

Versatile AAT

Discovering your interest and unleashing your potential



Name: Yan Liu
Title: Accounts Clerk
Company: Fortuna Optical Factory Limited

It is never too late to discover and develop your interest. Despite having no prior knowledge of accounting, Yan Liu is finding accounting both useful and interesting as a profession and a way of starting a career. Through her accounting studies and the AAT qualification, Yan is building up her career one step at a time.

Why did you choose accounting? What drew you to the profession?

I grew up in mainland China and studied English in college there. I didn't receive any accounting training there. When I migrated to Hong Kong, I chose to work in the accounting field because it is a reputable profession. The work is traditionally stable, and I believe there are ample opportunities in the profession for both experienced accounting personnel and newcomers; I believe these are important aspects to look for in a career.

What are your key responsibilities in Fortuna Optical Factory Limited? What was it like to start in accounting from scratch?

I first started as a general clerk in Fortuna. It was at my boss' suggestion that I took on accounting work. I started by going through the company's accounts and financial statements as well as dealing with basic day-to-day operations with the assistance of computer software. I began to take on book-keeping and other general accounting tasks for the company. My boss was keen on allowing me to handle a full set of accounts when I started my AAT studies.

It is true that the task of balancing the accounts is challenging for a person who has no previous accounting knowledge. However, as I began my studies and gained experience, my confidence grew. The help I received from fellow classmates in understanding my study materials and in using computer software helped me greatly.

Why did you decide to pursue the AAT qualification?

I originally wanted to attain a certificate offered by another accounting body. However, when I started to take a diploma course at the Hong Kong School of Commerce, I came to realize that the AAT qualification is more comprehensive, in-depth, and has good articulation to further professional development and studies in the field. As a result, I decided to switch to the AAT qualification.



What have you learnt from studying for the AAT Examination, and how do you apply what you have learnt at work?

As I had no prior accounting educational background, naturally I had to start from the very beginning. The knowledge I have acquired through the AAT Examination not only helped me build a firm foundation in my work – it also allowed me to understand the bigger picture of the whole accounting system.

For example, after studying for Paper 7 “Financial Accounting”, I can prepare financial reports on my own. My studies for Paper 1 “Accounting and Computerized Accounts” helped me make better use of the accounting software to process data and produce reports effectively. With the knowledge gained from my studies for Paper 8 “Principles of Auditing and Management Information Systems”, I now understand the different information needs and decisions made by my boss, so that I can answer his questions accurately and offer solutions effectively.

All in all, the AAT qualification has boosted my confidence in performing my job duties.

What difficulties have you faced while balancing work and studies? How do you overcome these difficulties?

The major concern when studying part-time while working is of course the scarcity of time. It is indeed not easy to find free time after work and at weekends for lessons, homework and revision. Good time management is the key to balancing these two feats well. I am also lucky in that my boss understands my study needs, and tries his best to accommodate, for example, by not asking me to work overtime when I have lessons.

What are your future plans in terms of your accounting career and studies?

My ultimate goal is to become a professional accountant. I am planning to enrol on a top-up degree programme with the AAT qualification. Hopefully I will be able to progress with that and then move onto the qualification programme (QP) offered by the Hong Kong Institute of CPAs.

Yan Liu's study and career path

2006	Graduated in English Studies from college in Mainland China
2006-2008	Clerk in Fortuna Optical Factory Limited
2009-present	Accounts clerk in Fortuna Optical Company Limited
2009-2010	Diploma in Accounting Studies at the Hong Kong School of Commerce
2009-2010	Passed Accredited Accounting Technician Examination Papers 5 to 8 (with exemption from four papers)