Hays Senior Finance takes a whistle-stop tour of some of the most resilient sectors for CIMA qualifieds and Hays Accountancy & Finance offers some words of wisdom to part-qualifieds.

CIMA candidates are always in demand, and in spite of the current economic climate, now is no different. There are real opportunities across the FMCG, oil and gas, insurance, internal audit and public services sectors, proving that it is still very much an employee driven market.

**Fast Moving Consumer Goods**
FMCG remains one of the UK economy’s most steadfast industries, making it one of the richest sources of jobs. ‘More and more we are seeing newly qualified accountants competing to get into this sector,’ says Teresa Thorrington-Allen, National Director at Hays Senior Finance. ‘We have a real need for CIMA candidates in FMCG across the UK: the majority of CIMA qualifieds will look to work in London upon qualifying but should also consider opportunities outside of it.’

**Insurance**
Insurance has also witnessed a sharp increase in demand for senior level candidates. ‘People look to increase their policies and take new ones out in times of financial uncertainty,’ says Thorrington-Allen.

**Popularity of the public sector undiminished**
The public sector remains a big draw for CIMA accountants given the variety, work-life balance and strong employee value propositions. ‘Skills learnt in the private sector are always in high demand by the public sector as they implement a wide range of commercial initiatives, such as service-line reporting and world-class commissioning,’ says Jan McQuaker, Director at Hays Public Services.

**Real career opportunities in oil and gas**
Existing skills shortages has led to a surge of jobs in the oil and gas sector, the fastest growing market in Scotland. Competition among newly qualified accountants is intense, not surprising for an industry that offers generous bonuses and share perks.

Keith Mason, Regional Director at Hays Senior Finance in Scotland says: ‘The rate of pay is high in this sector and there are real career opportunities. Finance professionals should be seriously considering it as a career move.’

**What about the part-qualifieds?**
‘Plan ahead and plug skills gaps,’ says Nick Tout, Director of Hays Accountancy & Finance. Part-qualified candidates should have an idea of their long-term and medium-term career plans and must prepare carefully for skills testing and competency-based interviews.

‘Organisations expect solid technical skills but they’re looking for potential leaders with the right personality and cultural identikit,’ explains Tout. ‘Implement medium-term and long-term career plans and build a strong network of contacts. This will help you build a solid platform for later progression.’

**Internal audit**
The level of investment in internal audit is testament to the function’s value. If you have a professional audit or accountancy qualification, now is the time to cash in. ‘Whether you are a qualified accountant or an experienced internal auditor, there is a strong demand for your skills set,’ reports Thorrington-Allen.

For further information visit www.hays.com/accountancyqual