



Akin®

London Training Programme

LEARN. ADVANCE. THRIVE.



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Why Start Your Legal Career With Us?

At Akin, we are all about opening doors. We recruit those with exceptional promise and give you everything you need to reach your goals. Our trainees are guaranteed an immersive hands-on experience, working side by side with senior practitioners on high-profile transactions and disputes.

Training Programme Structure

Over the course of your two-year training programme, you will rotate across four different practice areas, spending six months in each. This provides you with the best opportunity to acquire a breadth of experience and an in-depth understanding of our business, our work, our clients, and our people. All of our seats provide opportunities to gain exposure to multi-jurisdictional work and our global teams and clients.

Everyone's legal journey is different. Although you may already have an idea about the type of work you're interested in, our advice is to remain open-minded. Our Trainee Development team will be on hand throughout your training to help you navigate seat choices and help tailor your training programme.

Key practices include:

- Financial restructuring
- Corporate/M&A
- Energy & infrastructure
- Finance
- Financial regulatory
- Funds/investment management
- Litigation/arbitration
- International trade
- Antitrust & international competition
- Tax

All of our trainees sit in one or more of our flagship transactional seats and one contentious seat, to give a strong foundation of our key business areas and to build diverse skill sets. In addition, there are opportunities for a tailored international or client secondment.

Small Intake

We recruit a maximum of 8 trainees each year and therefore you will be integral to the team from day one. Expect plenty of responsibility and the chance to play a meaningful role in fast-paced, sophisticated client matters.

Feedback

Feedback will be key as you move through your legal career. You'll receive ongoing feedback from your seat supervisor and others within your team to keep you on track and help you develop and refine your legal skills. You'll also have two formal reviews in each seat.

Training

There is no limit to your learning as an Akin trainee. You'll attend regular practice group and office-wide training sessions on relevant areas of law and practical skills. Additionally, you'll have the chance to hone your public speaking skills through our Trainee Education and Development (TED) Talk Series. During TED Talks, you'll present to your trainee cohort on a topic in which you've become a subject matter expert - offering a great opportunity to share knowledge.

Our brand-new Optimal Performance for Junior Lawyers programme is designed to help you build resilience and equip you with the tools needed to thrive at Akin. Delivered in person over six 1-hour sessions during the first year of your training programme, the course complements the existing legal and technical skills training schedule. Each session has been crafted to support you in developing sustainable performance habits and a confident mindset from day one!

Throughout your two-year training programme and beyond, you'll also collaborate with our internal talent team and external consultants to support your professional growth. By working together, we'll make sure that your skills and knowledge are constantly growing.

The Akin Client Excellence Framework (ACE)

The ACE Framework outlines the core skills that our associates and counsel are expected to achieve at each stage of their career to provide exemplary service to our clients and to build a successful career as a lawyer. Our robust training programmes support our lawyers' development in these core skills. Please click [here](#) to learn more.

Support

Support doesn't begin on your first day as a trainee, it starts as soon as you've secured your place to join us. We will keep in regular contact with you throughout your studies and run socials for you to meet your peers and get to know us better before you join, to provide a positive and enjoyable transition into life at Akin.

When you arrive, you will have the continued support of our dedicated trainee development team, development partners, supervisors and peer mentors – to name just a few! As part of our commitment to support the positive mental health and wellbeing of our employees, we also have an in-house Be Well counselling service which offers unlimited one on one support, as well as regular group training sessions.

Akin Anchor

As part of our commitment to supporting future trainees, we have launched a new initiative designed to help you feel connected to the firm from the very start of your SQE journey. Through this programme, you will be paired with a newly qualified solicitor - your Akin Anchor. This buddy relationship begins when you start your SQE studies and continues through to your first day of training the following year.

Joining a law firm is a significant milestone, and our goal is to help you feel confident, informed, and well-prepared as you transition into life at Akin.

