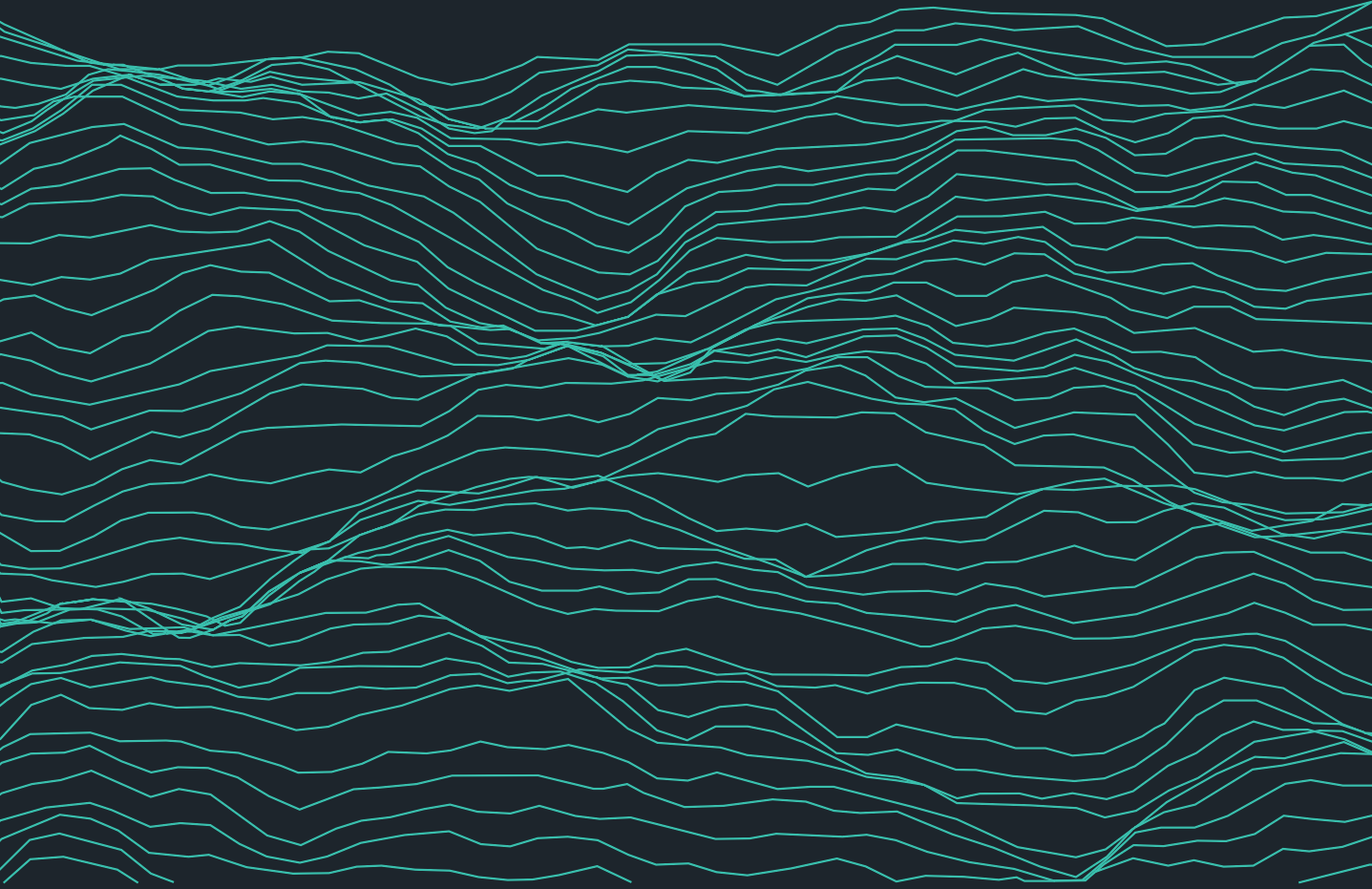


KIRKLAND & ELLIS



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Stand out from the crowd

Choosing which firm to start your legal career with is one of the biggest decisions you'll make.

At Kirkland & Ellis we combine the benefits of a small trainee intake with the excitement of being part of a global firm, employing over 3,500 lawyers in 21 offices around the world.

It's the best of both worlds, ensuring you have both the support and space you need to grow.

Talent, drive and enthusiasm.
That's what makes a Kirkland & Ellis lawyer.



