

HOW I BECAME A FORENSIC ACCOUNTANT CALLUM COULTER

The Post: Forensic Accountant
Harbison Mulholland
The Post Holder:
Callum Coulter

No two days are ever the same for Forensic Accountant Callum Coulter.

Give a brief outline of your career to date.

After university I went to America for a year and worked in statistics. Then after returning home,

which was just over six years ago now, I joined Harbison Mulholland (HM) as a trainee accountant. I worked in the accounts department for around two and a half years, while completing my training contract and exams then moved to the Forensic department of the firm and have been there ever since.

What was your favourite subject at school?

My favourite subject at

school was always history. I loved everything about it and I even studied it at university for a year.

Did you go on to further/higher education, if so what did you study and where?

I went on to Queens University Belfast where I studied Mathematics and Statistics.

How did you get into your area of work?

Getting into the Forensic line of work was largely down to being placed beside Vincent Bradley

our Director of Forensic Services at one of HM's Christmas events. I mentioned I was very interested in the work being done in the Forensic department and a couple of months later I got the call to join the forensic team which had just been instructed in a large fraud case. The lesson is, if you don't ask, you don't get.

Is this what you always wanted to do?

I am not sure it is always what I wanted to do, but forensic accounting is something I find interesting, challenging and enjoy.

Were there any particular essential qualifications or experience needed?

I joined HM as a graduate trainee accountant, therefore I needed a degree but this was not subject specific. I had no experience in the sector so it was all new to me

Are there alternative routes into the job?

You can also now join an apprenticeship programme and be put on the path to becoming a Chartered Accountant.

What are the main personal skills you need?

Job requires?

Good communication skills are essential as we work with a very wide range of people from very experienced people from the legal community right through to those who have no financial background whatsoever.

What does a typical day entail?

No day is ever quite the same in our department. With a number of cases ongoing at the same time, I will be in different meetings, analysing information that we have or writing reports.

What are the best and most challenging aspects of the job?

The best aspect of the job is working on a variety of cases through different jurisdictions in very different situations for each case. The complexity of the cases we deal with means you get to work with a wide variety of people, solicitors, investigators, digital experts, and the list goes on. This is also part of the most challenging aspects of the job - all having to combine into a working team from different backgrounds to get the job done.

Why is what you do important?

What we do is important as in each piece of work we are the expert witnesses so we have responsibility to the courts. We unravel complex cases of fraud and money laundering with the overall aim of distilling enormous amounts of data to give a clear picture of what transpired.

How has Covid-19 impacted your business/role?

Whilst Covid-19 has impacted our office life in the past 18 months it has not affected our work. The large data cases are particularly suited to remote working.

What adjustments have you had to make?

As with all of people, we have had to move all our meetings to Zoom. This works very well for us but the major downside is there are no edible treats anymore!

What advice would you give anyone looking to follow a similar career path?

Work hard, get a good knowledge of audit and accounts and be confident to adapt by putting yourself forward for challenging work.

If you weren't doing this what would you like to do?

If I wasn't doing this, and if a profession as golfer/footballer hadn't materialised, I would like to be teaching.

What is the one piece of advice you would give to yourself on your first day?

Look upwards, learn from your more experienced colleagues and do your best to understand what they want from you and why they want it. Harbison Mulholland are such a supportive firm and it's a great environment to learn and train. Everyone makes time to help you and I found it easy to ask for help.

Describe your ideal day off.

My ideal day off is an early round of golf followed by lunch with my wife. In the afternoon we would take our dog, Lily, to the beach and then barbecue dinner with family and friends.

And finally, what's the key to any successful job search?

The key to any successful job search is knowing what you are looking for and also knowing your strengths and weaknesses. Self-awareness is a strength, and this allows you to be confident in what you can bring to any new job or company that you are applying to.

Callum Coulter



"We unravel complex cases of fraud and money laundering with the overall aim of distilling enormous amounts of data to give a clear picture of what transpired."



invites applications for the post of

FINANCE & GENERAL ADMINISTRATOR

Application forms and relevant information may be downloaded from the web-site below or may be requested from the Head of Finance and Corporate Services, Mr Simon Burrows (sburrows@brcanet.net)

The closing date for receipt of completed applications is Friday 5th November 2021 at 12:00 noon.

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www.belfastroyalacademy.com

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Principal Legal Officer

SALARY: £52,026 - £55,685

REF: IRC266728

DEPARTMENT: Department of Finance (DoF) and Department of Justice (DoJ)

LOCATION: Successful applicants will normally be based in Greater Belfast.

Further appointments may be made from this competition should NICS positions become vacant which require the same eligibility criteria, same competences and have similar duties and responsibilities.

Applications from Protestants, males, young people (people under the age of 35), people with a disability and people from minority ethnic communities are particularly welcomed for this post.

Regulation Unit - Senior Scientific Officer (SScO) - Water

SALARY: £39,748 - £42,639

REF: IRC268112

DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)

LOCATION: NIEA, Kildyke Building, Belfast or NIEA, 17 Antrim Road, Lisburn

Further appointments may be made from this competition should NICS positions become vacant which require the same eligibility criteria and have similar duties and responsibilities.

As women are currently known to be under-represented in this occupation across Northern Ireland, and as young people (people under the age of 35), people with a disability and people from minority ethnic communities are currently under-represented in NICS, we would particularly welcome applications from these groups.

River Warden, HPTO Civil Engineer

SALARY: £32,328 - £33,459

REF: IRC270648

DEPARTMENT: Department for Communities

LOCATION: Lagan Lookout, Donegal Quay, Belfast

Further appointments may be made from this competition should NICS positions become vacant which require the same eligibility criteria and have similar duties and responsibilities.

As young people (people under the age of 35), people with a disability and people from minority ethnic communities are currently under-represented in NICS, we would particularly welcome applications from these groups.

Graduate Trainee Civil Engineer

SALARY: £28,404

REF: IRC270149

DEPARTMENT: Department for Infrastructure (DfI)

LOCATION: The successful candidates must be prepared to work anywhere within Northern Ireland.

Further appointments may be made from this competition should NICS positions become vacant which have similar duties and responsibilities.

Applications from females, Protestants, young people (people under the age of 35), people with a disability and people from minority ethnic communities are particularly welcomed for this post.

For more detailed information and to apply, please go to www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk

Completed application forms for all posts must be submitted no later than 12:00 noon (UK time) on Friday 29th October 2021.

All queries can be directed to HRconnect by

Email: recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net

Telephone: 0800 1 300 330

WWW.NICSRERECRUITMENT.ORG.UK

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ALL APPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT ARE CONSIDERED STRICTLY ON THE BASIS OF MERIT



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Civil Service