Spotlight: the CIOT’s 20,000th member!

Briefings



26 April 2024

Rachael Brown has completed both ATT and CTA and we welcomed her as our 20,000th member in February 2024. We took the opportunity to ask her about the CTA qualification and how it felt being our 20,000th CTA member.

Congratulations on completing your CTA qualification, and becoming our 20,000th CIOT member. The CIOT welcome you into our membership!

Thank you, I am delighted to become a Chartered Tax Adviser and honoured to be the 20,000th CIOT member!

What made you decide to study the CTA qualification?

Working in tax, you always hear about the work and activities of the CIOT and there was no question that CTA was the qualification I needed to pursue. I also wanted the intellectual challenge and to increase and consolidate my tax technical knowledge.

What motivated you to want to complete your studies and become a CIOT member?

I wanted to become a member as it is the gold standard for tax advisers. Completing the qualification proves you have mastered taxation to employers, clients and intermediaries and shows that you can undergo a rigorous testing process in order to earn those letters after your name.

How do you think achieving the CTA membership designation will help your career development?

It has and will increase my confidence and awareness of areas of tax outside of my specialism. As I progress in my career, it is key that I hold the CTA badge of honour as evidence of my technical tax expertise.

What benefits do you think your CTA qualification and CIOT membership bring to your employer?

My firm prides itself on offering high technical excellence and in competing with bigger firms in terms of quality. Having highly qualified and well-trained staff is part of that offering and my employer really values the additional kudos that having CTA qualified staff confers. CTA membership offers wider benefits, including branch membership, and local and online webinars, which can be invaluable in building professional networks and maintaining CPD.

What has been the highlight of your career so far?

I chose to take the ATT/CTA route early on in my career and this meant that I was studying for ATT while juggling a three year-old and a full-time job. I passed with a distinction in personal tax and gained a promotion at work, which was definitely a highlight! Completing my CTA feels like the culmination of a journey of hard work advising clients, writing technical articles and, of course, passing exams!

What was your perception of taxation before your CTA training began and how has this changed?

CTA hasn’t changed my perception because I have always loved the changing nature of tax and the technical challenge this represents. I do think that CTA often opens people’s eyes to just how *much* there is to know about tax.

What advice would you give to someone thinking of doing the CTA qualification?

Go for it. Ignore the noise about it being difficult and the pass rates being low, especially if you already have practical experience. The qualification should take you from having tax knowledge to giving a client succinct, valuable advice and it is the gold standard that employers and clients are looking for.

Tell us something about yourself that others may not know about you?

Outside of my day job I write practical tax articles and news updates for a newsletter aimed at tax professionals, and I’m an author for Bloomsbury Professional. I’m also about to have a baby girl!