Culture

Ask any of our trainees and they will tell you how important an open and supportive working culture is to thrive. The hours of a City lawyer can be long, but the firm recognises the importance of downtime and encourages all employees to do this where possible. Whether it be having your lunch on the terrace, chatting to a colleague over a game of ping-pong in the canteen, or leaving your desk early to attend one of our firmwide resource group socials - there is certainly no 'face-time' culture here!



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Akin has fostered an excellent culture for its trainees and junior lawyers; teams are friendly and sociable, and senior lawyers take the time to explain legal and transactional concepts, as well as the commercial background to matters. As a trainee you do interesting work, including legal research, case management, drafting transactional documents and liaising with clients in high-value multi-national deals. The firm has plentiful opportunities for trainees to get involved with a variety of pro bono matters, ESG publications and opportunity & inclusion initiatives. I cannot recommend the training programme at Akin highly enough.”

Ben Hasson, Associate and former Trainee

Opportunity & Inclusion

Opportunity and inclusion are paramount to us and we are proud of our commitment to create an inclusive and collaborative work environment where all members of the Akin community can thrive, grow and bring their full authentic self to work. We welcome a broad range of perspectives and experiences to solve our clients' most complex challenges.

We have Opportunity & Inclusion councils that operate at both the firmwide and office levels. The London Opportunity & Inclusion committee includes a trainee representative and is responsible for the development and implementation of office initiatives. The trainee representative engages in London office strategies and attends regular meetings related to Opportunity & Inclusion.

Firmwide Resource Groups

Open to all, our Firmwide Resource Groups (FRGs) provide a forum for our lawyers and business services professionals to engage with colleagues from across the firm, discuss shared interests and contribute to new Opportunity & Inclusion initiatives.

In London, our FRGs include:

Disability & Neurodiversity	REACH (Race, Ethnicity & Cultural Heritage)
Out & Allied (LGBTQ+)	Social Mobility
Social Mobility	Women

With subcommittees often led by counsel and associates, resource groups are a great opportunity to forge strong bonds with colleagues while sharing ideas to support the effective inclusion of all groups.

Learn more about our firmwide resource groups [here](#).

Pro Bono

All trainees are encouraged and regularly get involved in a wide variety of pro-bono matters and it's something that the firm actively champions involvement in. We also have a unique opportunity for first year trainees to apply for a London Pro Bono Scholar position, with successful applicants attending a summer Boot Camp in the U.S. for a week of training and networking.

The London-based Pro Bono Scholars work with the London Office Pro Bono Committee to help deepen relationships with not-for-profit organisations. We support engagement before you join the firm so as an incoming future trainee, there may be opportunities to work with our pro bono practice before your official start date!



Qualification

Throughout your training you will have an ongoing conversation about your qualification preferences. Our immersive learning approach and structured training sessions will ensure that you're ready for life as an Akin associate.



Benefits



	PGDL/SQE sponsorship plus maintenance grant of £20,000 per year of study
	25 days annual holiday
	Season ticket loan
	Pension
	Critical illness and death in service insurance
	Fitness and wellness reimbursement
	On-site mental health services
	Health, dental & travel insurance
	Cycle Scheme
	Lexxic Support

The Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE)

The Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) is the centralised assessment for aspiring solicitors in England and Wales, introduced by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) in September 2021. All graduates, regardless of what degree they studied, will need to pass the SQE - an assessment split into two parts: SQE1 and SQE2.

To qualify as a solicitor, you need to:

- Pass SQE1 (tests your legal knowledge)
- Pass SQE2 (assesses practical legal skills)
- Complete two years of Qualifying Work Experience
- Pass a character and suitability test

What is the Akin route?

We have worked closely with the University of Law (ULaw) to tailor the LLM Legal Practice Course (SQE1&2), ensuring it not only prepares you to pass the SQE1 and SQE2 assessments, but also includes modules that will set you up for a successful career at Akin.



How does Akin support trainees through the SQE?

