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Crona McLoughlin

Human Resources Manager

Byrne Wallace

20 October 2017

RE Traineeship Application

Dear Ms McLoughlin

I am writing to you to apply for the Traineeship Programme in Byrne Wallace as advertised on your website. I interviewed with you in July 2014 for a Legal Secretary position and, although I was offered the position, I accepted a position in another firm due to the higher level of responsibility and experience I felt that I would gain from the position. Nonetheless, I found the atmosphere in Byrne Wallace to be incredibly warm and welcoming which, along with the firm’s excellent reputation for its training programme and growth, is the reason that I am applying to you again today for the Traineeship Programme.

On my first attempt at the FE1 examinations in March 2017, I passed Equity, Criminal Law and the Law of Property. I currently have three results pending: EU Law, Contract Law and Tort Law. I intend to sit Company Law and Constitutional Law in March 2018. I have found the FE1s have been extremely challenging, both physically and mentally. However, one of the reasons I think that I have managed is that I made sure that I exercised nearly every day throughout the exams. I am an extremely active individual and I believe that incorporating exercise at least once a day into your busy life can help keep you focused and motivated. I am a keen runner and I would usually run between 5-15km every day and/or go to the gym.

I was employed as a Legal Caseworker in Mason Hayes & Curran from July 2014 until December 2016. I really enjoyed this position and the exposure which I gained to litigation and the courts process. From the outset, I was afforded a high degree of autonomy and responsibility to deal “hands on” with clients. I managed a case load of 550 repossession matters for two separate clients. This involved running a case from inception of the file, to the drafting of proceedings and bringing the matter to conclusion by obtaining a Court Order/Judgment and eventual enforcement if required. As a result, I gained an in-depth understanding of litigation and court procedure. Further, each week I attended the County Registrar’s List in Dublin Circuit Court and I personally managed and advocated the applications; whether it was for an Order for Possession, *ex parte* motion or an adjournment.

From such attendances I found that I very much sharpened my advocacy skills. Also during my time in MHC, in June 2016, together with a partner and associate, I presented off-site in a training programme for a major new client regarding repossession litigation, the courts process and the various circuit requirements.

During my time in MHC, I was a consistent performer regarding my fee intake. At the time of leaving the firm, my fee intake was in excess seven times my salary, which was a significant increase from just under six times my salary for the same period in 2015. I believe that this is due to my well-grounded understanding of client needs and to my excellent time management skills.

I am a Masters Graduate of the University of Edinburgh, one of the World’s Top 20 Universities, where I studied LLM International Commercial Law, achieving a High 2.1 overall grade. Having also achieved a High 2.1 in BCL Law & Society in DCU, I wanted to further my understanding and knowledge in the area of commercial law, and particularly how commercial law across various jurisdictions interrelates, conflicts and contrasts. For my thesis, I chose to critically compare the law surrounding directors’ duties in Delaware (as Delaware has been the most important jurisdiction in US corporate and commercial law since the early 20th century) with the corresponding law codified in the UK by the Companies Act 2006. I excelled in my Master’s Degree, achieving a high first class honours in the area of International Commercial Arbitration (a subject in which I also received first class honours at undergraduate level).

At undergraduate level in DCU, I was selected among the first set of fourteen students (selected across each of the seven universities in Ireland) to take part in an internship with the Judiciary of the Supreme Court and the High Court. I was chosen particularly to intern with the late Honourable Mr Justice Hardiman of the Supreme Court. Under the guidance of Judge Hardiman, I assisted with the drafting of Supreme Court judgments, with extensive research and with the reviewing of submissions. Two particularly notable cases with which I was heavily involved were those of *Callan v Attorney General* (concerning the commutation of a life sentence) and *Ó Maicín v Éire* (concerning the right of a Defendant to have an Irish speaking jury at his criminal hearing); involvement in the latter being particularly extraordinary in that Judge Hardiman was the only dissenting judge in that case.

Outside of my academic and professional interests, I am conscious that I am lucky enough to be able to help others and so I regularly take part in fundraising for charity. I spent a number of weeks in Ghana in 2012, for which I raised in excess of €2,000, where I assisted in the construction of a fresh water system for a local community and also in teaching local students and residents about the functioning of their new water system for the purpose of sustainability. I found my time in Ghana to be an extremely rewarding and challenging experience which demanded a strong ability to work in a team. I have also taken part in various charity runs: the Grant Thornton 5k run in September 2017 (which I completed in a time of 24 minutes); the Women’s Mini Marathon in June of this year (for which I raised just under €800 for Breast Cancer Ireland and completed the race in a time of 55 minutes); the “Great Pink Run” in August 2016 (for which I raised €4,290.00 for Breast Cancer Ireland and completed the 10km race in 59 minutes); the Women’s Mini Marathon in 2015 (for which I raised in excess of €2,500 for Temple Street Children’s Hospital), to name but a few. As you can see, my running times have been consistently improving. I strive to set myself new goals every year which I think is a huge factor in maintaining concentration and motivation. In 2018, I’m aiming to compete in my first half-marathon, the Clontarf Half-Marathon, and I will be aiming to complete it in less than 2 hours.

I also currently attend art classes every Wednesday in Cabinteely Community College and I am due to feature in an art exhibition in Powerscourt in May 2018. Art has been a hobby of mine since I was very young and I find painting to be very therapeutic when trying to wind down.

Byrne Wallace has an excellent reputation both in relation its client base and its training programme. I understand that the autonomy and responsibility which Byrne Wallace affords to its trainees is unrivalled. I think I would fit well in the firm because I am hardworking, dedicated and sociable and I see this opportunity as the commencement of a long and rewarding career as a solicitor with Byrne Wallace. I would like to thank you for considering my application. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

Aisling Duffy