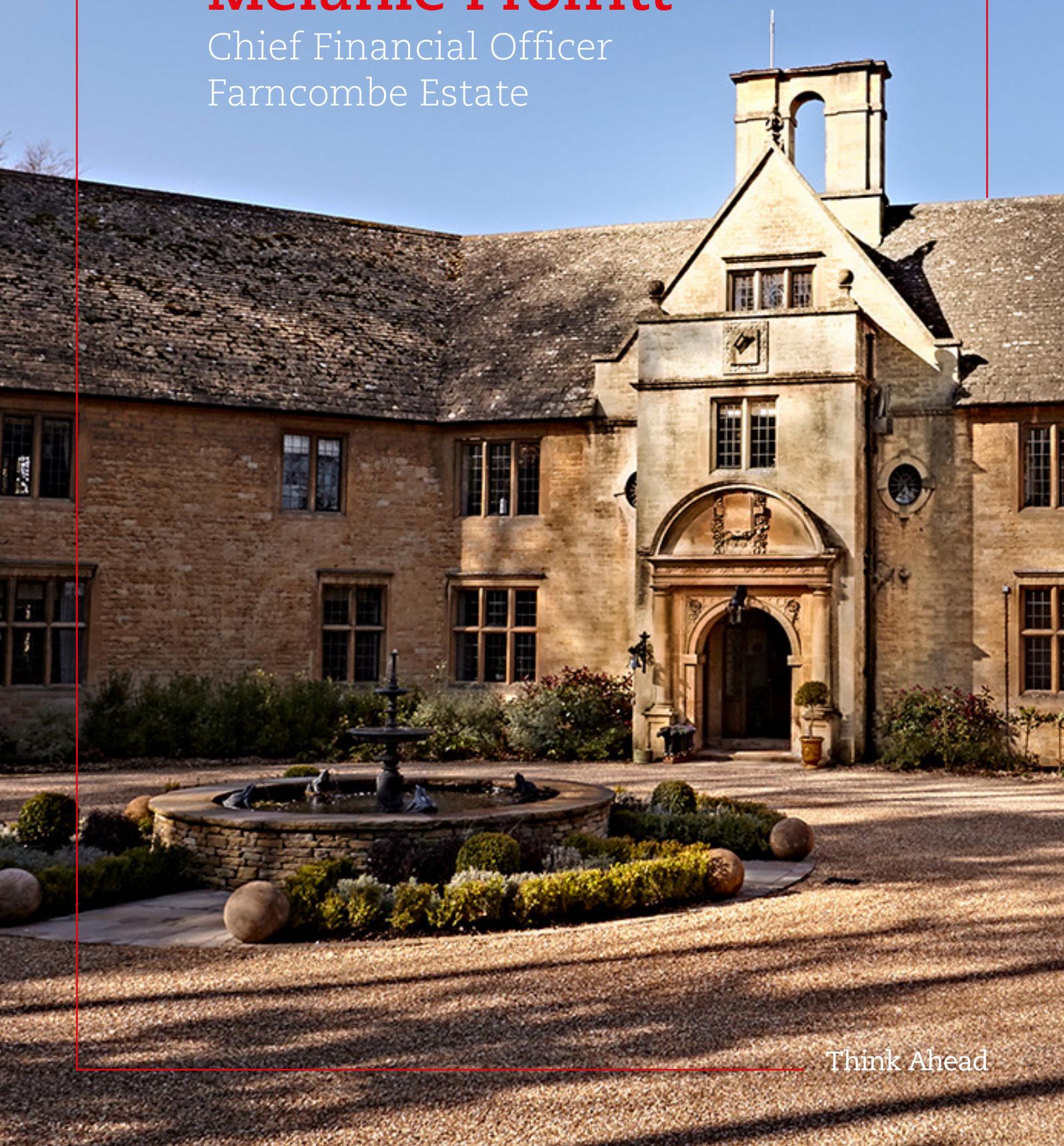


ACCA Apprenticeships employer case study

Melanie Proffitt

Chief Financial Officer
Farncombe Estate



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1 Tell us about your business, your objectives and priorities?

I am the CFO for Farncombe Estate which is a private family owned estate covering approximately 400 acres in the Cotswolds, it has 3 luxury hotels whose focus is to deliver a guest centric experience, where there is a relaxed approach that is different to anything else in the market.

The estate itself is on a journey of redevelopment and over the last few years it has developed the world-renowned Dormy House Hotel and Foxhill Manor. In 2018 we are continuing to build on this success as we oversee a £4m upgrade to the Fish Hotel, refurbishing existing rooms whilst also adding 3 treehouses and 5 hideaway huts, these will be supported by the launch of a new restaurant, 'Hook' by Martin Burge.

The need to manage this investment and ensure that the ROI is achieved is key, hence the need for additional talent within our Finance Team.

2 What attracted you to the ACCA apprenticeship programme?

The ACCA accountancy apprenticeship has a unique blend of ethics, technical and business skills which means that the demands and challenges of modern accounting and business are fully explored. The flexible delivery, the framework and the clear route to qualification were also key factors.

I feel this is an excellent programme that will certainly help empower the next generation of accountants to be strategic forward thinkers who will look beyond the numbers to help drive the growth of a business and help organisations to realise their potential... just like what we are doing at Farncombe!

3 How did ACCA help and support you during the process?

ACCA have been incredibly supportive throughout the process, talking us through the programme, providing a concise overview of the journey and even introducing us to the learning providers. It couldn't have been simpler.

4 What are your views on interpersonal vs. technical skills. Which are more important in today's workplace?

I believe that there are two key aspects to being a great asset to your business, 'what you do', ie your actual day to day tasks that will predominately utilise your technical skills that have been taught, and 'how you do it', ie your approach, attitude and willingness to interact with others.

5 What are your views on the thought that young people lack employability skills?

I have often heard that young people lack the basic 'soft' skills, such as communication and team working to succeed in the working world, however I believe that this isn't always the case and is certainly not true of my apprentice. Whilst they might lack confidence due to being in an unfamiliar environment, if they have the right attitude and are given the right support and coaching I feel these skills can be developed.

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