

## Careers



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## OUR PEOPLE

### Our people are our most valuable asset.

Lovewell Blake is one of East Anglia's leading accountants, business advisers and financial planners. Our teams comprise experienced and highly qualified experts skilled at helping businesses, individuals and charity/not for profit organisations.

We pride ourselves on providing individually tailored services to our clients. Whatever their aspirations and priorities in business and life, we will be by their side with expert advice from local specialists. It is because their needs are unique, that the solutions we provide are distinct and personalised to them.

We understand that none of this is possible without a highly trained team, and therefore support is always given to our employees to ensure they reach their full potential.

The fact is; being part of the team at Lovewell Blake means being engaged, friendly, and having a 'can do' attitude.

Without exception we provide employees with valuable training both externally, through industry related qualifications, and internally with continuing professional development courses, which are tailor made to the professions. We don't only understand that each of our clients is different, we understand that each of our employees is different too!



Aiden

## WHAT IS ACCOUNTANCY

### What do accountants do?

Accountants are vital to the running of all businesses. They analyse and provide trustworthy information about financial records.

### Typical tasks could include:

- Continuous management of financial systems and budgets
- Undertaking financial audits: an independent check of a company's financial position
- Liaising with clients to provide financial information and advice.

### What is an accountancy practice?

Accountancy practices provide a variety of accounting and business services to clients. They are accountancy firms that offer fee-paying services, including:

- Audit and Assurance
- Accounts Preparation
- Bookkeeping
- Payroll
- Tax.

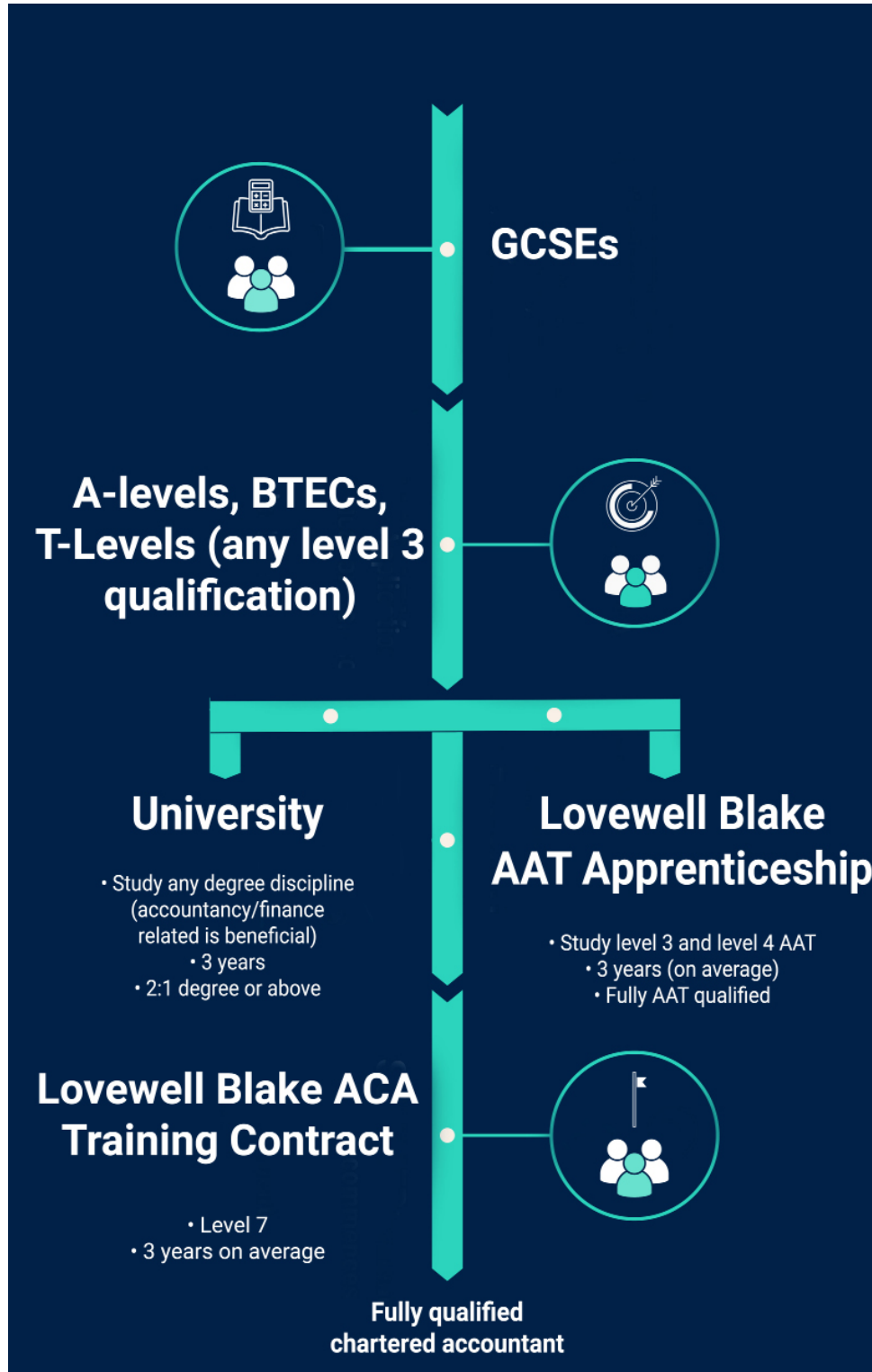
As an accountancy practice, we deal with the accounting and financial needs of our clients whilst remaining independent from our clients' staff.

