Audit and accounting
Within a year of graduating Alexander Woodford was accepted onto PwC’s graduate training scheme. He has been there ever since, gaining a promotion to Senior Associate and then Manager. In his current role, he is an expert in the company’s accounting consulting services department, with a particular focus on lease accounting and specialising in the shipping and telecommunications industries.

Alexander’s role is hugely varied and he looks after clients spanning a range of industries, including retail & consumer and biotech. ‘Prior to moving to accounting consulting services, I also worked as the engagement manager of a global listed shipping company audit. I was responsible for work carried out at quarterly reporting and year-end audit, as well as liaising with PwC network firms around the world.’

As part of the technical accounting department, Alexander also advises the practice around judgemental and complex accounting requirements and is a topic specialist for Leasing and EPS.

Becoming chartered
After graduation, Alexander initially enrolled on a Master’s degree with another university, but when the course did not meet his expectations, he left and looked instead at the job market. ‘I wanted to get into a long-term career and knew that accountancy provided many options. In my first three years at PwC I took and passed 15 exams and this, along with the required hours of client work, meant that I obtained my ACA, making me an ICAEW chartered accountant.’

Alexander has found that the indirect skills from his degree have been hugely helpful in a range of situations. ‘My degree helped me to develop my transferrable skills, such as logical thinking, modelling of situations, numeracy, computer skills, literacy and the ability to write reports. It also showed me applied techniques of mathematics, and the teaching behind this gave me the mind-set to solve problems and to apply my knowledge to complex situations which I might not have seen before.’

Future plans and advice
In the future Alexander plans to look for further opportunities to develop his technical accounting specialism within PwC and in the next few years aim for promotion to Senior Manager.

For those interested in getting into accountancy, Alexander recommends thorough research. ‘Read financial papers such as the Financial Times or The Times’ business section, to get a flavour of what is going on in the business world. Apply for a range of jobs and don’t be afraid to go to interviews and treat each one as a learning experience.’

For more guidance and advice on how to build your employability skills, and to apply for a vacancy at PwC, visit their careers website: [www.pwc.com/uk/careers](http://www.pwc.com/uk/careers).

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