

3 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT WHAT TO DO NEXT

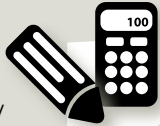


TAKE A BREAK

You've reached a significant landmark on the road to ACCA membership, so take stock of your achievements, and start planning where to go next. There's two months before the results, so schedule some quality time with friends and family, resurrect neglected hobbies, and take a strategic look at your career. Where do you go from here?

BUT IT'S NOT OVER YET

If you've prepared effectively and thoroughly for an exam, then a resit shouldn't be on the agenda, but just in case, tidy your revision materials methodically and make a note of question areas you found particularly challenging. If you think you might have failed a paper, it is far easier to be pragmatic and mentally prepared, than to just close your eyes and hope for the best.



AFFILIATE TO MEMBER

If you become an affiliate, then it's time to consolidate (or gain) the three-years' work experience essential for ACCA membership. You may also earn a promotion, apply for a new job, or move from college into work. Whatever you do, remember – although you may have passed the exams, nothing equals ACCA membership.



PROBLEM SOLVED

EXAM PERFORMANCE

I'VE DONE THE STUDY, BUT HOW CAN I BE SURE TO ENTER THE EXAM HALL READY TO PERFORM AT MY BEST?

Quality sleeping is one of the best things that you can do to improve exam performance. Sleeping too little or even too much isn't good and it's not just the number of hours you sleep but it's also the quality of your sleep.

Aim for 7–8 hours of deep, restful sleep each night and make certain you do this the night before your exam. Try and fall asleep earlier in the night. Every hour you sleep before midnight is equivalent to two hours of sleep after midnight, so the adage 'early to bed, early to rise, makes you healthy, wealthy and wise' is certainly accurate.

Studies have shown that certain foods boost brain activity and performance. It is important to feed your body a healthy diet, consisting of high-fibre foods, plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, especially blueberries and dark, leafy vegetables which boost brain function. Lean protein like chicken, tofu and eggs and Omega-3 rich foods like walnuts, salmon and olive oil also have been shown to boost brain activity, retention and performance.

Exercise promotes concentration, which will help you on exam day. It doesn't matter what you do, but move your body every day for 30–60 minutes. If you enjoy running, swimming, dancing, yoga... just do it! There are so many incredible benefits to exercise, such as strengthening your muscles and flexibility, and it makes you feel good, too, through the release of the 'happy hormone', serotonin.

It's very tempting to spend a lot of time on social networking sites and get easily distracted by other people, but you need to be protective of your time and emotion leading up to your exams. Keep focused on yourself, and limit your distractions of anyone or anything that makes you feel bad, is meaningless or unnecessarily occupies your mind in an unhealthy way.

Problems at work or with your studies?

email studentaccountant@accaglobal.com

FREE exam tips

Our tutors have prepared tips and guidance notes for each paper, which you can access for FREE and includes some video and online content. Give yourself the important final check by looking at our tutors' recommendations. What's more, if you're sitting papers F4, F5 or F6, you've the added bonus to access our extended content to help you prepare for your exams.



Register to receive your tutor tips:

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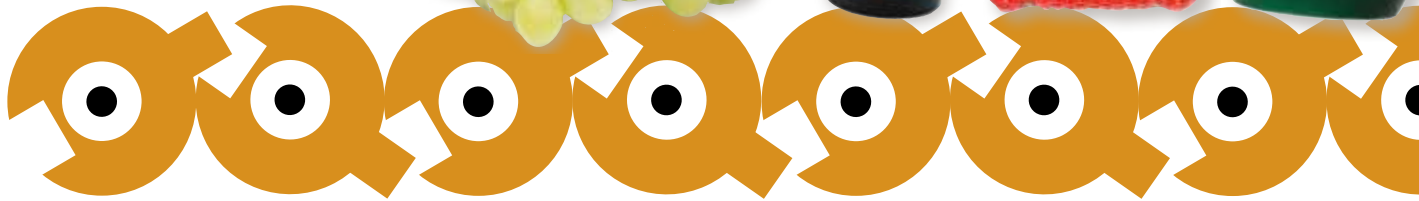
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Student Accountant would like to hear from you if you have recently changed jobs or been promoted. Go to www.accaglobal.com/changingjobs and tell us about your move



MOVING ON

JOSEPH ANYAIKE, UK

ACCA student Joseph Anyaike is a client account technician at Cunningham Lindsey in Cardiff, UK. His main responsibilities include invoicing and reconciling bank accounts, payment and remittance production, assistance with further development of new payment system and liaising with our claims operations.