### Why work in an accountancy practice?

- Accountancy practices can present trainees with a greater variety of work in comparison to working in industry (one company's accounts department). Working in public practice can offer the experience of working in multiple industries, providing challenge and flexibility
- Accountancy practices also offer more opportunity to specialise, for example in audit or tax.



## YOUR ROUTE TO ACCOUNTANCY



## SCHOOL/COLLEGE LEAVERS

We take on 'school/college leaver' (candidates with level 2 or 3 qualifications) trainees each year across our offices. As a trainee you will undertake training for the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) qualification under an apprenticeship scheme.

**There are three levels to the AAT qualification and it takes around three years to complete.**

We will fully support you through our study package which includes paid time out of the office to attend the training provider and paid study leave ahead of any exams. At the same time you will be gaining invaluable experience at one of our offices, which means that you will be able to put the theory you are learning at college into practice when working on clients' jobs.

We support you to become part of the highly trained team and will get you started on real client work as soon as you have settled in.

You will have regular reviews with our Student Training Team who will support you through your AAT studies (as well as being mentored by colleagues who have studied the AAT too).

We will discuss future career plans to ensure they fit in with you and your aspirations.

Most importantly, we'll ensure you are fully supported by our existing team to be able to put the theory into practice.



Lucy

## SCHOOL/COLLEGE LEAVERS - CASE STUDIES

### Why did you enter the profession?

I really enjoyed all my subjects at A Level but knew that university wasn't for me. After completing work experience placements in financial roles I knew it was the path I wanted to take.

### What did you study at college?

I studied A Levels in Physics, Chemistry and Economics. Commonly, people think that studying Maths at A Level is really important and whilst it's helpful, it's not compulsory. In my opinion, the most important skills are problem solving and having a logical way of thinking. After completing my placement at another practice, I attended the assessment day at Lovewell Blake. I instantly knew it was the environment I wanted to work in. The approachability and friendliness of the staff felt very welcoming.

### What does a typical week look like?

The majority of my time is spent producing year-end accounts for sole traders, partnerships and small companies. I am also tasked with looking after corporation tax returns and a lot of company secretarial tasks such as share transfers and director appointments. The diversity of tasks is something that keeps every day interesting.

### How do you find studying and working?

Working and studying can be a bit daunting at first but it is nothing to worry about. You are given more than enough time for studying at college and often given additional training before attending the college course. You are expected to do some work at home in your own time but this is very easily managed and balanced.

### What do you enjoy the most?

The first is the environment I work in and the people around me, always happy to help me if needed and help spread my workload effectively. The other thing I enjoy is the diversity of what I do. The range of clients we deal with is huge and you're given the opportunity to experience working on all types of clients doing a variety of different tasks. It keeps every day interesting and engaging.

