

Thoughts from an accounting student

Having the right attitude is the key to success in studying and working



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Programme: Higher Diploma in Accountancy and
Information Systems
(an HKIAAT accredited programme)

Institution: Hong Kong Institute of Vocational
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Phillip is a final year accounting student who is currently working towards his final examination, and will soon pursue the AAT qualification. He tells us about his journey from being a science stream student to an accounting lover who now dreams of becoming an accounting professional in the future.

Why did you choose to study accounting?

I was a student of science stream in secondary school. After graduating from Form 5, I chose to further my studies in IVE (Sha Tin). I chose accounting since I heard it could provide me with exposure to a range of different fields and industries and offer plenty of opportunities. With my strong interest in mathematics and the support from my family, I believe this was the right choice for me. I look forward to moving on to a brand new stage after graduation from the Higher Diploma.

How do you find accounting so far?

I think patience and endurance have played an important role during my accounting studies in the past few years. Accounting is a subject which involves more than just the simple addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. I recall that my first year study was a bit tough. I was so frustrated to get a “just pass” mark in my first test while other classmates got over 90 marks on average. It was probably because I did not have any prior accounting knowledge, and therefore it was hard for me to grasp the concepts at the beginning. But with my “never give up” attitude and optimistic character, I studied very hard every day, and eventually scored high marks in my examinations. Though the final year syllabus is even more difficult, I am able to manage it.

What have been the most unforgettable and enjoyable moments in your student life?

The most unforgettable experience in my student life is still tackling problem questions. As I move towards my final year, questions have become more difficult and the time needed to solve them has increased. For example, I used to need to spend 10 to 15 minutes in solving one question in year one, but now I usually need around 2 to 3 hours to answer one question. I can see the challenges emerging.



Studying with a group of friends has become the most enjoyable time because we share our views and discuss challenging questions during lunch or after school. This good learning atmosphere has inspired and facilitated my study.

When did you first learn about HKIAAT and the AAT qualification?

I first found out about the HKIAAT during my first year at IVE (Sha Tin). At that time, a seminar was held to introduce HKIAAT and the AAT qualification. I was impressed by the promising opportunities for career and academic advancement offered by the AAT qualification and from that moment I decided to acquire the qualification immediately upon graduation. I have already registered with the HKIAAT as a student.

What are your plans for the future?

Currently, I will work hard to prepare for my examination and wish to achieve good results to stay competitive. Then I will claim exemptions from the eight AAT Examination papers. With the AAT qualification, I will be eligible to apply for the top-up degree programme BA (Hons) Accounting offered by local and overseas universities. Upon graduation, I will seek employment with an accounting firm.

Which accounting field will you choose to start your career in?

Based on my study experience, I like taxation the most. Auditing incorporates too many theories and is a bit wordy compared with the other subjects. Without real-life experience, it is hard to understand auditing. However, I still want to work in an accounting firm to gain experience in different areas. I will then have a fuller picture of the profession before making a decision on the direction of my career.

My cousin works in a CPA firm and therefore I hope she will be able to help me in with job hunting. From our discussions, I think that I am psychologically prepared for a busy and tough working life, especially in early years. My previous summer internship experience in a CPA firm has strengthened my confidence in working in this type of environment. I now aim to be a successful accounting professional, so hard work, equipping myself with different kinds of soft skills, acquiring professional qualifications such as the AAT qualification and learning humility are crucial. I will keep my mind open and get ready to learn as much as I can.