Trainee day in the life – Isobel Frankis

Departments to date: Property, Family, Private Client

9.00am: I arrive at the office. I usually aim to arrive between 8.30 and 9.00am, depending on how busy my day ahead is likely to be, and whether I have any early training sessions or meetings to attend. My morning is free today, so I check through my inbox to see whether anything urgent has come in since I logged off yesterday and update my to-do list.

Trainees across the firm are encouraged to be in the office every day and (although the early(ish) starts took a little getting used to) it is hugely beneficial being able to discuss matters and talk through questions in person with other people in the department.

9.30am: I get started on drafting a codicil to a Will and amending a Letter of Wishes. The legal director who set the task has shared several precedents with me and came to my desk yesterday to explain the documents, so I feel confident preparing first drafts before returning them for her review.

11.00am: my supervisor and I discuss a letter to a client that I prepared for her earlier in the week, which she has returned to me with amendments and comments. She talks me through the reasoning behind her amendments, and I use the feedback to make some further changes to other letters I am working on. I have found that people throughout the firm are happy to share feedback on, and explain their improvements to, the work you do for them.

1.00pm: I head downstairs to the staff lunch which the firm provides every week and meet up with the other trainees. The firm's departments are based in separate buildings around New Square, and so we catch up on how we are all getting on in our new seats. Before we go back to our desks for the afternoon, we go for a quick walk around Lincoln's Inn Fields.

2.00pm: I started drafting a discretionary trust deed yesterday and I need to finalise it before returning my first draft to a legal director for their review and comments. I have only recently started my seat in Private Client, and this is the first time I have worked on a deed of this kind. I take my time working through the draft to ensure it meets the client's requirements, and that I can explain my drafting decisions to the legal director.

4.30pm: I spend the rest of the afternoon preparing and amending some lasting powers of attorney. My supervisor has asked me to attend a meeting she is having with the clients next week and I make sure to read through the background to the file so that I will have sufficient context when making the attendance note at the meeting. Trainees are often asked to take attendance notes, whether in client meetings, at court, or in consultations with counsel, and it is always a great opportunity to observe how partners and associates at the firm advise and interact with clients.

5.30pm: I check through my to-do list again and send a couple of emails in relation to ongoing matters I am assisting on.

6.20pm: On occasion I will need to stay late at the office when I am having a busy day, or if there are urgent deadlines to meet, but this evening I am able to log off and head to the pub with another trainee in my cohort.