

## *Thoughts from an accounting student*

### **AAT – grooming all walks of talents**



#### **Joyce Wong**

Programme: Diploma for Accounting Technicians (Part-time)  
(an HKIAAT accredited programme)

Institution: HKU School of Professional and Continuing  
Education (HKU SPACE)

Position: Accounting officer in CY Consultant Limited

In the past, accounting was often perceived as a career that suits people who prefer to work independently with figures. A part-time student of the Diploma for Accounting Technicians programme, Joyce Wong, however, is proof that this perception is wrong. Joyce is in fact an extrovert who was first worried that accounting job could be boring; instead she has been delighted to find that she is gaining a lot from this career. With a decade of accounting experience already behind her, Joyce talks about pursuing the AAT qualification and her part-time study experience.

#### **Beyond calculations**

“Accounting is much more than mere manipulation of figures,” said Joyce, who has worked as an accounting officer for eight years with CY Consultant Limited, a business secretarial and consultancy firm. At the beginning, Joyce handled clerical and book-keeping tasks. Now she is more experienced, there are chances for her to meet clients to discuss their accounting and taxation requirements.

Joyce recalls that after she had been working in the accounting field for few years, she felt her lack of a concrete foundation of accounting knowledge since she had only learnt basic accounting concepts at secondary school. She understood that a professional qualification and continuous knowledge input could better her career prospects, so she decided to study for the AAT qualification. In 2003, Joyce attempted AAT Paper 3 (then on cost accounting) and Paper 4 (then on IT applications in accounting). However, her continual heavy workload and personal commitments meant that she then decided to take a break from her studies. She is now planning to continue her AAT studies, and aims to complete the rest of the AAT examinations upon graduating from the diploma programme at HKU SPACE in February 2010. She points out that having flexibility in managing the study progress is one of many advantages offered by AAT.

#### **All-encompassing syllabus**

Joyce appreciates the AAT examinations’ wide coverage and the practical nature of the studies. Since the whole syllabus is systematically divided into different papers, students are walked through different key aspects of accounting at a steady pace.



With so many different opportunities available in the accounting field, Joyce says that the interdisciplinary nature of accounting appeals to her. Accounting also boosts her knowledge of different industries' business operations. In addition her strong numerical sense and love of problem-solving make balancing accounts and preparing financial reports enjoyable tasks.

Life-long learning is now popular in knowledge-based economies like Hong Kong. However, studying part-time is never easy. Joyce started her part-time studies again in 2007 and is now attending classes three days a week. She spends her weekends revising. "While I now have more for my studies since my kid has grown up, I still have to manage my time well so that I can attend classes regularly," Joyce notes. Despite the problems she faces, Joyce is highly motivated to attain AAT qualification. "This is not only beneficial for my own career development, but I hope my initiatives in continuous learning make me a positive role model for my children," she says.

#### **Tips for part-time accounting students**

- Attain a professional qualification such as the AAT and arrange your exam schedule flexibly according to your own needs and learning curve
- Manage your time well so that you can strike a balance between work and study
- Be active in asking questions during class and you will learn the skills you need much faster