

Welsh Government welcomes students to the Senedd as it supports Browne Jacobson's FAIRE social mobility programme

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Six law students got a taste of life as a lawyer inside government and the Senedd as the Welsh Government took part in an innovative Browne Jacobson social mobility programme.

They spent a day with the Welsh Government during a week-long work experience placement at the UK and Ireland law firm's Cardiff office, and visited the Senedd with government staff.

Browne Jacobson arranged the visit in partnership with the Welsh Government, a longstanding client, as part of its award-winning FAIRE (Fairer Access into Real Experience) social mobility programme.

The scheme provides work experience opportunities for people from lower socio-economic and minority backgrounds, who are under-represented in the legal profession.

Laura Hughes, Head of the Public Law team and Executive Lead for Wales at Browne Jacobson, said:

"Having worked with the Welsh Government for many years, it was fantastic to bring it on board in our FAIRE programme, which our firm is hugely passionate about to help make the legal profession open to young people regardless of their background and thus widening the talent pool for law firms."

Tim Edds, Head of Cardiff, added:

"As someone who worked at Environment Agency Wales and the Welsh Government before joining Browne Jacobson, it was fantastic to be able to showcase this work to the students and give them a taste of the very rewarding career they could have in public law, and for them to have the opportunity to see it from both a private practice and in-house lawyer's perspective. We look forward to seeing how they develop in the years to come."

The participating students were Emma Ostler Baraona, Ally Dowse, Jalan Marrast, Anya Millett, Lili-Berri Stokes and Joshua Blanks.

They were connected with Browne Jacobson via the University of South Wales, Cardiff Metropolitan University and social mobility charity, The Talent Tap.

Alongside the day with the Welsh Government, they shadowed Browne Jacobson's Cardiff team of lawyers to witness first-hand the type of work they get involved in, and also spent time in court.

During their visit to Cardiff Bay in March, the students were given a tour of the iconic Senedd building and also heard from Matthew Richards, Head of Legal Services, who gave his reflections on life as a parliamentary lawyer at the Senedd.

Stephanie Evans, Deputy Director for Welsh Government Legal Services, said:

“It was a pleasure to host such an enthusiastic and engaged group of students, and to be able to demonstrate that a career in the law is for everyone, regardless of your background, while raising awareness of the exciting opportunities that exist for lawyers within Welsh Government. We wish all the students we met all the very best for their future legal careers.”

Since launching FAIRE in 2021, Browne Jacobson has engaged more than 30,500 people aged 16 to 19 from more than 2,000 schools and academies, and 90-plus universities.

It is part of a firm-wide commitment to fair working practices, inclusivity, collaboration and making sure it is at the forefront of conversations about how we can all tackle society's biggest issues.

Recognition received for this work includes the Social Mobility Initiative of the Year at the European Diversity Awards 2023, Equality Trailblazer award at the British Chamber of Commerce's Chamber Business Awards 2023, and being the highest-ranked law firm in the Social Mobility Index 2023, where Browne Jacobson was also ranked as one of the UK's top five employers.

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