



RYAN BROWN

I grew up in Helensburgh and went to a school with a relatively diverse catchment area, which generally encouraged all pupils to consider university as a next step. Accounting was my best class, and the University of Glasgow Business School had an excellent reputation - it was where my Accounting teacher at school had studied, as well as being close to home.

After I started at university, one of my friends told me about the support he received from the ICAS Foundation. At the time, I was finding university financially challenging and working excessive hours in my part time job to make ends meet, and I could see the negative impact this was having on my results. Receiving a bursary from the Foundation helped me focus on achieving good grades in my studies, find a better balance with my part time job, and enjoy the rest of my time at university.

Attending university during the Covid-19 pandemic certainly had its challenges, and sometimes it was difficult to access support when I needed it. Having a Foundation mentor with whom I could discuss any concerns was indispensable. My mentor spent a lot of time supporting me as I applied for graduate roles, and his help with interview preparation was critical in me attaining my CA training contract.

I was keen to find an employer who would help me develop and see me as an individual, and working at a smaller firm offers me so many opportunities. I really enjoy having the flexibility to take on more responsibility and gain experience in a wide range of areas across the profession, and it's very positive to feel my contribution is valued by the firm and my colleagues.

I'm passionate about the importance of social mobility in the accountancy sector, and the need to identify practical ways to help people coming from a background where they may not have had the same advantages as others. Networking is a great example, and I had the opportunity to attend an ICAS dinner where I met CAs and others working in the profession. The Foundation team help students develop soft skills and build their confidence to undertake new opportunities - looking back I can clearly see how this networking and support benefited me.

I have always been very focused and I want to keep developing my skills as I progress through my CA training contract. I also want to give back and help others like me reach their goals - I know that the practical support I've received from the ICAS Foundation has been vital in helping me achieve my ambitions.

Education:

University of Glasgow

Accountancy with
Finance

Graduated 2021 with
First Class Honours

Role:

AAB

Audit Assistant

Top Tip:

“Think beyond the Big 4 – working in a smaller firm offers opportunities for individual support and wider experience.”

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