My tax career journey - Harriet Jones

What did you do before PEM?

I decided not to use the traditional route of going to university and started working for PEM in 2016 after studying for my A-level qualifications.

I was fortunate enough to be able to 'try before you buy' and completed work experience for PEM whilst studying for my A-levels. I shadowed a number of departments within the firm including Audit, Accounts, Business Tax, Insolvency and Personal Tax.

I was able to complete hands on work for the firm which taught me so much about the industry and helped me decide which area I would most enjoy.

Why tax?

Tax is challenging and ever evolving which keeps us on our toes and prompts many technical discussions in the office, as we always say, every day is a school day!

PEM have one of the biggest tax teams in Cambridge including Personal Tax; Employment Tax; Business Tax; VAT and Payroll. Having such a large tax team means that we can use each team's specialist technical expertise to learn and work together on projects that span the different taxes.

I chose to join the private client team because of the personal side to it. In my role, I can directly help people and assist with their personal tax needs which gives me the first-hand satisfaction that I am making my clients' lives easier in an ever changing tax world.

Why PEM?

I was initially attracted to the size of the firm. When I joined, PEM had approximately 140 employees, which meant as a trainee you have good exposure to all levels of seniority and people with experience, including the partners.

You can learn from everyone in your team and not just the people directly above you. This also means that there are great opportunities for internal growth and development at PEM.

PEM promotes a healthy work-life balance which I believe to be a really important value.

Following my work experience, I applied for a trainee tax adviser position in the personal tax team. The position enabled me to study towards professional qualifications including Association of Taxation Technician (ATT) and Chartered Tax Adviser (CTA) at the same time as working for PEM.

I was able to earn a salary and PEM fully-funded a study package for my professional qualifications, including paid study days off.

After 4 years of working for PEM, I am proud to have achieved both ATT and CTA at the same age as a graduate alongside experience working in the industry.

What does your role involve?

I am responsible for a portfolio of over 160 clients. I assist clients with their annual tax compliance and provide tax advice to help meet their individual needs.

This can include work such as calculating tax efficient pension contributions, forecasting estimated tax liabilities to be able to assist with cash flow or looking further into the future to review potential inheritance tax liabilities.

Every day in my role is different, with the wide diversity of clients, there is always something new to get involved with.

By having a main contact at PEM we are able to build relationships with clients through the ebbs and flows of their lives, so we have a greater understanding of their needs.

PEM have clients in such a variety of sectors from agriculture, to education, property and construction to technology and healthcare.

I have been fortunate enough to have completed secondments to business tax and employment tax, helping with compliance during their busier seasons. This gave me greater insight to other areas of tax which so often interlink.

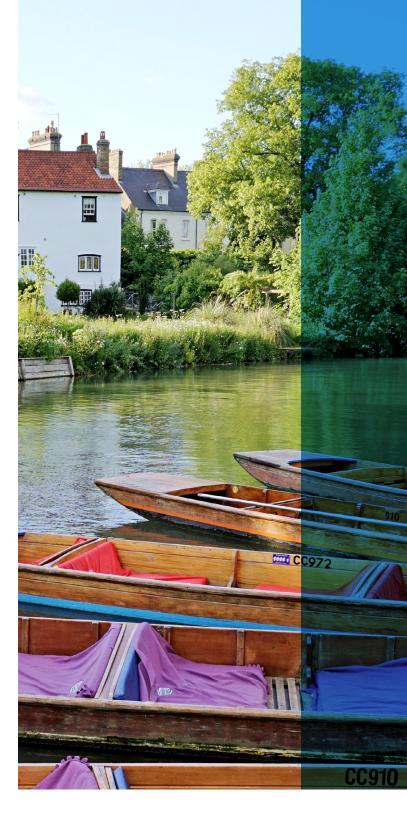## What makes Cambridge a great place to work?

Cambridge is a beautiful city, one with many historical sites. Working in Cambridge gives us the ability to enjoy the culture right on our door step.

PEM is located near Cambridge train station so it is easier for clients to visit the offices and useful particularly for commuting to work!

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