Robert James O’Daly

Email: robodaly98@gmail.com

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88 Harcourt Street

St Kevin’s

Dublin 2

D02 DK18

**Subject: Trainee** S**olicitor Programme Application**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you to apply for ByrneWallace’s Trainee Solicitor Programme. I am a Bachelor of Civil Law graduate, and I achieved a 2:1 grade from the UCD Sutherland School of Law in 2020. I completed my master’s degree in international relations with a 2:1 grade from UCD’s School of Politics and International Relations in December 2021. My thesis was titled “China and Africa: Debt and Influence” and it focused on China’s infrastructure expansion into Africa and the potential for political influence over African states. Since graduating from UCD, I have passed seven FE1 examinations and I am currently employed as a pre-trainee solicitor in a Dublin law firm. I am on course to complete all FE1 examinations and I am currently awaiting the result of my final exam from the Autumn 2023 sitting. I am writing to apply for a traineeship with ByrneWallace as I believe I would be a good fit for the firm based on my academic achievements and work experience.

I have ample experience working as part of a team. My postgraduate degree in International Relations allowed me to enrol in modules which required collaborative work on various assignments and projects. For example, in my Politics of European Governance module, I worked with colleagues in creating a moot court simulation for other class members to show them the procedures of the CJEU. This required us to work as a team in terms of mediating, time keeping, and answering any queries from our colleagues. Many of my team members and colleagues did not have an academic law background. As a result, I had to lead and chair the proceedings at certain points and provide background information on the processes of the CJEU. Furthermore, my current role as a pre-trainee solicitor requires me to work effectively within a small team on a number of different tasks. Such experiences have helped me to develop my communication skills as well as my ability to work collaboratively with colleagues.

My BCL degree provided me with a grounding in a wide range of different legal subjects. It also allowed me to study more specialised areas of the law as well as core legal subjects. I was previously enrolled in the Law and Chinese programme before switching to the BCL programme. During this time, I gained valuable experience and insight on Chinese culture and current affairs. I was also afforded the opportunity to travel and study in China as part of the Renmin University of China summer school programme. During this time, I improved my knowledge of Chinese language and enrolled in international relations classes. This time in China contributed to my personal development as I was exposed to a new culture and language, and I had the opportunity to collaborate with both Chinese and international students in class. I believe that my combined experience in Law and International Relations would be well placed in ByrneWallace as the firm advises on European Union law as well as on matters relating to European and International trade.

My current role at Peter Boyle & Co. Solicitors allowed me to experience the intricacies of working within a busy professional legal environment. In addition, it has also allowed me to develop my professional skill set. I have been tasked with various administrative duties which are essential in allowing the firm to meet client needs. These duties include preparing briefs for counsel, compiling booklets of records and correspondence, drafting letters, and responding to clients in relation to any queries that they may have. I have also become familiar with the day-to-day processes of filing court documents such as affidavits, notices, and booklets of exhibits in the Court Offices in Dublin. Occasionally, I have been tasked with taking attendance in court in relation to the firm’s cases. I am required to ensure that these attendances convey sufficient detail whether it be on points made by the firm’s counsel or directions made by the Court itself. My duties require me to be detail oriented in that all relevant information is conveyed appropriately within the relevant document or brief. They also require me to work effectively within time sensitive scenarios and this has allowed me to develop my organisational skill set. Additionally, engaging with clients in relation to their queries has allowed me to further develop my communication skills and has provided me with valuable client facing experience.

I had the privilege of interning in the Employment Law Department of ByrneWallace in July of 2019. In this role I developed my knowledge of employment law as well as my legal research and writing skills. During my internship I was able to connect with the then trainee solicitors of the firm. They informed me of their experiences and the numerous opportunities for development at the firm. They discussed the firm’s culture of support and encouragement when it came to career development and exposure to different areas of law. I was encouraged by the collegial atmosphere in the Employment Law Department which allowed me to further develop my interest in the area. I had the opportunity to research new and developing points of employment law while I was supporting members of the department with their work. Furthermore, members of the department were very approachable, and they were happy to share their experience and knowledge of employment law with me. These experiences were influential in my decision to apply for a traineeship at ByrneWallace.

I am keen to secure a traineeship with a firm that aligns with my professional interests and offers opportunities for further learning and development. ByrneWallace immediately stood out to me on this basis. The firm advises in areas such as Environmental and Planning Law, both of which I have a particular interest in. As an aspiring trainee solicitor, I am interested in gaining experience in a variety of legal areas. My current role has given me valuable exposure to work in the areas of Commercial and Corporate Litigation, Defamation, Employment Law and Administrative law issues. I believe that a traineeship at ByrneWallace would allow me to gain further exposure to these areas while furthering my legal knowledge and skill set. It is for these reasons that I am applying for the Trainee Solicitor Programme at ByrneWallace.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my application and please let me know if you require any further information.

Yours Sincerely,

Robert James O’Daly