

## A year on... our first year as paralegal apprentices at Cripps

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We asked some of our paralegal apprentices, now in the second year of their apprenticeships, about their experiences so far. Here is what they told us:

### **Working vs Studying – Louise Pettit**

Working full time and studying part time is definitely not an easy task to perfect.

My first year at Cripps has been a huge learning curve of figuring out my ideal working style and a study routine to reflect it. I've learnt to be realistic about what I can take on and have honest discussions with my supervisor when I feel overwhelmed by my workload. Heading into exam seasons can be especially difficult particularly when it coincides with a busy period in the office.

In my first year, I have developed not only as a law student but as a Cripps employee as well. Implementing my legal studies into workplace tasks has allowed me to learn and reflect on areas where my legal knowledge is lacking as well as areas of strength. By completing a variety of legal tasks at work I have also been able to build a detailed and relevant portfolio which is vital for my end point assessment.

Overall, the key is balance. Working and studying at the same time can greatly benefit one another despite being challenging at times.



## Misconceptions proven wrong – Ashleigh England

### Apprentices are given boring, admin tasks

It may once have been the case that new starter apprentices were only trusted with making the tea round, but that is certainly not the case now. An apprentice role at Cripps is a full-time paid job, that also incorporates high-quality training through BPP University Law School.

### Apprenticeships do not provide you with any useful qualifications

All paralegal apprentices at Cripps finish their apprenticeship with an industry-recognised qualification that can be carried with us for the rest of our career. The qualifications gained are a Level 4 Certificate of Higher Education (Law and Legal Practice) and a CILEx Level 3 Certificate & Diploma in Law and Practice.

### Apprentices have no scope for progression

At Cripps, upon completion of the paralegal apprenticeship, where possible, they would seek to offer you a position as a paralegal at the firm. There may also be the opportunity to further your career through our solicitor apprenticeship scheme.

### Apprenticeships are low paid

Cripps apprentice salaries are benchmarked regularly with the market and are reviewed in May each year. Full salary details of the paralegal and solicitor apprenticeship scheme can be found under the FAQs section of our [legal apprenticeship page](#).

## Social side of working – Mollie Wilson

Looking back at my first year at Cripps, I realise how many events we've all had the chance to be actively involved in. Since we began our apprenticeship, we have had a big input in the upcoming events and fundraisers for our charity of the year, Alzheimer's Research UK. I've really enjoyed getting increasingly involved in planning all different types of charity events and helping raise as much money across the London and Tunbridge Wells offices as possible.

This past year has made me realise that there is much more to being an apprentice than just studying and working. Yes, it's always important to stay on top of University deadlines as well as showing that you're a committed team member, but we're really encouraged to keep the balance between work and fun! When I reflect on my past year, this balance is definitely something that stands out.

## Seat rotations – Megan Barton

Throughout your two year paralegal apprenticeship, you will rotate to different 'seats' around the firm. This means that you will usually spend 6 months in four different teams ranging from private wealth, corporate and real estate. The great thing about this is that you have the opportunity to experience different types of work in different areas of law which allows you to gain knowledge and experience in these sectors. Not only does this help towards your studies, but it helps to give you a better understanding of which area of law you would like to qualify into.

When I joined Cripps, my first seat was in the private wealth team. Here, I assisted in drafting wills and lasting powers of attorney as well as making phone calls to different companies. My next team was in the transactional services team within corporate. Here my work consisted of assisting solicitors in the team with buying and selling



companies. I would collate documents from our clients to upload into a data room, as well as assisting in the disclosure process and final steps of the sale or purchase. Currently, I am now in the litigation team within the centralised paralegal support team. My work consists of drafting and sending court documents, arranging and preparing for court hearings, as well as liaising with our client to advise on other debt recovery and possession instructions.

It is important when moving teams to ensure that you stay organised to manage your work load efficiently. One way you can do this is by ensuring that you are on top of your inbox. I also have found that making daily to-do lists is a great way for me to manage my work and time well.

Find out more about our [paralegal apprenticeship programme](#).



[Louise Pettit](#)

Solicitor Apprentice



[Ashleigh England](#)

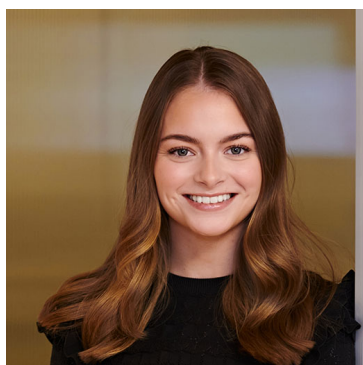
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[Mollie Wilson](#)

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