



Follow Up Report: Student Lab Summer Internship 2020

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Introduction

After the huge success of our one-day **Student Lab Summit** in November 2019, we wanted to find ways that the InterLaw Diversity Forum could support the high performing, diverse students from the Summit.

In early 2020 I began to speak to a range of corporates and financial institutions about creating a programme where these students could apply to intern with these organisations to increase their legal skills and to improve their future employment prospects. But when the COVID-19 pandemic hit earlier this year, it became doubtful that we would be able to deliver an in-person internship programme in 2020.

As we shifted all of our programming online in response to COVID-19, I wondered whether how we might still be able to support the future legal careers of students and recent graduates in this “new normal”. I strongly believed it was important to take steps in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as in the wake of the tragic death of George Floyd with the renewed focus on justice and equality for all, to provide support for the career progression of these talented individuals at such a critical stage in their careers. I decided that we could deliver an online internship that would combine learning about the law, exploring different legal career paths, highlighting role models, and developing soft skills. I wanted this experience to support this talent at a critical time in their career and a unique time in history.

The resulting InterLaw Diversity Forum **Student Lab Summer Internship** was a labour of love and took countless hours to develop, plan, and execute. I would like to thank **BPP University Law School** for their sponsorship of the event as well as our member organisations whose support underpins all of our work. A special thanks to our volunteers and 66 faculty members who gave so generously of their time and expertise.

This report is a summary of the Summer Internship and its impact. This internship surpassed our expectations and accomplished far more than we could have hoped for. Please consider joining the InterLaw Diversity Forum as an organisational member to support this and our other work across diversity, inclusion, and culture in the legal sector.

Best wishes,

Daniel Winterfeldt QC (Hon)
Founder & Chair
InterLaw Diversity Forum



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The Interlaw Diversity Forum's 2020 Student Lab Summer Internship, sponsored by BPP University Law School, was put together to support high-potential diverse students, recent graduates, paralegals, and trainees from all UK universities and backgrounds on their career journey by connecting them with their peers, law firms, barristers' chambers, and corporate institutions through lectures, panel events, and interactive skills-based workshops.



950

**Internship
Applications
Received**



450

**Summer
Internships
Offered**



397

**Successfully
Completed
Internships**

We received nearly 950 applications for the Summer Internship and asked applicants to provide us with their grades, university attended, diversity and social mobility statistics, and an essay. We offered spaces as Summer Interns to 450 of these applicants after reviewing every application by hand. Of these, 397 successfully completed the programme and received their **Certificates of Completion** (minimum of 80% attendance required).

Our Summer Interns were all high performing students (First or 2:1) from diverse (LGBT+, BAME, Disability, Gender) and/or socially disadvantaged backgrounds.

The diversity breakdown of the Summer Interns:

61%	BAME (Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic)
11%	LGBT+
9%	Disabled
66%	Female
8%	Caring Responsibilities
44%	Socially Mobile



5 days, 29 sessions

We had **29 sessions** of programming
(**1200 minutes** total) over **5 days**.



491,498 minutes

Our Summer Interns logged a combined
total of **491,498 minutes** (**8191 hours**).

Our curriculum covered:

Legal topics, including

- Capital Markets & Finance
- How Will COVID-19 Affect the Legal Industry?
- Pro Bono in Law
- Introduction to Commercial Awareness
- Tech and Law: How Legal Work Supports the Technology Industry

Case studies, including

- IP Branding & Enforcement
- The Anatomy of an M&A Transaction
- Litigation: White Collar Crime
- Battersea Power Station: A Case Study in Real Estate and Planning

Career paths and practice areas, including

- In-House
- Solicitors v Barristers
- A Day in the Life of a Trainee
- Intellectual Property
- Government
- Judiciary
- Corporate & Commercial

“Soft skills” or “Career-ready” skills, including

- Inclusive Leadership
- Virtual Networking
- Career Development Top Tips
- Introduction to Legal Drafting



We had 66 faculty members who shared their experience and expertise from law firms, in-house, government, universities and more.

Our in-house faculty included speakers from **Google, NBCUniversal, Netflix, Expedia, Spotify, Telefonica O2, Just Eat, Inmarsat, Citi, Adecco, T. Rowe Price, Visa, Bank of America, NatWest, JP Morgan,** and **Goldman Sachs.**

Our private practice faculty included speakers from **Cooley, Fried Frank, Reed Smith, Weil, Davis Woolfe, Macfarlanes, Dechert, Gowling WLG, Allen & Overy, Winterfeldt IP Group, Mayer Brown,** and **Addleshaw Goddard.**

Our government faculty included speakers from the **Government Legal Department, the Office of Parliamentary Counsel, the Judiciary, the House of Lords, the House of Commons,** and the **FCA.**

Additional faculty came from the **InterLaw Diversity Forum, BPP University Law School, the Law Society, the SRA,** and **Stonewall.**



Feedback

I can confidently say this has been one of the best weeks of my life in regard to self-development, discovering who I am and what I want for myself in the future. I do not have enough characters to express how incredible this week has been and to showcase all that I have learned.

The InterLaw Diversity Forum's Student Summer Internship in my head was going to be just another legal and professional program to help sharpen my legal skills and get the necessary knowledge of the profession needed to excel. Well, I couldn't be more wrong - its panning out to be this and much more!

I think it was truly a life-changing week.

This initiative is precisely what I was yearning for ... It's an amazing welcome into the modern profession.

It was intensely inspiring. It has changed my perception towards law and the BAME community also.

Blessed, motivated, ecstatic, and humbled. I believe you've revived something in me that was missing, and I will eternally be grateful for the opportunity you have afforded me. THANK YOU!

This program was truly a unique and insightful and showed us the different pathways into a career in Law ... It has made me more determined than ever to fight for what I want in life.