Welcome

“Trainees at Kirkland & Ellis seize the opportunity to take ownership of every task and make things happen for their clients and team. We reward them with real responsibility.”

At Kirkland & Ellis, we work on the biggest and most complex global private equity transactions. These are dynamic, challenging and high-profile deals that stretch your intellect and require you to be a business advisor as well as a lawyer. You will meet extremely talented clients from the most successful businesses and financial sponsors on transactions across a diverse range of industry sectors.

Each year we recruit up to 15 trainees who join a team of over 500 lawyers. We look for people who have a genuine interest in private equity and transactional legal work as well as individuals who are self-motivated, driven and ambitious. We have a track record of promoting our associates to partner after six years; our aim is to provide all our lawyers with an accelerated career path, the best technical and deal experience, and client development opportunities.

On top of the essential academic qualifications, we're interested in individuals who can demonstrate initiative and who have the confidence and ambition to thrive in an environment that places no limits on how successful you can be.

At Kirkland & Ellis, we have close-knit deal teams of partners and associates. As such, all our lawyers get the opportunity to work across every aspect of a transaction, right from day one. This will give you full exposure to how deals come together and a greater appreciation of the importance of the tasks that you will be involved in. With an understanding of the big picture, you will quickly become an integral part of the team, putting forward ideas and finding solutions to complex legal and deal issues.

Join a firm that is highly successful, entrepreneurial, energetic and fun. Kirkland & Ellis is a place where individual thinking is encouraged and where the view of each lawyer is respected. Everyone gets fully involved and takes ownership of their work to achieve the best result for the client.

Read on to learn more about the experiences of some of our lawyers, and apply for our Training Contract to experience it for yourself. We look forward to meeting you.

Be part of the team from day one

We believe in giving our trainees ready access to associates and partners because it means you hear about the work going on and the role you can play.

You'll be heavily involved with real deals and cases, not just listening and learning but relied upon to make a valuable contribution to the team.

"We operate small teams which means everyone has a role and our trainees gain exposure to everything that goes on."





Work for a firm with a strong international reputation

Kirkland & Ellis is a recognised major force on the global stage, practising English, US and international law. Our global footprint of offices and international outlook means we're trusted by many of today's biggest global brands.

The organisations we work with in London and the size of the transactions means we handle frequent matters across multiple jurisdictions. We have a reputation for managing our clients' international objectives very effectively.

"We have international work in the London office as well as working with our colleagues overseas on international projects."





From the Gherkin to 40 Leadenhall



Image: #ByAssembly

Due to tremendous growth, and after almost 30 years in the Gherkin, Kirkland will be moving to 40 Leadenhall in 2025, a brand-new, modern, amenities-rich building with excellent environmental and sustainability credentials.

“40 Leadenhall provides us with the perfect opportunity to create from scratch an uncompromisingly exceptional environment for Kirkland’s future. We have spent over three years working with leading architects, designers, and workplace specialists to create a space which is state of the art – from wellness and social facilities to lighting, office design and technology to boost well-being.”

Matthew Elliott and Stephen Lucas,
Firm Committee Members

“We have focused on features which weave in innovation, collaborative areas, and sustainability to ensure we all benefit from a space that facilitates teamwork and a more enjoyable ‘at work’ experience.”

Matthew Elliott and Stephen Lucas,
Firm Committee Members

Kirkland will be the anchor tenant in this impressive building, occupying almost 400,000ft² over floors 15 to 34 on the north side of the building. At approximately 817 feet tall, 40 Leadenhall is one of London’s tallest buildings and the third-largest office building in the City of London, offering panoramic views of the cityscape. Built over an entire city block, with entrances at Leadenhall Street and Fenchurch Street, it also incorporates the Grade II-listed building at 19-21 Billiter Street, built in 1865, which has been carefully restored as part of the project.

Sustainability

The 40 Leadenhall building is redefining sustainability standards, setting new benchmarks for environmental awareness and efficiency. It is targeting numerous accreditations and sustainability benchmarks, notably BREEAM ‘Excellent’ and NABERS 5 Star (both widely recognized ratings systems used to access the environmental sustainability and performance of buildings).