### What three words would you use to describe Lovewell Blake?

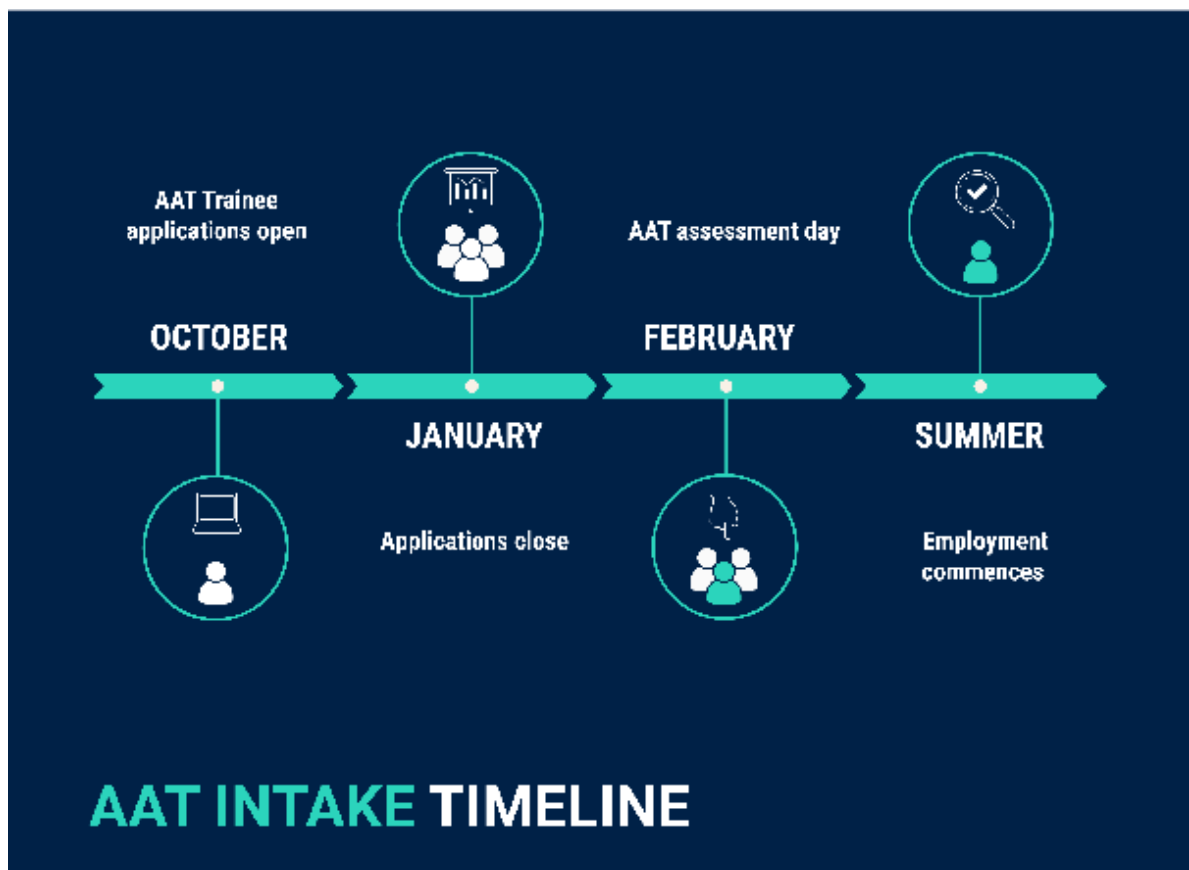
Friendly, supportive and nurturing.



Ben

## WHAT WE LOOK FOR IN OUR TRAINEES

- An interest in accountancy and how a business is run. We don't expect the full knowledge to do the job (yet), but look for other skills, like basic numeracy, literacy and communication alongside a genuine interest in the industry
- Voluntary work – not just unpaid work experience in an accountancy/finance environment but voluntary work which helps causes in the community for example, being an assistant at scouts/brownies, volunteering in a charity shop or fundraising for charities
- Part time work experience such as a Saturday job, a paper round or work in school/college/university holidays. It shows you are able work alongside studying and is a good starting point for picking up soft skills you need in the future
- Taking part in team activities, being in a sports team or a member of a club shows that you can work in a team and are able to communicate with others, this is really important in accountancy to ensure we deliver the best client service.



