

Everything you need to know  
about your training contract



splash

#BeMoreSalmon

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# Top quality work High profile clients Inspiring colleagues Cutting edge training Ready to dive in?

Finding a training contract that's right for you is a critical step in your legal career.

At Burges Salmon, you don't have to choose between top quality work and quality of life, high profile clients or first-class training – you can have it all.

Based in Bristol and Edinburgh, two of the top places to live and work in the UK, we're an independent law firm with an enviable range of national and international clients.

Join our award winning training programme and you'll enjoy exposure to our high profile client list as you gain quality experience across a broad range of practices.

Ready to **#BeMoreSalmon?** Dive in and you'll go further than you ever thought possible.



**#BeMoreSalmon**

# Get to know us

## Burges Salmon by numbers...

**3**

we operate  
in all three UK  
jurisdictions

**450+**

lawyers

**3**

we are headquartered in  
Bristol with an office in  
Edinburgh and a client  
meeting space in London.

**900+**

employees

**106**

partners

**£119m**

annual fee income  
to April 2022

**36%**

of partners  
trained at  
the firm

**96%**

average trainee  
retention over the  
last five years

**41%**

of the firm used at  
least one of their  
volunteering days  
in in 2021/22

# What we offer

- Exposure to **high-profile clients** from FirstGroup to The John Lewis Partnership.
- **A six-seat training programme** across a variety of areas from Banking and Real Estate to Dispute Resolution and Private Client.
- **A brilliant reward package** including a firm-wide bonus scheme, private health insurance, subsidised sports and social clubs and a group personal pension plan with a matching contribution from the firm.
- **Secondment opportunities** to clients and firms within our Preferred Firm Network.
- **Our responsible business agenda** is driven by our people. There are lots of opportunities to be involved with community, wellbeing, environment as well as diversity and inclusion.
- **A friendly, collaborative culture** balancing early responsibility with an open door policy.
- **We will support any future trainees** who are due to join us in 2024 and beyond in the completion of the Post Graduate Diploma in Law (PGDL) and the SQE Plus preparation course with the University of Law.

# What we are looking for

What all of our people have in common is an enthusiasm for the law and a drive to deliver top quality work for our clients.

You'll also need:

- ✔ A 2:1 degree in any discipline
- ✔ To be a great team player
- ✔ Drive and resilience
- ✔ Strong analytical skills
- ✔ Good judgement
- ✔ Excellent communication skills

APPLY NOW



# Meet our trainees

Hear what some of our trainee solicitors say about working at Burges Salmon.

## Carly Phillips-Jones

Burges Salmon has a culture of support and respect towards its trainees. You are encouraged to follow your interests, whether that means exploring niche areas of the law, or getting involved in a new charity initiative, you will always find support within the firm.



## David Morris

The environment and the culture is very welcoming and inclusive. As someone who is just starting their training contract at a new law firm, that's exactly what I was looking for.



## Kayla Urbanski

There's been an opportunity to dive into all different aspects of work – I think that goes to show the amount of work that's on offer, and if you put your hand up then you will get such great opportunities to develop your expertise.



To read more, visit our trainee blog page - click [here](#)

# What can you apply for?

## Law students

As a law student you can apply for a vacation scheme and training contract during your penultimate or final year. This means you will have time to complete the final year of your degree and the SQE before you start with us.

## Other students

50% of our trainee intakes studied another subject at undergraduate level. In which case, you can apply for a place on our vacation scheme or for a training contract from your final year. This will give you the chance to complete the PGDL and the SQE before you start with us.

## Graduates/Career changes

Once you have graduated you can apply for a vacation scheme or training contract at any time.

The Solicitors Qualifying Exam (SQE) is the new route to qualification and consists of a series of exams that were introduced in from September 2021. These will replace the need to complete the GDL and LPC. Our 2024 trainee intake will be our first intake of trainees to qualify through the new route to qualification. All trainees joining us in September 2024 and beyond will need to take the SQE. Anyone joining us before this point will continue with the existing route.

## Insight events

We run a number of events aimed at anyone interested in a career in law. From your first year at university, you can apply to attend a presentation evening, open day, or one of our 'Food for thought' networking and information sessions. You can find out more information and **apply here**.

