



Hong Kong Institute of
Accredited Accounting Technicians
香港財務會計協會

Versatile AAT
Written by Foster Yim



Name: Kawai Kwan
Title: Accounts Clerk
Company: Yan Tin Chemical Co. Ltd

Working and studying at the same time has never been easy. Ms. Kawai Kwan tells us what motivated her to overcome the hurdles in attaining the AAT qualification.

Tell us your current position and duties.

I have been working in Yan Tin Chemical Co. Ltd as an accounts clerk for eight years. My main duties include handling accounts payable and auditing the accounts of our Nansha factory. The latter duty, which requires weekly travel, started one year after I started work in the company. Before I joined this company (for its better prospects), I already had three years' experience in preparing a full set of accounts in a local lamp company.

Tell us your path of becoming an AAT.

I studied a Diploma in Business in which accounting was my best subject. This inspired my interest in this area. Given its universal applicability and good prospects, I opted for a career in accounting. After a few years' work in this profession, I found my accounting knowledge inadequate to support any advancement. Then I learnt about the AAT qualification. Initially I just wanted to take the first four papers as a trial to solidify my foundation knowledge. I took one paper after another and, because I found each one so useful to my job, ended up having taken all eight papers.

Why did you choose the AAT qualification?

AAT is truly a practical professional examination preparing one for the real world. For example, every accounting personnel encounters the costing or legal matters covered in the AAT examination papers "Management Accounting" and "Fundamentals of Business Law". Working knowledge of these areas is vital to every business. As I work in a manufacturing company, I have to deal with issues related to costing on a daily basis. Without the knowledge I obtained from the AAT qualification, I would not be able to cope with the rising demand of the post, never mind exceeding the expectations of my boss.



What is the most difficult part of studying for the AAT qualification? How did you overcome the hurdles?

I would say Paper 6 Fundamentals of Business Law was my greatest challenge. Like some accounting students, my English is at basic level. I found the legal syntax and terminologies extremely difficult to master. I therefore needed to dedicate extra time and effort in understanding the legal terms and concepts. I also attended preparation classes. At last, I managed to pass on my second attempt at the paper.

In terms of the whole process of studying for the AAT qualification, I was always vulnerable to the risk of running out of steam. As I have to travel to the mainland on a weekly basis, I found it difficult to handle the study and my work simultaneously. But I kept telling myself that I should not give up easily. Attaining the well-recognized AAT qualification not only helps my career advancement but also serves as self-recognition. I re-arranged my study timetable and paced myself. I am glad that I finally made it!

Do you have any study tips for AAT students or those who want to develop in the accounting field?

AAT is an excellent choice for anyone who is interested in getting an accounting qualification. Not only it is flexible, but the HKIAAT provides good support to its students, such as organizing seminars on examination techniques. The second piece of advice is that do not over-stretch yourself; study at your own pace so that you can get the most out of the AAT qualification.

What are your career plans for the future?

I will take a degree programme in accounting from one of the universities which offers advanced standing for AAT graduates. I hope to move forward to fulfil my goal to become a professional accountant, step by step.

Kawai's career and study path:

Graduated from F.5	1997
Undertook and attained Diploma in Business – Hong Kong School of Commerce	1997 - 1999
Accounts Clerk - local lamp company	1999 - 2001
Accounts Clerk - Yan Tin Chemical Co. Ltd	2001 - present
Undertook and passed Accounting Technician Examination (ATE) (without exemptions)	2003 - 2007