## SCHOOL/COLLEGE LEAVERS - CASE STUDIES

Before I joined Lovewell Blake, I knew some of the staff, therefore I had a lot of knowledge about the firm before I started. Knowing more about Lovewell Blake helped, as everyone always spoke highly of the firm, including the study packages available, career prospects and how friendly everyone was, and I can say this has been the case for me as well. Everyone is part of a team, and I know I have numerous people I can ask for help and support from.

I began my career at Lovewell Blake as a trainee and have now been promoted to a manager. I am a perfect example of the career progression that can happen within the firm. Throughout my time with Lovewell Blake, I have had an enormous amount of support both professionally and personally, and this shows in my progression.

Whatever department or office you work in within the firm, every day is different, and each role is varied, which is something I have loved.

Georgia



Bella

I recently joined Lovewell Blake as a trainee after completing my A levels in economics, criminology and sociology. Throughout college I knew that I wanted to do an apprenticeship, as I wanted to do a real job and gain practical work experience alongside studying towards my qualifications so that I could progress into a career in accountancy.

I had seen Lovewell Blake's stands at my college on careers days, and I had heard from family and friends that Lovewell Blake was a well-known and respected business locally that specialises in accountancy and financial services. I applied for the AAT apprenticeship and started as a trainee in one of the audit teams in the summer. I like how there are lots of people in my team who also started at Lovewell Blake as apprentices and have helped me with my day-to-day work as well as different aspects of my studies.

I really enjoy how each day is varied, whether that be working in the office with the team, out at a client's or at college for my study days. It is nice to be able to work with lots of people, and I have found this really helpful, as I've learnt lots from other colleagues' experiences so far.

## WORK EXPERIENCE

**We regard work experience highly when it comes to employing prospective permanent employees. We also understand that to do this we must offer opportunities to gain work experience with us.**

We offer work experience placements to school, college and university students across all of our main offices.

If you are interested in undertaking a week's work experience with us you will need to email your CV and a covering letter to [careers@lovewell-blake.co.uk](mailto:careers@lovewell-blake.co.uk). It is important you detail which offices you can attend and the dates you are available.

Our placements are arranged at the beginning of each year, so it is important to be organised and apply for your placements in October/November the year before you wish to do work experience, to ensure you don't miss out.



Emma

Emma joined the firm after completing work experience with Lovewell Blake. Knowing she didn't want to go to university, Emma decided to apply for work experience to get an idea of what a typical day as a trainee accountant is like. After spending a week with us she decided that accountancy was for her and would recommend anyone to apply for work experience to help them decide their future career.

## GRADUATES

Joining Lovewell Blake from university will give you the opportunity to study for the Association of Chartered Accountants (ACA) qualification. You may be exempt from some of the exams depending on what you studied at university.