# Application process

**Online application form**



## **Assessment day**

consisting of a group exercise, a written exercise, a Watson Glaser psychometric test and a short interview with a lawyer. You will also attend a networking lunch with current trainees and get the opportunity to learn more about the firm from one of our recruitment partners.



**Vacation scheme (one or two week scheme)**



## **Training contract interview**

with a partner and member of the People team. Direct training contract applicants will be invited back for an interview if successful following the assessment day.



To find out more about the application process click [here](#)



# Let's get to know each other

A vacation scheme is a great way for you to experience life at Burges Salmon. It's also an excellent opportunity for us to get to know you and help shape your career. So jump in.

Every year we run a winter scheme (one week), spring scheme (one week) and two summer schemes (two weeks each), which are open to anyone who is eligible to apply for a training contract – regardless of your degree discipline.

We recruit between 60-70% of our trainees from the vacation scheme. You will be offered a training contract interview on your final day and if

we decide that we're right for each other, you'll be offered a training contract to start two years later.

During your vacation scheme, you'll gain a real insight into our award-winning law firm as you:

- Get involved in real work
- Have the chance to go to client meetings
- Attend skills sessions and presentations run by qualified lawyers and trainees
- Attend social events with our trainees and have the opportunity to sign up for sports events



Winter vacation scheme

[APPLY NOW](#)



Spring/summer vacation scheme

[APPLY NOW](#)



# Department structure

## Our six seat system offers you more choice

Most law firms will give you a four seat rotation. But here, that's just a drop in the ocean.

Start your career in law with Burges Salmon, and you'll explore six seat rotations. This means more exposure to different types of law, more opportunities to build valuable working relationships, deeper expertise and sector knowledge, and more opportunities to make an impact when you qualify.



You'll spend time in six of the following departments:

### **Corporate and Financial Institutions (CFI)**

- Banking & Finance
- Corporate
- Funds & Financial Regulation
- Commercial
- Employment
- Pensions

### **Disputes, Planning and Construction (DPC)**

- Dispute Resolution
- Construction and Engineering
- Planning and Compulsory Purchase

### **Tax, Trusts and Family (TTF)**

- Private Client and Tax
- Family

### **Projects**

### **Real Estate**

### **Innovation team**

**“The six seat rotation works really well; it is a unique opportunity to gain experience in more departments, which gives you a wider breadth of knowledge overall. It also enables you to meet more people across the firm, which ties in with Burges Salmon’s collegiate culture”**

Current trainee



# Secondments

We believe in nurturing talent, which is one of the reasons we offer secondments.

We also believe that commercial awareness, adaptability and people skills are what set a great lawyer apart from a good one.

As well as giving trainees and lawyers a three dimensional view of the profession at large, secondments are an invaluable opportunity to learn more about our clients. Recent secondments have included working with **EDF Energy**, **Amazon** and The **John Lewis Partnership**.

Secondments also extend to working with our Preferred Firm Network, a non-exclusive group of like-minded leading independent firms around the world, involving a mix of cultural and legal education, which benefits your overall career as a lawyer.





## A day in the life of a trainee on secondment

Beatrice Petrescu - first year trainee on secondment at EDF Energy Nuclear Generation Limited

**6:30am:** I get ready for the day, making sure to not forget both my Burges Salmon and my EDF laptops - I really need to invest in a bigger work bag!

**7:20am:** I put my morning coffee in a keepcup and start walking towards Bristol Temple Meads to catch my 7:42 train to Gloucester. I board the train with minutes to spare, smiling at the other commuters. On the train, I turn on my favourite podcast and enjoy my coffee.

**8:30am:** I arrive in Gloucester and make my way to the taxi waiting outside the train station. I check my work phone and put my EDF pass around my neck, getting ready for the work day.

**8:45 am:** I get dropped off at EDF's offices in Barnwood, reciprocate the warm greeting from the reception and security staff, and walk to my desk in the legal team's designated area. The office is open-plan so I pass a lot of different teams already

working on exciting nuclear energy work.

