

Career Insight: Charli, Trainee Solicitor, GLD

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Charli provides an insight into her training within the Government Legal Department (GLD).

Why did you choose to become a government lawyer?

When deciding where to begin my legal career, I prioritised a few key elements: involvement in work that would impact people's lives; work that was unique, varied, and stimulating; and a supportive, collaborative environment that would allow me to grow as a lawyer. The Government Legal Department (GLD) provides me with all of these. As a trainee, I have been entrusted with a significant level of responsibility, genuinely involving me in the type of legal work usually reserved for qualified solicitors. This type of experience is unmatched elsewhere. The work is intrinsically unique to being a government lawyer and is frequently featured in major news stories, meaning every working day is engaging and exciting.

What type of work have you been involved in during your training?

I spent my first seat working on the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry. This consisted of liaising with various witnesses to gather and finalise witness statements, assisting witnesses when they provided their oral evidence at an Inquiry hearing, and various work focused on the human impact side of the case (some of which can be seen in Volume 1 of the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry's final report). I also dealt with work surrounding the Inquiry's costs and disclosure tasks, which required me to fully understand which documents, or parts of documents, were relevant to the Inquiry's terms of reference.

My second seat was in the Employment Directorate, where I had my own caseload. This involved drafting various documents, including prognosis letters, summary grounds of defence, and extension of time applications. I liaised directly with witnesses and HR case managers in order to understand the merits of each case and provide guidance to those involved on what would be required as the case progressed. I also liaised with relevant tribunals to ensure that any hearings were scheduled for an appropriate length, and completed various disclosure tasks.

In my third seat, at the Home Office, I drafted secondary legislation revoking certain regulations retained from EU law and an Order in Council, which will go before the Monarch at an upcoming Privy Council meeting. I also drafted various advice pieces for both operational and policy colleagues and completed work relating to how the UK adheres to various UN conventions.

I am currently at the beginning of my fourth seat, at the Cabinet Office, which has allowed me to develop my understanding of cross-government working and how departments interlink. So far, I have been involved in research and advice relating to high-profile matters, work on emergency legislation, and been privy to conversations relating to an upcoming bill. I look forward to the rest of the seat.

What has been your best experience so far?

My best experience so far has been successfully drafting legislation at the Home Office. This is completely unique to government work and I really enjoyed understanding the different elements required when drafting legislation. I hope to complete more projects like this moving forward in my career.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/career-insight-charli-trainee-solicitor-gld>