

and individuals is therefore more freely available in the UK, as opposed to the CVMail application process.

As an incentive to accept articles, certain firms offer to pay for your legal practice course and a living allowance while you complete the course.

As recruitment takes place in your penultimate year of study, you have the peace of mind that you have a job at the end of the legal practice course. This peace of mind is something fundamentally missing with students completing the Leo Cussen course. Once the legal practice course is completed you have two years of clerkship ahead of you.

“A legal practice course supplemented by two years of articulated clerkships ultimately makes the transition from university to practice easier, better equips junior lawyers for practice and increases retention rates.”

Furthermore, this approach offers one of two different alternatives to law firms, namely:

- allowing for a longer rotation in a particular area (e.g. four rotations of six months as opposed to four rotations of three months). The benefit to articulated clerks is that they have more exposure to an area and as time progresses they may in fact become more involved in the legal aspects of the department. Likewise, having completed a legal practice course they will at least have a basic knowledge of how things operate when they first begin; or
- allowing for shorter rotations through a greater number of areas (e.g. six rotations of four months or eight rotations of three months).

This approach lends itself to law firms having a different perspective on articles. As a substantial outlay is made to train the articulated clerk, law firms are encouraged to ensure that they provide a better quality articulated clerkship (hopefully) and it also becomes important to them to retain their articulated clerks after the completion of articles.

In the UK one of the aspects that the law firms would stress at their career nights on campus was their retention rates following articulated clerkships. This became an important reason for applying to a law firm because, if the law firm could not retain their articulated clerks following articulated clerkships, then the question begged to be asked why one would want to do articles there. The other thing it did was to provide peace of mind that at the end of your articulated clerkship you would have a job and that, in all likelihood, you would enjoy where you worked.

A legal practice course supplemented by two years of articulated clerkship ultimately makes the transition from university to practice easier, it better equips junior lawyers for practice and increases retention rates.

Your profession – your say

SARAH EMMERSON, LAWYER,
HERBERT GEER & RUNDLE

A good lawyer has the ability to listen to your client and understand their motivations and objectives; provide practical solutions to problems or requests; be inventive; have a sense of humour.

I decided to study law because the processes of being trained how to think analytically appealed – as did the enjoyment of studying history and philosophy (which, when you think about it, the study of law does encapsulate) and because I was told at school that it would open doors for me and create opportunities in life, not just in the legal profession.

The best thing about being a lawyer is that I learn something new each day, and interact with interesting and intelligent people.

I want to maintain a balance in my life, which for me means accomplishing my goals, both professional and personal.

I don't think it is a conscious decision to market myself at this stage in my career. Being attentive and interested in people is probably going to get me further than a direct marketing spiel.

I manage to broaden my legal skill set through observation of peers and those with greater experience, and focusing on relevant training.

Law school prepared me for writing long essays and being really handy with a legal citation guide, but it probably didn't give me a full appreciation of what the reality of legal practise would be like. But this generation of law students/junior lawyers has generally been exposed to law firms through either part-time work or clerkships, so the illusion is probably shattered before the first day of your articles year.

Outside of working hours I act the social butterfly with my friends (especially the ones who aren't lawyers and don't understand why you are at work at 8am and still there at 7pm), spend time on a big property on the peninsula where I can actually see the stars in the sky, drink wine, spend too much money...