**9:00am:** Today is Tuesday, a day most of the legal team is in the office. I chat to my supervisor and grab a cookie from the generously-stocked snack drawer. I then check my emails and take a look at my to-do list for the day. I get started with the first task of the day: tidying up board minutes from a meeting I attended the previous week.

**11am:** I finalise the board minutes and send them to my supervisor, and then it is time for the weekly meeting with the legal team. We all make our way to the meeting room and go around the room discussing current ongoing work and wider business updates.

**11:30am:** Back at my desk, I action a few other tasks on my list, respond to emails and arrange calls to discuss projects I am working on. An exciting matter I have been involved with, drafting a data-sharing contract

between EDF and a few universities, is nearing completion, and I spend some time checking it is in order before organising the DocuSign.

**1:00pm:** As it is a sunny day I suggest lunching in the courtyard, so a few of us head downstairs and grab cheesy baked potatoes from the cafeteria, and talk about our weekend plans.

**2:00pm:** Once back at my desk, I dial into a call with EDF's Technical Director to discuss an NDA I am currently drafting for him. We discuss the draft and his comments, and I create an action plan to amend the NDA and send him the final version later that week.

**2:30pm:** After the call, I start getting documents printed and signposted for a 3pm meeting with an EDF director to get two leases signed. The leases relate to land at one of EDF's nuclear stations, and I have been communicating with EDF's estate agents to get these executed and sent to the counterparties.

**3:00pm:** I walk to the director's office, which is only a few metres away from mine, and engage in small talk before talking him through the documents and what they each

relate to. After getting these signed, I make my way to my desk and get the leases scanned and saved into EDF's system.

**3:45pm:** I join my supervisor for a coffee and we talk about an exciting new project I will be helping him on, to write an advice note for EDF's Nuclear Decommissioning team.

**4:00pm:** At my desk with a warm oat flat white, I start reading relevant legislation to prepare my advice for the note. I conduct a bit of research on PLC, and when I am stuck on a specific issue, I ask my supervisor for some clarity and assistance - he is luckily more than happy to help!

**5:00 pm:** I spend some time updating my fresh unity entries for the past week, and check my Burges Salmon emails and teams inbox.

**5:15pm:** I create my to-do list for tomorrow, shut down my laptops and pack my bag. I say goodbye to my supervisor and the rest of the team, and go to my taxi waiting outside the office. I make my way to my train, and start texting my flatmates about our evening plans, content in the knowledge I won't be receiving any work-related emails until the morning.

# Quality clients

We have an impressive list of national and international clients.

- The John Lewis Partnership,
- The Financial Services Compensation Scheme,
- FirstGroup,
- HSBC Bank plc,
- Virgin,
- Costain Group,
- The Crown Commercial Service,
- Babcock International Group and
- National Highways.



**Clients of Burges Salmon LLP praise the firm's lawyers for being proactive, commercially-minded and committed to delivering the best possible outcome for their business.**

Legal 500



**With Burges Salmon you get a gold-plated, Rolls Royce service - you can't beat it. Nothing is left unturned, everyone there knows about the case and you get a very good service. They're a real joy to work with.**

Chambers 2022



# Our values

We work hard to ensure that Burges Salmon is a great place to work and our values are at the heart of everything we do.







# Responsible business

Responsible business and doing the right thing is what we're all about. Everyone who works here is encouraged to get involved. We see this as our values in action. We are a member of Business in The Community and signatory to the UN Global Compact.

## Community

We give back to the community in a variety of ways with volunteering, fundraising, pro bono legal advice, making donations and enabling community visitors to use our meeting rooms. Many of our people are also trustees of various charities and with schools. Our internal community network is BEngaged who help to communicate the many opportunities that there are to be involved. We have individual and team volunteering with everyone having two days for volunteering. We have connections with many different charities aligned with our responsible business priorities. The flagship of our community work is our multi-award winning 'Working with Schools' programme focused on inclusion and social mobility.

## Wellbeing

The wellbeing of our people is a priority. BWell is our internal network for wellbeing. We have a number of mental health first aiders and provide medical care and employee assistance should you need it. We have a social network with regular events. There are a number of sports groups too. We run wellbeing events covering a range of topics from mindfulness to financial management.

