National Apprenticeship Week 2020

This week, LA is celebrating National Apprentice Week, which runs from 3rd-9th February 2020. At current, we have 5 hardworking apprentices across a variety of teams, such as Litigation and Recoveries, Accounts and Real Estate. We sat down to have a chat with them about their experience so far.

We spoke to Lilly Hayward (LH), Will Shanks (WS) and Georgiana Gegiu (GG) – here's what they said:

How have you enjoyed your time here at Lester Aldridge?

LH: I have really loved my time at LA, my team have been very welcoming and my supervisors have been superb. I've been given generous amounts of work and often get to learn new things.

WS: Despite not having been here long, I have massively enjoyed my time so far at LA, settling into work was a very relaxed process and the office space and working environment plays a large part in that, but not nearly as much as my co-workers and the people around me. For the first time in my working life I actually enjoy my day at work and you can't ask for more than that.

GG: I really enjoyed the last year and I am still enjoying working for Lester Aldridge because my team is very supportive and always helping and answering any of my questions. Also, I find that all my colleagues, so not only my team members, are very friendly, approachable and they are making me feel that Lester Aldridge is more than a company, it is like a family.

What have you learnt as an apprentice?

LH: I've learnt of admin skills such as handling post, learning how to use visual files and telephone training.

WS: So far my learning has mostly covered more basic accounting duties such as; creating and processing bills for fellow members of staff, entering invoices into our system and filing them, printing and allocating cheques and more. As I learn about different processes and accounting skills at college I will pick up more responsibilities, such as making payments via Bankline.

GG: Every day I am learning new things but I started with the basics: scanning, printing, filing into our document management systems, typing from dictation and answering the telephone. But most importantly, I have learnt and am still perfecting my communication skills and team working spirit.

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What made you decide to do an apprenticeship?

LH: I decided to do an apprenticeship when I wanted to pursue law, but wanted some experience in a law firm. By doing this apprenticeship, it's given me the skills which I can use in the future and a qualification which demonstrates my ability to work in this sort of environment.

WS: I decided an apprenticeship was right for me because I knew university wasn't. I knew that without the motivating factor of being in a workplace my productivity would decline and I wouldn't do as well as I could education-wise - wasting my potential. Learning whilst in a workplace also gives me greater flexibility over the type of content I am doing at any one time, and increase the variety of my workload.

GG: At age 35, I was considering a career change after my son was born, so I was open to start from the beginning and learn new things. An apprenticeship seemed ideal for me because this way my employer and colleagues knew I needed help, they did not assume I already knew what I was supposed to do, and so they were really patient with me and showed me everything I needed to know.

Do you have any advice for anyone about to start an apprenticeship?

LH: My advice for anyone about to start an apprenticeship is not to be afraid to ask for help, changing from full time education to an apprenticeship was quite a jump, but my supervisors have been very understanding and helpful when there has been a lot on. Also, I'd advise bringing in cake for the team!

WS: An apprenticeship is what you make of it, going in with an open mind and wanting to try everything is absolutely your best bet of getting the most out of it, which you should absolutely be trying to do. Look at it as an opportunity for kick starting the career you want.

GG: Open your eyes and be attentive, listen, absorb and learn every day!

What are your plans when your apprenticeship has finished?

LH: I'd like to stay on at Lester Aldridge and in Litigation & Recoveries. In my spare time, I'm doing a legal secretary course so I hope to make full use of this.

WS: I'm either aiming to stay on and do a level 4 qualification if the company would offer it, if not, I intend to move to London and join a firm there to complete the course. If that isn't an option, I still aim to live and work in London and will pay for the course privately as required.

GG: I find my Business Administration Apprenticeship is very useful, I learnt and still am learning new things, so I plan to follow this path and search for a full time job as Business Admin Assistant and at the same time never interrupt the learning process.

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The benefits of an apprenticeship

As an apprentice, you are given the opportunity of gaining a qualification through on-the-job training, offering a range of benefits for both the employee and the employer, e.g.:

- Work with experienced staff as a valued team member
- Develop job-specific skills
- Earn a wage and receive the benefits of being an employee such as holiday pay
- Be given time to study alongside their job – most apprentices attend college one day a week
- Gain a nationally recognised qualification

Apprenticeships available at Lester Aldridge

If you are interested in LA's apprenticeship scheme across our Bournemouth and Southampton offices, please visit our careers page or, alternatively, email careers@LA-law.com.

Find out more

To find out more information about apprenticeships, please go to the Gov.uk Apprenticeship web page, speak to your careers advisor or approach your local college. Lester Aldridge currently works with Bournemouth & Poole College and City College Southampton.

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