

A Day in the Life of a Trainee Litigation & Dispute Resolution

8.30am Post duty

I join my fellow trainees bright and early to open and sort the firm's post. Trainee cohorts tend to be quite close-knit, so this is a social start to my day with a chance to hear about what is going on in other departments.

9am Department team meeting

Litigation & Dispute Resolution (LDR) is a very diverse department, with lawyers specialising in commercial litigation, insolvency, criminal defence and regulatory work among other things. As a trainee, you feel very much part of the team, and team meetings are a great way to hear what colleagues are doing and get involved.

10am Drafting

Today I'm tasked with drafting an interim application seeking an extension of time of a court deadline that could not be agreed with the solicitors acting for the opposing party, which needs to be supported by evidence, putting into practice my skills of legal analysis and written communication.

11am Research

I am regularly asked to conduct legal research, often on areas of law that are quite new to me. One day it might be on criminal procedure, the next the application of the Insolvency Act 1986, or on jurisdictional issues that sometimes arise with international clients.

12.30pm Lunch

I try to get out of the office and away from my desk at lunch to catch up with other trainees or colleagues. Sometimes I attend training, always with a canapé or sandwich in hand.

1.30pm Client meeting

A partner and I are meeting a client together to take detailed instructions in relation to an ongoing investigation of a company of which he is a director. Though the partner conducts the meeting, as well as taking a note I have a contribution to make in a discrete area that I have prepared beforehand, which prepares me for doing this all myself when I'm qualified.

3pm Attending court

Today I am issuing an urgent application at a central London court. Advancement of technology means much of the High Court administrative processes like issuing claims and filing documents take place entirely online now, but for the time being a substantial amount of litigation work involves physical attendance at court and seeing your opponent face to face.

5pm Trainee diary and filing

I reserve some time at the end of my working day to attend to my personal admin, including recording what I've been doing and how it has contributed to my development as a trainee.

6pm Charity 5km run

Devonshires has a fantastic CSR programme which largely relies on staff volunteers. It's a great way to meet people in other departments as well as clients. Tonight, I don my shorts and trainers for a run in support of some great causes, which is followed by a well-earned pint with colleagues.