It helped me realise that I can be myself and still be successful.

This has been an empowering and introspective experience throughout. It truly gave me a sense of belonging in the legal community. Instilling the belief that we all have something to offer as diverse individuals was truly inspiring and game changing.

It has definitely given me hope in terms of what the future holds for someone like me.

I undoubtedly benefited from the experience not only in terms of information acquired, but also in terms of self-awareness, self-improvement and self-reflection. I have never felt so inspired by other individuals before in my life and I will definitely be more proactive in changing my behaviours and supporting others.

I loved how the internship was legal-based, with some discussion of intersectional D&I issues throughout, as opposed to being just a diversity-discussion internship. This is a crucial framing which makes the internship really valuable on CVs whilst also being designed for those traditionally underrepresented in the legal industry. Thank you so much for the time which has gone into putting together this programme.

This was by far the best internship I attended over lockdown. I have never come away from anything feeling more inspired and ready to kick down both the barriers society has put in place for someone like myself who is a female, first generation student, working class and has a disability. I feel so much more confident applying for positions this year having taken part in this experience.

Overall, this has been a very healing and eye-opening experience.

Each panel was so diverse. It has made me reflect on other events that I have been to recently which have been predominantly white males. This event has allowed me to believe that I will succeed.

I definitely benefitted from the experience – it was incredible. I have taken part in one other virtual internship (the Bright Network commercial law internship experience) and I definitely preferred this one. It felt like we could get much closer to the speakers and really make the most of their wisdom. I am buzzing at the end of this experience.

I am in a WhatsApp group with virtually everyone on the internship and the comments coming in from everyone are really positive. “Best internship ever”, “So much better than Legal Cheek and Bright Network”, etc. I agree! So glad I was accepted, so thank you!

This internship has been the best internship all summer ... I feel as though I have found that support system which I have always wanted. The internship has allowed me to put into perspective what I want in the future.

I have attended three other internships throughout this summer, and I can honestly say that the Student Lab Internship was the most educational, beneficial, and genuinely enjoyable experience of them all. I left the internship feeling truly inspired and even more motivated to pursue a career as a solicitor.

This internship was head and shoulders above the ones I have attended before. The quality of the faculty was incredible.

The Student Summer Internship was one of the best virtual internships I have completed. In particular, the focus on helping student develop practical legal skills by analysing real cases was unique.

This was by far the best internship that I took part in. Every session was so interesting and so inspirational. It has motivated me to pursue a career in law even more than before.

The Student Lab Summer Internship was the most insightful and inspiring virtual internship I have had the pleasure of participating in.

Without a doubt the best virtual internship. I feel I benefitted a lot from it - not just with regards to legal knowledge and understanding of the vast sectors and openings to law, but also in terms of core skills such as networking, outreach, diversity, and the psychology of work.

This internship was probably the most engaging internship I have done. It was very insightful and gave me a real understanding of what the legal career holds for me as a BAME person.

The calibre of the speakers, the diversity in backgrounds, physical abilities, expertise, and career paths was absolutely incredible. There is not enough space to talk in depth about all that I have learned. In short, I have learned more about the different paths into law, beneficial skills, the importance of building meaningful relationships, that resilience and open-mindedness is key on your career journey, and I increased my understanding of different legal practice areas.

InterLaw Diversity Forum always go above and beyond with every event they do and that was certainly the case for this internship.

I have changed how I think about diversity.

Thank you for your tireless work to help this diverse community during such a difficult time!

This internship was so much than a mere box ticking exercise (as some diverse schemes appear to be) and the week was informative, realistic and aspirational.

The best part of the program was seeing so much diversity. I know diversity is often talked about, but I have never seen it depicted in a better way... After listening to some many inspiring, non-traditional routes to the legal industry, it has definitely changed my perception.

I have never heard such honest and upfront answers to questions posed by interns. The Team of InterLaw Diversity Forum is a conglomeration of diverse yet united personalities whom I will look up to for the rest of my life. Daniel, you are a superhero. Jonathan, you made the internship so very organised. Usha you have been so inspiring and Laura, I am complete awe of you.

Honestly one of the most enriching, insightful and invaluable experiences I have been a part of. Never have I interacted with such a broad, diverse group of people – a truly unique experience!!

I completely enjoyed every single day of Student Lab Summer Internship. The knowledge I got from this internship is incomparable to any other internship I was involved during this summer. It presented an absolutely exceptional opportunity to hear from wide variety of thoughtfully selected speakers on various topics - D&I, types of lawyers and practices, skills and aptitudes required for a good lawyer, practice areas.

I came away from the experience feeling positive and excited to pursue a career in law, with a renewed enthusiasm, especially to consider other routes.

I am not sure how to capture how amazing this experience has been in words; however, I would like to say this has been one of the most inspiring programmes I have ever taken part in. Every single panel starting from day one has taught me to change the way I think, step out of my comfort zone and, importantly, stay resilient.

An incredibly powerful week of well thought out, invaluable sessions containing an outstanding line up of speakers. Five mornings of thought-provoking, eye-opening, encouraging, humbling, and undeniably motivational talks which made me incredibly proud and humbled to have been considered “exceptional” to join this internship.

This experience has allowed me to improve my networking abilities and connect with law firms, corporate institutions, and barristers. The experience highlighted the key aspects I would enjoy in law, such as the problem-solving involved, the intellectual challenge, working in teams, constructing arguments, and the wide variety of commercial work. Thank you so much for this unique experience. I have enjoyed the challenges, appreciated the exposure, and believe it is fantastic preparation for when I start my training.

This was a fantastic internship that was interesting, engaging, interactive, diverse and stimulating. Every session was interesting and useful, and each speaker had been carefully selected and really added value to the overall internship.