



HAZEL SMITH

I went to school in the east end of Glasgow, a deprived area where few pupils progressed to higher education and a professional career was generally so far out of reach that it was hard to identify the steps needed to get there. Having achieved excellent results in my school exams, my head of year encouraged me to think about university as my next step. I applied to study at the University of Strathclyde because it had an excellent business school and was close to where I lived, and I had studied Higher Economics and Accounting at school.

I loved university and was very studious but found the Finance and Economics courses quite hard. I also found it challenging to juggle my studies along with my part-time job at Lloyds Bank, so I needed a lot of will-power to keep up with my classes. The Foundation's bursary funding helped immensely, allowing me to purchase a laptop and cover my train fare for university, and in my final year it helped to support my final months of study when I left my part time job to focus on my dissertation.

Most importantly, the Foundation gave me the opportunity to meet people who were professionals and could help me understand more about in a career in accountancy. I didn't know any accountants working in practice or industry, so had no idea what these roles involved or how to apply for them. Having someone who could explain the different types of roles in the finance sector, discuss interview questions and help me meet with new people made such a difference and really enhanced my confidence at interviews and networking events.

It was thanks to the Foundation that I achieved my internships at Consilium, and it was my experience there that made me realise accountancy was the career I wanted. I was delighted when Consilium offered me a graduate role after university, which included the opportunity to complete my CA training. The culture there is so supportive and because it's a smaller firm, I've had a personalised experience and got involved in the areas where I wanted to develop. My colleagues have been incredible in helping me learn and grow – and I can now help and give back to those who follow in my footsteps.

I was recently admitted to ICAS membership and I am so proud to have achieved my CA qualification. My three years of post-university accountancy training have offered me a lifetime's worth of opportunities, and I am so excited to see where my ICAS qualification takes me next – thanks to the doors the ICAS Foundation opened for me, the world is now my oyster!

Education:

University of Strathclyde

Finance

Graduated 2018 with
First Class Honours

Role:

Consilium

Corporate Finance
Senior

Top Tip:

“Use your time with the Foundation to research future roles & discover the potential doors that are open to you.”

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