

CAREERS AT IAMCO

IAMCO is seeking applications from recent graduates of outstanding calibre for the position of Associate. This is the entry level into which we recruit our professional staff, and it is our policy to promote from within.

The role of Associate will appeal if you are highly motivated to excel, thrive on intellectual challenge, have a keen interest in business and management issues, and seek a career that will both reward and engage you.

Why IAMCO

Some of the reasons that people apply to IAMCO are the same that attract talented individuals to any consulting firm: the variety of daily challenges that comes with a diverse client base, early responsibility and rapid career progression, and the desire for an international career, with opportunities to use foreign language skills.

In addition, we believe that we offer something more than applicants commonly expect from a consulting firm: at IAMCO, we pride ourselves on our friendly, supportive team environment. We are as committed to our colleagues as we are to our clients, and we truly value our team members' individuality. Our flat organisational structure and unbureaucratic atmosphere mean that new Associates are encouraged to contribute from day one - but a more senior colleague with years of professional experience is never far away, to provide guidance and support.

Judge for yourself: take a look at what some of our people think about working at IAMCO. If IAMCO sounds like the kind of place where you would like to build a career, find out how to apply.

Graduate opportunities

The role of Associate

An Associate is primarily responsible for the collection, synthesis and analysis of the information that forms the foundation of our reports and recommendations to clients.

The role involves undertaking research on markets, industries and businesses using a range of sources, conducting telephone interviews and taking face-to-face meetings.

Alongside other members of the case team, an Associate is also responsible for drawing conclusions from his or her analysis and supporting in the preparation of client presentations.

Graduate opportunities (continued)

Career progression

Life at IAMCO is dynamic and rewarding, and there is scope for rapid career progression. We value our colleagues' enthusiasm and commitment, and advancement is according to skill and motivation, not tenure. Graduates join us as Associates, progressing to Consultant and Manager level, and thereafter to Partner.

Throughout your career at IAMCO, more experienced colleagues and regular training will support you in your professional development.

Placements

IAMCO offers exceptional penultimate year students the opportunity to experience strategy consulting first hand. The position of Summer Associate will appeal to students seeking a challenging introduction to international business at its highest levels and a fast-paced, entrepreneurial work environment.

A Summer Associate's duties are similar to those of a permanent Associate. The position involves undertaking research using a range of sources, conducting telephone interviews and taking face-to-face meetings. A Summer Associate is also responsible for the synthesis and analysis of information and support in the preparation of client presentations.

Successful candidates will meet the following requirements:

- Penultimate year student
- A minimum of AAB at A level or equivalent
- Predicted 2.1 degree grade, or better
- Fluency in one major European language, as well as a perfect command of English
- A high level of numeracy
- Experience of Microsoft Office applications, or similar

Timing and duration of placements are flexible, and summer interns will receive a competitive salary.

If you are interested in this position and meet the above criteria, we would like to hear from you.

How to apply

Who we are looking for

At IAMCO, we promote only from within, so are seeking applications from recent graduates of outstanding calibre. Successful applicants are intelligent, highly motivated individuals with excellent analytical and communication skills, and a high degree of initiative.

The Associate position is suitable for graduates of any academic discipline. The high standards to which we work, however, and the demands of a consulting career, mean that we place stringent demands on applicants' academic qualifications. Candidates must have a minimum 2.1 degree grade and AAB at A level, or equivalent.

The international scope of our business makes fluency in a major European language (in addition to English) essential. A perfect command of English is a prerequisite, as is a high level of numeracy. Prior business experience through summer or part-time positions is an advantage, as is familiarity with Microsoft Office applications.

The application process

If you meet the above criteria, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please e-mail your CV and a detailed covering letter explaining why you are seeking this challenging, yet rewarding, role to: recruitment@iamco.com.

Alternatively, send your CV and covering letter by post to:

Ms. Kellie Evans
Recruitment Coordinator
IAMCO Partners
Crosby Court
28 George Street
Birmingham B3 1QG
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)121 212 1244

Fax: +44 (0)121 212 2466

We recruit throughout the year and welcome applications at any time.

