



OSCOLA

OSCOLA Mentorship
Programme HT2021

**GUIDE FOR
MENTEES**



Oxford Law Society

Hello!

Welcome to the OSCOLA Mentorship Programme. We are happy to have you on board with us for our inaugural run of the programme in partnership with the Oxford Law Society in Hilary Term 2021.

Navigating the legal industry is a complicated process on its own. Unfortunately, with the scourge of COVID-19, it has only become more challenging to juggle applications with academic work and opportunities to network with potential employers in person have evaporated. Being aspiring commercial lawyers ourselves, we understand the anxieties and uncertainties you may be facing during this journey. That is why we've launched this mentorship programme for you. Our mentors have walked this path ahead of you and share a passion for helping fellow Oxonians succeed as they have.

Before you commence this mentorship journey, we would like to emphasise that the success of any mentorship relationship depends on both parties putting in the effort. Please appreciate the time that your mentors set aside to help you and we hope you will put in the necessary effort to make your meetings worthwhile.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us at info@oscola.org. Congratulations on taking this step to take charge of your career by seeking a mentor. We wish you a fruitful and rewarding mentorship journey ahead!

Yours faithfully,

Joseph Khaw
Co-President
The Oxford Society for Commercial Law

Role of Mentees

Expectations

As full-time students with a myriad of different commitments, both you and your mentor have busy schedules. As such, the OSCOLA Mentorship Programme allows you the freedom to schedule virtual meetings with your mentor at a mutually convenient time and at a frequency that suits both your needs. If you and your mentor prefer not to have meetings, you are welcome to conduct your mentorship relationship solely through an agreed medium such as email or over Messenger. That said, our mentors are volunteering their time to give back to Oxford's community of aspiring commercial lawyers and we hope you can appreciate that and make the most of this opportunity. Naturally, your mentor may not always be available to answer your questions, as such please be patient and avoid spamming them should they take a while to reply to your messages.

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While your mentor can provide you with perspective and advice, this mentorship relationship should primarily be driven by you based on your aspirations and desired outcomes. You should not expect your mentor to share their past applications with you, make personal or professional introductions, or vet your applications unless they are comfortable with doing so. Please always be courteous and respectful to your mentor.

Recommendations

While the mentorship programme is flexible and should remain driven by your goals as a mentee, the following are some recommendations to facilitate a productive mentorship programme:

- Identify your goals and how you think your mentor can help you achieve them **before** the commencement of the programme. Discuss these with them at your first meeting.
- Space out your meetings across the term or vacation so that you have the opportunity to make progress on your research or applications between meetings.
- Come prepared to every meeting with a rough agenda and questions you wish to ask.
- If your mentor is willing to review your applications, provide them with sufficient runway to review them before the submission deadline and be understanding if they are too busy to do so.

Building Effective Mentor-Mentee Relationships

Here are some tips that may help you develop an effective mentorship relationship with your mentor:

- Clearly communicate where you are now in your journey and what you hope to accomplish with your mentor's assistance.
- Communicate openly and proactively with your mentor regarding your concerns, deadlines, and/or availabilities.
- Be willing to let your personality shine through and be open to your mentor sharing theirs too.

Guidance and Resources

To assist you in your exploration or pursuit of commercial law as a career path, the following are some guiding themes and questions that you may wish to reflect upon and explore with your mentor:

- Choosing a career
 - What do I want out of a career? Is commercial law for me?
 - Do I wish to become a barrister or solicitor?
- Choosing a firm/chambers
 - What practice groups, areas and/or sectors interest me?
 - Would I prefer contentious or non-contentious work?
- Writing strong applications

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- What makes a good CV, cover letter, and application form?
- How do I tailor my application to the firm/chambers?
- How do I develop commercial awareness? What is it even?
- Interviews and assessment centres
 - What can I expect at an assessment centre?
 - How can I best prepare for interviews and assessment centres?
- Vacation schemes
 - What can I expect at a virtual vacation scheme?
 - What can I do to maximise my chances of converting a vacation scheme?

We have also compiled a list of **free** resources that you may find useful depending on which stage you are at in your journey:

Just Starting Out

- [The Lawyer Portal: Commercial Law Guide](#)
- TargetJobs: [Commercial Solicitors](#) or [Commercial Barristers](#)

Exploring the Industry

- [Chambers & Partners, Chambers Student](#)
- [Chambers Student: Researching Law Firms](#)
- [Legal500](#)
- [All About Law: Legal Practice Areas](#)

Making Applications

- [Shearman & Sterling's Training Contract Application Guide](#)
- [Psychometric Test Practices](#): Oxford's Career Service offers current students **free access** to JobTestPrep where you can access Watson Glaser practice tests

Conclusion and Contact

At the end of the term, we will be in touch to collect your feedback on the programme. Thank you for joining the OSCOLA Mentorship Programme and we wish you a fruitful mentorship journey ahead!

If you have any questions or feedback, please feel free to contact us at info@oscola.org.