We run a 2-hour Starting Strong: SQE Readiness Workshop to help you feel confident and prepared ahead of SQE1, followed by a 2-hour Navigating the Transition to SQE2 Workshop before you begin SQE2. Both workshops are designed to equip you with practical tools and strategies to help you manage and excel in your studies. They also offer a great opportunity to visit the London office, connect with your cohort, meet other trainees, and catch up with the Graduate Recruitment team.

Our new Akin Anchor initiative is designed to help you build a meaningful connection with one of our recently qualified solicitors. Through regular catch-ups, your Anchor will provide an additional point of contact beyond the Graduate Recruitment team - offering guidance and insight as you progress through your SQE studies and prepare to join the firm as a trainee.

Non-law students

Although no longer a regulatory requirement, we've chosen to continue partnering with ULaw so that our future trainees without a qualifying law degree can study the PGDL (Postgraduate Diploma in Law) before beginning the LLM Legal Practice Course (SQE1&2). The PGDL gives those with a non-law degree a solid foundation of legal knowledge and skills required to become a successful lawyer. The programme length of the PGDL is one year and can be studied in person or remotely.

When will I sit the SQE1 and SQE2 assessments?

You will complete both assessments prior to starting at the firm. The course begins in September, preparing you to take the SQE1 exams in January and the SQE2 exams in April/May.

Where will I study the LLM Legal Practice Course (SQE1&2)?

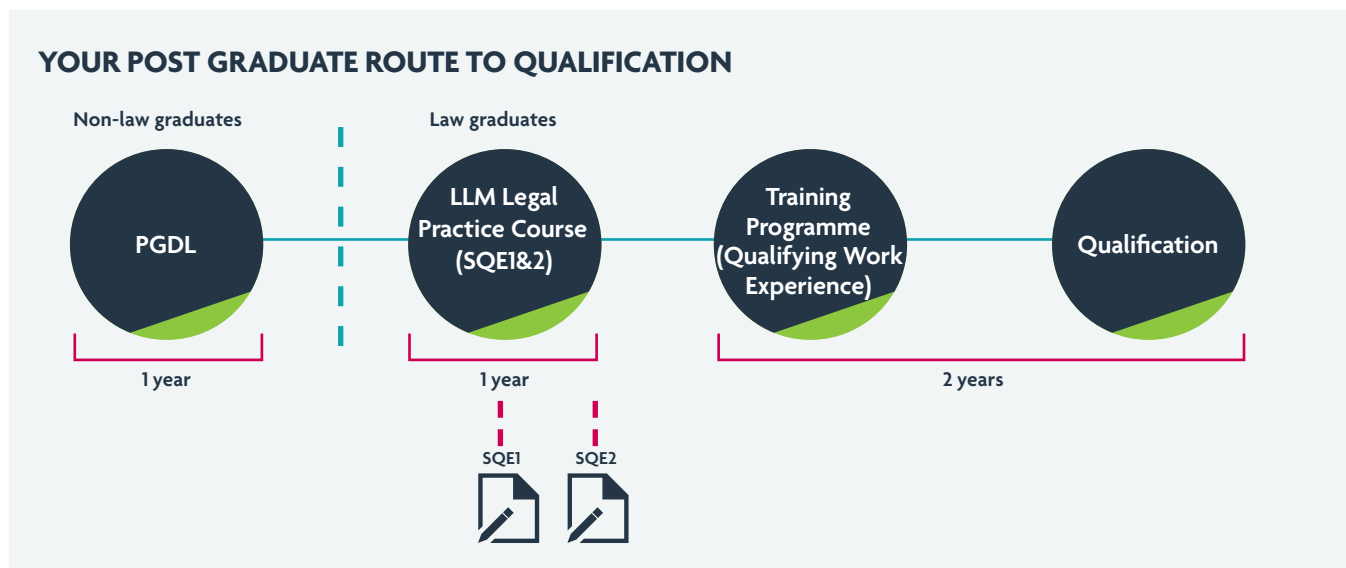
All future trainees attend the University of Law's London Moorgate campus as a cohort. We feel the community aspect of studying with your cohort is extremely important and valuable. Remote learning is not available for this course.

