Cover Letter

I wish to apply for the Byrne Wallace Trainee Programme. I am a dynamic, ambitious and highly-motivated Law Graduate from University College Cork. I have a strong academic record, a variety of unique and diverse work experience and a strong set of skills which I believe make me an excellent candidate for this position. At present, I am working in A&L Goodbody.

My application to Byrne Wallace is motivated by several factors. First, as I have a keen interest in European law, Byrne Wallace’s reputation and high-quality work in this area, particularly EU competition law, was highly influential. I believe the opportunity to participate in the Trainee Programme with Byrne Wallace would offer to bridge the gap between my theoretical knowledge and the law in practice.

Additionally, I was specifically attracted to Byrne Wallace by the calibre of the Firm’s clients and its international focus. The firm is known for nurturing ambitious individuals and providing a supportive and inclusive environment in which they can flourish. The resource provided by Byrne Wallace to Trainees demonstrates the Firm’s commitment to Trainees’ development. This investment shows Byrne Wallace’s interest in Trainees and furthermore illustrates the value placed on Trainees within the Firm. Finally, Byrne Wallace is one of the country’s most successful law firms. As a result, it has attracted some of the best legal minds from across the world. I believe this is an extraordinary opportunity to work with and learn from these professionals. Ultimately, I want to train in an environment where I am surrounded by the brightest legal minds as I want to be challenged every day to be the best. I firmly believe that such an environment of excellence exists at Byrne Wallace.

In terms of my career choice, my legal experience combined with my interest in the commercial world makes a career in commercial law the natural progression for me. The area of corporate law is one of the most challenging legal environments for any lawyer. It requires not only academic prowess but also a strong work ethic, polished analytic and communication skills and an ambition to continually succeed. Therefore, people who are accepted into this world are generally the best of the best. I am competitive by nature and would relish the opportunity not only to work with but also to challenge myself against such individuals. I would consider myself a commercially aware individual with a keen interest in the world of corporate law. It is a sector that is continually evolving and is a central player in the development of our country’s economic climate.

Although I have a strong academic history, I believe what makes me unique is my array of valuable work experience. I chose to get legal experience in different types of law firms in Ireland to sample a broad cross section of legal work. This was to assist me in making an informed choice of the area of law which I would like to specialise in. During my summer internship with HD Keane Solicitors I had the privilege to work for Waterford State Solicitor Frank Hutchinson. I assisted in the preparation and presentation of criminal prosecutions including commercial fraud, researching technical offences and comparative sentencing. This was an opportunity to experience first-hand the operation of the criminal justice system on day to day basis combining both research elements with the practical experience of actual trials.

Following the completion of my FE1s I was employed at Harrison O’Dowd Solicitors and my duties included the review of all witness statements, CCTV evidence, all expert reports and the preparation of litigation briefs. The overview I was given of the firm gave me an in-depth understanding of the firm’s identity and an appreciation of the hard work necessary for a firm to function successfully. It provided me with an excellent stepping stone into the world of corporate law.

Having worked in a legal environment, I believe that that I not only understand but possess a number of invaluable skills necessary to succeed in a corporate law firm. Firstly, I am an ambitious, focused and determined individual, always striving to improve myself. This trait, coupled with a strong work ethic, is necessary to meet the demands of life as a successful corporate lawyer. Secondly, I would consider myself a problem solver, a creative person who thinks outside the box for a solution. I believe this to be an invaluable weapon to have in my arsenal when faced with a complex legal challenge. Finally, I possess excellent interpersonal skills essential for forming strong relationships with both clients and colleagues alike, a skill highly valued by Byrne Wallace given their renowned culture of collaboration.

Throughout my time at University I have been actively involved in several societies. I was an active member of the UCC water polo team and represented the university at intervarsity level. I am also currently a member of the Stockholm University swim team. The major benefits of these sporting activities is the development of teamwork, discipline and commitment as well as mental well-being and physical fitness. During my time at UCC, I was actively involved in debating and public speaking and with all activities associated with the UCC Law Society. This activity has provided me with a solid foundation to develop my analytical and public speaking skills. I have also been asked to establish an academic link between the UCC Law Faculty and the Stockholm Law Faculty. This provides a basis for building both academic and business links and relationships for both law faculties and myself personally. I have been nominated to be a class representative for my present university course. This role has helped to develop and demonstrate my leadership, organisational and communication skills which are valuable traits for any legal adviser.

During the summer I participated in the RDJ internship program. While I have worked in a number of legal practices, RDJ was my first exposure to a large corporate law firm. On a daily basis I was met with challenges and I learned to think quickly on my feet. The work was difficult and it helped hone my analytical ability. My tasks greatly varied and this helped improve my adaptability. From my time in the firm I became more confident and I understood that I had the skills to become an effective lawyer. I learned here how to prioritize different tasks and seek help if I had a question.

In summation, I am enthusiastic and diligent and would value the opportunity to work Byrne Wallace as a trainee solicitor and I am convinced that Byrne Wallace is the best Firm for me.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to consider my application. I have attached a copy of my Curriculum Vitae for your consideration and I am available for interview at your request.

I eagerly await your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Shane Healy.