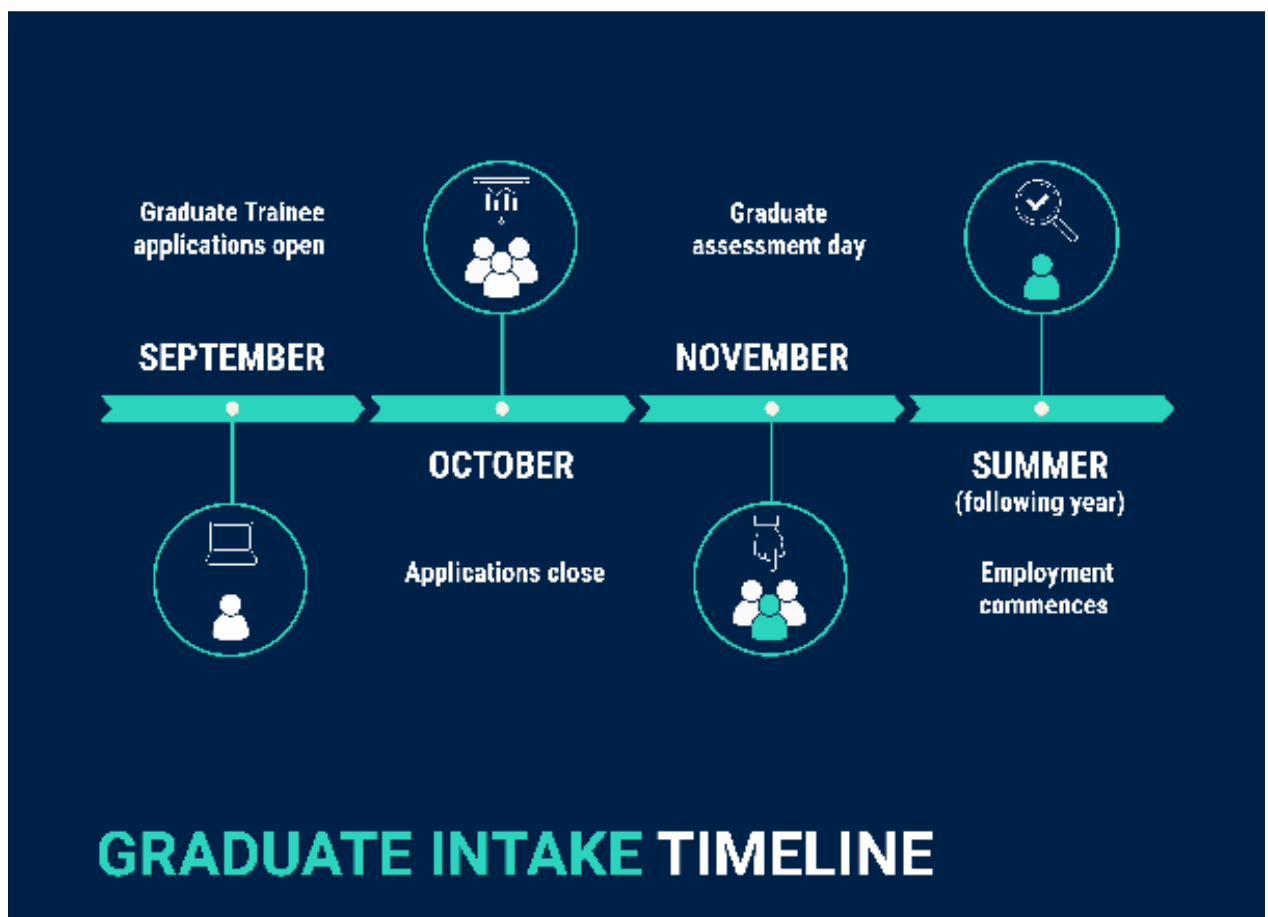
We will fully support you through the qualification with a study package that includes:

- Paid time out of the office to attend our training provider
- Paid study leave ahead of any of the exams
- Regular reviews with our Student Training Team.

Alongside the training you will gain invaluable experience in one of our offices. No week is ever the same and, depending on what department you join, you can expect to assist with audits, prepare accounts for limited companies and individuals, and produce VAT returns.

We will discuss future career plans with you to ensure they meet your aspirations. Once you have qualified there may be an opportunity to specialise in a particular sector or transfer to another department.

Most importantly, your learning will not stop and you will be fully supported throughout your career.



## GRADUATE - CASE STUDY



Samantha

My route into accountancy was slightly unconventional. At the age of 27, I completed an Open Degree with The Open University, combining business management and finance modules. It was only after seeing the graduate route advertised on Lovewell Blake's social media channels that I realised this could be a suitable career path for me.

I subsequently attended an open evening at one of the firm's offices, where I had the opportunity to speak with existing staff and learn about their experiences. Following this, I arranged work experience within the audit department, which confirmed that this was a role I would both enjoy and find rewarding.

I began my career with Lovewell Blake in September 2020 and have since completed my ACA qualification, progressing from Trainee to Audit Senior Associate.

No two days are the same, and while the role presents regular challenges, I am grateful to work within a supportive team that consistently offers guidance and encouragement.

## FINANCIAL PLANNING

**Financial planning involves providing advice to individuals and organisations on financial products and services which will enable them to meet their financial objectives and aims. caning**

Financial planning administrators support financial advisers by researching products and services, drafting reports and liaising with clients. As a financial planning administrator, you are given the opportunity to study for the Certificate in Financial Planning.

We will help you identify how you wish to progress your career and discuss which direction you would like to choose to suit your aspirations.

If you are of a technical mind-set you could become a Paraplanner to support financial advisers and carry out more technical and analytical research, such as investment analysis. We will support you to study specialist exams to provide you with the knowledge and qualifications required.

