


Tips on applying for a solicitor apprenticeship

09 February 2024  Olivia Jay

Solicitor apprenticeships are a fantastic way to kickstart your legal career. In the UK, as of 2023, there are 1,300 Solicitor Apprentices and this community continues to grow rapidly.

After completing their A-levels, individuals following the solicitor apprenticeship route can gain valuable experience within the legal field.

The programme gives apprentices an opportunity to work alongside experienced solicitors who specialise in various departments, all while earning an income and working towards a law degree.

If you're interested in applying for a solicitor apprenticeship programme, here are some useful tips to help you navigate the application process:

1) Research the firms that are offering solicitor apprenticeships

It's important to note that not all law firms offer solicitor apprenticeship programmes. To get started on finding a suitable opportunity, you should conduct some research.

Look for firms that offer these programmes and visit their websites and LinkedIn pages. Make sure to read about their core values and culture and learn what kind of work they do. This research will help you identify which firms align best with your interests, values, and career goals. After the research, you may want to make a shortlist of firms that you'd like to apply to.

It's important to be intentional about your applications, and not just apply to every programme you come across. For instance, if your ambition is to become a clinical negligence lawyer, it may be beneficial for you to apply to a solicitor apprenticeship programme at a firm that specialises in medical law. It's best to make sure that the apprenticeship you're considering is well-suited to your interests and career aspirations.

2) Check the eligibility requirements

Each firm typically has different eligibility requirements for their apprenticeship programmes. Some may require certain qualifications or grades, while others may be more focused on your personal qualities and work experience. To establish that you are well suited to the apprenticeship you are considering, it is important to make sure you meet the specific requirements before applying.

3) Tailor your application

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to job applications, and the same is true for apprenticeship programmes. By tailoring your application, you can emphasise your relevant skills and experiences that fit the job requirements, as well as demonstrate your enthusiasm for the firm and the legal profession. Remember, all experience can be useful if you can successfully tailor it to the role. For instance, have you done any charity work, taken a gap year to travel, or worked in a high-pressure retail environment? While these experiences may not seem directly relevant to the legal profession, you can showcase various skills and attributes through these experiences, so don't exclude them from your application.

4) Prepare for the assessment centre

If your application is successful, you will likely be invited to an assessment centre. The type of assessment you'll be required to complete is firm dependant. Ranging from group exercises, presentations, and one-to-one interviews. This is your chance to showcase your personality, problem solving abilities and communication skills. Preparation is vital at this stage so make sure you thoroughly research the firm and practice your interview skills. Remember to be yourself during any interviews conducted, this will help you discover which law firms' apprenticeship programme truly aligns with you and your career goals.

5) Be patient

The application process for solicitor apprenticeships can be very competitive and lengthy. It may take several months to hear back from a firm, and you may need to go through multiple rounds of assessments and interviews so it's important to remain patient throughout the process. If possible, ask for feedback to identify any areas where you can improve your application for future opportunities. The key to success is perseverance, and it's crucial to not get disheartened. Remember that rejection is redirection and can lead you toward more fitting opportunities.

Applying for a solicitor apprenticeship can be a challenging experience. However, with proper research, a tailored application, and thorough preparation for interviews, you can increase your chances of success and kickstart your legal career. Though it may be a long journey, it is certainly a worthwhile one.

Author

Olivia Jay

Solicitor Apprentice

olivia.jay@brownejacobson.com

+44 (0)330 045 2480