Interview process

There are three stages to the IAMCO interview process.

Stage one: telephone interview

Once we have received your application, we will carefully review your fit with IAMCO. Applicants that meet our criteria will be asked to participate in an initial telephone interview, part of which will be conducted in your primary foreign language.

The interview will give us an opportunity to discuss the following:

- Your academic background;
- Any professional experience you may have;
- Your interest in IAMCO;
- Any questions you have about the company, our people, and the work that we do.

If we still consider that you meet our needs, you will be invited to the first of two face-to-face interviews at our Birmingham offices.

Stage two: first face-to-face interview

Firstly, we will ask you to sit a short numeracy test. In addition to allowing us to assess your ability to work with numbers, the test will also provide you with some insight into the type of quantitative analysis you would perform as an Associate.

Following the numeracy test, there will be an interview lasting 45 minutes to an hour. This comprises four parts:

- A discussion about your career aspirations;
- A series of competency-based questions to explore the skills you would bring to the firm;
- Two short problem-solving exercises, based on previous consulting assignments;
- A second opportunity for you to ask questions.

Stage three: second face-to-face interview

If our initial meeting goes well, we will invite you back for the third and final round. This begins with a case study, where we ask you to synthesise extracts from an actual client report and present your findings in an informal role-play situation.

After the case study, there will be a brief, final interview, which will provide you with the opportunity to meet senior managers at IAMCO and to ask any remaining questions.

Numeracy test

The numeracy test consists of a series of data interpretation questions. Data will be presented in various forms and you will use the information provided to answer a number of questions. You will be given a calculator, but, don't worry, no complicated formulae are involved.

Example questions:

2003 - 2004 Global Confectionery Market (\$ billion)			
	2003	2004	2003-04 Growth (percent)
Chocolate	52.8	53.1	
Sugar Confectionery	35.5		-1.1%
Gum	12.1	12.3	1.7%
Total	100.4		

1. What were the sizes of the sugar confectionery and total confectionery markets in 2004?
2. Calculate the growth of total confectionery and chocolate from 2003 to 2004.
3. What percentage of total confectionery in 2003 does gum represent?
4. Which sector grew the most, in absolute terms and as a percentage?

Case study

In our case study test, we provide you with a twenty page report, based on an actual project conducted a number of years ago. This report, however, requires summarising, and we ask you to draw out the key findings.

In addition, we look to you to exercise your judgement, developing a set of recommendations for the client's future strategy.

Finally, we provide you with the opportunity to present your work in an informal role-playing situation.

Development

IAMCO seeks to develop well-rounded professionals with a range of skills and experience, instilled in a number of ways.

Exposure to complex management issues at the highest levels of our clients' businesses

Our clients tend to be large, multinational organisations, requiring support on business strategy or acquisitions. We are commissioned by general managers or business development executives at corporate or business unit level. Many of our clients are household names or leaders in their fields.

Experience of a range of sectors and issues

Our clients participate in a broad spectrum of industries and geographies. You will work on assignments that last an average of two to three months, and you will not be 'pigeon-holed' into focusing on one sector or type of analysis. Rather we seek to develop consultants with a rounded base of skills and experience.

Work alongside senior colleagues

To a degree unparalleled in many other firms, you will work closely with Managers and Partners of the firm, who will provide mentoring and guidance as required, and challenge you to perform to the best of your abilities.

Responsibility from day one

Your input into project planning and the generation and testing of hypotheses is invited from day one, and your views are listened to alongside those of more seasoned colleagues. As you gain experience, you will take on increasing responsibility for analysis, report writing and management of more junior colleagues.

Formal training

On-the-job learning is supplemented by an on-going programme of formal training, using a combination of external and internal trainers, as appropriate. The schedule incorporates technical and analytical tools, project management, communication and presentation skills, and strategic frameworks, among other topics.

Participation in improving IAMCO processes

As a small company, we encourage you to make your mark on how things are done at IAMCO, and your suggestions for improvements are welcomed in any area of the business.

