

London Training Programme

LEARN. ADVANCE. THRIVE.



AkinSM

Why Start Your Legal Career With Us?

At Akin, we're 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/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 will attend regular practice group and office-wide training on relevant areas of law and practical skills. You'll also work with our internal talent and external consultants to aid your professional development throughout your two-year training programme and beyond. By working together, we'll make sure that your skills and knowledge are constantly growing.



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.



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!



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

DEI is paramount to us and we are proud of our commitment to create a diverse and inclusive work environment where all members of the Akin community can thrive, grow, and bring their full authentic self to work. The more diverse our teams, the better we can support clients. We welcome your unique background, perspective and experience.

We have DEI councils that operate at both firmwide and office level. The London DEI committee, which includes a trainee representative, provides an opportunity for lawyers and business services team members to proactively communicate questions, concerns and ideas to firm management and is also responsible for the development and implementation of office initiatives.

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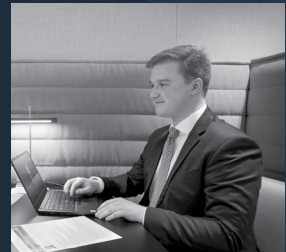
... People are always willing to listen and answer questions and I can say without a doubt that the firm has a very collegiate working environment”.

Gunel Latifova, Associate



Being a part of a smaller intake has afforded me the opportunity to work with nearly every person in my relevant practice areas on very varied workstreams”.

Ben Hasson, Associate



The trainee DEI representative engages in London office DEI strategies and attends regular committee meetings, office and graduate recruiting events. This role opens up opportunities to connect with peers, senior lawyers and firm leadership.

Keep reading to find out more about the London office DEI resource groups.

Firmwide Resource Groups

Our Firmwide Resource Groups (FRGs) provide a forum

for our lawyers and business services professionals to meet throughout the year at both the firmwide and office level. These forums are a fantastic place to engage with colleagues from across the firm, discuss shared interests and contribute to new DEI initiatives.

In London, we currently have resource groups focused on:

Abilities	REACH (Race, Ethnicity & Cultural Heritage)	LGBTQ+
Parents and Caregivers	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 related to recruiting, professional development and advancement.

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, networking and social justice programming.

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 £15,000 per year of study
-  25 days annual holiday
-  Season ticket loan
-  Pension
-  Critical illness and death in service insurance
-  Fitness reimbursement
-  On-site mental wellbeing services
-  Health, dental & travel insurance

The Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE)

The changes in routes to qualifying as a solicitor from 2022 means that the LPC (Legal Practice Course) will eventually be phased out. Every graduate, no matter what degree they studied, will now need to pass the SQE. The SQE is a centralised assessment consisting of two assessments - SQE1 and SQE2.

To qualify as a solicitor, you now 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 ULaw (The University of Law) to tailor the SQE Preparation Course to include modules that will set you up for a successful career at Akin. The course is designed to prepare you to pass the SQE1 and SQE2 assessments.

Non-law students

Although no longer a regulatory requirement, we have chosen to continue to partner with ULaw for our future trainees without a qualifying law degree to study the PGDL (Postgraduate Diploma in Law) prior to starting the SQE Preparation Course. The PGDL gives those with a non-law degree a solid foundation of legal knowledge skills required to become a successful lawyer. The programme length of the PGDL is one year.

When will I sit the SQE1 and SQE2 assessments?

You will sit both assessments before arrival to the firm. SQE1 six months into the LLM Legal Practice Course and SQE2 will take place at the end of the SQE Preparation Course.

Will I receive a maintenance grant?

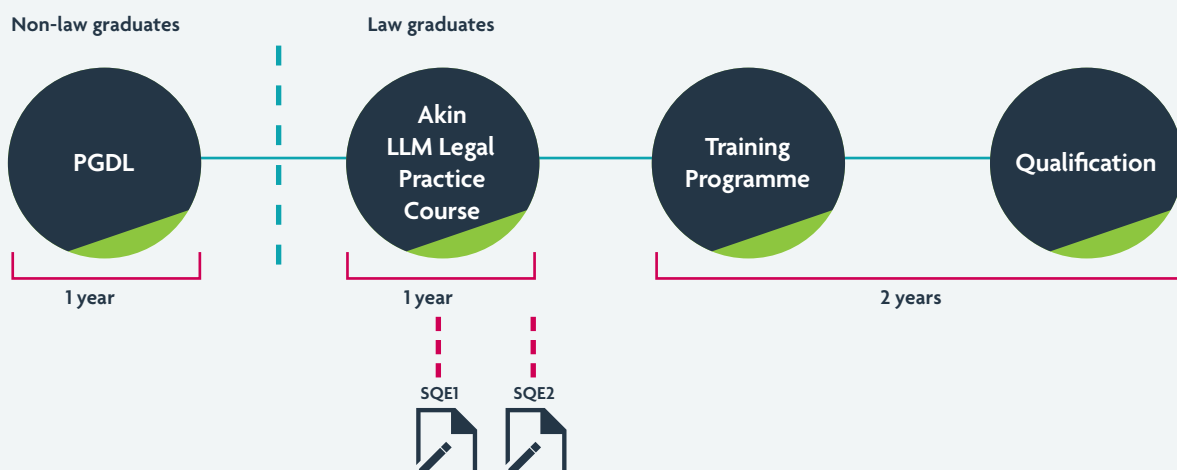
We will continue to provide financial assistance for post graduate studies to those joining the firm (£15,000 per year of study).

