other organisations?

We would absolutely recommend Chartered training to other organisations. For us, it has been a key part of building a strong, capable team and maintaining the standard of service our clients expect.

Training people within your own environment allows you to shape how they develop—both technically and professionally—while embedding the approach and culture that define your firm. Over time, that leads to stronger teams, better retention, and more consistent client relationships.

Most importantly, it's a long-term investment in your people. When that investment is made properly, the benefits are felt across the entire business—from the quality of your work to the continuity you can offer your clients.

Our dedicated team

To find out more, contact our Relationship Management team today



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Chartered Accountants are trusted business leader driving impact and influencing key decisions, across businesses in every sector worldwide.

Chartered Accountants Ireland supports employers with flexible training pathways, strong student support and future-focused professional education designed to develop commercially aware, technically capable and ethically grounded professionals