

Rachel Bell BACC (HONS) CA CTA (qualified as a CA in 2011 and CTA in 2014)

Senior Manager

While studying accountancy at the University of Dundee I decided that I wanted to study for the CA qualification once I had finished my degree. I also wanted to stay in the local area and having heard about EQ through various careers fairs and presentations it seemed like a great place to complete my training. I was lucky enough to be offered a job in the Dundee office and started my training in August 2008.

Although everything was totally new and a bit scary at first, everybody in the office was really friendly and helpful so I settled in pretty quickly. Staff of all different levels sit together in the office so there is always somebody willing to help you out no matter how small or trivial a question you might have.

One of the main things that attracted me to the Firm was the fact that EQ does not departmentalise so students get to work on various different types of jobs including tax, audit and accounts. Not only does this help you to develop a wide range of skills and knowledge but it also makes work in the office a lot more interesting. One day you might be preparing individual's tax returns in the office and the next day out at client's premises conducting an audit.

The wide range of different types of clients and jobs is also a great help when it comes to studying for the ICAS exams.

As I had a relevant degree for gaining exemptions from the TC level of the ICAS exams, I started my studying at the TPS level. Studying for TPS and TPE involved being out of the office for blocks of classes, usually for 2 or 3 weeks at a time. Although the blocks were sometimes quite intense they were a great chance to meet other CA students and to get advice from other people who were in the same position. There was quite a lot of studying needed in the evenings and at weekends but it was worth it when I successfully passed my final exams (and gained an ICAS prize for my TPE paper with it being the best paper produced by a Tayside student).

Having now completed my training contract, it is hard to believe how quickly the last 9 years have gone! I have always been interested in the tax aspect of clients' affairs and the Firm further developed the skills and knowledge I have gained so far by involving me in various tax planning assignments. EQ also invested in my development by sponsoring my further studies towards the Chartered Tax Adviser qualification, which I thankfully passed in January 2014.

