International Women's Day – Women Working in Law

In celebration of International Women's Day 2022, several lawyers at Lester Aldridge share their experiences as females working in the law. Here's what they had to say:

Neeti Chauhan, Solicitor in our Residential Property & Conveyancing team, explains:

"I am a solicitor in our residential property department and fortunately this is an area which has always had a good mix of men and women. There has, however, been a definite shift in the number of women in senior roles over the years and this is certainly something that has increased. When I first qualified as a solicitor there was only one female partner out of eleven in the firm I was at and the idea of having aspirations of a successful career and a family were incomprehensible. In fact, in the early days, I was once told by a male partner that he would never employ a woman in her thirties as she would inevitably leave to start a family!

"Thankfully these views are now changing and women are encouraged to take on more challenging roles. After working for many years at a City law firm, I decided to take a career break and focus on raising my two small children. I was worried that this would have a negative impact on my career, but on the contrary, it has been viewed as a positive – it shows strength of character, prioritising what's important, and not being afraid to take risks. I am fortunate enough to work for a fantastic firm like Lester Aldridge who understands the benefits of flexible working and work/life balance, but also that women are excellent multi-taskers who can run home life and million-pound transactions in unison. The firm encourages and drives us to do well and succeed. The level of support here is unparalleled in comparison to anywhere else I have ever worked.

"I am proud to work at Lester Aldridge, I am proud to be a solicitor and I am proud to be a woman."

Danielle Slater, Associate in our Corporate & Commercial team, said:

"I am an Associate in the Corporate team, an area of law which, historically and currently, has a male-dominated client base. However, I am increasingly seeing more female entrepreneurs and business leaders so I expect the male dominance to weaken in the coming years.

"My experience as a female working in law has been entirely positive, which I'm sure is largely attributable to those who have fought for equality through the years. I am incredibly fortunate to be part of a firm with a number of female partners who are paving the way and inspiring more junior female lawyers to progress in their

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careers."

Partner Melia Hirst of our Restructuring and Insolvency team comments:

"I feel privileged to be working at a firm with gender equality at the forefront of its agenda and which promotes progression opportunities for women. I believe that the future ahead for women entering the law is positive with attitudes changing rapidly. This will ensure that not only are there enough women starting out in the law but that they can develop their careers (especially after starting a family) to maximise their full potential."

Senior Associate Jennie Harris from our LA Marine team explains:

"I am lucky enough to work in a very interesting and diverse area of law. Whilst there are lots of women working in the law in general, and marine law in particular, there are much fewer women than men working in the marine industry. Gender inequality unfortunately exists with biased attitudes and discrimination towards women. Thankfully, LA recognises and acknowledge individual contributions and promotes equality, celebrates diversity, and challenges inequality and barriers to diversity and fairness and will seek to change this where we can."

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