



graduate
recruitment

FUTURE PROOF

your future starts here



YOUR FUTURE STARTS HERE



Great environment. Great clients. Great prospects. At Cobbetts, the things you are looking for in a training contract are right here. We offer you the chance to build a career where your voice counts from day one. A career that can take you all the way to partner, with support when you need it and responsibility when you want it. Managing partner, Michael Shaw, opens the show here with his personal outlook on why Cobbetts is definitely the place to start your legal career.

During my time as managing partner of Cobbetts we have taken the firm from a small, single site property specialist to a national player packed full of experts in a wide variety of legal areas. What makes us unique is that throughout this continual period of development we have always remained true to our values and believed that we have a very special law firm. Cobbetts is ambitious but has an innate decency which has always dictated our core values. If you have determination, drive and capability then you can take your career all the way to the top in an environment where relationships are valued and your views are respected.

Cobbetts will provide you with future proof training and high quality work with high quality people. As a trainee solicitor we will expect you to make the same level of contribution and share the same passion for the business as our most senior partners. In return you'll be part of a firm that is exciting, strong, innovative and challenging. One of my greatest pleasures is seeing every intake of trainees mature and develop and start to share my passion for the firm. I know that Cobbetts has all the right ingredients to continue being a success story – if you have what it takes then you could be one of our stars of the future.

MICHAEL SHAW
Managing Partner

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TIMETABLE FOR 2012

Your Career Timeline at Cobbetts:

Easter/Summer 2010	Vacation schemes
Aug – Sept 2010	Training contract assessment centres and offers made for 2012
Autumn 2010	A Cobbetts buddy allocated to successful candidates
Sept 2011:	Commencement of Cobbetts' LPC+ at The College of Law
Aug 2012:	Start of your training contract with Cobbetts
Spring 2014:	Confirm your chosen specialist practice area for qualification
Aug 2014:	Admission to your chosen practice area as a newly qualified solicitor

...and beyond – Where will your career at Cobbetts take you...?

KEY DATES FOR 2009-2010

Oct 2009:	Applications accepted online at www.cobbettsgraduate.com
14 Feb 2010:	Application deadline for the easter and summer vacation scheme
1 - 12 March 2010:	Vacation scheme assessment centres
12 - 16 April 2010:	Easter vacation schemes
12 - 30 July 2010:	Summer vacation schemes
31 July 2010:	Training contract 2012 application deadline
16 - 27 Aug 2010:	Training contract assessment centres
1 Sept 2010:	Offers made for 2012 training contract

WHAT WE CAN OFFER YOU

Cobbetts is committed to providing you with a bona-fide high quality training programme – after all, you are our future partners. We will provide a sophisticated training programme that will provide you with a watertight traineeship, many marketable skills and the experience to help you make informed career choices for the rest of your life.

Vacation Schemes

Our paid easter and summer vacation schemes will give you an insight into our business and help you to make that all important career decision “Which firm shall I train with?”

During your week with us, you will experience two different legal practice areas and you will have the benefit of additional skills training provided by The College of Law to help prepare you for entry onto the LPC+.

During the week, you will be assigned to a mentor who will delegate real work, make you feel at home and help you to network with members of the firm both in the office and in a social environment. The vacation scheme is your opportunity to shine and demonstrate your real potential.



Training Contracts

Our offer of a training contract is accompanied by a financial commitment to you. We will pay your GDL and LPC+ course fees. In addition, the firm will support you during your LPC studies in the form of a maintenance grant of £5,000.

Buddy Scheme

Before you step through the door on the first day of your training contract, you will already be part of the team. When you accept a training contract with us you will join our buddy scheme which will guide you into the Cobbetts way of life. Your buddy will contact you at regular intervals, giving you the opportunity to glean as much information as you can about anything from life as a trainee, to tips on LPC+ revision.

You will also be invited to attend several social events. The trainee buddy scheme is an important and valuable way to welcome our future trainees and definitely helps to calm any nerves before you join the firm.

Once you commence your training contract you will develop your own leadership skills by guiding the trainees of the future.

LPC+

The LPC+ is an exciting opportunity to develop on the LPC and is tailored specifically to Cobbetts, helping to prepare you in becoming a great trainee solicitor.

Delivered in conjunction with The College of Law, the LPC+ provides electives which reflect the core areas of our business - real estate, mergers and



acquisitions and commercial dispute resolution together with an additional fourth elective in banking and commercial law.

Your integration will start here and you will regularly meet with our senior partners, as well as undertaking research projects.

The LPC+ will help you to start thinking like a Cobbetts trainee before your training contract even begins.

Supervision and Support

Whatever area of law interests you, our training contract can provide the opportunity to help you realise your full potential and ambitions. Under the supervision of our expert partners and solicitors you will be transformed into a confident and capable qualified solicitor with an excellent future.

Our open plan working environment will ensure that your supervisor is always on hand to guide you and that partners are readily available whenever you want to speak to them. Regular progress meetings with your supervisor and the graduate recruitment team will help you in revealing your true star potential.

Trainees are also supported with formal development. Each practice area holds regular training sessions which focus on new legal developments and refresher sessions on existing law.

