Mark Fairbrother, BSc Money, Banking and Finance | QA Business School, UK

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Mark Fairbrother graduated with a BSc in Money, Banking and Finance from the University of Birmingham in 2001. He is currently employed as the Finance Director of QA Business School and is also studying an Executive MBA at Birmingham Business School. Mark was previously Head of Finance at Aston Villa Football Club in Birmingham, United Kingdom, a business with a turnover of £92 million, which employs 1716 staff.

My career

After graduation, I joined PricewaterhouseCoopers on their graduate training programme within their assurance practice in Birmingham. Once I completed my chartered accountancy professional qualification in 2004, I looked after a number of large scale regional clients and particularly focussed on clients within the financial services industry. I was also part of the UK and Indian training tutor programme. In 2008, I secured a position as Financial Controller with Aston Villa and am currently Finance Director at QA Business School.

Why Birmingham Business School?

Of all the universities I visited, the UoB was the one I was most impressed by, so much so I chose to return in September 2011 to study my Executive MBA! The campus was really inspiring and the course itself was far more appealing than similar courses offered by other institutions. The variety of modules available were fantastic and the skills and knowledge acquired from studying such diverse topics have really helped me in the wider business world.

I did not study economics before coming to the UoB so I was a bit apprehensive about taking up an economics focussed degree. I was not alone in this; the academics, who were very supportive and understanding, developed our comprehension of economics very quickly. There is a balance of easy and tough subjects but overall, the topics are of real interest, particularly those you can choose yourself through the module options in the second and third years.

Through studying the BSc in Money, Banking and Finance at the UoB, I learnt how to utilise my learning which made studying for my accountancy exams far more bearable. Obtaining this skill benefitted me greatly as it contributed to my success in securing my current role. I also studied a lot of material which is still applicable to my job now; there are approximately ten course books still in my office which I refer to when I have finance or accounting queries!

"The guild was a fantastic place and I have some great memories from events that occurred there."

Challenges

The guild was a fantastic place and I have some great memories from events that occurred there. The halls of residence were also a wonderful experience and some of my best friends now are people I met in my first weeks in Mason Hall, my first year accommodation.

Tips and advice

The module choice is a key aspect in shaping your degree; make sure you choose modules that you enjoy as you will really benefit from your experience and this will encourage you to do well. The options I selected really helped make for a pleasant learning experience as I was able to select subjects that I had a keen interest in.

Find out more

BSc Money, Banking and Finance (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate/econ/money-banking-finance-bsc.aspx)

Department of Economics (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/business/departments/economics/index.aspx)

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