

TC APPLICATION HANDBOOK

Produced for use of the members of the Hatfield College Law Society

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1 Introduction

This handbook takes you through the stages of an application cycle: from building your profile and conducting initial research, all the way through to final-stage interviews.

Whilst this handbook includes advice at various stages, it should be primarily treated as a directory, that will point you towards resources and activities which should be helpful in making successful applications.

Some of the resources listed in this guide are paid.

2 Commercial Awareness

Commercial awareness is as much about understanding the legal profession, how firms develop a competitive edge, and the kinds of tasks lawyers undertake, etc., as it is about building your economic/financial literacy and knowing current affairs. Successful candidates will be confident in each of the areas listed below.

Whilst the resources below should be of help, they are no replacement for attending firm events

2.1 What do lawyers do?

V. Charles Ward, *Legal Profession: Is It for You?*

- Useful, but very entry-level, guide to how various legal careers differ
- An important read if you have not decided between barrister and solicitor routes
- <https://amzn.eu/d/hdvA4Ee>

Virtual Work Experiences on Forage

- <https://www.theforage.com/>

2.2 Firm research

Networking

- Whilst the resources below should be helpful, they are no substitute for speaking with future/current trainees, associates, partners and recruiters
- Law fairs (Durham law fair normally happens in early October)

Firm client and graduate recruitment websites

RollOnFriday

- <https://www.rollonfriday.com/>

Legal Cheek

- <https://www.legalcheek.com/>

Legal500 Firm Profiles and Rankings

- <https://www.legal500.com/>

Chambers Student

- <https://www.chambersstudent.co.uk/>

Commercial Law Academy: Law firm profiles and research

- <https://www.commerciallaw.academy/courses/take/law-firm-insights/lessons/31645662-why-is-firm-research-important>

2.3 Commercial awareness: building blocks

Christopher Stoakes, *All You Need To Know About The City*

- Canonical introduction to the global financial ecosystem: an essential starting place
- <https://amzn.eu/d/f03leog>

2.4 Commercial awareness: current affairs

**denotes legal-specific resources*

Publications

Financial Times

Economist

Bloomberg

Email newsletters and online resources

Non-Billable*

Zip law*

Exec sum

Little law*

Watsons daily*

Podcasts

FT daily news briefing

2.5 Private Equity

Bryan Burrough and John Helyar, *Barbarians At The Gate: The Fall of RJR Nabisco*

- Highly enjoyable account of one of history's most significant LBOs
- Excellent introduction to PE
- <https://amzn.eu/d/7EHLdJq>

EY Private Equity Pulse

- https://www.ey.com/en_uk/insights/private-equity/pulse

3 Writing Applications

3.1 Example Successful Applications

Commercial Law Academy

- <https://www.commerciallaw.academy/courses/take/example-successful-applications/texts/62715517-cover-letter-paralegal>

Congrapps

- <https://congrapps.com/company/list/general>

TCLA

3.2 Deadlines

Legal Cheek Key Deadlines Calendar

- <https://www.legalcheek.com/key-deadlines-calendar/>

4 Preparing for Watson Glaser Tests

No matter what law firms advise, the Watson Glaser can absolutely be prepared for. You should start as soon as you can, and practice as much as possible.

4.1 Practice Tests

Job Test Prep

- <https://www.jobtestprep.co.uk/>

12MinPrep

- <https://www.12minprep.com/>

TestHQ

- <https://www.testhq.com/login>

4.2 Guides

Idin Sabahipour, Watson Glaser Guide

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4XtHE_zJZk

5 Preparing for Interviews

5.1 General advice

- Do not underestimate the importance of taking time to carefully reflect on your strengths
- Remember that you are interviewing for a trainee role; as such, you need to demonstrate commercial awareness to the extent that it demonstrates your willingness and ability to learn. Therefore, unless you are interviewing with a firm that has a very specific area of expertise, it is unlikely that you will be tested on specific technical or commercial points. In my experience, I have only been asked technical questions after I have volunteered a specific interest (for instance, I was only asked about the risks facing clients in PE, after expressing an interest in the practice area).
- Always write brief emails to thank graduate recruiters, your interviewers, and others you met on interview days.

5.2 Sample Questions

Commercial Law Academy

- <https://www.commerciallaw.academy/pages/blog?p=application-and-interview-questions>

TCLA

- <https://www.thecorporatelawacademy.com/175-training-contract-interview-questions-2/>

5.3 Previews Interview Experiences

Networking with current/future trainees

- Reach out to current/future trainees at the firm where you are interviewing to ask for advice

If you reach out to associates, make sure to check they trained at the firm in question

Durham Law School Employability Student Experiences

- <https://durhamuniversity.sharepoint.com/teams/DurhamLawSchoolStudentHub/SitePages/Student-Feedback.aspx>

Commercial Law Academy

- <https://www.commerciallaw.academy/courses/take/assessment-centre-insights/texts/44158005-introduction-to-our-assessment-centre-insights>

Congrapps

- <https://congrapps.com/company/list>

5.4 Mock Interviews

The Corporate Law Academy Mock Interview Service

- <https://www.thecorporatelawacademy.com/mock-interview-2/>

6 Other resources

6.1 Handbooks

Philip Bennet, *Durham University Law School Employability Handbook*

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<https://durhamuniversity.sharepoint.com/teams/DurhamLawSchoolStudentHub/SitePages/Employability-Handbook.aspx>

Jake Schogger, *Commercial Law Handbook*

- <https://amzn.eu/d/2MNyfR5>

Jake Schogger, *Training Contract Handbook*

- <https://amzn.eu/d/dcYjuME>

6.2 Online forums

The Corporate Law Academy forum