

Successful graduate

Accountancy for good

Leo Lui wants to use his QP skills to help the society.

Healthy interest

Ask most people to name the caring professions – those whose main role is to help other people – and they tend to think of jobs such as social worker, doctor or teacher rather than accountant. But for Leo Lui, the world of accountancy provides him with the perfect opportunity to do some good in the society.

Lui joined the accountancy profession in 2005, and started his career by working for the Big Four firms, first as an auditor and then as an assistant manager focusing on China tax. But around the time he completed QP, he moved to a very different sort of employer: the Hong Kong Hospital Authority. There, as part of the finance professional team at Hospital Authority Head Office with over 130 staff, his job involves, among other things, co-ordinating the Hospital Authority Head Office's annual budget planning, reviewing its financial position, and analytical support for healthcare financing studies.

He became interested in the profession when the Big Four came recruiting at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, where he was studying molecular biotechnology and business administration. He was attracted by the firms' willingness to employ people from all backgrounds and by the promising future to make a difference. "Accountancy is important in all businesses: it provides the language and entry point for business," he says. "From day one, accountancy appealed to me. My daily work is closely related to healthcare issues, and I feel that I am contributing to the society in Hong Kong. I hope I can use my accounting knowledge to contribute to the Hospital Authority which in turn provides quality services to those who need medical services. When I look back in the future, I will be proud to have done my part.

"I also wanted to do something related to my major. Working for the Hospital Authority means I am doing something related to human life."

Benefiting from QP

Lui joined QP straight after graduation. He says, he benefited a lot from the wide range of accounting and business topics the programme covers, especially as a non-accounting student who does not have much solid knowledge in business. His current job is focused on budget-management and management-reporting; skillsets which he can transfer from the QP classroom to the workplace. "The focus in the



Graduate profile

Name	: Leo Lui
QP graduation	: December 2008
Education	: Bachelor of science, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Job title	: Financial analyst
Company	: Hong Kong Hospital Authority Head Office (HAHO)
Past experience	: - Auditor, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu - Assistant manager, KPMG
Hobbies	: Running, badminton and reading books
Role model	: Steve Jobs

Hospital Authority is on the back-office and emphasizes resource-allocation and management instead of generating revenue; you have to clearly show how resources are utilized," he says. "I have done quite a lot of different jobs, and all of the requirements for them were covered by QP – I went through the transition smoothly based on what I learned in QP. It is valuable for students like me with no accounting background.

"To step into the business sector, one has to be able to understand and work with numbers to deal with income, expenses and the management of budget. QP, as a practical and comprehensive training programme, provides the best foundation."

Lui's varied job also sees him employed in a special-projects team, which was recently engaged in a healthcare financing studies, looking at public and private sources of funding. "The Hong Kong healthcare system is stressed and the escalating medical expenditure poses potential threats to the system. So, it is meaningful for me to take up this challenging but interesting task," he says.

Not all of the important skills he learned from QP were specifically related to accountancy, he adds – the mere fact of doing the programme was a valuable experience in itself. "Time-management skills are important. Doing QP, you have to work and study together; you have to balance them quite efficiently. It helped me deal with multi-tasking – to prioritise the jobs that are important or critical to the team."

QP's style of learning also appealed to him, teaching him to be flexible and creative in his thinking. "Open-book examinations appeal to students, especially in Hong Kong where so much is rote-learning. The focus is on how to understand and apply knowledge and extract information, not just memorize. But the examination is very challenging; it is only three hours but the coverage is quite wide."

Lui says his role model is Apple co-founder and chief executive Steve Jobs. "He keeps improving and striving for the best," he says. "He always encourages youngsters to take on challenges. I love his statement: 'You cannot connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backward.'"

Tips for QP students:

- Learn to think logically, like a scientist. "As a scientist, you have to plan a hypothesis at the beginning and then prove whether it is true or not. That is useful in life – you have to visualise a problem in your mind and take it step by step."
- Devise a time schedule for QP study and start early. Try to follow the study plan strictly and develop good time-management skills.
- Prepare a critical file and summarize your learning focus. A good critical file is essential for QP examination success.



Interview and reporting by Richard Lord