

Versatile AAT

Perseverance leads to success



Name: Dennis Mak
Title: Accounts Clerk
Company: Kerry Holdings Limited

A successful career starts from setting a clear target and staying the course. Dennis Mak tells us how he has persevered along the way towards his career goal by taking the Accredited Accounting Technician (AAT) Examination.

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

I am interested in mathematics and in dealing with numbers. Prospects are important when one is planning to start a career. Accounting is a stable field as every business demands accounting expertise. Moreover, accounting knowledge is helpful in our daily lives, for example when calculating our own salary tax.

What are your key responsibilities at Kerry Holdings Limited? You worked in a CPA firm prior to joining this company: what are the main differences between these two roles?

Currently at Kerry Holdings Limited I deal with accounts of more than 10 subsidiaries. My tasks include handling daily financial operations, payment settlement and a full set of accounts.

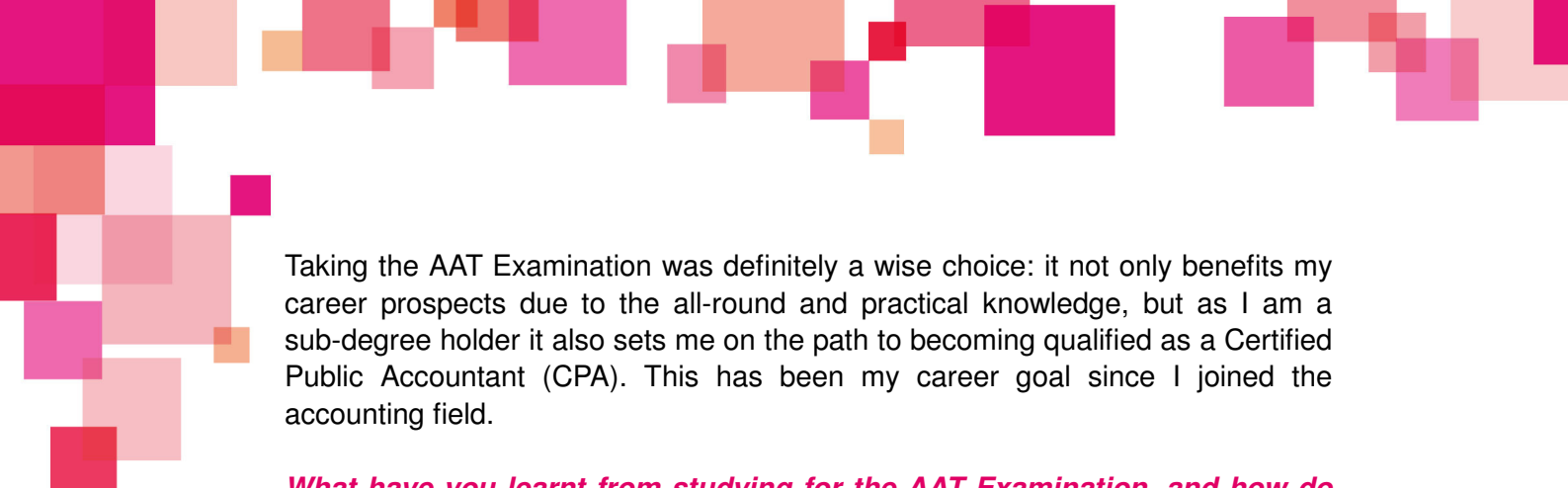
Previously, I worked at a CPA firm and at a commercial company. All these experiences provided me with different accounting knowledge. At the CPA firm, I helped my supervisors handle clients' accounting issues. I had received training in providing various professional accounting services and this role deepened my knowledge in business law, accounting rules and regulations. At the commercial company, I handled daily financial operations and this gave me a clearer picture of the whole accounting process in a company.

How did you find out about the AAT qualification? Why did you decide to pursue this?

I had been looking for ways to further my studies and enhance my accounting knowledge once I started working. My friends, who are also pursuing further studies in accounting, introduced me to the AAT qualification. They told me that the AAT is a well-recognized professional qualification in the industry. I first enrolled in a part-time diploma course which is accredited by the HKIAAT, and after graduation I completed the rest of the AAT examination papers and obtained the qualification.



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Taking the AAT Examination was definitely a wise choice: it not only benefits my career prospects due to the all-round and practical knowledge, but as I am a sub-degree holder it also sets me on the path to becoming qualified as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). This has been my career goal since I joined the accounting field.

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

The AAT Examination syllabus is practical and tailor-made for the Hong Kong business environment. All the subjects are inter-related and helpful to my everyday work. In particular, through my studies for Paper 5 “Principles of Taxation”, I am now better able to understand the Hong Kong taxation system. My knowledge helps me not just with the calculation of the company’s profit tax but also my personal tax affairs.

How do you cope with balancing work and studies? Do you have any advice for current and prospective AAT students?

Time management is one of the major concerns for all part-time students. There were times when I needed to work overtime and therefore could not attend class or was late for a lecture. It is crucial that in these instances you try your best to catch up as swiftly as possible. Seek help from teachers and classmates if necessary.

Also, practice makes perfect. The best practice you can get is with past papers. In my experience, past papers are a sure way of preparing yourself and improving your ability to answer questions prior to exams. I also find discussing topics with friends and classmates a very effective of revising. It can help you memorize the knowledge and improve your understanding of the topics by sharing successful study tips. Last but not least, the Internet is a very powerful tool for today’s students, enabling you to look up terms instantly.

What are your future plans and goals?

My target is to be an accounting professional. I have registered as a Professional Bridging Examination (PBE) student. My ultimate goal is to qualify as a CPA within three to five years from now. Beyond that, I will consider pursuing a postgraduate degree to further improve myself after attaining the CPA qualification.



Dennis Mak's study and career path

2007	Form 7 graduate
2008-2010	Diploma in Accounting Studies from the Hong Kong School of Commerce
2008-2009	Accounts clerk at Hong Kong Shizuoka Sangyosha Company Limited
2009-2011	Audit officer at Gerizim CPA & Co., CPAs (Practising)
2010-2011	Passed all the Accredited Accounting Technician Examination papers (with exemptions from four papers)
2011-Present	Accounts clerk at Kerry Holdings Limited
2011	Registered as Professional Bridging Examination student