October 17, 2016

**Re: Application for ByrneWallace Trainee Solicitor Programme**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to apply for the trainee solicitor programme at ByrneWallace. I am a 2015 BCL graduate from University College Cork and recently completed an LLM in Business Law in 2016.

I have always had an inclination toward business-oriented subjects. For my Leaving Certificate I studied Business, Economics and Accounting. This interest has formed the basis of my ambition to be a corporate lawyer.

My interest in the finance sector remained throughout my undergraduate career, studying management accounting and achieving a first class honors grade. Studying financial modules has developed my commercial awareness and enhanced my business acumen. Over the course of my LLM, I studied a number of business-oriented modules including Corporate Insolvency and Debt Restructuring, an area of particular expertise in ByrneWallace. I would like to gain practical exposure in this area during my traineeship.

While working at Ronan Daly Jermyn, I got an insight into the workings of a smaller commercial law firm. I gained valuable experience while working in the commercial property department, in which I was dealing with large commercial leases. This involved reading and drafting rent review clauses. I also spent time in the litigation department, during which I was involved in a large personal injuries dispute in the High Court. I learned a great deal from the court exposure during this case.

I have also accumulated substantial managerial experience as a floor manager in a busy city restaurant for the past three years. During this time, I developed and honed a wide range of skills directly transferable to corporate law. While working in Il Padrino Ristorante, I am directly accountable and responsible for the staff roster, table plans and wine orders. I am also responsible for recording cash intakes on a general control sheet and ensuring it balances with our sales report figure. I report directly to the owner of the restaurant and have demonstrated substantial interpersonal skills in developing rapports with regular patrons of the restaurant. During this time, I also showed initiative in spearheading a campaign to pedestrianise the street where the restaurant is situated. This involved drafting a petition to the Cork City Council and obtaining signatures from any affected businesses. It is my firm belief that working and having a significant level of interest in a small business has enhanced my commercial awareness.

During my postgraduate year I worked, once a week, in the well-known criminal practice of Frank Buttimer & Company Solicitors. While this firm deals predominantly with criminal law, the experience has been invaluable in gaining exposure with court procedures and the strategy involved in litigation. I am responsible for the preparation of briefs for counsel, drawing up witness statements for cases and preparing books of pleadings for hearings. While I have learned much under the tutelage of Emmett Boyle, it has also thought me that my future is in corporate practice.

Over the past summer, I spent one month interning with Mason Hayes & Curran. This internship presented a valuable insight into the requirements of a trainee in a large commercial law firm. While working in the commercial department, I was exposed to large transactions in the area of data protection and intellectual property. I assisted partners with research and attended a number of client meetings. As part of the internship, we were divided into sub-groups required to present on a given topic before partners. I was responsible for delivering the presentation on dawn raids, which demonstrates my confidence in public speaking. During the internship with Mason Hayes & Curran, I contributed positively to the firm’s blog, drafting a post titled, “Copyrighting APIs – Google and Oracle battle it out”, which was published on the firms website and social media accounts.

Throughout my undergraduate years, I undertook several extra-curricular activities in which I demonstrated my ability to work in a team. During my final year in my U.C.C, I was an editor of the Cork Online Law Review. My editorial role requires me to read large quantities of submissions and assess the legal argument and ultimately determine those to be submitted to the final edition of the journal. This often involves working late into the night with a partner to meet tight deadlines, demonstrating my commitment to meeting targets on time. The next stage of the editorial process involves editing the submissions in line with the Oxford University Standard for the Citation of Legal Authorities (OSCOLA) guidelines, which requires close attention to detail. I held the House Style Editor position for the fifteenth edition of the Cork Online Law Review. This position required educating the incoming editorial board on the OSCOLA guidelines.

I am also confident in leading which is evident through my appointment as Head Boy in a large boys school. This role required me to allocate a number of tasks on a daily basis to a group of ten prefects. I was also responsible for the organization of our yearbook and graduation dinner. This workload was significant given that it fell during the same year as the leaving certificate and a busy rugby schedule of five weekly training sessions. This demonstrates my ability to balance heavy workloads and determine the most efficient method to deal with the work in a timely manner.

I am available for an interview at any time and look forward to your response.

Yours Sincerely,

Philip O’ Leary