The building project incorporates energy-efficient systems, renewable energy sources and sustainable materials to minimise its environmental footprint. The building’s facade reflects the latest advancements in architectural technology and environmental performance. The building’s design prioritises occupant comfort, indoor air quality, and access to natural light and green spaces. Advanced energy-efficient technologies will be employed throughout the building, from smart lighting systems to ventilation sensors, ensuring optimal energy performance year-round. Water-saving fixtures and the use of recycled water will minimise water consumption, and a comprehensive waste management plan promotes recycling and composting.

Sustainability was a key focus during the initial construction of the building:

- 100% of the timber procured for the project is Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) or Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) certified, sourced from sustainably managed forests to avoid deforestation.
- 100% of our construction waste is diverted from landfill, with the majority becoming Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF), which can then be converted into energy.

- The Correx used on site (sheeting that protects windows, lift lobby walls and the floors during construction) is made from 100% recycled plastic. At the end of the project, it will be recycled into new protection sheets, saving roughly 30 tonnes of CO₂e (embodied carbon).
- Most of the site office furniture (lockers, canteen, office equipment etc.) has been reused from a previous project at Battersea Power Station, saving 80 tonnes of CO₂e.



Billiter entrance



Central Square

Overview of 40LH amenities



Outdoor rooftop bar and restaurant



Billiter Street Building restaurant and café



Treehouse ‘private members club’ workspace and lounge



Cycle-to-work facilities



Wellness and fitness suites (including Peleton bikes and access to yoga, pilates and HIIT classes)



Seven outdoor terraced balconies



Library with over 6,000 books to read and borrow



Screening room which will host monthly movie nights



40 Leadenhall reception



Leadenhall Street view

Training Principal
Rajinder Bassi

“Trainees spend the majority of their time working on real deals and cases gaining exposure to partners who are working at the top of their game.”

During the first weeks at Kirkland & Ellis, all trainees participate in an induction process that introduces them to the firm. Our aim is to ease you into working life and integrate you into the firm. Everyone will be aware of your arrival and will be looking forward to meeting you. You're seen as a valuable new resource for partners and associates to draw on – something you need to live up to.

Over the next few months there are lunchtime training sessions for you to participate in, which cover different aspects of our practice areas. These are delivered by partners and are the more formalised part of our training programme. They give you valuable grounding in the practice areas that you may experience during your seat rotations. The opportunities to play to your interests are enormous and the self-starters we're looking for will always be talking to associates and partners about the projects going on and the work they can get involved in.

Your supervisor in each seat will help you control your workload so you can deliver on all of the responsibilities you're eager to fulfil.

A desire for responsibility is one of the common threads amongst Kirkland & Ellis trainees. We're a firm that's happy to give it to you based on your proven ability to deliver. With our mid and end of seat reviews we give you feedback on your development and the opportunity to develop and mould your capabilities and approach in response.

Feedback is a two-way street, however. An important cultural aspect of our firm is the dialogue we encourage. Doors are always open to trainees who have ideas and initiatives they want to put forward and our non-hierarchical and meritocratic approach means great ideas will be responded to far quicker than they would be elsewhere. Our responsiveness is a key feature of our entrepreneurial culture.

We're a firm that doesn't stand still, always finding new and better ways to do things for the success of our clients, our firm and our people. So if you want opportunities in abundance, have the confidence and drive to act on them yourself, and have the personal skills you need to build a network and become part of the team, Kirkland & Ellis is a place you will flourish without question.



Work with high-profile clients from the start

One of the exciting things about the work we do at Kirkland & Ellis is advising clients from well-known businesses we see around us every day. Everything from retail companies to healthcare, real estate to hospitality.

It's not unusual for the deals we're involved in to be covered in the business pages and sometimes the headline news. It gives all of us a lot of satisfaction – no matter how long we've been in the business – to know we're operating at that level and at the top of our game.

"You have direct client contact early on and they're fine with that. With the whole team involved, the client knows they're getting a quality product."



Trainee

Olivia O'Hara

First seat: **Corporate** Second seat: **Investment Funds**

Third seat: **Litigation**

There's an enthusiasm at Kirkland that is very contagious.

I spotted it at a graduate recruitment fair and now

I'm experiencing it for myself.

People are excited about their work and proud of their role, which makes you want to step up, do better and be of the same calibre.

Associates and partners take a real interest in you and are generous with their knowledge. My supervisor in my first seat, Corporate, was very generous with his time and explained essential trainee tasks, alongside walking me through the complex legal elements of transactions. Even the senior partners care about the trainees and invest time in them.

