

EIP



My journey from student to associate

It's officially National Careers Week, a week to focus on providing career guidance to help support young people leaving education.

As in previous years, we wanted to highlight the different routes available to young people after completing education. In this Q&A, you will hear from [Liam Rhodes](#), Associate at EIP, on his studies and career advancements at EIP. He also provides advice to anyone who may be preparing for a training contract.

Hi Liam! Could you tell us about your route from school to studying biochemistry at the University of Birmingham?

I was absolutely mad for anything science related from as early as I can remember. During my A-levels I developed a particular interest in evolutionary biology and that transitioned quite neatly into genetics and biochemistry at university. Birmingham has a great selection of genetics modules on their biochemistry course and I was able to study genetics based topics for the majority of my final year modules.

Great! You then become a

Trainee Solicitor at EIP. How did you find the role and what was the application process like?

EIP's application process genuinely stood out from other law firms. I found other training contract applications to be pretty taxing and I often found myself answering a whole host of bizarre questions, not to mention plugging in every academic result over and over again! These often felt more like a hurdle to prove you were interested in the firm rather than a real attempt to assess your skillset. In terms of written information, EIP simply asks for a CV and cover letter and from that point on it was a very personal experience, consisting of calls with the Recruitment team and in-person interviews with the Partners in the Litigation team.

What projects did you get involved in as a Trainee Solicitor and how did those two years prepare you to become an associate?

I got to work on a fantastic variety of projects during my training contract. These ranged from the larger 'headline-grabbing' litigation cases at EIP, including being heavily involved in one particular trial at the High Court, through to supporting a smaller client considering a more cost-effective IPEC claim, through to working with the patent attorneys at EIP on non-contentious matters, such as advising clients on Open Source Software issues. There was even the opportunity to assist with a rewarding pro-bono case, involving a private individual who needed support with an IP matter. My training contract was capped off with a three-month secondment in Dyson's commercial contracts team, which provided experience that I am already putting into practice back at EIP.

Now you are an associate at EIP, what's changed?

Exposure to more direct contact with clients has been the most noticeable change. As the EIP Litigation team moves into supporting more non-contentious and commercial IP matters, I've recently had the opportunity to put my Dyson experience to good use and support a client directly with their NDAs and commercial contracts. Part of this role involves me taking responsibility for the client's NDA system and setting up a process at EIP to help manage their NDAs going forward.

Could you tell us about what like most about working at EIP?

The atmosphere at the firm is the highlight for me. During work hours it's a very open office where the norm is to talk to colleagues across the room. As a trainee, and even now, exposure to these conversations provides insight into the various cases and helps you understand the key decisions being made. The firm also has a great 'JFDI' (Just Do It) attitude when it comes to finding practical solutions that work for the client. Outside of work there is a strong buy-in to the social events (which are plentiful), all the way from the managing partners to the trainees. This was most apparent during the COVID lockdowns when numerous quizzes and activities were organised by the team.

What advice do you have for others looking to do a similar role to yours?

I feel that simply reading from high quality sources is such an underappreciated activity when preparing for your training contract and career as a lawyer. Whether it's a judgment, a scientific article or even a just a good book it's so beneficial to not just absorb the knowledge, which is great for interview questions, but also the style of writing, which will shine through in your cover letter, and to improve your reading and comprehension in general.

If you are considering your career options, please reach out to us for a non-committal conversation about your future in IP at:

careers@eip.com.