

#MonthlyMotivation: Sophia Margetts (class of 2015)



Sophia was always inclined to work in Law but her recent role as a paralegal has inspired her to start a Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL).

What did you do at University?

After finishing school in 2015, I went straight to Bristol University to study English Literature, graduating with a First in 2018. Aside from studying, I was involved in a few societies; (Falstaff) English, the student newspaper (Epigram) and Rowing.

What was the Rowing Club like?

Brilliant. I was fortunate enough to be a Squad Captain in my second and third year. During this time, I worked towards improving the club's performance and fundraising efforts.

Do you have a particular highlight?

I think it would have to be representing Bristol at the [European Games \(EUSA\)](#), where my boat unexpectedly won Gold!

What have you gone on to do after University?

Although I loved Bristol (I often go back to visit my sister, Mia - class of 2018), after graduating I returned to London to begin my role as a paralegal for didlaw.

What does your role as a paralegal involve?

I assist solicitors with their preparation for settlements and/or litigation. This may entail scanning documents, drafting witness statements, or even attending a conference to make notes on the firm's behalf. I tend to spend a lot of time organising information, as well as proof reading settlements before they reach the clients. The hours are quite long but the work is never repetitive and I enjoy the challenge of working to strict time limits.

When did you know you wanted to pursue a career in law?

I always knew that I wanted to go into Law; however, I initially thought I wanted to go to the bar and so I undertook work experience at several chambers. Although I enjoyed it - especially as I shadowed a deportation case against the Home Office - I found the life of a barrister to be generally, quite lonely. I also felt that my skillset - working in teams and writing essays - was better suited to being a solicitor. As such, in preparation, I began my job as a paralegal and applied to do a GDL at BPP Waterloo.

How do you think Putney has helped you in the world of Law?

The career fairs and PIE talks were all useful in consolidating my inclination towards Law, yet I think, outside of that, it's the Putney ethos - in essence, the emphasis placed on being spirited and critically astute - that best prepares you for a career in a fast-paced environment, such as the City.

What was it like applying for training contracts and work experience?

Law is notoriously competitive and as such, landing a training contract can be difficult. Although the process can be demoralising, it is important to use the setbacks as motivation for next time and to remain open-minded. Putney fosters self-belief, and that has enabled to me keep going, even as certain applications haven't gone my way.

In light of this, what would you recommend to those thinking about applying or working in Law?

Firms will expect you to be academically strong, but having work experience is essential. I would recommend applying for vacation schemes as early as possible and to not limit yourself to the big firms. Whilst it is important to be ambitious and to strive for the best, you do not want to rule out work experience at a high-street firm that could give you an insight into legal procedure. In preparation for any work experience, I would read as much as possible about the firm - what cases are they working on and what are their expertise? It is important to demonstrate a commercial awareness; firms are in themselves businesses and so reading the Financial Times, knowing about key mergers and corporate restructures will give you the edge. Good Luck!