## Environment

We are taking progressive action for the environment and climate. We are working towards reducing our total carbon emissions by 50% by 2030 from a 2019 base-year. We are members of the Chancery Lane Project, the Legal Sustainability Alliance and the Net Zero Lawyers Alliance. Our internal network for the

environment is BSustainable. We hold an annual green week in addition to on-going activities including volunteering with environmentally-related charities. We encourage sustainable travel and provide a cycle-to-work scheme. We have an active Bike User Group too.

### Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity and inclusion is a strategic priority. We focus on inclusion

across race, gender, disability, sexual orientation as well as social mobility. We have four key internal networks known as BCultured, BBalanced, BEnabled and BProud. We have diversity and inclusion events across the year including for Black History Month, International Women’s Day and PRIDE. We make work-place adjustments to enable those living with disability.



**41% of the firm used at least one volunteering day in 2020/21**



Our responsible business report is available on our [website](#).

# Fair and inclusive

**Be valued. Be inspired. Be yourself.**

**#BeMoreSalmon**

Our people, who come from all kinds of backgrounds, are our greatest asset. And we're committed to nurturing, inspiring and encouraging them every step of the way.



**It's great to be part of a firm that prioritises D&I. With the launch of BCultured there's much more engagement with BAME employees and opportunities to contribute towards the firm's strategic aims**

**BCultured (ethnic diversity network) member**



With a range of people-led networks that promote diversity and inclusion across the firm, we pride ourselves on fostering a culture that welcomes everyone and celebrates different perspectives and backgrounds. After all, we know it's what makes us stronger.

Not only are we a Disability Confident employer and supporter of CIPD's Flex From 1st Campaign, we're also proud to be one of the Top 75 UK employers for social mobility and were listed in a Times Top 50 Employer for Women in 2022 too.



# Our culture

## We're a leading independent UK law firm with a unique model and culture

Our collaborative approach to how we do business is totally refreshing. It's what attracts some of the best legal minds in the industry and it's why our people love working here.

We are headquartered in Bristol, have an office in Edinburgh and a client meeting space in London. All of our trainee solicitors are based in Bristol, which is key to shaping and maintaining a supportive and collaborative training environment and culture.

We don't do hierarchy. Everyone's contribution is valued and we mean it when we say our doors are open. Throughout your training contract, you will be an integral part of the team, working alongside lawyers who are experts in their field and with a supervisor who will support your growth and development.

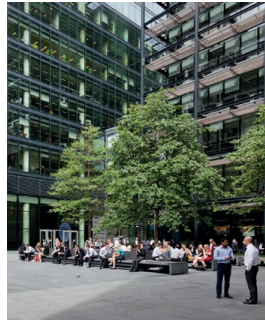
And it's not all work at Burges Salmon. You can build your network

through our active sports and social clubs. Football, hockey and running groups meet on a regular basis and Pilates, yoga and circuits classes are available at the office. Our social club also organises other events such as wine tasting and weekend trips away, which are great opportunities to meet colleagues from across the business.

We're proud to have been awarded with Platinum 'We invest in people' accreditation by Investors in People for 2021-2024, a testimony to the collective efforts made across the firm to ensure it's a place where all our people can flourish. We are proud of this highly prestigious accolade with only 2% of companies assessed through Investors in People awarded the Platinum standard.

So make the jump with both feet and **#BeMoreSalmon**.

**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE®**  
**We invest in people** Platinum



# A day in the life of a trainee

All of our trainees are based in our Bristol HQ. Located in the heart of the Temple Quay area, you'll find us in the business hub of the city, less than five minutes walk from Temple Meads station.

Jess King - first year trainee at Burges Salmon LLP



**6:15am:** I dash to the gym to squeeze in a workout before work. It's surprising how much this sets me up for the day. If you hadn't of guessed already, I am very much an early bird!

**8:15 am:** I leave home and stroll through Harbourside with my flat mate Amelia – another first year trainee! We have a beautiful sunny walk in along the river towards the office and often meet fellow trainees along the way.

**8:45 am:** We arrive at the office and I grab some breakfast from our onsite canteen, 'Glassworks'. Usually

a porridge drizzled in honey, which I take up to my desk to eat whilst I look at my to do list for the day.