My work in the Funds team was varied, challenging and fast-paced. Over the course of my six-month seat, I saw the full cycle of a fundraise, from the initial phases of marketing through to the closing of a fund. This has given me a comprehensive understanding of how Private Equity Funds are structured, and the legal reasoning behind it. It's a genuinely meritocratic environment, where if you do the work and learn quickly, you earn the right to be included in more complex tasks.

It takes repetition and practice and it's as much about learning on the job as the more formal training sessions. But the great thing is you have space to make mistakes. Everyone makes them and that's OK, you then learn from them and your supervisor is on hand to ensure your work product is client ready.

In addition to general team events I was also able to attend an amazing diversity event through our Women's Professional Network with professional ballet dancers performing inside St Paul's Cathedral. Not only were there lawyers from our firm in attendance, but also various private equity clients. I found it invaluable having the opportunity to engage with them all, and ultimately already start to build my professional network.





Take responsibility for your own career

The culture of the firm is friendly and informal, the training process feels open and flexible. You can talk to anyone about the work you're doing and are encouraged to ask questions.

You can get involved in private equity work, leveraged financings, financial restructurings, taxation arrangements on domestic and international transactions, mergers and acquisitions, regulatory and fund formation matters, and competition issues, as well as litigation and arbitration cases.

"We're a young, modern firm looking for self-starters who've figured out through their research that they like the kind of work we do."





Newly Qualified Associate (former Kirkland Trainee)

Ed Mort

First seat: **Litigation** Second seat: **Corporate**
Third seat: **Debt Finance** Final seat: **Investment Funds**

I decided to choose Corporate as my specialism upon qualification, however it was a tough decision! I really enjoyed all four of my seats, but ultimately Corporate appealed to me most.

In Corporate, you need to keep many plates spinning and new things can crop up at any point. However it is your involvement in lots of different workstreams which helps you to make connections, problem spot and highlight any opportunities to the associates and partners you're supporting.

In each of my seats I learnt about business as much as the law. Although what was really valuable was asking the right questions. For example, why are we doing things this way? Or what business goal is this supporting? When you see the senior partners in action you can tell they're trusted advisors, not only about the law but business. They provide general counsel.

Qualifying as an associate will feel like a bit of a jump, but thankfully collaboration and support doesn't stop once you've moved on from being a trainee. Everyone at Kirkland really does take care of you.

I remember on my first day as a trainee, an associate gave up three hours of their time to show me around and introduce me to my new colleagues in the team. I then felt much more confident walking around the offices to ask if there was anything I could do to help.

No matter what route you've taken to get onto the training contract, it's a level playing field when you get here. You all start at zero. So for me, doing a history degree instead of a law degree wasn't an issue. In the interview process, what the partners are really looking for is an understanding of what Private Equity is, and why you think you're suited to this kind of work. On top of that the most important thing is to be yourself!

Remember you're on a huge learning curve when you get here and with each new seat you embark on. Stay humble. Acknowledge you're not the finished product yet. Ask questions, show interest in everything and get involved. People will respect you for that and help you to learn as much as you can.



A firm where people really matter

Pursuing a career in law and working for Kirkland & Ellis is challenging but everyone here is behind your success, whether that's your supervisor during each seat, associates you collaborate with, or partners who share their knowledge and expertise.

Our open culture gives you access to everyone and through regular progress meetings you can share any concerns as well as discuss your ambitions. We also give you the freedom to manage your own time, so you can deliver what's been asked of you and fulfil your interests and commitments outside of work.

"We place a lot of trust in our trainees to understand and manage their own work, which for the kind of people we hire is very motivating."

Superior training across multiple practice areas

High-quality training is the hallmark of our trainee training programme at Kirkland & Ellis.

Your success goes hand in hand with ours, so we are passionately committed to your personal development and career progression. Join us and you will receive quality training right through to qualification and beyond.

You will have four six-month seats. Three of our main practice areas are corporate, finance and investment funds so it is likely you will spend a seat in each of these. Your other seat(s) will be allocated from one of our other complementary practice areas.

Your training

The formal training programme we run for the first four months of your Training Contract covers primary practice areas in detail, building on the skills you have already learned, while also introducing new topics. There are also opportunities for soft skills training with our firm's Leadership and Management Training programme.

Post-qualification training

Your training and development does not stop after your Training Contract. We continue to invest in your professional development through regular lunchtime training sessions and workshops.