Development (continued)*Regular performance evaluation*

We provide frequent feedback on your performance and development, and invite your views in return. When you first start work at IAMCO, you are given an informal appraisal after three months, and formal appraisals after six and twelve months. Thereafter, formal appraisals are given every twelve months, with an informal evaluation halfway between. At the end of each assignment, employees complete self-evaluation forms that are discussed with project managers.

Our people

There are no blueprints at IAMCO - neither for the solutions we offer our clients, nor for the people that we recruit. We recognise that each of our colleagues is unique in his or her strengths and we value the diversity this brings to our firm.

Our people: Jessica (Summer Associate)

Jessica spent three months working as a Summer Associate at IAMCO before her final year studying Commerce and Spanish at the University of Birmingham. She has now joined the firm permanently.

When I first began looking for a summer placement, I was extremely keen to gain some real hands-on business experience in a dynamic commercial environment, as well as a chance to use my language skills. After some research, IAMCO seemed to offer exactly what I was looking for, and after spending three months with the company I can happily say that my expectations were not only met, but exceeded.

Every day working for IAMCO was completely different; my first project involved researching the global biscuit industry, whereas my second required me to understand the dairy ingredients and functional foods markets. One day could be spent understanding the soup market in Poland and the next translating Swedish company accounts, so even in the short time I was there I got exposure to a number of different industries and markets.

At IAMCO everyone is very friendly, and someone is always on hand to answer any questions you may have. Also, even as a Summer Associate you are given real responsibility for real projects, something that many other summer placements are unable to offer. I was given training alongside new permanent recruits. This has been invaluable on return to university, and getting that hands-on experience has definitely furthered my understanding of consultancy.

As well as the normal project work, I was able to take part in both charity and recruitment initiatives, allowing me to get an insight into the business as a whole. Being a student from Birmingham University, I already knew what the city had to offer, but still the social aspect of IAMCO meant I got a chance to get to know my colleagues and benefit from their advice and experience from their own careers.

Our people (continued)

Our people: Joe (Associate)

Joe joined IAMCO 18 months after graduating from Warwick University with a degree in Management Sciences, after spending time travelling and working.

When I decided I wanted to pursue a career in strategy consultancy I began looking for a company where I felt I could make a real impact, use my languages and gain exposure to a range of industries and challenges. I have found all of this at IAMCO and at no other company do I believe I could have progressed as much as I have in a short space of time, or have had as much fun in the process.

Since starting at IAMCO, I have learned a great deal. The level of responsibility I have been given and the exposure I have had to high-level strategic issues have driven my personal development faster than if I had chosen to work for a larger consultancy, while the opportunity to work alongside senior partners and managers has proven invaluable.

Working for a smaller consultancy, you are expected to contribute from the very beginning, and the responsibility you have reflects this. Everyone must pull their weight and this generates a strong team-working ethos within project teams and the company as a whole.

One of the things that attracted me to IAMCO was the chance to use my language skills. Few companies provide such regular opportunities for recruits to use their language abilities as IAMCO does; the international nature of our projects requires it.

The industries IAMCO specialises in are dynamic, exciting and varied. When you join the company your experiences will not be limited to a specific industry or market. This makes each project unique, presenting different challenges that require different skills.

All of this combined means I really enjoy the work I do; the environment is extremely supportive and the people at IAMCO make it a pleasure to work here. I couldn't ask for anything more from a company that has given me so many opportunities and such a great start to post-university life.

Our people (continued)

Our people: Ann (Associate)

Ann joined IAMCO directly after graduating from the University of Nottingham with a degree in German and Hispanic Studies.

When I reached my final year of university, I found myself wondering what I wanted from a career. I knew that I wanted to work in a fast-paced, business environment, where I could use my language skills, but also something that involved quantitative analysis. Most importantly, I was looking for a position that would keep me on my toes and maintain my interest. It was with this in mind that I attended a careers day organised by my university for language students, where IAMCO happened to be presenting. As I listened to a couple of people from the firm explaining what strategy consulting was, and what IAMCO did, I began to think I'd finally found something that really appealed to me. The rest, as they say, is history!

