



A day in the life of...

... **Cameron Crees** trainee, Payne Hicks Beach

Departments to date: Private client and dispute resolution

University: Durham

Degree and class: Combined Honours in Arts, 1st

9.00am: I arrive at the office. I review my to-do list, updating it as I go with the jobs that have come in overnight or dropped off the bottom of my list from the day before, and check my calendar. Lunch today is the weekly 'Staff Lunch' which is prepared by our excellent kitchen and it provides an opportunity to catch up with colleagues and fellow trainees.

9.15am: I am currently helping out in relation to a historic phone hacking claim. I am reading and compiling articles in which the client was potentially hacked. The way in which the tabloids have written has changed drastically in the last ten years. I am amazed at the number of times the phrase 'a perfectly placed informant tells me' appears. I discuss my progress with my supervisor on this matter who provides me with some helpful feedback.

10.00am: Departmental meeting. This is an informal chat over some coffee about what has come in over the last week, our workloads and any updates on current matters. The meeting gives me a good opportunity to engage proactively with some of the new cases. This also gives each fee-earner the chance to share or take on more for their workload; there is definitely a collegial work ethic at the firm.

11.30am: My next piece of substantive work is to do with a disputed will claim. I am tasked with reviewing a valuation report from

a London auction house to present to the client. This is to establish the total value of the residual estate. I have found it fascinating to see how the value of an estate can accumulate through even some of the most mundane items. I never knew that cutlery could be so expensive.

1.00pm: The staff lunch is a convivial affair. It is always nice to see colleagues from my previous departments and is also a great way to get to know new people in the firm. The litigation department works quite closely with the other departments, for example we work with the private client department on contentious trust work and with the family department on reputation management. It is helpful to gauge what other departments are working on to contextualise my own work.

2.00pm: One of the partners has asked me to attend a conference with counsel on a defamation claim. Defamation cases can be heavily front loaded as interim injunctions are the first obvious remedy. We discuss the overall strategy and what potentially could happen, assessing the benefits and drawbacks of the claim and attempting to second guess the other side.

3.00pm: After a short call to my colleague in the property department, I draft an internal memo to a property litigation associate explaining some research on party walls that

I had undertaken over the last few days. This is another example of how the litigation department operates closely with others.

4.30pm: I begin drafting a statement of costs. With litigation I have found that the workload peaks before a court hearing. It can be exciting when one has to reprioritise

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the workload in a hurry if a client asks for an injunction or a similar emergency application.

6.30pm: I have organised to meet up with my mentee from Coram's Fields. The firm has a close relationship with Coram's Fields, a children's charity based on the site of the original Foundling Hospital, and encourages trainees and junior solicitors to volunteer. My mentee and I set each other challenges. So far my mentee has excelled in all of her challenges. She has tasked me with running a half marathon in the Autumn on behalf of Coram's. After finishing my meeting with her, and to ensure I do her proud, I don my gym gear and get running.

About the firm

Address: 10 New Square, Lincoln's Inn, London WC2A 3QG

Telephone: 020 7465 4300 **Fax:** 020 7465 4400

Website: www.phb.co.uk

Email: recruitment@phb.co.uk

Chair of the management board: Robert Brodrick

Who we are: Payne Hicks Beach is a Lincoln's Inn firm established in 1730 providing a full range of legal services to domestic and international private and commercial clients.

What we do: The firm's reputation has been built on family and private client work as one of the few UK firms who provide these services at the highest level. Its commanding position in these areas is complemented by an excellent reputation for contentious trusts, dispute resolution, privacy and media law, company and commercial law, employment, residential and commercial property and citizenship and immigration work. Despite their position in the market, Payne Hicks Beach's lawyers pride themselves on the confidentiality and discretion with which they conduct their work, not least because the firm's clients include many household names, as a result of which the firm is one of London's best kept secrets.

What we're looking for: Applicants should have an excellent academic record (an upper second class degree is a minimum), a high degree

Facts and figures

Total partners: 27

Other fee-earners: 61

Total trainees: 5

Trainee places available for 2022: 2

Applications received pa: 350

Percentage interviewed: 3%

First year salary: £36,000

Second year salary: £38,000

Newly qualified salary: £60,000

of drive and determination, and will need to demonstrate an ability to analyse problems accurately, to be creative in finding practical commercial solutions, and communicating these clearly, as well as a flair for building relationships.

What you'll do: Trainees spend time in each of four departments, with their preferences being taken into account in this rotation so far as possible. With only one trainee per department, they play an important role, with a high level of responsibility, real work and supervised client contact from the outset.

Trainees are subject to regular assessment, and engage in the required professional skills courses, as well as in-house training. However, with the firm's team outlook and open door policy they also have access to help and support from colleagues who are acknowledged experts in their fields.

Perks: Private medical insurance; permanent health insurance; employee assistance programme; life assurance scheme; health screening; contributory pension scheme; cycle to work scheme; season ticket loan; childcare vouchers; staff introduction bonus.

Sponsorship: Full GDL and LPC funding, and a maintenance grant each year of study. BPP law school is the firm's preferred provider.

Application process

Apply to: Janice Okuns, HR manager

How: Online application form

When: By 31 July 2020 for 2022 contracts.

What's involved: Assessment day and interview.

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