These are tailored specifically to the work of the London office, such as corporate and finance update sessions. Nearly all of our teams have Professional Support Lawyers, dedicated to ensuring you receive the highest quality training throughout your career.

At Kirkland & Ellis your career is our business, so we are focused on helping you become the best lawyer you can be.

Rewards & benefits

First year trainees receive a starting salary of £60,000 and this rises to £65,000 in the second year. We pay the fees for your compulsory qualification prep courses and exams and provide a competitive maintenance grant for the year of study. On top of that we also offer:

Private Medical Insurance	GP Consultation Service	Wellbeing Apps
Life Insurance	Fertility And Family Forming	Kirkland Concierge
Income Protection	Employee Assistance Programme	25 Days Holiday
Travel Insurance	Cycle To Work Scheme	Season Ticket Loan
Pension Scheme	Free Breakfast and Lunch	Business Travel Accident Insurance
Corporate Gym Membership	Emergency Back-Up Child/Elder Care	Menopause Plan
BUPA Health Assessment		Annual Flu Shots
Dental Plan		Eye Care

“There’s a real openness about the firm which makes it easy to be yourself.”

A working environment that inspires you

Everything we’re proud of at Kirkland & Ellis stems from our open, dynamic, friendly, inclusive and professional culture that we’re committed to maintaining.

Culture

Our trainees feel the benefit of an inspirational working culture from the moment their training contract begins. In their first few weeks they undertake an induction programme that eases them in to their new working environment, with a focus on integration and making sure names and faces are quickly known amongst the whole London team. All of our partners operate an open door policy, ensuring any questions about matters or an individual’s role and development are dealt with in an unhindered way.

The atmosphere this helps to create encourages all of our associates and trainees to collaborate, share knowledge and inspire each other too. The result for our clients is a team of highly motivated and informed lawyers working on their projects, with everyone making the most of each other’s knowledge and experience to get the best result.

It’s not just about work. Our lawyers and staff get together regularly in our café at breakfast and lunchtimes, as well as attending our themed monthly socials.

“Our commitment to diversity is reflected not only in the firm’s policies, programmes and committees, but also through our efforts to build and maintain a culture that values and gathers strength from difference.”

We have lots of social events throughout the year too, such as our Halloween pumpkin carving competition, and our summer and winter parties. For those who enjoy team sports we also have netball and football teams for anyone who is interested, whatever your ability. Everyone works hard here, but in the fun, supportive and collaborative environment we nurture, the results we deliver are significant and the sense of achievement equally so.

Diversity

At Kirkland, we believe that our ability to function at the very highest level of our profession is significantly enhanced by building a team of lawyers who bring us the benefits of a broad range of socioeconomic, racial, ethnic and personal backgrounds. Our lawyers and staff boast rich and varied backgrounds, knowledge and skills, and we value and encourage diversity with respect to each individual’s work style, career path and experiences.

Our commitment to diversity is reflected not only in the Firm’s policies, programmes and committees, but also through our efforts to build and maintain a culture that values and gathers strength from difference.

- **Pride Professional Network**
- **Race and Ethnicity Professional Network**
- **Women’s Professional Network**

Strategic Partnerships

As part of our graduate recruitment we work closely with diversity organisations including Aspiring Solicitors, PRIME and SEO. Many of our current and past trainees utilised at least one of these diversity organisations when they were making their own applications, and were able to meet members of the firm through our partnered open days, work experience schemes and networking events.



*“Using our legal skills to better lives,
communities and our profession.”*

A firm that takes its role in society seriously

In 2023, Kirkland & Ellis worldwide devoted more than 144,100 hours to organisations and individuals in Pro Bono matters. Our commitment as a firm to providing legal services without charge to those who cannot afford legal counsel is based on our goals of helping to improve clients' lives, bettering communities and deepening the professional experience of our attorneys.

“At Kirkland, we are committed to advancing the local and global communities in which we live and work. In London, we partner with Pro Bono organisations to help further their work to assist our local communities and beyond. We dedicate substantial energy, talent and resources to an array of meaningful causes and initiatives through our Pro Bono programme that reflect our values and vision.”



