



LIAM GUTHRIE

Education:

University of Stirling
Accountancy and
Business Studies

Graduated 2019 with
Upper Second Class
Honours

Role:

The Phoenix Group
Trainee Accountant

Top Tip:

“There is so much that the ICAS Foundation can offer - reach out and ask for the support that’s available to you.”

No-one in my family had attended university before, so it was difficult for them to understand why studying was so important to me – for me, a university place was the first step in my future career and building a good life. At school, we were encouraged to go to university, but I didn’t know what I wanted to do. I enjoyed Higher Accounting and achieved a good grade, so I decided to look at Accountancy courses offered by universities close to home, to alleviate some of the financial burden.

I first heard about the Foundation programme while attending a university open day, and after researching it online I decided to apply. I always knew that funding would be the most difficult part of attending university – I worked part time throughout my degree and took on a second job during the summer holidays to make ends meet. The Foundation’s bursary helped financially, enabling me to reduce the hours I had to work during term time to focus on achieving the best in my studies.

The most important benefit of the Foundation programme was the individual support I received. My mentor helped me develop skills for academic assessments and job applications, and was always available when I needed help. When I faced challenges, the Foundation staff offered me the opportunity to meet with another student who had studied the same course to get some guidance. Everyone was so open and approachable, and quick to provide extra assistance where I needed it – all I had to do was ask for help.

I really valued the events I was invited to attend, including the opportunity to meet other Foundation students and accounting professionals. In 2017, I was invited to share my story with guests attending the fantastic ‘Steam Train’ fundraising event. This was very much out of my comfort zone, but it was a defining moment for me and an unforgettable experience.

The Phoenix Group is a great place to work, and I feel that I have been well supported since starting. I would like to keep developing my personal experience, and once I’ve completed my ICAS professional training, I want to secure a post-qualification role and progress towards managing my own team.

ICAS Foundation support goes far beyond bursary and mentoring help, and it was so important to me throughout university. It’s great to know that students continue to benefit from this help – I know, even though I’ve graduated, I can still benefit from the connections and assistance the ICAS Foundation offers too.

The ICAS Foundation is a registered Scottish charity, no. SC034836. Visit www.icasfoundation.org.uk to find out more.