



Featured AAT



Name: Fiona So

Job Title: Accounting Officer

Fiona So completed the ATE Examinations in 2006. Currently, she is a Fellow Member of the HKIAAT. She talks to us about studying for the examinations, how the AAT qualification helps her in her daily work and her further education studies.

What is your current position and your duties? How long have you been working at your current position?

I have been working as an accounting officer in a Japanese retail firm since I qualified with the AAT two years ago. Two assistants work under me and we are responsible for all the accounting work in our main office and also in our branches. I am responsible for everything in the company that involves numbers and the money tag, like the daily sales figures, staff salaries, stock taking and issuing cheques.

Why did you choose accountancy as your career?

I started out as a company clerk and I studied commerce at high school. But after working for a year or so, I decided that I wanted to specialize in accounting. Since then, I have spent the last ten years doing accounting work.

What academic training did you receive before studying for the HKIAAT qualification?

I obtained the LCC qualifications before enrolling as an HKIAAT student. As a matter of fact, I took accounting courses in F4 and F5 and used them to prepare myself for lower level LCC qualifications. I went for higher level qualifications later.

But then, I found the training was not enough to equip me for practical accounting work.



Why did you decide to study for the HKIAAT qualification?

AAT courses are broader in perspective as I had to take courses like taxation, IT, English communication, and also auditing – these subjects are not covered in LCC. I learnt from my colleagues that the AAT qualification is recognized by many local and overseas universities. AAT graduates can claim some exemptions from certain bachelor degree programmes. Because of these various benefits, I decided to go for AAT.

What are your thoughts on the HKIAAT syllabus? Do you think it helps in your daily work?

Many subjects that the AAT offers are useful. Through my studies, I got to understand auditors' work and the flow of business better. Now I can report to the tax authorities for myself and for my company. Where I work now, I need to keep track of business transactions. This is something that I learnt through my studies. The notes that I took helped. Also I gained a more in-depth understanding of certain accounting related software that I was not previously aware of.

What is your career plan?

I am taking an advanced diploma in accounting at HKU SPACE. I want to obtain a degree first. I think everyone needs a university degree these days in order to find a place in the job market. They may not be relevant to your work, but they are required. If I don't have a degree, I'll lose my competitive edge. I see the AAT qualification as a step in helping me to get a degree. I am not thinking of going for the CPA qualification yet.

Do you think the HKIAAT qualification is helping your career development?

Employers definitely give you additional consideration if you have an AAT qualification. This is evident in job ads where an AAT qualification is often listed as one of the basic hiring requirements.

Would you recommend that your colleagues/subordinates take the HKIAAT examinations? Why?

I have already recommended some of my colleagues to take the AAT exams because it is a shorter route for career development and better promotion opportunities. And also, AAT is a highly regarded and recognized qualification for people working or planning to work in middle level or in the accounting area. As an AAT graduate, you get better entry pay when compared with other similar qualifications. My colleagues like to ask me about their work-related problems because I am AAT qualified.