

Successful graduate

Money matters

How studying for QP and becoming a CPA helped Kasper Leung make his way in the world of finance.

What auditors do next?

Many accountants who move from the practising sector into the commercial world find that they require a very different skill set. Not so for Kasper Leung, associate (corporate finance) at the ABCI Capital Limited, one of the leading Chinese investment banks. His job at the company involves analyzing financial data and advising clients on the merger, acquisitions and initial public offering projects – skills, he says, that QP qualification and his previous auditing experience have prepared him well.

“Auditing work is very similar to my work in investment banking,” he says. “When I was at a Big Four firm, I worked on initial public offering projects in which my duties were very similar to what they are now; and a lot of investment bankers have auditing experience.”

Leung also frequently deals directly with the profession – liaising with the auditors when performing due diligence on companies. “Frankly speaking, investment bankers usually rely on auditors when conducting the due diligence and concluding whether the client is suitable for listing,” he says. And there is another similarity between the two professions, he jokes. “Auditors usually work very long hours – and that is also similar to investment bankers, who needs to work at a high level of commitment and dedication.”

Leung thanks QP for equipping him with the flexibility and capability for his career transition and he can adapt to changes smoothly. “Undoubtedly, the practicality and comprehensiveness of the QP training provides me with a solid training ground to help develop critical thinking, and analytical and communication skills,” he says.

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Comprehensive learning

Leung says he knew early on that the two professions would dovetail nicely, which is why he decided to study for a bachelor of business administration in accountancy at City University of Hong Kong. “I was very interested in accounting since secondary school, and in the first year of university I decided to work for the profession. Accounting is a challenging subject and the best way to learn is by working. There is a strong need for accounting and finance talents in Hong Kong, and it helped me to prosper when I went into finance. Accountancy knowledge can provide a strong foundation and lots of opportunities to those who want to work in finance. It is the basis of being able to work well in the industry.”



Graduate profile

Name	: Kasper Leung
QP graduation	: June 2007
Education	: Bachelor of business administration in accountancy, City University of Hong Kong
Job title	: Associate (corporate finance)
Company	: ABCI Capital Limited
Past experience	: - Senior associate (assurance and advisory service), Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu - Executive (corporate finance), GF Capital (Hong Kong) Limited

He started studying QP the year after he left university. "A lot of professors and accounting practitioners commented that the QP curriculum is very well-designed," he says. "Studying accounting at the university provided me with basic accountancy knowledge, but QP gave me the chance to consolidate the knowledge I acquired during my three years of study. It is a very comprehensive programme which includes the context of the financial management, taxation, auditing and accounting. Also, QP is one of the most widely recognized programmes, and the only CPA qualification tailor-made for Hong Kong."

The most useful feature of the programme, he adds, is its focus on providing students with experience in problem-solving via its workshops. "There are interactive workshops in QP, and that gives students an opportunity to share their experience; a good curriculum should include both the elements of technical training and practical experience of real-life work. It is also a differentiated feature from other professional qualifications that just require a lot of academic study from books."

What should prospective accountants do to make sure they get the most out of their studies?

- Be active and willing to learn new things.
- Always evaluate how you could do things better next time. There is usually room for improvement.
- Keep up-to-date with market trends in different industries and select a company that you are interested in and dedicated to devoting your time to.



Interview and reporting by Richard Lord