COLLAS CRILL

Collas Crill's NextGens build strong foundations for future careers

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Collas Crill prides itself as a flexible firm, encouraging its people to develop their careers in the way that suits them best, whether through on-the-job opportunities, mentoring, professional training delivered in-house or by external providers, or other support.

Ben Havard, Partner and Training Principal at Collas Crill, said: 'We take great pride in our training programme, which has been running for more than 15 years. Our aim is to recruit trainee solicitors who will become our future lawyers and ultimately progress to partnership.

'As an extension of this we have developed our NextGen programme. This gives our trainees and associates the opportunity to build the foundations of those all-important skills above and beyond the academic side of exams and qualifications – business development, networking, presentation skills and how to develop their network of contacts.

'This gives them a well-rounded start to their career at Collas Crill so they are well placed not only to be proactive, build relationships and develop their own practice, but ready to meet the ever-changing demands of the legal profession and of our clients.'

Don't take our word for it

Jessica Burgess is an Associate in the Private Client and Trusts team. In September 2021 Jessica began her training contract with the firm, completing four seats as a Trainee Solicitor before qualifying as a Solicitor of England and Wales in 2023.

'The NextGen network has been running for several years now as an entry level network building and relationship development initiative. We have a NextGen Committee which is led by associates of the firm with a budget and business development plan to manage and implement.

'It is a great chance to build your confidence and skills in an environment with people who are all at the same level as you in their career. Standing up, presenting and building my network of contacts at this stage in my career will set me in good stead for the future.'

Oceane Chandler joined Collas Crill as a Trainee solicitor in September 2022. She is currently undertaking her third seat in the Training Programme in the Financial Services and Regulatory team, having completed seats in the Private Client and Trusts and Insolvency and Corporate Disputes teams.

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'There is continuous support for trainees to develop skills like networking, business development and presenting at Collas Crill. There is also an understanding of how important this is for future career development.

'Each trainee is allocated a buddy (an associate or senior associate) who also helps with passing advice, tips and guidance. We are also mentored by the partners and there is real encouragement to get involved in business development by attending industry events or seminars.

'As Jessica said, it's not as nerve wracking to present our NextGen events as the audience is at a similar stage in their career. It gives you the opportunity to build confidence to take those skills to the next stage and to build relationships. They, like you, might not be the ultimate decision makers but you have contacts in supporting industries to pick up the phone to - and it works both ways.'

What is next?

Following on from the success of its NextGen Network seminar series, Collas Crill's NextGen team will be hosting a series of industry working breakfasts throughout 2024.

Entitled "Opps...I did it again" the first event takes place on 22 March and is a thought-provoking talk which considers what NextGens can learn from Britney Spears, Matthew Perry and other famous faces when considering their own estate planning.

'We will be covering a checklist of documents and processes relating to estate planning including the assets NextGens might have themselves – and there are often more than you think.

'We also touch on digital assets like your social media accounts, photos stored in the Cloud, online banking and crypto currencies,' said Oceane.

'With the growing trend of people not getting married and either not having children, or having them much later in life, it's becoming more important to estate plan to protect your assets for your loved ones,' Jessica said.

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