Top tips

- Perseverance is my top tip – the right job will come to you one day. Ensure you keep your options open in terms of recruitment companies.
- Have a positive attitude, and never give up if you are disappointed with your searches. I had many interviews for jobs for which I felt I was qualified, but the final decision rests with the company. From these interviews, I asked for feedback so as to improve myself.
- Continue to update and improve your CV, and ensure the role you are applying for, at least matches your skill set and education
- Appearance matters. Look good for the role and engage with your interviewers – show them you are comfortable to work with.
- Take on temporary roles as it will help to build your skills, also you may end up being made permanent on the role if you show that you have what it takes. No job is too small. Start from somewhere and build on – even if you feel that you have more qualifications than the role. Be jovial and go the extra mile if you can. The reward will come to you.

NURUDEEN ABUBAKAR ZAURO, NIGERIA

ACCA student Nurudeen Abubakar Zauro is senior supervisor at the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Abuja, Nigeria.

His main responsibilities include auditing CBM branches and some head office departments.

‘I got my current job through the Central Bank of Nigeria website (www.cenbank.org). The job was advertised in the national daily newspapers for applicants to apply online though the CBN website.

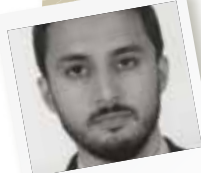
‘General websites used in Nigeria include www.naijahotjobs.com and www.careers.com.’

