


Hints and tips to help you apply for a Solicitor Apprenticeship

10 February 2023  Sahnia Shouan

Our Solicitor Apprentice Sahnia Shouan shares her experience of applying and what to know before you start.

Applying for a legal apprenticeship can seem like a daunting process. You might be concerned about how many stages there are, or perhaps worried about the content of interviews or tests that are included as part of the process. If you are considering applying for a legal apprenticeship, this article will help you to understand the basics of how to look for and apply for an apprenticeship, what you need to consider when applying and whether an apprenticeship is the right fit for you.

How to find a legal apprenticeship

Legal apprenticeships (including solicitor apprenticeships) can be found online on the websites of some law firms, via job searches on websites like Indeed and Prospects. In my case, the apprenticeship I was applying for was included on the vacancies page for Chartered Legal Executives, as the apprenticeship at the time was a CILEX apprenticeship. You should do some research into the different kind of apprenticeships on offer – for example there are solicitor trailblazer apprenticeships, Chartered Legal Executive apprenticeships as well as a range of different apprenticeship providers who deliver the apprenticeships.

Once you have found a vacancy that is relevant to you, you should review all of the requirements and specifications to ensure the apprenticeship will be a good fit for you. To do this, you should carry out some research into the firm and the role that is being offered. This will help you to understand the firm's values, important policies and team structures and will help you to build a profile of both the firm and role being offered. When I was applying for apprenticeships, I tended to carry out research on the firm's recent activities that were posted on their website to gain an insight on their commercial priorities. I would also recommend researching whether they have any current or previous apprentices to get an idea of what they have become involved in at the firm. This will inform you as to what your potential future role might entail and will help you to understand if this is something you want to, and are able, to undertake.

The application process

The application forms and processes themselves can vary from firm to firm. Generally, you will need to disclose your CV and fill out a specific form for the apprenticeship role that is being offered. Further steps in the process may include online testing of Maths and English skills, psychometric tests (of your personality and aptitude) and some reasoning-based tests to complete.

Some firms may then go on to offer an assessment centre (where you might attend the firm for a half day or a full day to undertake tasks and activities as part of the evaluation process) or an individual interview or even an interview/presentation before a panel of a few members of the firm. I experienced several different interview/assessment types when I was applying for my apprenticeship, however in all cases it was clear that the more you had prepared yourself to answer questions about your own skills/weaknesses and researched into the firm, the better placed you were to answer both the questions in interviews and to interact with others within group activities.

Before you apply

When applying for an apprenticeship, try to ensure you have considered how the requirements specified apply to you with examples, if you can. This will help you to be informed (and hopefully feel less nervous!) when attending assessment centres and interviews. There

are some great resources online about preparing for legal interviews as well as interview tips in general.

You should also consider researching into the values of the firm, their recent movement or deals in the news and reviewing their websites or social media to understand what they are passionate about and what they are looking for in an apprenticeship. Understanding the firm's values will be helpful in an interview where you are required to demonstrate some knowledge about the firm.

Believe in yourself!

Legal apprenticeships do vary widely and their application processes will vary as well, however you can prepare yourself when applying for the apprenticeship by researching into the firm and role that you are applying for. Take some time to consider how you would approach certain questions in an interview or assessment centre before attending to ensure you have the best chances at success.

It is also vital to have confidence in yourself when applying and when attending an interview! Additionally, consider reaching out to others for more support and advice on how to apply for apprenticeships if you are feeling stuck in the process.

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