

A day in the life of our Solicitor Apprentice Laura Morland

10 February 2023  Laura Morland

As part of our series of articles to mark National Apprenticeship Week 2023, Laura Morland gives us an insight into what it's like to be a Solicitor Apprentice at the firm and the Skills for Life that she's building.

I cannot believe it has already been 4 years since I began as a Solicitor Apprentice at Browne Jacobson, the time really has flown – no day is the same. I've taken the opportunity to provide a little insight as to what I do in the Public Law Team on a day-to-day basis.

Monday 30 January 2023

As a Solicitor Apprentice, I have one day a week dedicated to my study. I usually like to take these on Mondays.

I am currently studying Criminal Litigation & Evidence as well as Access to Justice. My study days are always very busy, with plenty to get done. Today I attended a lecture for Criminal Litigation and Evidence, this was really interesting and also covered some areas I studied in Criminal and Public Law. I also had some reading to complete for the unit... there was a lot to get through!

Finally, it is Mock Assessment week for Access to Justice, so I also completed this, the assessment this time was written coursework and multiple-choice questions... I think I did well!

Tuesday 31 January 2023

Today is one of our team days so I went into the Nottingham office. It is really nice to be with the team, I find it invaluable speaking with them and being able to ask questions... the idea is to learn on the job.

As it was my study day yesterday, Tuesday mornings are often spent catching up on the emails from the day before, thankfully there weren't too many. I really enjoyed the work I was involved with today, I was able to have a call with a client to provide legal advice on a relatively complicated area of law. I then spent some of my day drafting documents for Court, the first related to Judicial Review proceedings which we see many of in the Public Law Team. I then also drafted some additional documents for Court on a different matter, this time with an environmental focus (the team also do Planning and Environment work).

In the afternoon, I was invited to a university to talk about my apprenticeship and Browne Jacobson. I really enjoy being able to do these talks, it is a great opportunity to spread awareness about alternative routes to 'the Law'.

Wednesday 1 February 2023

My day has been a little different today. This morning, I dealt with some more administrative tasks, one of which was arranging for a new file to be set up for a new instruction I had received from a Partner in the team. It's really important we take time with such tasks as this is the very beginning of new work, I therefore needed to be thorough to provide all the information needed to correctly open the file - ready to start work.

Once this was done, I was able to meet a new member to the team and give them a tour of the office! It only feels like yesterday that I was being given my tour of the office.

The main work I completed today was preparation for a call with a client tomorrow. The prep included reviewing the documents the client provided as part of their instruction and also completing legal research into the legislation and cases to help form our advice. It was nice to be able to do a legal research task, I don't currently do many of these however, I am hoping to increase the legal research tasks I complete. It is one of my objectives to help develop my skills as an Apprentice Solicitor. Legal research can often be a long task to ensure we have covered all bases necessary, I made good headway with this however, I suspect there is still more to be done... I'll let you know how I get on with the call tomorrow!

Thursday 2nd February 2023

The call went well! We were able to get the information we needed, and also complete the additional legal research to formulate our advice. This meant I could draft this today; I am just going to do a final proofread tomorrow before it goes to a Partner for supervision. This filled the majority of my day.

I also had a call about some slightly different work relating to Japanese Knotweed, this work usually sits with the Technical Claims team, however, I did do a seat with Technical Claims for two and a half years, so I do have experience in litigation. It was really interesting to learn about something new and to be able to use my skills developed over the last four years as an Apprentice to re-visit Technical Claims work.

I also had a call with my Supervisor/Line Manager today, as an Apprentice we have these relatively regularly (weekly), we use the opportunity to catch up with the work I am doing and also generally how I am doing. We often consider how I am meeting the competency requirements for my Solicitor Apprenticeship (I have to keep a log of evidence of this to be able to use at something called a 'Gateway Meeting', this is to provide evidence that I am working at a Day 1 Solicitor standard). We do this by ensuring I have a good variety of work, the focus at the moment is advisory. I'm sure you will agree, I get up to all sorts!

Friday 3rd February 2023

I can't believe it is Friday already! I worked from home today as I needed to get my head down with a very large disclosure task. 'Disclosure' is something we submit to the Court when a case is litigated, it can include a variety of pieces of information such as documents and emails. This took up a large portion of the day.

Another important task I did today was working through my billing report, this is something we have to do monthly to charge for the work we complete. This is therefore very important; it is more administrative however is still an element of my role (albeit not day to day).

There you have it, a week in the life of a Solicitor Apprentice! I'm sure you will agree the work I get up to is relatively varied, most weeks often include work like this week, however, I also do Planning work such as negotiating planning agreements, which I have not done much of this week.

I feel so lucky to be a Solicitor Apprentice, it is the best of both worlds, I get to study for my degree and SQE as well as learning critical, transferable skills on the Job! I am a very hands-on person and therefore, this is what intrigued me back in 2018 when I first found out about the apprenticeship route over the traditional University option.

Browne Jacobson is a brilliant firm to work for, not only am I able to undertake challenging work I also get to be part of additional communities, such as the Social Mobility group. I truly do feel a valued employee and that there is trust in me as an Apprentice, which only helps my progression as I gain confidence with the work I do. My team and the firm are supportive of Solicitor Apprentices, and all other employees, I really can't wait to qualify! Only two more years to go...

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