

'Looking for a clear future path can be difficult and slightly daunting. I had interest in a business like environment that would incorporate my passion for economics and natural ability for numbers. Ousedale staff recognised this and informed me about a visit from Grant Thornton (the accountancy firm) which were there to explain the different options and paths I could have with their firm. It was a brilliant session where I was able to network and ask any questions necessary. I was able to keep in touch with one of Grant Thornton's recruiters who recognised my interest and suggest the Business Advisor Development programme. I completed my online interview and found out a few weeks later that I had got it!

The first day at the Milton Keynes office was more relaxed than the rest, getting to know the people, and Grant Thornton itself. We played team work based games and had many discussions about what we wanted to get out of the week. It was very different from anything I had experienced before but everyone was so welcoming and lovely.

The second day was based in the Northampton office where we were part of Business Services Group, this was focused on account preparations and managerial accounting. We were given laptops for the week to work on a case study which was given. In order to further our case study we had to do a process called "mapping", and understand double entry. It made me aware of where accounts start and the range of services Grant Thorton offer.

Day three was back in the Milton Keynes office working in Audit. Having done some shadowing previously in financial services for Home Retail Group, I was looking forward to Audit as I thought it was what I wanted to do later in life. The day was very full on, with both a lot of practical work with bank reconciliations and tolerable errors, and with theory on the five fundamental principles and key audit assertions. It was a very helpful day as it gave us further knowledge and understanding of our case study and gave me the chance to network.

Tax: Day four. I had minimal to no knowledge on tax apart from what I had learnt in economics previously. We were given a booklet to work through and had colleagues on hand if we had any questions. Seeing as I had my heart set on Audit I thought that there would be nothing to change my mind, but tax was incredible. Whilst researching and asking questions I wanted to know more and more about all the quirks and exceptions in tax, it was something I would never think to be so passionate about. My aim of the week was to decide what department I wanted to apply for in the school leaver programme and I had found it.

Day five was the case study day. We had to present our case study as though we were pitching to a client. Throughout the week I had been lucky enough to meet a range of people from different departments. This made me able to email them asking for advice as to what they would suggest for if this was a real client, I was able to find out a lot of information that turned out to be both very useful and accurate. We were presenting to five people from a range of departments and positions. Once we had done our presentation our "mentor" ,that had been assigned individually, gave us feedback and spoke to us about our aspirations set at the beginning of the week. I was lucky enough to have Heidi Roberts who works in the tax department for Grant Thornton and who took their school leaver apprenticeship. She explained that the feedback about me had been brilliant from everyone and that they felt like I was passionate about it, asking all the right questions! I am lucky enough to be able to skip application stages of the school leaver programme and possibly take my final interview early.

Grant Thornton was a great experience, being helpful in deciding my future career and something good for my C.V.'

Victoria Beechy