**9 am:** I start the day by drafting a licence to sub-let for one of the capacity tasks I picked up from the previous day. The allocation of trainee work can be delegated through supervisors or sometimes in the form of a capacity emails. This is sent out to all of the trainees and apprentices within the team and whoever is interested and/or best placed, will pick up the task. This provides a great opportunity to explore other areas of the department, pick up work that sparks your interest and work for varying fee earners.

**10 am:** I have a Teams catch up with my supervisors. In Real Estate, all trainees/apprentices are allocated two supervisors that specialise in two different areas of the department, for example, my supervisors are in



Energy and Agriculture. This enables us to have a broad exposure to varied work streams over our four-month seat. These informal catch ups are really useful to see what work my supervisors have on at the moment, discuss my capacity and have a general catch up. We caught up on the Food Festival that we all attended over the weekend – a must do when in Bristol!

**10:30 am:** I then take a look at a refinancing matter I am assisting with in reviewing some CPSE replies which we had received from the other side. This matter is providing me with fee earner responsibility in running my own file under the assistance and support of a director. This is an excellent opportunity to broaden my skills and personal development in managing my own matters ahead of qualification next year. I caught up with the director to discuss the next steps and any risks we should flag to our client.

**12:30 pm:** I then head over to another law firm to get a statutory declaration signed on behalf of our client. This is a common trainee task in Real Estate.

**1pm:** I head down with some of the trainees in my department to 'Glassworks' to make the all-important lunch choice decision. All of the trainees tend to meet at

lunchtime for a general catch up – it's a very sociable group.

**2pm:** Once back at my desk, I review and reply to a couple of emails before sitting down to review a Certificate of Title. The other side have sent over a draft version of a large document which summarises a property. I have been asked to review this and compare the data and information with a 'Valuation Report' prepared by a property agent, and the Official Land Registry Titles. A big task to get stuck into and test out my knowledge and attention for detail.

**3:30pm:** Having rotated seats only two weeks ago, I was kindly taken down for coffee by one of the solicitors in the team to check in on how I am settling in, discuss any interests I have and how they can support this. Burges Salmon are very much a people law firm which provide the best mix of advice, training and support.

**4pm:** I continue to review the Certificate of Title, updating the fee earner on my progress and anything that should be addressed to the client.

**5:30 pm:** I have a quick chat with my supervisor and create my 'to do list' for tomorrow before heading home around 6.

# A partner's perspective

37% of our partners trained at the firm and are now experts in their field. Commercial partner Helen Scott-Lawler shares her story.



I joined Burges Salmon as a trainee 25 years ago, and have been at the firm ever since. I did a law degree at Merton College, Oxford and I wanted to have a very high-quality training contract outside London.

Burges Salmon fulfilled that objective, but also turned out to provide something else – a culture of collaboration, which helped me to feel part of the firm from the very start. That culture is core to the firm, and is just as palpable today.

As a trainee, I sat in four departments in six four month seats (as we continue to do): Disputes, Real Estate, Tax, Trust and Family and Corporate (which incorporated our Commercial practice) and then revisited Disputes and Commercial.

I qualified into Commercial in the midst of Rail Privatisation (I have already dated myself, so don't be too shocked by that), and was at the heart of the firm's involvement in that project during my training



contract and on qualification. We were one of very few firms to have that experience, and we have had a market leading Rail practice since that time.

I also got to try some other aspects of commercial work, including IP and commercial contracts. I became a partner in 2001 in that practice area, and since then have spent time in our management team, both on our Board and as a Head of Department. But there is still time to be involved in some of our wider activities too: One of my favourite examples was participating in an internal dance competition to raise money for charity.

I am far from alone as a home-grown partner: about a third of our partners did their training contracts at the firm, 25% of whom are women. Indeed, both our senior partner and managing partner trained at the firm.

Burges Salmon has always taken the view that trainees are the future of the firm: my 25 years here is one of many examples of that. And the reason so many trainees choose to stay and spend their careers here. It's the combination of quality of work and clients with the strong culture of collaboration and shared values.

# Ready to make the leap?

Find out more information about our programme, get application advice and much more.

[www.burges-salmon.com/careers](http://www.burges-salmon.com/careers)



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