You may want to progress into an adviser role, in which case you would need to study for the level 4 diploma in financial planning. This level is needed to ensure you can recommend strategies, products and services to fulfil clients' needs.

The fact is joining Lovewell Blake as an administrator can lead on to a fulfilling career in financial planning as part of our highly trained team.



Scott



## TAX

**Tax is one of our specialist areas where we take on entry level candidates to study for the Association of Taxation Technicians (ATT) qualification.**

If you join us as a school leaver you may study for the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) qualification first. If you join as a graduate then you will start on the ATT.

You will join the personal tax team preparing personal tax returns for clients, and assisting colleagues with bigger projects. Over time you will gain exposure to different areas of tax such as trusts, inheritance tax and VAT, and you may decide to venture into one of these areas by studying specialist qualifications.

Communication is an essential skill to possess when working in tax because you will have to communicate with clients to gather information both via the telephone, email and by letter. You will also liaise with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) on behalf of clients.

Without exception we will provide you with the support and encouragement you need to be successful in your career in tax.



Charlotte

Charlotte carried out a work experience placement with Lovewell Blake and then decided to apply for one of our trainee positions. She studied the AAT first and then continued her studies with the ATT. Charlotte is now a fully qualified tax senior.



## SUPPORT STAFF

**As well as the accountants and financial advisers we need a dedicated support team to ensure the service provided to clients is timely and effective.**

Our support teams comprise secretaries, receptionists, marketing, IT and human resources.

### **Secretaries, reception and administration**

Our administration team provides a dedicated service to partners and their teams, to ensure client correspondence and communication is accurate, kept up to date and reaches the client in an efficient manner.

Our secretaries and receptionists have regular contact with clients, so customer service is a key skill. The administration team keep everything running smoothly behind the scenes, distributing the post when it comes in each morning, typing documents and ensuring meeting rooms are clean and welcoming.

You could join Lovewell Blake as an entry level employee in these areas of the firm and gain experience across administration, reception and secretarial work. As knowledge increases you will become an integral part of the team ensuring client service is at its very best.

### **Marketing**

Our marketing team support the firm by ensuring our brand and our services are communicated effectively.

The team looks after the website, publishes newsletters, organises events and assists partners and managers in obtaining new clients. They have responsibility to ensure business development is active across all offices so that we continue to grow and remain one of the region's leading firms of accountants, financial advisers and business advisers.

### **Human resources**

People are our most important asset and to ensure our people are happy we have a human resources team who look after all aspects of the employment relationship.

Our HR team are responsible for recruitment, induction, training, wellbeing and anything else with which they can support employees.

### **Information technology**

To ensure the service we provide to our clients is up to date we need to ensure our technology is up to date too!

Our IT department looks after the network linking all the offices, computer equipment and specialist software. We have a dedicated IT helpdesk to ensure that when IT doesn't quite go to plan, things can be resolved efficiently so that it returns to business as normal, as quickly as possible.

Entry level and experienced positions in our support teams occasionally become available across our offices. We support and develop our employees in these departments in just the same way as our client facing staff.

Claire



## CAREER DEVELOPMENT

### Lovewell Blake' Senior Mat, joined the firm as an apprentice.

Mat Waters joined Lovewell Blake in 2004 as a graduate, having completed a Chemistry degree and then decided to use his talent for numbers in a new direction.

He joined the team at the firm's Halesworth office. With a relatively small team located there, he found himself immersed in the whole gamut of activities offered by the firm.

"Because Halesworth is a smaller office, I was soon doing a little bit of everything, from VAT to payroll, bookkeeping to accounts" he says. "There was a really good system of support from those who had started a year or two ahead of me, and as well as the practical help, that meant I felt I had encouragement from people who knew what it was to be an apprentice."

With a high proportion of agricultural clients at the Halesworth office, it was perhaps inevitable that Mat would find himself specialising in this sector, and he is now a leading member of Lovewell Blake's highly-regarded specialist Agriculture, Food and Drink team.

Mat qualified as a Chartered Certified Accountant in 2010, and admits that the path to qualification was not entirely smooth.

"I had one or two failures, but the firm supported me to bounce back from those, and achieve the qualification which would set me up for a successful career in the profession."

