Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is Shannon Huggard and I am a final-year Law & German student at Trinity College Dublin. I have gained many experiences throughout my undergraduate degree, which have not only enhanced my legal expertise, but also shaped the areas of law I am most interested in and led to my resolve to work as an intern at ByrneWallace this summer. The most exciting parts of my legal training thus far have involved private European law, particularly comparative contract law and competition policy. Not only would interning at ByrneWallace give me the opportunity to experience the exciting, fast-paced environment of a leading law firm, but the prospect of observing the EU Competition and Regulated Markets Group also adds to my motivation, as I am certain that this would be of great benefit for my future career.

In the third year of my degree, I studied at the University of Freiburg, where I was faced with the many challenges that arise when living abroad. My goal for this year was to excel in my studies, while also integrating fully into German student life and culture. I achieved these goals by managing my time effectively, bolstering my self-discipline, and further building on my strong work ethic. These personal skills allowed me to expand my knowledge of German civil law and European law in particular, along with several other legal subjects. I took on a demanding comparative contract law project, written in German and defended orally in front of the professor and her colleagues. I found I flourished in this competitive environment, rising to the challenge of studying abroad and adding greatly to my legal expertise in the process.

Soon after returning to Ireland, I suffered a debilitating sports injury: my life took an unexpected and challenging turn, rendering me incapable of attending my final year of university. Filled with resolve and perseverance, and fuelled by the same enthusiasm that had shaped my studies in Germany, I worked in the Tax and Legal department of the German-Irish Chamber of Commercefrom February to May of 2016. With dedication and attention to detail, I successfully drew up German employment contracts, researched and responded to countless queries regarding Irish, German, and EU law, and held meetings with German lawyers to discuss ways in which a smooth employment transition by way of contract was possible for Irish workers moving to Germany. This invaluable professional experience allowed me to develop the essential skills of taking responsibility for clients’ often pressing issues and providing swift and helpful responses. It is now my ambition to enhance these skills in a corporate legal environment.

Returning to my degree in September 2016, I was eager to continue the broad development of my legal knowledge, while also gathering further experiences of value for a career in law. I was elected class representative and am very confident in this leadership role. I take on the tasks of this role with relative ease; I am approachable and patient, upholding positive communication between students and professors. Given the opportunity to work at Byrne Wallace this summer, these skills will be essential when understanding and responding to clients’ changing needs.

Throughout my studies, I have become increasingly aware of the privilege of a legal education, and I believe strongly that it is right and fair to use this education to help those in need. This will remain a priority for me throughout and alongside my career, and the best way to start was by getting involved in FLAC (Free Legal Advice Centre) this year. In November, I competed in the FLAC intervarsity moot court competition. The topic allowed me to research areas beyond my university modules, and gave me an insight into the types of cases that may arise when taking on pro bono work.

Competing in the moot was only the most recent of many experiences of public speaking. At secondary school, I competed at national level in French debating, winning Best Speaker at the Irish quarter-finals. Building on this strong base, I went on to compete in TCD Law Society’s Mock Trial competition in the first two years of my undergraduate degree. These experiences have taught me excellent argumentation skills and debating composure, which I look forward to implementing in a corporate setting. Additionally, long years of sporting success, including captaining my school basketball team and representing Dublin in Gaelic football, have taught me the dedication, grit and stamina required for working in a corporate law firm.

In short, I am an engaged and diligent student of law, and am determined to increase my legal knowledge with work in the corporate sphere. The range of experiences I have gained throughout my undergraduate degree has prepared me for the next step in my legal career, and I hope to take that step by working for ByrneWallace this summer.

Yours sincerely,

Shannon Huggard