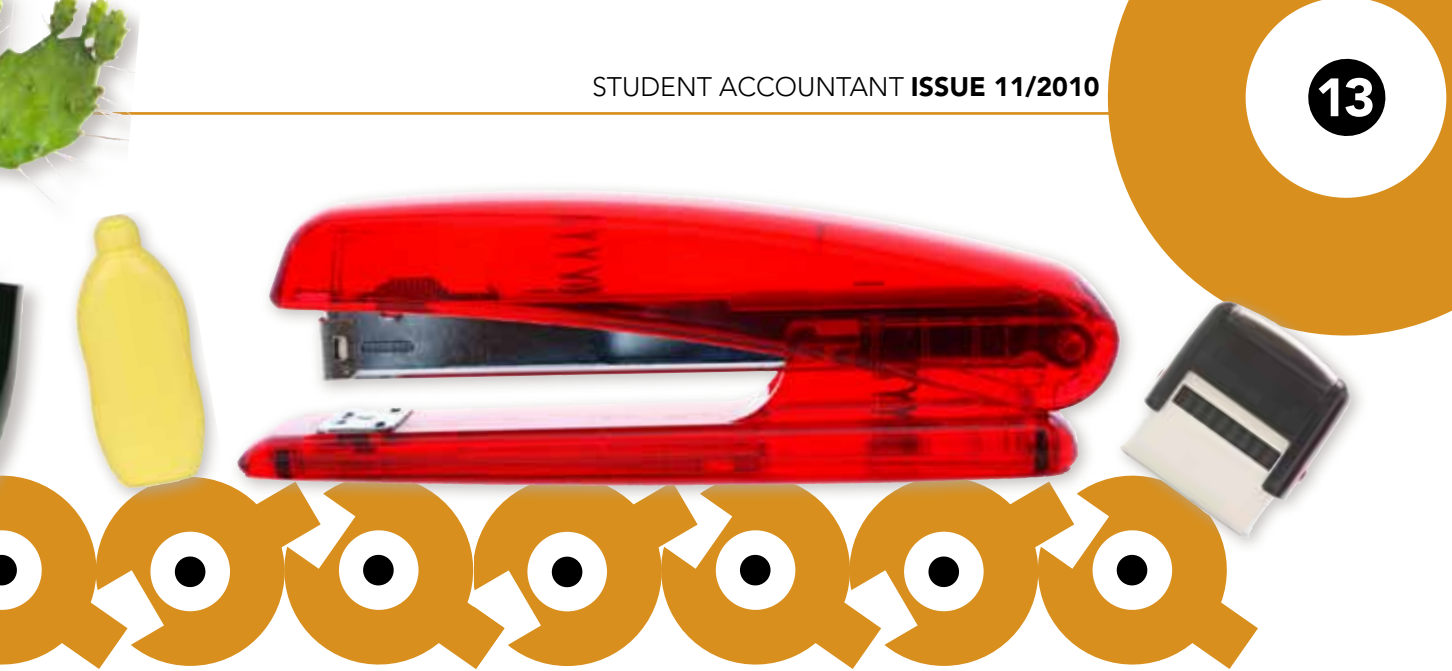
SYED SHABBAR HASAN NAQVI, SAUDI ARABIA

ACCA student Syed Shabbar Hasan Naqvi is an audit senior at Grant Thornton Aldar Audit Bureau Abdullah Albasri & Co, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. His main responsibilities include the planning, execution and finalisation of audit engagements.

‘I have been associated with Grant Thornton since February 2004. I worked in the Grant Thornton Pakistan office for five years, and was I was transferred to Jeddah in December 2008.

Among my top tips is to always update your CV and look for jobs online. Firstly, go online and search for audit firms around the world and post your CV on any career links that appear there. Secondly, search for blue chip companies around the world and apply online.





SUFFIYAN SALEEM, UAE

Affiliate Suffiyan Saleem is a divisional accountant working at Nasser Al Refaee Fruits & Vegetables Trading Co L L C in Dubai, UAE.

'Looking for jobs, especially in the current market conditions isn't easy. We all know that Dubai went through a major crisis plus the economic recession further worsened the job market. I got my job by chance. This job was turned down by a fellow affiliate of mine so I applied and I got it. One of the most popular websites is www.gnads4u.com but other websites like www.dubizzle.com and www.monster.com are also good. Registering with reputable recruitment consultancies is useful. Putting an advert in the paper is a very good option – I received quite a few calls when I did this. Dropping CVs as a flyer also helps, although I would only do this as a last resort.

General advice

If you are looking for a job in an audit firm, make sure that you have at least a year of audit or accountancy experience.

Job hunting is easier in the early months of the year, because the weather gets really hot and it's impossible to go out of the comfort of the air conditioner and look for a job. Make sure that you have good walking shoes and a healthy stamina to walk because transport is very expensive in UAE.

'IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR AN AUDIT JOB, YOU NEED AT LEAST A YEAR OF AUDIT EXPERIENCE.'

LUAN GABRIEL-PINDAR, ST LUCIA

ACCA student Luan Gabriel-Pindar works as an assistant accountant in the Customs Department at the Ministry of Finance, Government of Saint Lucia in Castries, St Lucia.

'I began pursuing my ACCA Qualification while employed as a Clerk of Court within the Registry of the High Court. As interesting and informative as the legal system proved to be, I yearned to enter the accountancy field.'

'I requested a lateral transfer to the Accounts Department within the Registry of the High Court but continued to scour the local papers for openings within the private sector. I was able to secure a few job interviews and was en route to one when informed I had been transferred with promotion to the Accounts Department of the Customs & Excise Department as assistant accountant.

'The main reason I was successful with this transfer is because I was very persistent and kept exploring different avenues until I was successful; I sent many letters requesting the transfer and visited the Human Resource Department several times to ensure my requests were acknowledged.

'There were times when I became frustrated since it can be difficult to begin an accountancy career without experience but my resolve was always renewed by understanding the practical experience requirements needed for ACCA membership. I am grateful this is one of the requirements since it provided an extra incentive for me to jump start my career.'



YOU NEVER SIT STILL

Whether you have changed your role, organisation, home address or even country – don't forget to tell us. Login to *myACCA* at www.accaglobal.com to review and update your details



ACCA student Said Nawaz admits that he was confused about the direction his career would take after finishing his education: 'After high school, in Pakistan, I started as a junior teacher in a local private school,' he says, 'but then returned to college to study for a degree in law and political science, graduating from the Islamia College, at the University of Peshawar.

enabled me to get the interview with KPMG which led to my current job.'

Said's main role is to assist audit supervisors involved in audit engagements with different organisations. 'This work is completely different to my previous career, and I am still getting used to my new role,' he says. 'In addition, I am also still working as a lecturer, currently teaching ACCA Paper F1 and F3 students at the Kardan Institute of Higher Education in Kabul.'