Will I receive a maintenance grant?

We will continue to provide financial assistance for post graduate studies to those joining the firm (£20,000 per year of study). If you are required to undertake the PGDL, and decide to study this course remotely, you will receive a maintenance grant of £15,000.

What is Qualifying Work Experience?

This is the equivalent to a two-year training programme where you'll rotate through four different seats, spending six months in each. We have kept a rotational system to ensure our trainees are exposed to a wide variety of commercial practice groups to enable them to make an informed decision for their qualification preference.



Want To Get To Know Us Better?

2026 London Spring Vacation Scheme

Our two-week spring vacation scheme is the perfect way to experience what life is really like as an Akin trainee. We have carefully designed a comprehensive programme of interactive training sessions, workshops, networking opportunities and exciting social activities to help you get to know your fellow scheme participants and reps from across the London office.

When you're not attending timetabled sessions, you will split your time between two practice groups and work alongside our partners, associates and current trainees. Whether it be drafting documents, researching points of law, or attending client meetings — you'll be supported and guided each step of the way by your dedicated scheme supervisors.

Our preferred method of trainee hiring is via our vacation scheme because it is the best opportunity for you to experience life at Akin, and for us to get to know you better. Although we will be assessing your performance during the programme, we appreciate that you will also be working out whether we are the right firm for you.

Your supervisors will provide us with detailed feedback about your time sat in their departments, and you will also get involved in a mixture of written and group tasks. At the end of the scheme, you will be offered the chance to interview for our two-year training programme starting in September 2028.

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Akin's spring vacation scheme is truly a fantastic experience to foster professional development. It provides a great insight into life as a trainee at the firm and offers a fantastic overview of the firm's wide-ranging practice areas. I've learnt an enormous amount, expanded my professional network, and confirmed to myself this is the career path for me.

2025 Vacation Scheme Participant

Benefits Package

Our benefits package ensures that financial barriers do not prevent talented candidates from participating in our vacation scheme.

**Please note that all monetary payments are subject to standard statutory deductions.*



£1,200 salary with 50% paid on Day 1 of the scheme

We understand that waiting for payday can be stressful, so we've introduced a 50% salary payment on Day 1 to help you hit the ground running and focus on making the most of your experience.*



£300 Work-Ready Payment

Two weeks before the scheme begins, you'll receive a £300 payment to help cover any upfront costs. Whether it's buying a new work wardrobe or subscribing to resources to develop your commercial awareness, we want you to feel confident, prepared, and excited for your experience with us.*



Travel Expenses Covered

We know commuting costs can quickly add up, so we'll arrange and cover reasonable travel expenses to and from the office each day.



Accommodation

We offer support for those who do not have access to accommodation outside a 2-hour commute to the office.



Complimentary Breakfast & Lunch

Start your day right with breakfast in our Staff Café, available Monday - Friday. Plus, for at least three days a week, lunch is covered - whether you're attending timetabled 'Lunch & Learns', officewide events, or heading out with your supervisor, it's one less thing to worry about. On the days when lunch isn't provided, you'll find a variety of great food options just a short walk from the office!

At A Glance

Dedicated supervisor in each practice group you sit in

Get involved in real trainee tasks

Develop your legal skills and enhance your commercial acumen

Immerse yourself in Akin's culture

Build your network, both professionally and personally

Guaranteed interview to join our two-year training programme



I had an incredible experience during the spring vacation scheme at Akin. I had the invaluable opportunity to fully immerse myself in the firm's work and culture, which was evidently supportive and collaborative. This opportunity provided valuable insight into the role of a trainee at Akin and firmly reinforced the reasons I was initially drawn to the firm. Through interactive sessions and practical tasks, I enhanced my skills and deepened my knowledge.