I've been at IAMCO a year now and have worked on a number of very different projects: from investigating power station maintenance strategies, critical if the UK is to keep its lights on, to benchmarking our client's financial performance against its peers' using complex financial key performance indicators. Combine these challenges with interviewing experts in the fruit industry to ascertain the requirements of a chilled route to market, and it is fair to say it has been a steep learning curve!

Apart from the industry specific knowledge you gain from each project, I think IAMCO is an ideal place for recent graduates to work simply because of the variety of skills that you acquire. As someone without much of a business background, I was keen not to find myself channelled into one particular area too quickly.

The last important thing to mention about IAMCO is the nature of the people that work here. It is a young, vibrant office with motivated employees who make the most of their time, both in and out of the office. It is a genuinely friendly place to work where someone is always on hand to help you when you need it.

Our people (continued)

Our people: Richard (Consultant)

Richard, having spent a gap year working in Germany and travelling, studied Modern History at Lincoln College, Oxford, before joining IAMCO.

I was looking for a career that offered both the intellectual challenge I had relished during my degree and the opportunity to use the skills I had gained at university. What strategy consulting offered in addition was the chance to add considerably to those skills from day one, and to gain early exposure to the highest levels of business - within two months of joining, I was on the team advising the management of a FTSE 100 company on a major acquisition.

In recognition of my progress, I was promoted to Consultant after two years. While this did not result in a drastic overnight change in the nature of my work, my responsibilities have progressively grown.

My level of client interaction has steadily increased. Making a presentation to senior managers at a client company, and seeing the respect with which our advice is received, is immensely rewarding.

I have been able to gain experience beyond the UK. We conduct a lot of international projects but do not have a chain of overseas offices, which has allowed me to work in various far-flung countries, and to use my foreign language skills.

As a Consultant, I enjoy managing colleagues as well as my own workload. What promotion has left unchanged is the close, friendly support available from colleagues, both junior and senior, which is as much a hallmark of the working environment now as when I joined the company.

Beyond IAMCO

Of course, not everybody spends their entire career with IAMCO. As we grow professionally, some of us discover a passion for working in a particular industry, or wish to realise other goals. Former IAMCO consultants have gone on to pursue successful careers in the media, telecommunications and consumer goods industries, to name a few. In this, they have our wholehearted support, and we always enjoy catching up with them at a company party.

Beyond IAMCO: Anna

Anna joined IAMCO in 2002 having studied French and Spanish at Durham University, and was promoted to Consultant in 2005. In summer 2006, Anna joined the BBC as a Strategy Manager.

My four years at IAMCO provided me with an excellent skills base on which to found my future career. I was exposed to a wide range of sectors, from FMCG to media, and travelled extensively. For example, I lived in South Africa for 7 months as part of a joint client-consultant team, as we undertook a commercial review of our client's business in that market.

Through talking with colleagues from other consultancies, I have come to realise that the high levels of responsibility given to new graduates at IAMCO and the exposure to the expertise of senior management are exceptional. After around 2 years as an Associate I was promoted to Consultant and, overseen by a Partner, was able to lead small projects on my own soon after.

At IAMCO you learn to get up to speed quickly in a new sector, a skill that has been invaluable in my new role in the ever-changing media industry. IAMCO's supportive environment and its cohesive and friendly team are key to its culture. If you have an interest in business, the skills and experience you'll gain at IAMCO will certainly open many doors.

Beyond IAMCO (continued)*Beyond IAMCO: Fred*

Fred studied Politics at Durham University before joining IAMCO in 1999. After four years as an Associate and Consultant, Fred left to undertake an MBA at INSEAD. Following a year as a freelance consultant, he joined E.ON as UK Strategy Manager.

At IAMCO, I enjoyed working across a broad range of industries and geographic markets, and gaining deep insight into strategy development. Working with talented client managers from different organisations, I became increasingly interested in moving strategy forward within an operating company, immersing myself in a particular sector. To facilitate this transition, I decided firstly to undertake an MBA. Subsequently, I took on the challenge of leading the corporate strategy team of E.ON UK.