Still a student himself, Said is now enjoying the support provided by KPMG, having previously studied ACCA at home and without formal tuition: 'I am given two days off each week to study, and given leave for exam preparation,' he explains. 'I am now preparing for my final exams, and am aiming to become an ACCA member by 2012. It will be fantastic to add the letters ACCA to my name and I hope it will lead to great career opportunities. I have already been offered the post of audit supervisor when I become an ACCA affiliate, and I hope that membership will enable me to realise my ultimate goal of becoming a KPMG partner.'

SAID'S WORKING LIFE

I get to work by 5.30am – I have a tough schedule, delivering my first lecture at 6am before going on to KPMG, working until 6pm, spending the evening studying and preparing for my lecture the following day

Our lunch is normally eaten with a client – typically we eat rice with chicken, vegetables or beef, with chaie sabaz (green tea) to drink

Our dress code is strict – shirt and tie, no jeans or t-shirts

At the weekend I read books and political articles, surf the internet, and enjoy eating out with my friends. Kabul does not have many outdoor activities so we have to restrict ourselves to our residential compounds.

'I continued working as a teacher at different educational institutions, but was unsure about my career. However, a friend who was also an ACCA student recommended that I investigate ACCA – I requested a brochure and that convinced me to start a career in accountancy.'

Said was attracted by ACCA's flexibility, international recognition and the career opportunities on offer, as well as ACCA's partnership with Oxford Brookes University. His decision proved to be the right one when he gained a position with KPMG Afghanistan in Kabul, as an audit assistant, in September 2009: 'The job market is currently very competitive in this region,' comments Said, 'but I know that my ACCA studies

MY WORKING LIFE SAID NAWAZ

'I AM NOW PREPARING FOR MY FINAL EXAMS, AND AM AIMING TO BECOME AN ACCA MEMBER BY 2012. IT WILL BE FANTASTIC TO ADD THE LETTERS ACCA TO MY NAME AND I HOPE IT WILL LEAD TO GREAT CAREER OPPORTUNITIES. I HOPE THAT MEMBERSHIP WILL ENABLE ME TO BECOME A KPMG PARTNER.'

YOUR WORKING LIFE

Want to share your working experience with other students? Email studentaccountant@accaglobal.com with your details and we'll be in touch



TALKING TECHNOLOGY

MORE CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON

THE 'CLOUD' IS EVOLVING AND YOU NEED TO KEEP AHEAD OF THE GAME. SAAS, IAAS AND PAAS, COMMUNITY CLOUDS AND CLOUD COOPERATIVES ARE THE NEW BUZZWORDS TO GET YOUR HEAD AROUND

Cloud computing is evolving rapidly. If you read the Learning Centre feature in the January 2009 issue of *Student Accountant* it will still help you to understand how 'the cloud' uses the internet to deliver software and services, and why this is proving so popular. But if you want to understand the cloud-based delivery models that have caught on during the past year or so, you will need to read on.

The most widely used on-demand delivery model in the cloud is Software as a Service (SaaS), and it is being used to offer pay-as-you-go access to an ever-expanding array of software applications. These include bookkeeping systems (www.kashflow.co.uk), budgeting, planning and reporting applications (www.adaptiveplanning.com), plus tools for collaboration and productivity (www.google.com/apps/index1.html) and customer relationship management (www.salesforce.com).

But SaaS is just one of the three main on-demand models, along with Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS)

and Platform as a Service (PaaS) – and because the latter two can also make flexible and scalable computing resources accessible and affordable to organisations of all shapes and sizes (and not just those with the most money), as and when they are needed, their popularity is growing too.

Infrastructure as a Service is not yet as widely used as SaaS, but it is well on its way. IaaS provides 'pay-as-you-go' use of servers, operating system software, data centre space or network equipment, which many find preferable to using their own capital to buy and maintain them – whether the aim is to supplement existing resources or totally 'outsource' computing infrastructure. Major providers include Amazon, Fujitsu, GoGrid, and Joyent.

The lines between PaaS and IaaS can seem rather blurred, but PaaS takes IaaS a step further. By providing on-demand access to the tools (including pre-built business functionality) needed to create applications, it eliminates the high

up-front costs and long development cycles of traditional software. This is a boon for small scale software developers, but it also simplifies and speeds-up application development for non-tech organisations.

