

Browne Jacobson launches dedicated Black lawyers mentoring scheme to further improve diversity

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Under the initiative 13 mentees will have access to six months of 1:1 mentoring by lawyer members of its REACH community, with the option to extend for a further three months. The programme will also offer two weeks paid work experience at one of the firm's five UK offices, and access to a series of bespoke masterclasses on brand, routes into law and meeting client expectations.

The national law firm has collaborated with a number of local organisations that have extensive experience of working with a largely Black student population to launch its REACH (Race, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage) Black Mentoring Scheme.

The organisations include:

- Nottingham Trent University (Nottingham Law School)
- Birmingham Black Lawyers - a networking organisation committed to promoting diversity within the legal community.
- First Class Foundation - A charity that supports young UK ethnic minority people aged 13-25 from the West Midlands.
- Reach Out 2 Kids – a London based charity made up of Black and minority ethnic professionals, working with schools and businesses to help young people from ethnic minority and working-class backgrounds achieve their career aspirations.
- University of Wolverhampton
- University of Hertfordshire

Improving diversity and inclusion is a key strategic priority for Browne Jacobson as it looks to further increase diversity at all levels within the firm and across the legal sector.

Bridget Tatham, partner at Browne Jacobson and one of the architects of the scheme, said:

"Black people are disproportionately underrepresented in the legal profession, particularly in senior roles and we are committed to playing our part to change the landscape.

"The REACH Mentoring Scheme is just one of the programmes we are co-creating with our REACH community, to increase representation of Black talent at all levels across the firm.

"The REACH Mentoring Scheme is a programme, which incorporates paid for work experience and 6 months mentoring, with the aim of supporting and developing the next generation of talented Black lawyers.

"Ultimately, we are not only looking to positively impact early careers, but also the aim is to improve the retention and promotion of Black lawyers across all areas of our business and the wider legal market.

"What is fantastic about the scheme is that we have engaged with our REACH community and partnered with charities and educational institutions who are working with talented and underrepresented students, to make sure that the programme works and benefits Black

aspiring lawyers of the future."

Tom Lyas, Recruitment Manager at Browne Jacobson, added: "This latest initiative complements a wide range of initiatives we have in place as part of our commitment to increase diversity at the firm.

"As well as allowing students to experience first-hand what it is like to work in the legal profession, the scheme will also help us to develop another crucial talent pipeline of exceptional young trainees for the future."

Browne Jacobson's commitment to promoting greater diversity and inclusion in the legal profession is nationally recognised. Its innovative approach is spearheaded by its award-winning **FAIRE** programme, one of the UK's largest social mobility schemes for the legal profession.

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