
THE LEGAL LAUNCH PAD (LLP) BRIEFING FOR STUDENTS

About BLD

BLD was launched in 2006 to make a real difference on diversity in the legal profession, with particular emphasis on those from black and ethnic minority backgrounds (BMEs). Its website is at www.onlineBLD.com and we would advise you to join the free mailing list by using the Quick Email Only Registration within the Directory pages. You may also want to consider becoming a BLD member – for more information about membership, email members@onlinebld.com.

BLD publishes the ground-breaking annual *Black Letter Law* publication. Also every month BLD profiles individuals who have made outstanding contribution to the legal profession. Previous individuals have included Mrs Justice Dobbs (the highest ranking black minority ethnic (BME) judge in Britain, Imran Khan, who acted for the Lawrence family following the murder of Stephen Lawrence and Baroness Scotland of Asthall, the first female and first BME Attorney -General.

ABOUT THE LEGAL LAUNCH PAD PROGRAMME

WHY WE ARE RUNNING THIS PROGRAMME

Higher than average numbers of law students and graduates are from BME backgrounds and yet they are less likely to find training contracts, pupillages and tenancies. Some of the stumbling blocks are that BME students (due to their family backgrounds and other evident disadvantages) may be less prepared and less informed about the different routes into the profession, what is required and the recruitment process. By the time they become aware of these, it may be too late along their career path, resulting in waste of their talent, resources and time.

The aim of this programme is to help prepare participants into the legal profession by increasing the likelihood of success, improving skills, providing information and raising aspirations via training workshops, coaching, mentoring and work placements.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Educate and inform about the wide ranging opportunities in the legal profession
- Raise aspirations and empower participants
- Assist participants in making informed choices
- Provide inclusive BME recruitment and retention services
- Provide work experience

Our Legal Gateway Scheme

BLD runs the Legal Gateway Scheme to widen access for ethnic minorities into the legal profession and all its career development opportunities, such as mentoring, workshops and events, fall within the scheme. The scheme is for the benefit of lawyers, trainees, pupils, paralegals, undergraduates, postgraduates and schoolchildren considering or pursuing legal careers.

BLD has joined forces with other organisations, including DLA Piper, Allen & Overy, BPP Law School, BP, Slaughter and May, Clifford Chance, Freshfields, White & Case, Olswang, Berwin Leighton Paisner, Beachcroft, and No5 Chambers, to create two programmes: **The Legal Launch Pad** and **Today's Children, Tomorrow's Lawyers** which are aimed at those aged 18 years and over and those between 14 and 17 years respectively.

The Legal Launch Pad

The Legal Launch Pad programme is primarily targeted at ethnic minorities in their second year at university but does not preclude those in the first year or in later stages of academic and other professional studies.

This programme was developed because higher than average numbers of law students and graduates are from BME backgrounds and yet they are less likely to obtain training contracts, pupillages and tenancies. Some of the stumbling blocks are that BME students (due to their family backgrounds and other evident disadvantages) are more likely to be less-prepared and

less-informed about the different routes into the profession, what is required and the recruitment process. By the time they become aware of these, it may be too late along their career path, resulting in a waste of their talent, resources and time. The aim of this programme therefore is to help prepare participants for the legal profession by increasing the likelihood of success, improving skills, providing information and raising aspirations via developmental training workshops, coaching, mentoring and practical experience of working in a legal environment by the provision of work placements.

Those Eligible to Participate

The programme started in January 2008 and was held in London, Birmingham, Manchester, and Leeds (although the work placement also includes Northampton, Newcastle and Bristol). The yearly intake is maximum of 50 and selection is by application form. The selection criteria include strong academic results, a clear understanding of the questions, communication skills and attention to detail. The quality and content of the answers on the application form are critical as you need to demonstrate your interests and achievements so far, your personal attributes, why you will benefit from the LLP programme and the research done so far into legal careers.

What Will be Gained

Successful applicants will undertake a schedule of intensive training seminars, work placements run by sponsoring organisations, workshops and one-to-one support, including having a mentor. Areas covered will include different routes into the profession, career planning, academic and other required attributes, various career options on qualification, presentation skills, commercial awareness, negotiation, interviews (including mock interviews), drafting (including drafting CVs, covering letters and applications forms).

What Applicants Need To Do Now

Download the brochure and application form on the website within the Legal Gateway pages. Complete it, ensuring that you fall within the specified criteria. Then:

1. Email the application form with your up-to-date CV **and** all other specified required supporting documentation as set out on the application form by the stated deadline (such documents can be scanned and then emailed) **OR**
2. Email the application form with your up-to-date CV **and** then post your application form, your CV **and** all other specified required supporting documentation as set out on the application form by the stated deadline.

It is critical that you complete the form fully, as your application may not proceed beyond the screening stage if it is incomplete. Please refer further to the FAQs on the website.

Dates to Note in your Diary

Please note that should your application be successful, you must attend a full Induction Day taking place in London on 28 January 2011 and the Training Sessions and work placements set out below. **Failure to do so means that your place will be terminated, your mentor withdrawn and sponsors informed.**

Other dates to note are:

Training Session 1 (Applications, Assessment and Drafting) on Thursday 3 March 2011 in London **OR** Wednesday 10 March 2011 in Manchester. This training session includes applications, drafting (including CVs and covering letters), assessment Days and interviews.

Mock Interviews. All are likely to take place in the Spring and/or Summer of 2011 in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Reading, Newcastle or Bristol as part of your work placement.

Training Session 2 (Presentational Skills, Commercial Awareness and Negotiation) on Thursday 16 June 2010 in London **OR** Thursday 23 June 2010 in Birmingham. This training session as the title indicates is a presentational, commercial awareness and negotiation skills workshop.

One Week Work Placement(s) in the Spring and/or Summer of 2011. This is likely to be in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Northampton, Newcastle or Bristol.

Expenses

A contribution towards your travel costs will be paid, in accordance with BLD's published Travel Policy. However, please note that accommodation expenses are made in **exceptional circumstances** only and prior approval must be sought before incurring such costs. Any student who has difficulty in attending any Legal Launch Pad events due to financial circumstances should speak to BLD in confidence, as further assistance may be available.