Businesses have used PaaS to create their own cloud-based systems for e-commerce, inventory management, recruiting, and more: one team of chartered accountants in India built an entire on-demand accounting system (www.ecountingonline.com) in 60 days using a platform from www.wolfframeworks.com. Other PaaS offerings include Azure (from Microsoft) and Force.com (from Salesforce.com).

Although all clouds were initially publicly available for 'rental' to anybody with internet access, some large enterprises have created (and control) their own 'private clouds', for internal use only. As these two approaches have different benefits, some enterprises want to exploit the best of both worlds, and where the two are mixed together the results are described as 'hybrid clouds'.

Business use of the cloud has been built on the popularity of consumer-pioneered developments such as social networking, and other interactive internet-based tools (read page 19 in the October 2009 issue of *Student Accountant*). So you will also encounter 'community clouds' and 'cloud cooperatives', where infrastructures are shared by organisations and individuals in 'communities of interest' – and you can look forward to even more clouds on the horizon in the future.



CONNECTED

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

ALEXEY DUBIK

NAME

ALEXEY DUBIK

JOB TITLE

REVENUE SUPERVISOR

EMPLOYER

EXXON NEFTEGAS LTD,
YUZHNO-SAKHALINSK, RUSSIA

In September 2008 we featured ACCA student Alexey Dubik in our 'Moving On' column, as he had just been promoted to the role of intercompany coordinator with Exxon Neftegas in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, a city on Sakhalin Island in the far east of Russia. We caught up with Alexey to find out how his career has progressed since.

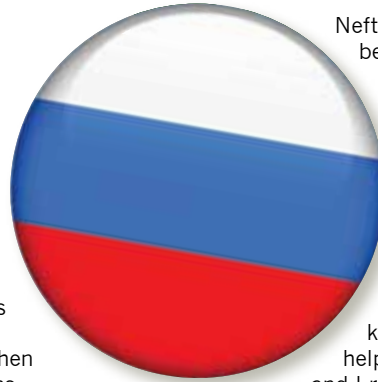
'Last year I experienced some significant career changes,' says Alexey. 'I am still with Exxon Neftegas but have been promoted again to the position of revenue supervisor, responsible for the accounting processes related to all our sales of crude oil and gas. Exxon Neftegas has an excellent policy of rotating personnel between departments in order to provide them with a chance to develop their careers. This move has given me the opportunity to improve my accounting and personnel management skills, as well as have more interaction with senior management, and with our customers and vendors.'

With Exxon Neftegas being one of the major employers in the far east of Russia, it's not surprising that Alexey's career has developed with the company, although he didn't start in the oil and gas

industry. 'I always enjoyed working with numbers,' he says, 'as I could use them to build up a picture of a company, like working out a puzzle. I started my career by studying economics at the Far East State Academy of Economics and Management, graduating in 2000 and first working as an economist with NORFES Co, a shipping company. I then moved on to Moore Stephens in Vladivostok, and entered the world of audit. This was a great experience for me – I learnt more about finance and accounting, and began my ACCA studies.'

'After a while, I decided to move into industry, choosing oil and gas because it is one of the region's principle economic sectors. I joined Exxon Neftegas, a subsidiary of Exxon, as an accounting analyst in 2007, moving to the role of intercompany coordinator after a year (when I got in touch with *Student Accountant* to announce my promotion). This was a great opportunity for me to improve my management skills, as I had to organise, control and improve the work of the group. After a year, I was promoted again to my current position of revenue supervisor.'

Alexey continued his ACCA studies when he moved to Exxon



Neftegas, and hopes to become an ACCA member in the next two years, depending on his career commitments. 'I actually began ACCA before even becoming a student,' he comments, 'as I used introductory-level ACCA textbooks to improve my general skills and knowledge. These greatly helped my understanding and I registered with ACCA as a result. I hope that membership will help me develop my career further, not only in Russia but also abroad as the ACCA Qualification is internationally recognised. However, membership is not just about the final certificate. It's also about achieving new levels of knowledge and reaching new standards of business conduct.'

Having developed a successful accountancy career over the past 10 years, what advice does Alexey have for other ACCA students currently considering their career options? 'Don't be afraid to ask your supervisor how you can improve yourself,' he says. 'Ask for challenging and meaningful tasks, while making sure you still perform well in your everyday, routine jobs.' Above all, recommends Alexey, 'don't stay in the shadows, as there is the chance that you'll be missed'.

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