2025 Vacation Scheme Participant

The two weeks was an incredible chance to experience life at Akin. My pre-existing perception of Akin as a friendly place was really validated - the open-door culture is particularly unique, and everyone had time to speak to me regardless of their role. Combined with high-quality work and intelligent people, I had an amazing two weeks and feel very lucky to have experienced life at such a special firm.

2025 Vacation Scheme Participant

Want To Get To Know Us Better?

Key Dates For Your Diary



Applications open: Thursday 18 September 2025



Applications close: Sunday 4 January 2026



2026 Spring Vacation Scheme: Monday 13 April - Friday 24 April 2026

(Please note that these dates are not flexible, and scheme participants must be available to attend the London office for the full two weeks.)

Who Can Apply?

Our 2026 Spring Vacation Scheme is open to:

- Penultimate-year law students (graduating in 2027)
- Final-year students and graduates from any degree discipline

To find out more about what we look for, please click [here](#).

Recruitment Process

STEP 1 Online application form

Your chance to tell us all about yourself, your academic record, your achievements and what attracts you to Akin. We're looking for people who are genuinely interested and motivated by a career in commercial law. We are looking for thoughtful, original answers that reflect who you are and why Akin is the right firm for you. A reminder that AI should be used to support, not substitute, your responses! We receive a lot of strong applications, so it's essential you do your research, make every word count, and carefully review your form before pressing submit!

STEP 2 Akin bespoke online strengths-based assessment

Our untimed web-based assessment has been carefully designed to give you a realistic preview of what being a trainee solicitor at Akin entails. As you navigate through different scenarios and challenges of the role, you will also have the opportunity to tell us about the things you do well, and the things you really enjoy doing! You will receive a personalised feedback report after completing the assessment.

STEP 3 Telephone interview with a member of the Graduate Recruitment team

Your chance to bring your application to life! We want to know more about you, and your motivations for a career in commercial law at Akin. The 25-30 minute interview will also include some competency-based questions.

STEP 4 Assessment Centre in the London office

Our assessment days take place in person and consist of a commercial case-study interview with our Graduate Recruitment Partners, a competency-based interview with our trainee supervisors, and a written assessment. All interviews are conducted CV blind, which means interviewers will not see a copy of your application form.

Talk To Us



Have a question? Want to discuss reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process, including those related to a disability or health condition? Please get in touch with us and we'll be happy to help - graduaterecruitment@akingump.com

Set Yourself Up For Success

Before drafting and submitting your application, we strongly encourage you to:



Join one of our virtual Application & Interview Workshops, run by the Graduate Recruitment team, designed to help you prepare a strong application and guide you through what to expect at each stage of our recruitment process.

Apply to attend our brand-new Ask Akin Virtual Open Day, taking place on Tuesday 4 November 2025. This is your opportunity to connect with our people, explore our culture, and discover what makes Akin a place where you can thrive. You'll hear from partners, associates and trainees about life at Akin, and have the chance to ask questions in an open and friendly environment.

This event is open to penultimate-year law students, final-year non-law students and graduates from any discipline.



To apply, please send an up-to-date CV along with a short paragraph (maximum 250 words) answering the following questions to graduaterecruitment@akingump.com:

1. Why do you want to attend the Ask Akin virtual open day?
2. What are you hoping to gain from the event?

Applications open on Thursday 18 September 2025.

Applications close on Monday 20 October 2025.



Visit the '[**Meet Us**](#)' page on our graduate recruitment website to explore all our upcoming events.

Ready To Apply?

Applications should be submitted using the online form, which can be accessed [**here**](#). Applications are screened on a rolling basis, so we recommend you apply as early as possible.



Application FAQs

How can I get to know Akin better before applying?

