

### **Feedback from 2012 placement students:**

*"I really appreciated the opportunity to gain some legal experience at Bhatt Murphy. Everyone from the secretaries to the partners were so friendly and welcoming, making such a good impression that it was so easy to assimilate into the office culture here. I would definitely recommend to anyone interested in civil liberties to apply for an internship here in subsequent years! Also I thought that the programme was really useful for non-law students, as well as law students because the scheme gave a really good overview of the work of a solicitor in this area of law."*

*"I like and appreciate the firm's ability to stretch to my preference. I wanted cases I could spend time thinking about and my mentors accommodated my schedule to this, whilst still achieving a sort of balance. I was also directed to the aspects I wanted, mostly public law related matters but again, there was a good balance. I was interested in the rule of law particularly and the cases I was allowed to work on helped me to put the principle in context from a societal perspective. With law generally, I have appreciated the time I was allocated to spend on cases and reflect on my subjects at university. Glad my education didn't turn out to be a waste."*

*"The aspects of the placement that worked well included the attempt to get me to experience a range of activities that solicitors partake in. i.e. meetings with clients, prison visits. But also doing tasks such as typing up medical chronologies was useful as it shows the realistic side of what solicitors do on a daily basis. Having a well structured weekly timetable was also helpful. Friendly staff was probably one of the best aspects. My mentor and others were more than willing to give me tips on the tasks I undertook as well as advice for my training contract interview."*

*"It worked well having a mentor as you build a relationship with them which makes it easier to ask questions if there's any confusion. Working with different departments was very good experience as I was able to gain an understanding of different areas of law. Attending meetings and listening to new enquiries worked well as you get an aspect of different stages of work. Also doing work relating to those meetings and new enquiries e.g. writing up attendance notes, letters of claim and deciding what the causes of actions were in new inquiries, made the experience much more interesting. There was a lot of work, but no pressure. This worked well as it meant that I wasn't nervous about getting anything wrong as I had the time to go through work."*

*"I thoroughly enjoyed this placement. Great exposure as to the work the firm undertakes as well as what life as a legal aid solicitor entails e.g. hurdles of public funding and other procedural elements that students are not aware of when studying law academically. Also great exposure to the nature and the way Bhatt Murphy operates as a law firm."*

### **Feedback from 2013 placement students:**

*"I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at Bhatt Murphy, The firm's atmosphere and ethos really does encourage you to develop your own skills and thinking for the world of work as a practicing human rights/ civil liberties lawyer. You do have an exposure in the areas of law practiced and have the opportunity of working on substantive issues in relation to a file you're working on. Compared to other firms which I have worked with before, you really don't get down to the boring 'admin work' but are exposed to areas of work which I am currently interested in. I hope to stay in touch with the firm and its colleagues, and would consider a role with the firm if that opportunity does arise."*

*"I have been so thankful for this opportunity and am extremely grateful to the firm for taking a chance on me. It is encouraging and refreshing to come across people who are so committed to helping students and people like myself. The support you have given me, as a firm and also financially has been of great help. I would not have been able to do a placement like this in London without your help, so thank you! I have learnt so much in my time here and the experience has been invaluable. It has really opened up doors and shown me what is possible. I have felt extremely welcome by everyone here and really felt like a part of the firm."*

*"The placement feels like a sort of mini-training contract seat, and I have relished this. Far from being a passive exercise, I have been given really interesting tasks – quite meaty in my opinion – on live cases and great care has been taken by my mentor to ensure that the tasks were varied, which kept my interest in the work high at all times. The natural result of this is that I am leaving with a new head of knowledge, namely in AAP. Having sat in on an initial interview, drafted a letter of claim from scratch and talked it through with my mentor, drafted a letter to medical expert, attended court with a barrister and heard arguments, and also sat in on the tail-end of the process - a costs hearing, I have gained a general idea of how all the different aspects come together."*

*"I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience at the firm and I am extremely grateful to have been given the opportunity to be a part of such a unique practice. I will definitely keep in touch with many of the members. Everyone has been absolutely lovely and very welcoming. I hope in the future to become a more permanent member of this firm and share my experiences with others."*

