

Industry news

More women partners at Big Four

By Sally Percy

Accountancy magazine, ICAEW (U.K.)

Efforts by the Big Four accountancy firms to boost their ranks of female partners are being rewarded as nearly a quarter of this year's internal partner promotions are women.

PricewaterhouseCoopers promoted 17 women out of a total of 58 internal appointments (29 percent) while KPMG promoted eight women out of 31 (26 percent). Ernst & Young promoted eight women out of 36 (22 percent).

Deloitte promoted just seven women out of 42 (17 percent). Heather Hancock, Deloitte partner and

diversity champion, insisted the firm intended to improve. "It really matters to us, but we're trying to make sure we're taking the right long-term steps," she said.

PwC's director of diversity Sarah Churchman said the number of female partner promotions at the firm this year was the "culmination of a huge amount of focus we've put into the desire to bring more women into the partnership."

Fleur Bothwick, director of diversity and inclusiveness at Ernst & Young, said the firm had set a target of achieving 20 percent female representation at partner level by 2011. At present that figure stands at 14 percent.

Firm (U.K.)	Total new partners 2008	No. of female partners 2008	% female partners 2008	Total new partners 2007	No. of female partners 2007	% female partners 2007
PricewaterhouseCoopers	58	17	29%	56	7	13%
Deloitte & Touche	42	7	17%	43	7	16%
KPMG	31	8	26%	25	4	16%
Ernst & Young	36	8	22%	25	3	12%
Total	167	40		149	21	
Average	42	10	24%	37	5	14%