



Case Study

My Journey from A Level Student to Associate Partner at Ensors Chartered Accountants

I left Long Road Sixth Form College in Cambridge in 2011, after completing my Business, Economics and Psychology A Levels. I was one of the few lucky people that always knew what they wanted to do, which for me was to be an Accountant. I have always had a real passion for numbers, and that was cemented when I started my Business A Level and thoroughly enjoyed the finance aspect.

I always knew that University wasn't for me and an apprenticeship was the way to go. I didn't like the idea of being in debt and spending three years at University, and then still having to do my professional exams to become a Chartered Accountant. I searched for an Apprenticeship and I came across Ensors; what really attracted me to the firm was the ethos of making me more than just a number. I wasn't interested in being a tiny cog in a big wheel - I wanted to be appreciated and have the opportunity to progress.

After getting the required A Level results to secure my Apprenticeship at Ensors, I had my first day in August 2011. I can remember the feeling on my first day like it was yesterday, the excitement mixed with nerves - but I had nothing to fear, Ensors felt the right fit for me from day one.

I started my professional exams only a couple of months after joining Ensors which was a daunting and scary prospect but a necessity for my job. The first qualification I worked towards was my AAT which involved a series of computer-based exams (sounds easy right?!) across two levels, which took two years in total to complete before I was AAT qualified. Ensors were so supportive throughout, providing days off to attend college and also time off before the exam itself. I remember being so nervous for my first exam but one of the more senior students sat with me and went through some questions and really reassured me that I could do it. It's something I now in turn do for my students.

After AAT I then progressed to do my ICAEW exams to become a Chartered Accountant, that daunting feeling returned as these were deemed to be much harder than AAT. I have to be honest that they were hard, but I put the work in to ensure I passed my exams and I'm pleased to say I passed them all first time. I couldn't have done that without the support of Ensors and the wonderful training experience the firm provides.

The day I received my last exam result to confirm I was a qualified Chartered Accountant and that all the exams were over, I was given an envelope by two of the partners at the firm and it was my shiny new contract to become a Senior Accountant. I was absolutely chuffed with not only passing my exams and finishing 5 years of professional exams but the fact Ensors had recognised all of my hard work and commitment to the firm.

Just shy of a year passed and before I knew it I was being given another envelope, this time to be promoted to Assistant Manager. This is something Ensors are really good at, promoting their own, and recognising where individuals want to progress.

Another 18 months later the envelope appears again, and this time it was for the Manager position, a promotion I had been striving for since I started at Ensors. During my first couple of years in this role I was also given the opportunity to do my Chartered Tax exams so I am also now CTA qualified, as there is no such thing as too many letters!

Four years later that time had arrived once again, although no envelope this time as we are all used to working a certain amount of time from home thanks to COVID, my contract was sent in an email. The title on the contract this time was Director!

To my surprise, six months later it was promotion time once more. This time my title contained the word that I had always wanted right from when I first started my career and that word was Partner, I was being promoted to Associate Partner! It's wonderful that the partners have recognised my continued hard work and commitment to the firm with my latest promotion which I am extremely grateful for. This is the role I currently occupy today as I continue to strive forward at Ensors and I cannot wait to see where my career at Ensors takes me in the years to come.

I consider myself extremely lucky and grateful for the support I received not just from my sixth form tutors, (particularly my business teachers who always gave me lots of encouragement), but also from Ensors. Our strap line is 'making you more than just a number' but it is actually a true fact, I am living proof that is the case. A lot of the people in the firm in senior positions are 'home grown' and have progressed within the firm, including our Managing Partner. The thing that has kept me with Ensors for the past 10 years is most definitely the people: they are great! Plus the partners are approachable, supportive, and they actually know your name.

I would strongly encourage anyone looking to seek a career in Accountancy to consider the Apprenticeship route and ideally consider completing the journey with Ensors.

My contact details are below, but if anyone would like more information about what we offer as a firm in terms of apprenticeships, then please do get in touch.



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<https://www.ensors.co.uk/people/detail/holly-gibson/>