#### **Feedback from 2014 placement students:**

*"The work I've been involved with has been really varied including indexing files, taking notes, drafting claimant's statements and preparing schedule's of police officers accounts. I've had a really interesting, practical insight into working in this type of firm."*

*"I really enjoyed the level of responsibility I was given but at no time have I felt overwhelmed or as if I didn't know what I was doing. This is because with everything I've been working on, my supervisor has taken the time to explain things clearly and answer any questions I've had. It's much more satisfying to feel as if you've actually helped instead of just being found things to do."*

*"I have felt really supported by everyone from BM, everyone has been extremely helpful and made me feel really welcome. Thank you so much for this opportunity, I have enjoyed every second of it and I hope to continue my involvement with the firm."*

*"I enjoyed getting involved in cases, especially doing complex work like legal research and NASS applications. I really enjoyed meeting clients. I especially enjoyed going to a settlement hearing. I really enjoyed talking to the solicitors, paralegals and trainees about the law and legal practice. It was good to be kept busy and have lots of work to do. I received a lot of encouragement from my mentor and she was always there to answer questions but she also let me take a lot of initiative which I was very happy about."*

*"I really appreciated the opportunity to become absolutely sure that this is what I want to do. It was really great to be able to see that it is actually possible to have the power to get justice for people. It has helped me see that being a legal aid lawyer will be worth the difficulty of doing the GDL and LPC unfunded. I am also really glad that it was paid at the living wage and travel expenses were paid as this made it a great deal easier for me."*

*"Thank you SO much for this opportunity; I have loved every minute of it and have thoroughly enjoyed my time here. Thank you for making me feel part of the team and for giving students the chance to gain some work experience in a highly competitive industry."*

#### **Feedback from 2015 placement students:**

*"I liked the fact that we were given trainee mentors as they were able to give us advice on training contracts etc. I really enjoyed that we were left to do our tasks by ourselves and it consisted of "real work" rather than just shadowing. It is great that you ensure that we get both experience in the office and with clients. Overall it has been a great experience that I have really enjoyed."*

*"Working on a range of cases was really beneficial as I was able to get a taste of the different areas of law Bhatt Murphy works in, whilst also gaining insight into how a case is produced. Furthermore,*

*working alongside different people in the firm was very beneficial as I was able to see a visual progression from paralegal to solicitor. Lastly, a pleasant opportunity was being able to go to court and see two very different trials, a criminal and civil case.”*

*“Mentors were really helpful both helping with work and general career advice. I got to do real hands-on work on real case across a range of practice areas, e.g. immigration detention/actions against the police/day at court. Having the accommodation was really helpful (the experience would not have been an option for me otherwise). I really enjoyed my time here and would love to do more with the firm in future.”*

*“I felt that there was a great variety of work that I was exposed to. I got to experience cases that were at their earliest stages, and sit in on cases that have progressed over the years. It was great to be exposed to lawyers at different stages of their careers. Being exposed to the workload of a trainee lawyer, whilst also being exposed to the workload of a partner provided me with a comprehensive view of what a career in legally aided law entails.*

*I thought it was great that almost everyone in the firm had a vague idea of who I was and I did not need to awkwardly introduce myself fresh to everyone. I appreciated that everyone in the firm went out of their way to be very friendly to me – it really did help make me feel more comfortable!*

*Lunches with partners/other lawyers were an excellent opportunity to hear more about the nature of the work undertaken here from a personal point of view. A lot of queries/confusions I had about this area of work were cleared up during these lunch sessions!”*

#### **Feedback from 2016 placement students:**

*“I enjoyed working with various people in the firm, and the types of cases taken on. I also enjoyed drafting advice letters and attendance notes (something I have not encountered previously). It was also interesting to sit in on a meeting about new enquiries and see how causes of action were thought about.”*

*“Thank you so much for the hands on experience! The summer placement has really confirmed to me that this is the right career path to pursue!”*

