

## **William James Blower MAAT**

When I left Spalding High School in 2016, I sought a career in accountancy and went about this by emailing local firms. I emailed five firms (In Spalding & Peterborough), however only received an email back from one practice offering me an interview. I took this opportunity, knowing it can be difficult to secure an interview and went about preparing to make sure I made myself stand out (preparation for anything is key!).

This was a local firm in Peterborough, previously known as Rawlinsons, a medium sized independent firm with around 60 employees at the time. It was the type of business I wanted to be involved in, where I could have an impact and feel my voice would be heard.

I started there as a Trainee Accountant, where I was enrolled at the local specialist college for professional services (part of Peterborough Regional College). The training provider was called Anglia Professional Training, and they supported students through various professional qualifications such as AAT (Accountancy qualification) & CILEX (Law qualification). I attended this college as part of my apprenticeship, once a week (20% of my time). Starting on a Level 3 apprenticeship, I passed all my exams first time gaining an overall of 89%, becoming AAT Level 3 qualified. Following this I progressed on to the AAT Level 4 qualification and again passed my exams first time gaining an overall of 81%.

Taking on a qualification such as AAT once you leave school is a really rewarding route. I found working for a company at the same time as gaining a qualification to be very beneficial, as it gave me the job security and knowledge I would need in the future as well as making sure I was gaining experience at the same time.

After I had finished my AAT qualifications, I decided to move to a larger firm in the area to gain more specialist knowledge, to strengthen my understanding of accountancy as well as take the step I feel my career needed. Making this move allowed me to see how a different accountancy firm operates and allowed me to see how I believed things could be done from a different perspective and in some ways better.

I had now been in accountancy for around 4 years, and I decided I needed change. I decided to work for myself. I formed a limited company, "Realise Finance" in July 2020 (In the midst of the pandemic) and left my job to concentrate on my new passion full time in September 2020. From here I have experienced rapid growth in my business, providing services to clients across Lincolnshire/Cambridgeshire as well as a few clients further afield. I have won clients from larger local firms, which gives me a real sense of achievement and shows me that it really was worth spending the time early, to be prepared for the now. I plan to continue growing my practice, and I hope one day that I can mentor a Trainee Accountant like myself studying AAT, guiding them through the apprenticeship route and inspiring them!

I would not be where I am today without the AAT. I gained my knowledge from the Level 3 & 4 qualifications, coupled with my experience from two firms, and then became licenced and regulated with the AAT. I would recommend this qualification to anyone looking for a route into accountancy. Don't be put off by your subject choice as you don't need to be a maths wizz to be an accountant, it is a people focused business and this is what matters!

**Realise Finance website: [www.realisefinance.com](http://www.realisefinance.com)**



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