

A day in the life of a trainee solicitor

Sofia Gottgens is a trainee solicitor at Marriott Harrison. She was recruited from our Summer Vacation Scheme (as with all of our trainees). Here she describes a typical day in the office from the time that she spent in the firm's Corporate Department.

8:30 – 9:10: I have a quick check of my diary before commuting into the City, during the journey I catch up with current affairs by reading the news and checking twitter.

9:10 – 9:15: I arrive at the office and settle at my desk. I head to the kitchen to make a cup of coffee and I bump into a fellow trainee. We make a plan to go and get lunch with the other trainees that afternoon. Once back at my desk, I take some time to review my emails and go over my to-do list for the day.

9:15 – 9:30: I have a quick catch up with a Partner who has asked me whether I have capacity to help out with an M&A transaction where we are acting for the Buyer. Once briefed on the transaction, I join a call with the Partner and the Associate working on the matter together with the client to discuss timelines and next steps.

9:30 – 10:00: After meeting with the client, I dial in to our weekly corporate team meeting where we discuss the week ahead and any recent legal developments that we may have come across during the previous week. This week, one of the Associates talks about a recent legal case in relation to penalty clauses, and the team discusses what to look out for in legal drafting.

10:00 – 11:30: The Associate who I am working with on the M&A transaction asks whether I can put together a documents list for the transaction. I look through the draft share purchase agreement and compile a list of the documents needed to effect the transaction. In the list, I clearly set out who is responsible for drafting the documents, who the signatories are and when the documents need to be entered into. This is an important trainee task and is vital for transaction management. Once I finish the list, I email it to the Associate for review.

11:30 – 11:40: I have also been asked to help out on an investment by one of our venture capital clients. As part of this, we will be required to conduct due diligence in the target company. The Partner leading the transaction has set up an internal kick off meeting with the various teams who will be conducting due

diligence, including the employment and commercial and IP team. We meet to discuss what the target does and our client's main concerns when it comes to due diligence. I am put in charge of managing the due diligence process, liaising with the internal teams and putting together a first draft of the due diligence report.

11:45-13:00: I get started on the corporate due diligence for the venture capital transaction. We have been given access to a data room set up by the target, and I am responsible for reviewing all of the corporate documents. I make a list of further enquiries we have in relation to the corporate documents.

13:00 – 14:00: I meet with the other trainees outside the front of the office and we head to Leather Lane market to grab some food. We are spoilt for choice, and in the end, we all decide to go for different things. I decide to go for some Brazilian BBQ, and we then head back to the office break out room to eat our lunch and catch up.

14:00 – 16:00: Once back at my desk, I see that the Associate has reviewed my documents list for the M&A transaction and has given me the green light to start drafting buyer-side ancillary documents. I get started on drafting board minutes, stock transfer forms, powers of attorney, director appointment letters and new share certificates. Once drafted, I send them to the Associate.

16:00 – 17:00: I have a discussion with a Partner about a client who has issued some loan notes that they now want to convert. We discuss the heads of terms in respect of the conversion and I ask the Partner some questions on the mechanics of the transaction. The Partner asks me if I would like to do a first draft of the amended articles of association of the company. I look up the company's current articles, and make a note of the provisions I will need to change.

17:00 – 17:20: The Associate has got back to me with the ancillaries I drafted. I make a few minor tweaks and email them to the seller's solicitors for them to review and provide any comments.

17:20 – An email is sent round the firm inviting everyone to come down to one of the meeting rooms for drinks, as it is the first Thursday of the month. The firm holds drinks every first Thursday of the month, and it is a nice opportunity to catch up with people from other departments in a relaxed setting.