The wealth of skills I gained at IAMCO has been invaluable since I left the firm. In particular, I regularly draw on the ability to process large volumes of complex and ambiguous information, to distil the key elements and to construct succinct, clear lines of argument and recommendations. IAMCO's emphasis on undertaking in-depth interviews as part of a project develops your ability to build a rapport with people from diverse cultural and/or professional backgrounds, a definite benefit when working in a large organisation.

An element I particularly valued at IAMCO is the relationship I developed with the Partners of the firm. You are not an anonymous employee, rather you are a valued colleague, and managers make great efforts to ensure that people enjoy a good work-life balance. IAMCO remained incredibly supportive even when I decided to leave the firm and to move into a new role, and I still enjoy a strong relationship with my former colleagues.

IAMCO provided me with an excellent grounding on which to build my future career, and I would recommend the firm to anyone interested in tackling international business issues.

Why Birmingham

Birmingham combines world-class cultural diversity and heritage with a strong commercial and industrial presence. More importantly, Birmingham is also an excellent place to live. It offers all the lifestyle advantages of a big city, but at a fraction of the cost of London.

Socialising

With three universities and scores of young professionals, Birmingham is home to an increasing number of young people, and investors have been quick to pick up on this: the city has transformed itself beyond recognition since the early 1990s.

Nowhere more so than by the canals. As you will (frequently!) be told, Birmingham has more miles of canals than Venice. In the city centre these are now lined with lively bars, restaurants and clubs, all enjoying the views of water, cobbled paths and narrow boats.

The Mailbox is particularly to be recommended. A collection of designer shops and popular bars fill this waterside complex, all with spectacular views.

The nightlife and restaurants are exceptional. Birmingham is home to the Balti, and new bars and restaurants are springing up all the time, with every taste accounted for. The city's wealth of pubs and clubs, including a Jools Holland jazz club only two minutes' walk from our office, will keep even the most hardened party-goer entertained.

All of this, combined with the compact city centre, makes it a great place to socialise and meet people.

Sports

Birmingham offers a wealth of opportunities for sports enthusiasts. As well as numerous gyms, swimming pools and clubs for team and individual sports, there are parks, lakes, and open countryside, all within easy reach. This makes activities such as running, cycling, rowing and horse riding viable midweek pursuits.

Birmingham is also home to a state-of-the-art indoor climbing wall and a short drive from the Snow Dome, an indoor piste with 'real' snow.

For those who prefer to spectate, Birmingham has hosted more world, European and national sporting championships than any other UK city. Regular events include test cricket at Edgbaston and the DFS tennis tournament in June, as well as football fixtures at West Midlands clubs. Birmingham has hosted the Davis Cup, Ryder Cup, and both the European and World Indoor Athletics Championships. It has been chosen to host the European Gymnastics Championships in 2010.

Why Birmingham (Continued)

Other activities

For those interested in the arts, there are numerous galleries, concert venues, theatres (including nearby Stratford-upon-Avon), museums and cinemas to keep you entertained.

The Symphony Hall, with its world class acoustics, hosts a wide range of classical, jazz, folk, rock, pop and world music, as does the Town Hall, recently reopened after extensive refurbishment.

Big name bands, DJs and comedy acts frequently appear before sell-out crowds at the NIA, NEC or Academy, while a typical night in the pubs and bars of Digbeth, Moseley or Kings Heath might throw up anything from an up-and-coming indie group to a world famous DJ or hip-hop artist touring on the low-down.

The NEC also hosts major events of all kinds, including the Clothes Show Live, BBC Good Food Show and Autosport International.

If you simply want to shop, Birmingham offers boutiques, arcades, exclusive outlets such as Harvey Nichols and Selfridges, plus some of the best shopping in Europe at the Bullring.

Getting around

Getting around Birmingham is easy, and there is no need for a long commute. Some colleagues live within walking distance of the office, while others live within a twenty minute bus ride. Free parking is available at the office.

Out of town

Birmingham's central location gives it unparalleled transport links for local, national and international travel.

Within easy reach are the Cotswolds, the Peak District and the Welsh borders, with plenty of beautiful towns, villages and countryside attractions to visit.

London is just an hour and a half away by train, and Birmingham International Airport is only twenty minutes from the city centre.