In 2014 he became a Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, the professional body's highest status.

So what advice does Mat offer someone considering an apprenticeship as a way of entering the profession? "Picking the right firm is crucial," he says. "It's important that apprentices have a structured training plan, and that there is peer support for the studying – doing this alone would be much tougher."

"I would advise looking into any firm offering apprenticeships, attending insight events, and taking part in the recruitment days. It's important to have the opportunity to hear from the firm's current apprentices, who can give the most accurate picture of the support on offer, the culture of the firm, and what career paths are open to those who start as an apprentice."

"It is also important to research exactly what qualifications any apprenticeship will lead to. You need to know whether the proposed qualifications will lead you to the career you want, and that you understand what is involved in achieving those qualifications."

"Potential apprentices should be asking about things like study leave, and whether apprentices are taken on – and paid – as full members of staff."

Mat points out that succeeding as an apprentice is not solely down to the employer.

"You have to be prepared to commit your own time to gaining the qualifications you need to progress. After all, those qualifications will belong to you, not your employer, and they are the key to building a successful career."

Mat



## CAREER DEVELOPMENT



**Less than nine years after joining Lovewell Blake as an apprentice, Vickie Sillet is now a fully-fledged Chartered Accountant, and is an audit manager in the firm's Corporate Services team.**

Vickie took a year out to gain some work experience when she left school, a period which convinced her not just that accountancy was the career for her – but that she wanted to launch that career with a firm which provided a structured training programme, and which would enable her to find support among fellow apprentices.

"During my work experience I worked at a really small firm, and it soon became clear that if I were to start my career journey there, I would be very much on my own," she says. "At Lovewell Blake there is a whole cohort of apprentices each year, so not only do you make friends, but you are not the only one who doesn't always understand everything!"

Vickie went straight into Audit, an area of work which attracted her, as she enjoys the client interaction. But she found it useful being able to compare notes with fellow apprentices in other teams within the business.

After five years of hard work, she achieved both her AAT qualification and her status as a Chartered Accountant, becoming a member of the ICAEW in 2018.

Vickie

"You have to be prepared to put the time in to work at the qualifications," she says. "Lovewell Blake are great at supporting you and allowing you time to study, but the truth is that you need to put plenty of your own time in at home as well."

Vickie says that doing some research before seeking an apprenticeship is vital. "My year of work experience helped me realise the type of firm I wanted to work for, but even if you don't go down the work experience route, it's important to know what is involved, and whether you think you will fit into the culture of each individual employer.

"Once you have started your apprenticeship, don't be shy, talk to lots of people in other departments to get a wider view of the job" advises Vickie.

"Learning is not just about studying towards qualifications, important though they are. You need to gain a wider knowledge at the start of your career, which will give you a firm foundation for whatever you eventually want to achieve."

## NEXT STEPS

Entering the profession may seem challenging and hard work but don't worry, our employees still manage to find the time to socialise outside of work too, taking part in quizzes, football matches, dragon boat races and bowling to name just a few!

So what's stopping you from taking this simple step to start your career with Lovewell Blake?

Contact our recruitment team to find out how you could be part of the team.

[careers@lovewell-blake.co.uk](mailto:careers@lovewell-blake.co.uk)  
01603 663300



## Your Notes

Disclaimer: Please note that this document is provided for your information only. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure its accuracy, information contained herein may not be comprehensive and you should not act upon it without seeking professional advice.

Registered to carry out audit work in the UK by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

Details about our audit registration can be viewed at [www.auditregister.org.uk](http://www.auditregister.org.uk), under reference number C002613207.

Regulated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales for a range of investment business activities.

Lovewell Blake Financial Planning Limited is available for advice at all Lovewell Blake offices.

Lovewell Blake Financial Planning is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

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WE ARE AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF  
THE GLOBAL ADVISORY  
AND ACCOUNTING NETWORK



Best Employers  
Eastern Region

**GOLD** 2023



**Apprenticeships**  
Top 100 Employers 2022

Contact us at one of our offices in  
Norfolk and Suffolk.

**Bury St Edmunds**

01284 337070

**Halesworth**

01986 873163

**Great Yarmouth**

01493 335100

**Norwich**

01603 663300

