Cadbury Schweppes is one of the biggest international beverage and confectionery companies in the world with a market capitalisation of £10 billion (December 2004). With a history stretching back over 200 years, today Cadbury Schweppes employs around 55,000 people and its brands are enjoyed in almost every country around the world. Their heritage starts back in 1783 when Jacob Schweppe perfected his process for manufacturing carbonated mineral water in Geneva, Switzerland. And in 1824 John Cadbury opened in Birmingham selling cocoa and chocolate. These two household names merged in 1969 to form Cadbury Schweppes plc. Since then they have expanded their business throughout the world by a programme of organic and acquisition led growth. Concentrating on their core brands in beverages and confectionery since the 1980s, they have strengthened their portfolio through almost fifty acquisitions, including brand icons such as Mott’s, Canada Dry, Halls, Trident, Dentyne, Bubblicious, Trebor, Bassett, Dr Pepper, 7 Up, Snapple and Orangina. Cadbury Schweppes is a CIMA Training Quality Partner.
Helen Watson, Passed Finalist

What’s been your career to date?

What’s your current role?
Based in Sheffield. Senior Operations Analyst.

What are the best things about your job?
I particularly enjoy working with a broad range of people; it makes for an interesting work life. Cadbury also has an amazing heritage and it’s great being involved with products that are a pleasure to make and sell. A large part of my job is ensuring non-finance people can understand the numbers – that sounds easier than it is.

Why CIMA?
Purely and simply because I wanted to study for a qualification that prepared me for a working life in business. Other qualifications have a more detailed focus on financial standards and accounting rules but I really value the breadth that CIMA offers.

Michael Partington, Student

What’s been your career to date?

What’s your current role?
Based in Bourneville. Central Finance Analyst.

How does Cadbury support you?
For every CIMA exam there are five days’ holiday for study and revision plus time off on the day of the exam. They also pay the course and exam fees.

How relevant are your CIMA studies to your current role?
CIMA covers all the traditional number-crunching material, reporting and accounting etc. This has really helped working the central finance function. The Systems and Project Management paper has given me the necessary skills I’ve needed when been working on non-finance specific projects too.

Why CIMA?
When I moved to Cadbury, CIMA was the qualification people were studying. But it actually fits with what the business needs; its relevance has been clear all along.

Do you think the traditional image of accountants is justified?
I don’t think I’m boring and I have more to talk about than accountancy, CIMA and Cadbury. I work in finance and that is a broad brush covering a lot of different functions. I think the traditional image could be seen amongst the auditors I worked with before – they are a bit more old school.

How do you see CIMA contributing to your future career? Where would you like to be in five or ten years?
I’m more aware than ever how important CPD is and will be from now on. CIMA, as my professional body, will help me keep on top of the game when it comes to new legislation and practice and also the softer skills. When I’m qualified I will have to stay relevant if I want to keep my letters. In terms of the future, CIMA will open doors and the effort it’s taking to qualify will be worth it. Studying to be a Chartered Management Accountant is giving me the confidence I need to do the day-to-day; theory and its application has come together with CIMA.

Sharon Bhachu ACMA, CIMA Training Co-ordinator
‘Two years after graduating, I started in Bourneville as an accountant within manufacturing, and was immediately made responsible for the finances of two major production lines, chocolate making and crème eggs. With two team members reporting to me, it was a bit scary at first. About a year later I moved to Maple Cross, to support the marketing team as a commercial analyst: evaluating the effect of proposed product changes on our contribution, working on scope costings to help evaluate proposals for Easter, helping decide on promotions, and even which products should go in a selection box. I’m now taking over from my manager, supporting the entire seasonal range. Two years in and I’m living every minute, working with the current brands and developing insight for the future. The knowledge I brought from manufacturing has definitely proved valuable. I have been given tremendous CIMA support, key management skills training: a ‘real role’ with ‘real responsibilities’ – and plenty of chocolate!’