

## Graduate Development Series (Summer 2021)

Dr Raymond Wong, The Bachelor of Business Administration Accountancy (BBAAC) Undergraduate Major Leader, organized the “Graduate Workshop Series (Summer 2021)” to provide career support to undergraduate students through professional advice and mentoring opportunities.



The first workshop of the series, on 20 August 2021, featured the topic “Career Planning and Choices” and engaged two guest speakers, Mr Mackie Mak and Mr Christopher Lam. Fifteen students gathered to hear industry insights and explore career options.

Mr Mackie Mak is currently a senior manager at PricewaterhouseCoopers Hong Kong (PwC HK) with 11 years of experience in audit and assurance services. He spoke about his life working in a big accounting firm, career progression in the

Big Four, and recruitment processes.

When asked about career progression, he advised students to think critically rather than blindly following set-in-stone instructions. He noted that entry-level jobs may not be enjoyable and that graduates may feel stuck doing repeated tasks and unable to find meaning and satisfaction. This struggle is common among graduates who do not think critically when performing jobs at this level.

To cope with that challenge, he offered some tips. Graduates in early careers can think critically by asking *why* the job at hand is important, *how* the task could be performed more smartly, and *what* could be the implications if an error goes unnoticed. Mr Mak highlighted that it is important to develop an analytical mind in this process. For instance, when the bank balance does not match the ledger balance, an analytical mind would inspect why the ledger balance is higher than the cash balance and speculate about the reasons and implications.



Mr Mak also spoke about his professional challenges as he moved up the corporate ladder. When he was first promoted to a senior manager position, his role expanded to developing business relationship and increasing the client base. He felt the growing pressure of uncertainties. As his role expanded, he had to continuously prepare for all conceivable scenarios.

Mr Chris Lam, a qualified CPA who previously worked for EY, now works for the multinational company L'Oréal. He shared his insights into the fast-paced consumer market and his advice about career planning. As a brand controller in a multinational, he has been involved in a wide array of business decisions and analyses including launch and renewal plans and sales forecasting. He remarked that the transition from auditing to a commercial environment was not easy but it was the right choice for him because he enjoys learning new skills.

Mr Lam also mentioned the importance of self-talk and reflection when planning a successful career. Students can rank their life priorities by asking “What industry am I keen to join?” or “What are my goals in life?” They can self-assess by making a Venn diagram of things they are good at and things they enjoy doing.

He also highlighted that it is vital to put in work to invite serendipity. Students can leverage part-time and temporary opportunities such as internships and part-time jobs to explore different options.



**20 August 2021**  
**2 PM - 3:30 PM**

**LAU-7-207**



**Industry knowledge**  
- business developments, audit conversion, finance transformation, real estate industry group, government funding initiatives, etc.

**Interviewer and Trainer**  
- Involved in campus recruitment and experienced hire recruitment as well as learning and development activities.

**Expertise in IPO and capital markets**  
Under secondment in Capital Market Services Group, focusing on engagements in IPO; bond issuance; highly substantial transactions; major transactions, etc.



Mr Mackie Mak  
Senior Assurance Manager

**Topics of the day**

- ACCOUNTING PROFESSION AND CAREERS
- LIFE IN PwC
- CV PREPARATION
- CAMPUS RECRUITMENT PROCESS, AND POINTS

**YOU SHOULD NOTE**



Q & A session  
3:00 - 3:30PM



**20 August 2021**  
**3:30 PM - 4 PM**

**LAU-7-207**



**Industry knowledge**  
- Controlling PNL management issues in the high-end luxury skincare market  
- financial modelling and internal control compliance

**Senior Accountant at EY (2015-2019)**  
- CPA and CFA level 3 candidate

**Insights and skills**  
- financial systems and IT i.e. SAP (COPA/FI),  
- Tableau, IBM Cognos TM1, Power BI, Python



Mr Christopher Lam  
Brand Management Controller

**Topics of the day**

- LIFE OF A BRAND CONTROLLER
- AND CAREER PLANNING TIPS
- WORK EXPERIENCE IN EY



Q & A session  
4:00 - 4:30PM

**Venue: LAU-7-207**  
**Late signup : 1:30 PM**  
**Look foward to seeing you!**

