

Sarah Millar MA (HONS) CA (qualified as a CA in 2010)

Manager

After completing my degree in Accountancy at Aberdeen University in 2007, I returned to my local area and started work with EQ in their Forfar office. EQ appealed to me as the Firm has a good reputation and prides itself on its high level of “on the job” training – having worked here for 10 years, this is something I am able to agree with both during my training contract and beyond.

Although they have a wide client base, a large proportion of clients in the Forfar office are involved in the agricultural industry in one way or another. This appealed to me as I am from a farming background.

EQ is a medium-sized Firm, which does not departmentalise; this means that you see a job from the start, when the client’s records are handed in, to the accounts being signed and bound and the tax returns being sent to HMRC. This is extremely rewarding and gives experience of all aspects of accounting and tax work, rather than dealing with the same aspect all the time.

I successfully passed my final exams in November 2009 at the first sitting. Having completed a relevant accountancy degree it meant that I received an exemption from the first level of exams.

While studying for my exams at TPS level, I was out of the office for 2 – 3 weeks at a time on block release, 3 times in my first year with EQ. It was possible to go to Aberdeen, Glasgow or Edinburgh on block release. I chose Aberdeen and it was nice to be back in the city where I was at university. Block release also gives you an opportunity to meet other ICAS students from other Firms and to share study tips and advice.

Working all day and studying in the evenings and weekends is hard going at times – especially when the sun is shining outside - but it has all been worth it in the end! There are a number of people across the offices, studying for various exams, which is good as they give each other support and help each other with any difficulties encountered.

EQ has a friendly atmosphere and there are always people to ask when you encounter a problem. They never seem to mind you asking questions, no matter how stupid they may sound. It is hard to believe I have been at EQ for over 10 years now - it has all passed so quickly! – but EQ has invested in my development throughout and I have been able to progress from Junior right up to Manager level.