*“I found the general organisation of the placement to be of a really high standard. The fact we were provided with a folder including a full work plan for the fortnight, on the first Monday morning, was excellent, and particularly good that Rachel continued to update it as things changed over the course of the two weeks. The organisation between different members of the firm was great as I was able to work with a broad range of people within the firm, from partners to paralegals, and able to work on a variety of cases. There was always something to do, and everyone was very happy to provide jobs, and genuinely appreciative of the help. I also really appreciated that any members on a court run/court visit would invite us along where possible.*

*I really liked the fact that we were given trainee mentors and a close relationship with the paralegals and other trainees was encouraged, as this gave us a chance to learn a lot from those who were in our position not that long ago.*

*Internships like this one are excellent for students while they are still studying as it has provided me with the motivation to work in my degree after having seen the job I'd like to have, as well as enhancing my prospects of securing work later on. Aside from a summer placement, there might be the potential for students to work on court runs, or intern one day a week helping with administrative work on cases.”*

#### **Feedback from 2017 placement students:**

*“I really liked interacting with different members of staff, and being able to get an overall insight rather than having just stayed with one solicitor or trainee for the experience. I loved listening in to new enquiries and speaking to Raju about their merits and prospects. I learnt so much in court, too. I went to an inquest in the first week with Carolynn and that was so interesting, then to a PIR, and then with Tony*

*to see the beginning of a trial. I particularly enjoyed visiting courts and engaging with the clients.*

*I have to say how grateful I am for the help I have been given since being offered my placement. As somebody who is from a tiny town in south Wales, coming to London was really daunting and I wouldn't have had any idea where to look for accommodation had Diane not helped out. The firm has been so generous and I can't emphasise enough how thankful I am. My self-confidence has come on leaps and bounds since being here, too. I was panicking about being given work I wouldn't know how to complete or being expected to know lots of information, but Anastasia has helped me so much and everybody has been so patient and welcoming. I haven't once felt like a "spare part" or like I was a burden, either, which is unique (in my experience at least) of work placements or experience opportunities."*

*"The schedule was organised in a way which allowed me to dip into all the areas of law BM specialise in within a short period of time. This meant that I was constantly learning and experiencing things I have never experienced before such as attending an inquest hearing.*

*I would like to highlight that my mentor, Catherine, was absolutely amazing. We got on really well from the get go and I felt I could approach her with anything. The whole teams generally are extremely warm and welcoming – I felt a part of it. Bhatt Murphy definitely lived up to my expectations."*

*I thoroughly enjoyed attending an inquest and engaging with both the firm's partner (the acting solicitor) and the family's barrister. Furthermore, I enjoyed the fact that I was constantly kept on my toes, involved in real life cases and having a trainee solicitor as mentor provided a great insight into what is instore for me in the near future. I was also challenged even further during this experience and I was able to independently write a letter of claims to the Home Office, which was my biggest challenge but I gained a lot of confidence in both myself and my abilities. Everyone in the firm was very friendly and treated each other with respect and collaborated well with one another even the partners, it felt as though no hierarchy existed within in the firm which made the whole experience less pressurised and intense.*

*"I really enjoyed the variety of relevant work that I was tasked with. Being provided with an understanding of how each of these tasks would affect the nature of a case was also useful in helping me understand the nature of pre-litigation work and the importance of every aspect of it. In addition, being able to attend an inquest and go the Court of Justice helped cement my desire to learn more about legal process and pursue law. All in all, the experience has been instrumental in confirming the career path I want to take and has shed light on the avenues I could go down.*

*Thank you very much for offering me the opportunity. The 2 weeks were an amazing experience and Bhatt Murphy exemplifies everything I hoped a law firm would be. Dedicated to an amazing cause and caring to all its staff and clients!"*

#### **Feedback from 2018 placement students:**

*"I had a lovely time at a lovely firm! Such interesting and amazing work, I'm really glad I've had the chance to be exposed to this kind of work as I don't know many people my age who have had such an opportunity."*

*"I was really luck that whilst I was here that there was an office party on the second evening; this is a really good way to get to know people quickly and in a relaxed environment."*

*"Being able to work with quite a few different people and being invited to different client meetings was great. I feel like I was really opened up to the work of a legal aid firm."*

*"I had an amazing experience at the firm."*