



Liam Guthrie CA

No-one in my family had attended university before, so it was difficult for them to understand why studying was so important to me – for me, a university place was the first step in my future career and building a good life. At school, we were encouraged to go to university, but I didn't know what I wanted to do. I enjoyed Higher Accounting and achieved a good grade, so I decided to look at Accountancy courses offered by universities close to home, to alleviate some of the financial burden.

I first heard about the Foundation programme while attending a university open day. I always knew that funding would be the most difficult part of attending university – I worked part time throughout my degree and took on a second job during the summer holidays to make ends meet. The Foundation's bursary helped financially, enabling me to reduce the hours I had to work during term time to focus on achieving the best in my studies.

The most important benefit of the Foundation was the individual support I received. My mentor helped me develop skills for academic assessments and job applications, and was always available when I needed help. When I faced challenges, the Foundation offered me the opportunity to meet with a student who studied the same course to get some guidance. Everyone was so open and approachable, and quick to provide extra assistance where I needed it – all I had to do was ask for help.

I really valued the events I was invited to attend, including the opportunity to meet other Foundation students and accounting professionals. In 2017, I was invited to share my story with guests attending the fantastic 'Steam Train' fundraising event. This was very much out of my comfort zone, but it was a defining moment for me and an unforgettable experience.

I started out at Phoenix Group, a FTSE100 insurance business. It was quite different to undertake CA training in industry, when most of my peers were working in practice, but it offered me the opportunity to rotate around different finance functions so at the end of my training, I could make an informed decision about my future. I have since moved on to a role at M&G plc, another FTSE100 which also operates in the insurance sector. Looking forward, I'd like to further develop my skills and knowledge with a view to progressing my career and managing a team of people.

ICAS Foundation support goes far beyond bursary and mentoring help, and it was so important to me throughout university. It's great to know that students continue to benefit from this help – I know, even though I've graduated, I can still benefit from the connections and assistance the ICAS Foundation offers too.

Education:

University of Stirling
Accountancy and Business
Studies
Graduated 2019 with Upper
Second Class Honours

Role:

M&G plc
Accountant

Top Tip:

“There is so much that the ICAS Foundation can offer - reach out and ask for the support that's available to you.”



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