October 19th, 2018

Dear Byrne Wallace,

I am writing to apply for the Hayes trainee solicitor programme advertised.

Qualifications

I hold a Bachelors of Agricultural Science Honours (Animal Science) degree from University College Dublin. This degree is awarded at level 8 NFQ by University College Dublin NUI. During my Bachelor’s, I completed modules in Science, Agricultural Science, Animal Science and Business Management. I am a trained Scientist with laboratory experience. However, my technical understanding of farm production allows for broad careers in farm management, research, advisory and agri-business.

Further, I hold a postgraduate Higher Diploma in Business Honours degree from Dublin Business School. This degree is awarded at level 8 NFQ jointly by Dublin Business School and Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI Award). I completed modules in Business Management and Organisational Behaviour, Marketing, Digital Media Strategies, Business Finance, Business Law, Business Strategy, Economics etc. This qualification built upon my prior business knowledge obtained in my Bachelor’s degree. It allows for broad careers in business such as management, marketing and finance. It has provided me with excellent commercial awareness and understanding of business financial information.

Moreover, I hold a postgraduate Diploma in Law awarded by the Law Society of Ireland. I have successfully the course and obtained a 2.1 overall. I completed modules in: Constitutional Law, Contract Law, Criminal Law, Law of Tort, Company Law and Property Law, European Union Law and Equity/Trust Law. This qualification built on my prior law knowledge obtained from my Bachelor’s degree (Environmental Law, Health and Safety Law, Animal Welfare Law, Business Law) and my Higher Diploma (Business Law). This qualification covered all eight core areas examined by the Law Society Entrance FE-1 Exams. In addition, the Pass mark for each module on the Diploma course was 50% in line with the FE-1 Exams. This is higher than the Pass mark in UCD and Trinity College (both 40%). Furthermore, the Diploma contained workshops in which students worked in groups and could apply the law to a practical problem scenario. This was an aspect which I enjoyed because I had come from a Science/Business background in which principles and theories are applied practically to problems.

Presently, I am enrolled on the Masters in Law LL.M in International Commercial Law degree in University College Dublin. This Masters qualification is one year full time and will be awarded at level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications. This Masters will complement my existing qualifications in Science, Business and Law. The Masters will significantly build on my prior legal knowledge expanding into commercial areas. I have registered for the following modules: Patent Law, Trade Mark Law, Regulatory Governance, Data Protection and Privacy Law, Environmental Law and, the Law of The European Convention on Human Rights. The Masters also includes a Dissertation in Law.

I hope with my significant qualifications that I can add more to a commercial law firm than a basic law graduate.

FE-1 Exams

I have successfully passed the following FE-1 Examination subjects in March 2018; Criminal Law, Constitutional Law and Law of Tort.

I feel this accomplishment is evidence of my academic ability in Law to pass all three exams first time.

In addition, I have just sat the following FE-1 Examination subjects in October 2018; Company Law, Contract Law, Property Law and Equity/Trust Law. It was a challenge trying to balance my time between the Masters course and studying for FE-1 Exams.

I am awaiting results which are due in November. Hopefully, if I obtain passes, I will only have the EU Law exam left in March 2019. Thus, I aim to have completed all FE1 exams by March 2019 and would be hoping to begin PPC1 at Blackhall in September 2019.

Scientific understanding

My Science degree will be of benefit in understanding complex scientific information in areas of law such as Patent Law, Environmental Law, Climate Change Law, Agricultural and Food Law. Indeed, many lawyers that practice in Patent Law have prior degrees in Science. This is because lawyers must be capable of fully understanding the technical process of the invention in order to write a patent application. Indeed, in proceedings for patent infringement, counsel must be capable of fully asserting the technical aspect that has been infringed by the defendant and have technical knowledge of the invention itself. Thus, having completed a degree in Science, I am familiar with a wide range of scientific principles and concepts which has greatly assisted in understanding the technical inventive step in a patent. In particular, my biological and chemistry knowledge would be useful in pharmaceutical drug patents and gene patents.

In addition to my theoretical understanding of science, I also have professional experience in the field. I worked on laboratory research in Teagasc Grange in the area of animal genetics. Further, I was employed as a Walsh Fellow in Teagasc Ashtown on a Walsh Fellowship. The Walsh Fellowship offers funding for full time research leading to a Doctor of Philosophy PhD. I worked in Teagasc Ashtown on a PhD title ‘Genomics in beef eating quality’ and was registered for a Ph.D. in the UCD School of Veterinary Medicine. I worked for three months in Teagasc Ashtown in research but left for personal reasons.

Business knowledge

My Business degree will be of benefit in understanding complex business and financial information, which is important in providing practical advice to clients. A commercial solicitor must have commercial awareness and be capable of understanding how a business operates. Indeed, in my business degree, I successfully completed modules in the areas of strategy, finance, economics, law, management and marketing.

My business knowledge has helped in understanding terminology in Company Law. In particular, the practical impact regulation under The Companies Act 2014 has on Companies and their members such as Directors duties, restriction and disqualification orders, and the increasing reliance companies have on gatekeepers in compliance.

Indeed, in regard to understanding financial information, in my Bachelor’s degree I successfully completed modules in Mathematics; a general calculus/geometry module in first year, a statistics module in second year and a data analysis module in third year. These modules were necessary in understanding mathematical data from experiments, but equally are applicable in understanding financial information in business.

Further, I was raised in a home where my father operated as a sole trader accountant. I did some accountancy work for my father over summers. My uncle owns his own accountancy business and my grandfather owned a supermarket.

Indeed, I have already advised family and friends in various legal issues in the areas of business, contract law and property law to a successful conclusion. My neighbour is a sole trader who runs her own wedding business that has asked for frequent legal advice.

Further, I was previously an Advice Worker in Threshold where I obtained detailed knowledge of the Residential Tenancies Act 2004 to 2017 as amended. The Residential Tenancy Act provides the statutory legal rights and obligation for both landlord and tenant. Threshold charity runs a free advice service for tenants that have legal issues with landlords. Threshold aim is to assist tenants and prevent homelessness.

The enclosed CV illustrates my qualifications and work experience.

I look forward to hearing from you to arrange an interview, so I can better highlight my strengths as your next trainee solicitor.

Yours sincerely,

Aaron O’Connor B.Agr.Sc. (Hons), H.Dip.Bus. Dip. Law, LL.M. Int. Comm. Law.