Browne Jacobson

Browne Jacobson partners with Forage to launch virtual work experience to improve diversity and inclusion in legal sector

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Browne Jacobson has partnered with Forage, one of the world's leading work experience platforms, to launch an interactive virtual work experience programme to open up access for aspiring young lawyers and improve diversity in the legal profession.

Over 260 students have already enrolled on the programme within two weeks of its official launch. Of these 53% are from Black, Asian or minority ethnic communities, 77% female and 78% attend state schools.

Participants gain real work experience through completing a variety of simulated tasks in their own time. Each task has been specifically designed by specialist legal teams at the firm which closely mirror the work the firm's trainee lawyers undertake on a daily basis. These include reviewing contracts, advising on disputes, and drafting witness statements. At the end of each task, participants will be able to review the model solutions provided by the legal teams. The tasks are split across six-modules covering employment, contractual, clinical negligence, education, public and real estate law.

After completing the programme, students will have developed a range of core legal skills including critical analysis, drafting, planning, and communication. Once the programme has been completed, each student receives a personalised certificate which they can add to their CV and Linkedin profile to further enhance their career prospects.

Tom Lyas, Head of Resourcing at Browne Jacobson, said: "We see complimentary on demand virtual work experience programmes playing an important role in helping us to open up access and improve diversity and inclusion within the legal profession.

"We wanted to make the Browne Jacobson programme easy to access for everyone so there is no formal application process and no costs to take part, with each student completing the programme in their own time.

"Taking part in the programme is a fabulous opportunity for young people from all socio-economic backgrounds, particularly those under-represented in the legal sector, to gain an invaluable insight into one of the world's most exciting professions.

"We hope the success of this programme will enable us to offer further tailored programmes for other age groups interested in exploring a typical day in the life of a lawyer."

Thomas Brunskill, CEO and co-founder of Forage added : "Forage is on a mission to democratize access to work experience and level the playing field for emerging talent.

"Browne Jacobson shares this mission and we're thrilled to have partnered together to provide students across the UK with the opportunity to experience a day-in-the-life of a solicitor through this new virtual experience programme."

The virtual work experience programme is one of a number of innovative initiatives that forms part of Browne Jacobson's commitment to improving diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. These include FAIRE, the country's largest virtual legal careers insight event, REACH (Race, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage) Black Mentoring Scheme, Summer Vacation Scheme and its well-established in person work experience programme.

In 2021 Browne Jacobson was named as the country's leading social mobility employer by the Social Mobility Foundation.

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