



The Ogier trainee solicitor programme: your opportunity to be extraordinary

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Ogier is one of the few Channel Island firms to operate a structured England and Wales Trainee Solicitor programme. We're always looking for people who fit in with the Ogier vision - driven and innovative; ambitious and technically strong.

Each year we take on a small number of graduates to our programme, which is regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority and is the equivalent of those run by City law firms. The training contract sees trainees completing a number of "seats" - either three or six months - in each of Ogier's legal teams. In addition, all trainees set development objectives and meet regularly with their supervisors to review progress and share feedback. There are also group development sessions aimed at sharing knowledge and supporting career progression.

| Meet the trainees

Kiran Uppal is on her fourth seat in the corporate team, having completed seats in property, banking and finance and funds. Natasha Aurakzai is on her third seat in banking and finance, having completed seats in funds and as in-house counsel.

Why did you choose Ogier for your training contract?

Natasha: I initially came to Ogier for a job as a paralegal and having worked here for a few months I then progressed on to a training contract. When I took the job as paralegal I knew the training contract was an option - seeing a clear path for progression was definitely a pull.

Kiran: I came straight to Ogier for the training contract, having first worked as a paralegal in a London law firm. Ogier has a great reputation in the London market, and is known for being one of the 'magic circle' offshore law firms. Having researched the firm I was particularly drawn to the high quality of the international deals that Ogier has been involved in and I wanted the opportunity to work on cross-border finance and corporate transactions.

What has been the most rewarding aspect of your experience as a trainee so far?

Kiran: I wanted to feel that I'm working towards an associate level throughout my training and that the training contract would challenge me. I've definitely experienced that at Ogier. I've really enjoyed the high level of responsibility that you're given as a trainee – you're drafting documents from the outset, contacting clients and running matters.

Natasha: It's rare to be able to say as a trainee elsewhere that you've had the kind of direct experience that we have here. We work on truly international matters given the firm operates in so many different jurisdictions, which gives us a great range of work to get involved in.

What else has life at Ogier offered you outside work?

Kiran: Ogier recognises that a number of trainees have moved to Jersey to complete their training contract, so the firm understands the importance of providing social experiences too. You're given plenty of opportunities to get to know the other trainees outside of work – from painting Elizabeth Castle on a CSR day to doing an away day at Creepy Valley, there's a lot to get involved with.

Natasha: Beyond the activities organised by Ogier, we regularly organise socials among ourselves too. A lot of us are involved in industry groups like Jersey Finance and Jersey Junior Lawyers Association, so there's always something going on. It's good to have other people you can speak with who are going through the same thing.

What advice would you give to people applying for training contracts?

Kiran: Research the firm that you're applying for and try to understand the type of work that the firm is involved in. It's useful to get practical experience in the industry before committing to a training contract, so that you understand the expectations of working in the legal profession. The training contract is no doubt a challenging but rewarding experience!

Natasha: Try to find out as much as possible about the firm before applying (maybe even try to get a paralegal position first), so that you can gauge whether it would be a good fit in terms of firm culture as well as the type of work done.

Meet the newly qualified associates

Jamie Colquhoun and Matthew Davies recently completed their training contracts with Ogier and are now associates in the firm's banking and finance and dispute resolution teams respectively.

Why did you choose Ogier for your training contract?

Matthew: I started life at Ogier as a paralegal and later decided to apply for the training contract. I initially was looking for some experience offshore but was drawn to Ogier's culture and opportunities for career progression, so decided to stay and complete my training here.

Jamie: Besides being one of the only offshore firms to offer a training contract, I liked the possibilities for progression at Ogier. I also started out as a paralegal here and it was good to know going into that role that there were clear "next steps" to aim for if I liked the work.

What did you find most surprising or rewarding about your training?

Jamie: I was impressed by how much responsibility you are given from the get-go - as a trainee you do meaningful work, get your hands on real matters and have direct contact with clients, all of which is great preparation for life as an associate.

Matthew: Although I ultimately chose to join the dispute resolution team, what surprised me most was how much I enjoyed corporate law, and how seriously I thought about it as being a potential career option for me. Some areas of law can turn out to be really different to what you initially anticipated, and you can discover interests that you didn't realise you had.

Did you find the structure of the course in terms of rotation across different teams helpful?

Matthew: The direct experience and insights I gained across different practice areas have been invaluable for my work in dispute resolution, as a lot of what we do intersects with different practice areas.

Jamie: I definitely use the knowledge I gained in other transactional seats in my work now, and from a practical viewpoint just having that oversight of different teams is really helpful.

What next?

Jamie: The plan now is to get more experience and keep building up my client contacts.

Matthew: Alongside building up my bank of experience, I'll also be looking to do my Jersey Advocate exams in the future.

Any advice for future trainees?

Jamie: Treat every seat with an open mind, even if you think it won't be for you. Every skill you learn will be useful in the long run and every seat offers a unique opportunity to see how teams work on different aspects of a transaction.

Matthew: I don't believe you can know what area of law you want to qualify in to until you have worked in that area for a little while. Some areas of law might surprise you, and you can only

discover this if you are open to this possibility.

Find out more about Ogier's training contract [here](#) or contact Harriett at harriett.bisson@ogier.com

About Ogier

Ogier is a professional services firm with the knowledge and expertise to handle the most demanding and complex transactions and provide expert, efficient and cost-effective services to all our clients. We regularly win awards for the quality of our client service, our work and our people.

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