
MEETING THE FUTURE

The BCC academy in London is a symbol of the vision of the future that is at the core of everything that we are doing. Founded in March 1977, the academy is situated in Trafalgar Square in the heart of London's West End. There is an impressive feeling of stability and dedication throughout the academy. The rooms have oak-panelled walls and the beautiful stained glass windows are over 200 years old.

The worldwide training of new staff is coordinated by the International Development Management Committee based at CSO. The oldest academy is in Karachi, and there is another fully operational academy in Hong Kong. By the end of 1981 there will be two more, one in Cairo and the other in Lagos and a fifth academy is planned for Zimbabwe. The instructors from all the academies met in London this summer for a series of conferences to coordinate their worldwide activity. The vision of BCC is the common property of everyone. It is the foundation on which BCC in each country builds its success according to local customs and requirements. The academies emphasise the way BCC operates and integrate this into the standard banking procedures in each country.

When new students arrive at the London academy, they are welcomed into the fold and introduced to the BCC vision. This delightful task is performed by Mr K Q Din and a team of five instructors. The academy offers two main courses. The first is for school leavers aged about 16. This year there were over 500 applicants for the 60 places available. Mr Alfred Orriss, personnel manager for the UK region, helps with the selection and successful applicants are given six months' training that

combines theory and experience to give a thorough introduction to the banking profession. The students spend two weeks in the academy, followed by six weeks in the London branches. This cycle is repeated three times during the course and each cycle represents a progressive deepening of the students' knowledge of their new careers. All the major aspects of banking are covered as well as sound grounding in computers, public relations and the law. The students are taught to pay great attention to every detail of their work. They learn to understand what our customers require and then to tailor their services to those requirements.

For their part the academy staff pride themselves on giving individual care to their young students, looking after all aspects of their welfare.

The second main course taught at the academy is the graduate training programme. This is open to graduates from any discipline. There are 18 students on the current course. They have come mostly from universities in the United Kingdom, but others have come from the United States, Pakistan and India. As with the school-leavers course, the graduate students divide their time between learning the theory of banking at the academy and the practice of banking at a London branch. Their cycle is two weeks in the academy, followed by two weeks in a branch.

The purpose of the graduates course is to produce officers for the bank. The graduates will be expected to take on responsible positions and some of the early students are already branch managers. When talking to a prospective student the selection committee look for two qualities: their adaptability to change and a willingness to accept new challenges. There are between 40 and 50 different nationalities working at BCC in the UK and it is essential that all new staff can quickly blend into the existing teams. One of the strengths of BCC management philosophy is the emphasis that it places on the joint personality concept, rather than on rigidly structured graduations of rank. Mr Din and his colleagues have seen again and again that the new students respond to this. They see the success of BCC and want to involve themselves in it.

Apart from the two main courses, there are many others held at the academy. There is an induction course for all new members of the BCC family and there is a whole series of refresher courses aimed specifically at all the main functions in a branch, including deposit banking, advances and securities, documentary credits and foreign exchange.

The academy is also used for senior and junior management courses. Seminars are held on special subjects such as computer operations and a good deal of emphasis is given to helping students prepare for the examinations of the Institute of Bankers. The academy likes to encourage branch members to join the Institute. "We want to see our students prosper in their careers," says Mr Din. "We would like the branches to introduce a manpower training programme so that all members of the BCC family can grow together in ever greater knowledge and understanding of our profession. The courses are not expensive, but ignorance in banking matters could be very costly. Our students are the future of the bank and we are very proud of them. We will be taking in more school leavers and graduates and we will be holding more management courses.

"1982 has been designated the Year of Lift-Off for the UK region. In the last few years we have had very rapid horizontal expansion. Now, for the time being, we have enough branches and we are aiming at vertical expansion. That is to say, expansion of profit. The contributions that we hope this academy will make is to prepare the hands that will carry out this task and ensure that the take-off is technically sound. Our fulfilment comes from seeing success in the branches."

Mr K Q Din: "Our students are our future."

