



LEWIS McARDLE

When I was at school, I wasn't sure what I would do next. Going to university was a big decision for me as, even though my school encouraged us to apply, most pupils chose to start working or go to college. I found out about the ICAS Foundation through a school careers advisor. I was surprised at how much the Foundation offers, and as the support is just for accountancy students, applying was the obvious choice.

I found first and second years at university more challenging, but the lecturers were great at helping us understand the topics. Third and fourth years were really interesting - we started to debate issues in the sector and it felt like we were being prepared for the workplace.

I had great support from my mentor - I didn't know anyone who worked in this field, so it really helped to have someone who understood what it was like to study accountancy, particularly when writing my dissertation and applying for graduate roles. Having someone there to help you in this one-to-one way isn't something that's available to many other students, and it felt like a real head-start in terms of my career.

The financial assistance from the Foundation made a big difference – I really appreciated being able to work less hours and spend more time studying. I also had the opportunity to meet a number of accountants through work shadowing and by attending ICAS events, and this gave me a much better understanding of the different routes open to me after studying accountancy. The more people I met, the more I became sure that this was the right route for me - although discovering audit in my third year definitely had an impact on the type of role I wanted to pursue!

Having researched potential employers, I really wanted to work at Audit Scotland – I could see that it would give me a real sense of achievement and ability to contribute to society. Since I started, I've learned so much and it's given me opportunities to get involved in a huge variety of work – it's been great so far, and I'm looking forward to starting my ICAS professional training soon to become a Chartered Accountant.

Applying to the Foundation before I started university seemed like a good idea, but I didn't understand then just how beneficial it would be. Now that I've graduated, I can see that the ICAS Foundation completely changed my experience of university – the assistance it offers is just fantastic.

Education:

Glasgow Caledonian
University

Accountancy

Graduated 2020 with
First Class Honours

Role:

Audit Scotland
Trainee Auditor

Top Tip:

“Make the most of your mentor's assistance, because their advice and support will really help you.”