Harkiran Hothi,
London Pro Bono Partner

Over the last year, lawyers from Kirkland & Ellis London have provided Pro Bono services to a diverse range of organisations and benefitted enormously from the experience of clients and challenges outside of their usual legal work. More importantly, they have really made a difference to the people for whom they have worked. Every hour of Pro Bono work counts as billable equivalent, hour for hour for associates and our Firm aims for each associate to spend at least 20 hours per year on Pro Bono work. Pro Bono opportunities are available to attorneys at all levels, including trainees. We have highlighted some of the Pro Bono projects in which attorneys at the Firm have been involved.

Kirkland has partnered with the University House Legal Advice Centre, one of London's oldest legal aid organisations, to provide volunteer staff for its weekly housing clinic in East London since 2017. The clinic provides free legal support to vulnerable individuals facing housing issues including homelessness, evictions, and poor living conditions.

Since 2015 Kirkland attorneys have represented numerous clients in welfare benefits appeals with a success rate of over 90%.

Since 2020, Kirkland attorneys have provided substantial Pro Bono support to Amicus, an apolitical, non-campaigning, non-profit organisation that helps provide legal representation to those facing the death penalty in the United States, by building a portfolio of user-friendly case files for prisoners on death row.

The London office partners with Refugee Legal Support and several City law firms in the Family Reunification From Europe Project, which aims to reconnect refugees living in England with their family members in refugee camps across Europe.

In 2023, the Firm also engaged in a variety of Pro Bono matters assisting women who have survived gender violence and been impacted by the criminal legal system, including representing a previously incarcerated woman in a lawsuit against the prison official who assaulted her and helping trafficking survivors clear their criminal records.

Our Investment Funds Group has been engaged in multiple matters on behalf of Big Issue Invest, an affiliate of the Big Issue group of charities, including the formation of the Growth Impact Fund alongside charity UnLtd after their research uncovered very significant unmet funding needs in the social enterprise sector, particularly for enterprises founded by individuals from underrepresented groups. Kirkland has already helped successfully raise capital from a diverse group of investors into a novel fund structure to enable Big Issue to invest in social enterprises across the UK.

KIRKLAND & ELLIS
pro bono 



Trainee

O'Neil Ouinsou

First seat: **Real Estate Finance** Second seat: **Debt Finance**
Third seat: **Corporate**

I did a lot of research before joining Kirkland. I completed internships at law firms, as well as two investment banks and an asset management company.

My first internship was when I was still at school, and I also attended work experience schemes at two law firms through the diversity organisation, PRIME.

I am now a second year trainee, having completed my second seat in the Debt Finance team. The main focus in this group is leveraged finance transactions. My first seat was a subset of the wider finance group – Real Estate Finance. I love the pace of the work in this area and the commercial element, plus the range of industry sectors you get to work on. The deals I've been involved with to date have included the healthcare, real estate and logistics sectors.

What appealed to me most about Kirkland is the space to be entrepreneurial. It's what's expected, whereas other firms from my experience were a little more systematised, with work allocated based purely on capacity.

At Kirkland, you can build your own practice in the early years, by putting yourself forward for work. The more work you do, the better you will be and the more opportunities you will get.

It's a social place and events are a great time to network with people. Just recently there was the Annual Debt Finance Retreat, which involved talks from the practice areas, networking events and drinks, not to mention quad biking, archery and football. I've also been invited to client events and there are summer and winter parties every year for all attorneys and staff.

At Kirkland, you'll find everyone wants to help you. There's a real culture here of lowering the ladder back down to help other people climb.

“Graduates need to show us why they’re right for this firm.”

All of this is possible

When we interview we look for graduates who’ve got to know our business and understand the kind of work we do. Then we look for their excitement about doing it.

There are common traits among the people we hire. Intelligence, focus, a commercial outlook. They’re independent and capable of managing themselves. But we also look for personalities that will fit with our open culture, mix well with our clients and engage fully with colleagues at all levels of the firm.

These are the people who will make partner at around six years post qualification experience.

“We pride ourselves on giving trainees responsibility. That’s how they learn. That’s how they grow. We encourage them to think things through for themselves. Empowering them by letting them try things first, rather than just telling them the answer. Always inspiring them to be better.”

Jennifer Feng (Trainee 2010–2012, now Investment Funds Partner)



All of this begins with us

Before joining the firm as a trainee, you can get to know us at our open days, at various law fairs and at our assessment days.

We're recruiting trainees for September 2027, with vacancies open to those in their penultimate year of a law degree, final year of a non-law degree, or beyond. Applications for our open days, vacation schemes and training contracts will open on 1 October 2024.

Apply Now
ukgraduate.kirkland.com



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