

Profile

Azmy Adel Elgabour is a Senior Tax Consultant at Parker Russell, United Arab Emirates. Azmy was awarded the ATT VAT Compliance Diploma certificate in 2019 and completed the DITT qualification in August 2023.

Qualifications

ATT VAT Compliance Diploma

DITT

Azmy Adel Elgabour



Interview

Tell us about your current role, career so far and how did you first start working in tax?

Currently, I hold the position of Senior Tax Consultant at Parker Russell in the United Arab Emirates. In this role, I specialize in providing comprehensive tax services to a diverse range of clients. My primary responsibilities involve offering expert guidance and solutions in the realm of taxation, particularly with a focus on Value Added Tax (VAT) services. I am part of a consultancy firm that has established contracts with numerous clients to assist them with their tax-related needs. Our services encompass both present-day tax concerns, such as VAT, and future considerations like corporate tax, which will come into effect starting in 2024.

My daily tasks encompass a wide range of tax-related activities, including but not limited to: VAT Returns and Tax Reports, VAT Registration and De-registration, Voluntary Disclosures, Tax Refunds, Penalty Reconsideration, Committee of Dispute Resolution and Tax Auditing.

How did you first start working in tax?

My journey into the field of tax began during my university years in Egypt. In 2012, while still studying, I embarked on my career in taxation by joining a chartered accountant office. Initially, I worked as an accountant under training, gaining practical experience and insights into the world of finance and taxation. Over the course of two years, my role evolved, and I transitioned into the position of a tax accountant. This hands-on experience allowed me to develop a strong foundation in tax-related matters.

In 2016, after successfully completing my studies in commerce, I continued to pursue my career in taxation.

In late 2017, I took a significant step in my career by relocating to the United Arab Emirates. I arrived in the UAE just as the country was preparing to implement its Value Added Tax (VAT) law in 2018, a transformative period for tax professionals in the region.

By 2019, I had achieved a notable milestone by becoming a certified tax agent recognized by the Federal Tax Authority in the UAE. This certification was a testament to my expertise and understanding of the UAE's tax landscape.

My experiences and skills, cultivated over the years, have enabled me to serve as a Senior Tax Consultant at Parker Russell, where I continue to provide valuable tax services to a diverse clientele.

What area of tax do you work in and how did the Tax Technology qualification help you in your day-to-day job?

In my role as a tax consultant, I am involved in various aspects of taxation, with a focus on providing comprehensive tax solutions to clients. The field of tax is multifaceted and constantly evolving, requiring a deep understanding of various tax laws, regulations, and strategies. One of the key tools that have significantly impacted my day-to-day job is my Tax Technology qualification.

Studying Tax Technology has equipped me with a range of skills and tools that directly enhance my effectiveness and efficiency in addressing the complex demands of my role. These include:

Robotic Process Automation (RPA): RPA has revolutionized how I approach routine tasks. For instance, when dealing with clients who need assistance in preparing reports and filling in invoice details, RPA has enabled me to automate these processes.

Artificial Intelligence (AI): AI has played a vital role in expediting various aspects of my work. For instance, AI-powered tools can assist in rapidly drafting emails, summarizing complex legal documents, and gathering relevant information for specific cases.

Data Analysis and Visualization: Data analysis is crucial in the tax field, especially when dealing with large volumes of financial data. By employing Power BI, I can perform comprehensive reviews of data, identify trends, and even conduct sample analyses to ensure the accuracy of tax-related calculations and reports. This data-driven approach enhances the quality of my recommendations to clients.

Efficiency and Accuracy: The overarching benefit of these technologies is the substantial increase in efficiency and accuracy. By automating repetitive tasks, using AI to assist with information gathering, and conducting robust data analysis, I can dedicate more time to strategic thinking, problem-solving, and providing personalized tax advice to clients.

This qualification has empowered me to navigate the dynamic world of taxation with greater confidence and effectiveness, ultimately benefiting both myself and the clients I serve.

What motivated you to undertake this qualification?

I pursued the Tax Technology qualification for several compelling reasons. Firstly, I was driven by my aspiration to continuously enhance my knowledge and skills.

Furthermore, the UAE is a dynamic country, it encourages growth, openness to the world, and forward-thinking. Given the current trajectory towards the future, it's evident that technology is at the forefront of virtually all sectors. Even tax-related processes, such as filing declarations and payments, are now integrated into platforms like Emaratax, which heavily rely on Robotic Process Automation (RPA) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) through their API interfaces.


Therefore, pursuing the Tax Technology qualification was a logical step for me.

What are your observations on the syllabus, learning experience, assessment questions and touchpoint comms?

Syllabus: The subjects covered in the syllabus are deemed highly valuable and relevant. They provide a comprehensive understanding of the intersection between tax and technology. The range of topics covered appears to be well-selected, reflecting a blend of theoretical knowledge and practical applications.

Learning Experience: The learning experience appears to be designed with simplicity and clarity in mind. The use of webinars, slides, workbooks, and interactive modules contributes to a well-rounded learning experience.





Assessment Questions: The inclusion of assessment questions after every module allows learners to consolidate their understanding by applying the concepts they've learned. It also helps in identifying areas that might need further review, fostering an active learning process.

How did you manage studying and working at the same time?

Undoubtedly, balancing work and studying concurrently can be challenging, particularly when work is demanding. Despite an 8-hour workday and 2 days off, I've managed to allocate 3 hours daily for studying. This allocation isn't confined to a continuous 3-hour block; rather, it's adaptable. I dedicate perhaps 1 hour during afternoon breaks and 2 hours after work hours. Additionally, I reserve 1 day each week to take a break from work and study, ensuring I return to tasks refreshed.

Do you have any guidance on how best to approach the learning material?

Tolley has outlined a practical and effective approach to navigating the learning material which you can access via the learning platform. Recommendations include dedicating 3 hours each day for studying, engaging with webinar and transcripts (dual approach enhances understanding of content), summarising content to enhance understanding, supplementing learning with exploring tools and after completing each module, undertaking practice assessments.

Which module did you enjoy the most and what were the most relevant to your current role?

I found Module 9 and 10, "Understanding the Shift to Digital Tax Administration" "HMRC's Ten-Year Strategy," to be the most enjoyable. This module took me on a journey through the origins of the British tax system, showcasing the extensive changes and challenges it underwent, culminating in the implementation of Making Tax Digital (MTD).

Module 2 appears to be the cornerstone of this diploma, as it covers a range of topics that are fundamental to the program. The tools and technologies explored in this module – including RPA, AI, Data Analysis, Visualization, Data Security, and ERP – are integral components used extensively by both government agencies and businesses.

How do you think this programme will benefit the profession?

Without a doubt, this diploma will greatly benefit the profession due to its unique and tailored design for both the near and distant future. This transformation will serve the profession efficiently and promptly across various domains. It will lead to reduced losses and penalties for taxpayers, while also lightening the workload for tax advisors and auditors at the Federal Tax Authority. This balanced approach ensures that technology is applied in the right areas, fostering a harmonious relationship between innovation and established practices.

Any words of wisdom to future candidates thinking of studying the DITT?

I wholeheartedly advise all colleagues in the tax profession to pursue this diploma, as it holds the potential to significantly impact the field. It transforms traditional 'routine employees' into innovative professional's adept at utilizing tools such as programming, analysis, RPA, and AI effectively within their roles.