

A Day in the Life of a Tax Adviser

8.50am to 9.15am

Start the day by catching up with colleagues, reviewing my day's appointments and preparing for my meeting with a client this morning. Quickly scan through my emails before leaving the office.

9.15am to 10.00am

Head off to Haymarket to catch a train out to Edinburgh Park. I have arranged a meeting with a client to review its quarterly VAT return calculations.

As well as working to my Managers and the Partner, I have also been given my own client responsibilities. Most of my work is office based although I tend to have on average one client meeting per week. I also work from our other Scottish offices in Glasgow and Aberdeen at least once a month as well as occasionally from London.

10.00am to 12.30pm

Spend 20 minutes chatting through the VAT return calculations with the client's Tax Manager and identifying any potential issues that have arisen during the period.

Sit down for 45 minutes to review the client's documentation to ensure that this ties in with the calculations and note down some queries and potential errors in the calculation. Reconvene with the Tax manager to chat through my findings and clarify the queries I have identified.

After a quick chat and coffee with the client, dash back for the train back to the Haymarket.

12.30pm to 1.00pm

Write up the notes of my meeting and chat through with my manager the findings. Make a note of the actions to take for the next return.

Lunch – Grab a sandwich and coffee with a couple of graduates who started at the same time as me and work in the Assurance part of the business. PwC is one of the UK's largest graduate employers so there is a good peer group both on a social and professional level.

2.00pm to 3.00pm

Complete an informal translation of a German European Court of Justice (ECJ) decision. Quite a lot of my work involves looking at different cases from the ECJ. These decisions are quite often not released in English immediately and it helps to keep abreast of the latest decisions and how they may impact upon our clients. I am lucky that I am able to use the language skills I picked up whilst studying abroad in a work context. Our weekly newsletter (Indirect Tax Weekly Highlights – which is distributed to both clients and staff) allows us to keep up-to-date on all VAT developments and my translated summary will form part of next week's publication.

3.00pm to 3.15pm

Make a call to a VAT partner in London regarding a job we are working on together. As part of my training contract I got the chance to work on secondment to the Financial Services VAT team in London for four months. As a result I quite often get asked to work on cross office projects with my old colleagues in London. Agree the work to be completed in the next week and arrange a further update call for the following Monday.

3.15pm to 3.30pm

Make a call to an oil and gas client in Houston, Texas regarding some North Sea oil contracts. Part of the job involves knowing when people start and finish work in relation to UK time. You need to be early to catch people in Australia and you might have to work late if you are speaking to people on the west coast of America. Most of our clients have a presence in Scotland although they may be headquartered elsewhere in the world.

3.30pm to 4.30pm

Sit down for a buddying session with a colleague who started as a graduate with PwC last year. Buddies help new joiners settle in to life at PwC. They are a great resource for hints and tips relating to studying for the exams. This graduate is due to sit his CTA exams next month and is looking for some advice on exam technique. Having successfully sat the exam last year, I try to give some pointers which helped me get through.

4.30pm to 5.45pm

Start to prepare some slides for our next technical update session. Our team covers Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen. On a quarterly basis we meet up to discuss the latest technical and business issues. There is also a UK wide conference annually as well as an opportunity to attend European update sessions. For this particular session, I have been asked to present some of the latest VAT legislative changes from the last Budget to the rest of the team.

5.45pm

Head out to the pub. A graduate who joined PwC a few years before me is off on secondment for two years to PwC in Sydney so must ensure that he gets a good send off.

Career Progression

Graduated from the University of Sheffield with a Masters Degree in Mathematics with Study in Europe including an ERASMUS year studying at the Technical University in Graz, Austria. Worked for one year as a business English teacher in Central Europe on an AIESEC traineeship. Successfully applied to PricewaterhouseCoopers for a deferred position in Tax, prior to graduating. Currently in the final year of three year training contract. Completed ATT examinations in May 2003 and CTA examinations in May 2004. During the training contract students in Tax study either for both the Association of Tax Technicians (ATT) and Chartered Institute of Tax Adviser (CTA) examinations or the Institute of Chartered Accountants Scotland (ICAS) examinations.