We will be attending a number of events and virtual law fairs over the coming months. In addition, the Graduate Recruitment team will be hosting a series of virtual workshops throughout the autumn term, offering application tips and tricks to help you stand out. We are also excited to launch our brand-new Ask Akin Virtual Open Day in November. We encourage you to visit the [‘Meet Us’ page](#) on our graduate recruitment website to find out where you can speak to reps from across the London office.

What is Akin’s recruitment process?

Head over to the [‘How to Apply’](#) page on our graduate recruitment website to watch our animated recruitment video to learn more about each step of the recruitment process.

How many places are available on the spring vacation scheme?

We invite up to 15 successful candidates to take part in our yearly vacation scheme.

How many vacation schemes do you run a year?

We run one vacation scheme each year. This year, we will be running a two-week spring scheme from Monday 13 April - Friday 24 April 2026.

When do applications open and close?

Applications open: Thursday 18 September 2025

Applications close: Sunday 4 January 2026

How do I apply?

Applications should be submitted using the online AllHires form, which can be accessed [here](#).

Who can apply?

Our spring scheme is open to penultimate-year law students, final-year students and graduates of any subject.

I’m in my second year of a four-year course - can I apply?

You’ll need to wait until you’re in your penultimate year or beyond before you can apply for our spring scheme, as we recruit for our training programmes two-years in advance and all future trainees complete at least one year of sponsored post-graduate education before joining the firm.

Do you only hire future trainees from the vacation scheme?

Our preferred method of trainee hiring is via our vacation scheme because it is the best opportunity for you to experience life at Akin, and for us to get to know you better.

What are the minimum grade requirements?

We look for a consistent and exceptional record of academic achievement. Candidates should be on track for, or have obtained, a 2:1 degree overall at undergraduate level. We require full details of your degree, including module scores for all years of study. We do not have any minimum GCSE or A-level requirements (or equivalent).

Are there any degree requirements?

We welcome applications from all degree disciplines, from any university.

My academic performance was affected by mitigating circumstances. Will you take these into account?

Yes. Please include relevant details on your application form or, if you prefer, send a confidential email to graduaterecruitment@akingump.com

I don't have any legal work experience — should I still apply?

Yes, definitely. Work experience does not have to be legal to be relevant to your application. Please tell us about the transferable skills you have gained or developed during your experiences (legal or non-legal) that will help you thrive in your future career as a commercial solicitor — for example, teamwork, communication skills or working well under pressure.

Prior work experience or volunteering experience is a plus but not a necessity.

Do you screen applications on a rolling basis?

Yes. We encourage all applicants to submit your application as soon as you can!

Can I have feedback on my application?

We appreciate your eagerness to receive feedback, however, we receive a high volume of applications each year. In fairness to all candidates, we are unable to provide individual feedback at application stage. All those who are unsuccessful at Assessment Centre stage will be offered a feedback call.

Do you accept applications from candidates who are not eligible to work in the UK and who require sponsorship?

Yes. We accept applications from candidates requiring a work permit and we will sponsor your visa during the two-year training programme (subject to any changes to government quotas).

Please note that we are unable to offer visa sponsorship for our Spring Vacation Scheme. All applicants must have the right to work in the UK for the full duration of the scheme. If you are currently on a visa, it is your responsibility to ensure that your visa permits you to undertake paid work experience on the scheme dates listed.

We strongly advise all candidates to check their visa requirements carefully before applying.

What should I do if I need reasonable adjustments for the recruitment process?

We'll work with you to make any reasonable adjustments you need to help you perform at your best. Please email graduaterecruitment@akingump.com to discuss further with a member of our Graduate Recruitment team.

Meet the Graduate Recruitment Team



Amy McCarthy (right)

Graduate Recruitment Manager

graduaterecruitment@akingump.com

Lois Colquhoun (left)

Senior Graduate Recruitment Coordinator

graduaterecruitment@akingump.com



Akin is a leading international law firm with more than 900 lawyers in offices throughout the United States, Europe, Asia and the Middle East.
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