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.

Our 2024 trainee intake will be the first to complete the SQE post graduate route and will join us to start their Qualifying Work Experience.

YOUR POST GRADUATE ROUTE TO QUALIFICATION



Want To Get To Know Us Better?

Our two-week summer vacation scheme is the perfect way to experience what life is really like as a 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 schemers and meet others at our office summer party!

When you're not attending timetabled skills 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 supervisor.

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.

Benefits

	£600 per week
	Dedicated supervisor and trainee buddy
	Guaranteed interview to join our two-year training programme

Key Dates

Applications open: Thursday 28 September 2023

Applications close: Sunday 7 January 2024

2024 Summer Vacation Scheme dates: Monday 17 – Friday 28 June 2024

Who Can Apply?

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

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

Application 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.
STEP 2	Akin bespoke online strengths-based assessment Our 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 realistic 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!
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 motivation for a career in commercial law at Akin. The interview will also include some competency-based questions.
STEP 4	Review of commercial application question Our Graduate Recruitment Partners will blind-screen your commercial application question to determine the depth of understanding of your chosen topic.
STEP 5	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, a written assessment and group task.

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.

Talk To Us

Have a question? Want to discuss adjustments? Please get in touch with us and we'll be happy to help - graduaterecruitment@akingump.com

“ Don’t just take our word for it

Care was put into every detail to ensure we had a great experience. We were introduced to the firm’s global chairperson and met partners from all of the departments – they were all very personable, incredibly intelligent and interested in the development of our careers.”

Rebecca McNeill, Trainee



The main thing that drew me to Akin was the smaller trainee intake and leaner team sizes, as I wanted more opportunity to train at a firm where I was challenged and would learn through the mentorship of senior lawyers.”

Gunel Latifova, Associate

What stood out to me was not only the top tier work I experienced, but also the inclusive and supportive environment created for all employees.”

Simrhan Khetani, Trainee



What stood out most about my time at Akin was how welcoming and supportive everyone was at the office. This made introducing myself to the team far less daunting, the assessments and interviews felt relaxed and enjoyable and, in my view, is testament to the great collegial culture of the firm.”

Summer Ahmed, Future Trainee

From the moment I started my vacation scheme at Akin, I found myself completely at ease. The work was incredibly interesting, and the socials meant I got a real feel for the type of people at the firm.”

Jack Seifert, Trainee



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 diversity initiatives. I cannot recommend the traineeship at Akin highly enough.”

Ben Hasson, Associate

Akin has quite a distinct culture ... it’s collaborative, enjoyable, and exciting!”

Aaron Brookes, Trainee



What I like about being a trainee at Akin is that people are keen to give you a great deal of responsibility. Colleagues want to give you work that’s going to be stimulating and conducive to your development.”

James Lack, Trainee

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. The graduate recruitment team will also be hosting a series of virtual workshops to run through application tips & tricks in October and November. We would encourage you to take a look at the [‘Meet Us’ page](#) of our graduate recruitment website to find out where you can meet our reps!

How many places are available on the summer vacation scheme?

We invite up to 12 successful candidates to take part in our summer programme each year.

How many vacation schemes do you run a year?

We run one summer vacation scheme every year for two weeks. Our 2024 vacation scheme will run from 17-28 June.

When do applications open and close?

Applications open: Thursday 28 September 2023

Applications close: Sunday 7 January 2024

How do I apply?

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

Who can apply?

Our summer 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 summer 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 summer scheme?

Our preferred method of trainee hiring is via our summer 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 achievement and candidates to 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?

Unfortunately, because we receive a high volume of applications, we can’t offer individual feedback on application forms. All those who reach Assessment Centre stage and are unsuccessful 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).

We cannot offer sponsorship for the Summer Vacation Scheme.

What should I do if I need reasonable adjustments for the recruitment process because of a disability?

We’ll work with you to make any reasonable adjustments you need. Please email graduaterecruitment@akingump.com to discuss further with a member of our Graduate Recruitment Team.



Akin is a leading global law firm providing innovative legal services and business solutions to individuals and institutions. Founded in 1945 by Richard Gump and Robert Strauss with the guiding vision that commitment, excellence and integrity would drive its success, the firm focuses on building lasting and mutually beneficial relationships with its clients. Our firm's clients range from individuals to corporations and nations. We offer clients a broad-spectrum approach, with over 85 practices that range from traditional strengths such as appellate, corporate and public policy to 21st century concentrations such as climate change, intellectual property litigation and national security.