You will be encouraged to attend internal seminars, practice area induction workshops and the Professional Skills Course to develop your legal and personal skills and broaden your trainee experience.



Seats

With seats available in our Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester offices, our trainees are supervised through five five-month seats and will typically have exposure to key areas of our business - banking, commercial, dispute resolution, corporate (including business restructuring), employment, real estate and private capital.

After your contract

We are committed to retaining our trainees and through our new qualifiers programme and our structured legal training programme “Springboard”, you can continue to fast-track your career within your chosen practice area. At Cobbetts your future is in your hands.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

Like most law firms, we recruit our trainees two years before they are due to start with the firm and you should ideally be ready to commence your LPC+ in 2011 and your training contract in 2012.

The easter and summer vacation schemes are only available to those who can commence a training contract in 2012.

You will be working towards or will have achieved a 2:1 at degree level,

supported by a consistent track record of academic excellence.

You must also show the potential to offer something above and beyond the undertaking of legal work.

We are looking for people who fit our firm and its ethos, having the capacity to think, lead, self-manage, relate to others, find solutions, be commercially astute, apply their knowledge and work with drive and ambition.

ABOUT US

Cobbetts is a full service law firm with offices in Birmingham, Leeds, London and Manchester.

Our vision is to build a law firm that achieves growth beyond the norm. We are recognised not only for the quality of our work, but for our consistency in maintaining our six core values – quality, integrity, teamwork, innovation, respect and outstanding client relationships.

We have become the leading law firm we are today by strategic mergers and smart lateral hires. We have always had a focus firmly on the future and our national and international presence is growing every year.



Key facts:

- Seven national practice areas – banking, commercial, corporate, dispute resolution, employment, private capital and real estate.
- Specialists in niche areas of law – public markets, planning, new media, telecoms, intellectual property and low carbon.
- Household name clients – Orange, Matalan Retail Limited, Whitbread Group, Magnet Limited, Henri-Lloyd Limited, Barclays Bank Plc.
- A reputation for innovation, quality and job satisfaction.
- A past winner of the 'Best Vacation Scheme' at LawCareers.net and Trainee Solicitors' Group Training and Recruitment Awards.

'Cobbetts LLP enjoys a fine reputation'

Legal 500 2009



Our Work

We court leading corporate clients, we advise on multi-million pound transactions and we drive forward our international relations.

Our firm is internationally recognised for its experience and knowledge in public markets and is currently the No. 1 AIM legal adviser*. The latest office in our national network, our London office, focuses on corporate finance and many transactions have an international aspect which has enabled us to excel in mergers and acquisitions. We have one of the pre-eminent planning teams in the UK, and our real estate team is renowned for leading on dynamic developments such as the procurement, funding, and delivery of the new BBC home in Manchester, MediaCityUK.

Our media team has advised the Manchester International Festival on a broad range of venue, advertising, artist, and regulatory issues, and Ocean Colour Scene, Birmingham Royal Ballet and Glashead Television are also clients.

It's a broad scope of work; one which offers you a wide ranging variety of legal experience. All in all, we provide a fantastic opportunity for you to see exactly what the law has to offer you.

Our Clients

Such is Cobbetts' unique understanding of business relationships; we excel in retaining our impressive client list, whilst continually developing new contacts through proactive pitches and client recommendation.

By putting ourselves in our clients' shoes, we find out what they want and we help them get it. We add value over and above what is expected or required and our professionalism and our personality easily differentiates us from others.

We take our research seriously in a robust and strategic manner; we use our insight, and harvest our knowledge. Then, we have earned the right to become our client's strategic adviser.

This mix makes us the firm of choice. Clients know Cobbetts for its quick-fire grasp of a situation, for providing smart ideas and for handling every business decision with a clear aim and a well thought out strategy.

*Based on information published by Hemscoff and correct as at Sept 2009

WHAT IS IT LIKE WORKING HERE?

We are a leading, full service law firm, but we still maintain a personal touch. Personality colours our core values, beliefs, expectations and while we're far from carbon copies of each other, we share the same ethics and vision.



We have invested time choosing the right people to develop Cobbetts in the market place and to grow the business organically and methodically. The Cobbetts values are the cornerstone of our success.

Our offices are modern with contemporary design and features and we employ state of the art technology in order to keep in touch with our staff and our clients in our thriving city bases. The working areas are all equally spacious and there are quiet rooms if you need some serious concentration for a particularly tricky deal or transaction.

Our culture is very much an open one. Our offices are all open plan to encourage greater communication between our solicitors, as well as respect for one another. Our senior partner even has his own blog to keep the rest of the firm up to speed on management activities, strategies and general bits and bobs (as well as what he is listening to on his IPOD!!)



Our trainees are complete individuals and are all from varying different backgrounds, as well as first rate candidates straight from university. Previous lives have included being a club DJ, a musician working in Hollywood, a pharmacist and a teacher. It is this mix of unique personalities and abilities that contribute to what Cobbetts is really about – the future of its people.

PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING

As a trainee you will be encouraged to get involved with Cobbetts Young Professionals (CYP) which has become one of the most established and successful professional networks in our bases of Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester.

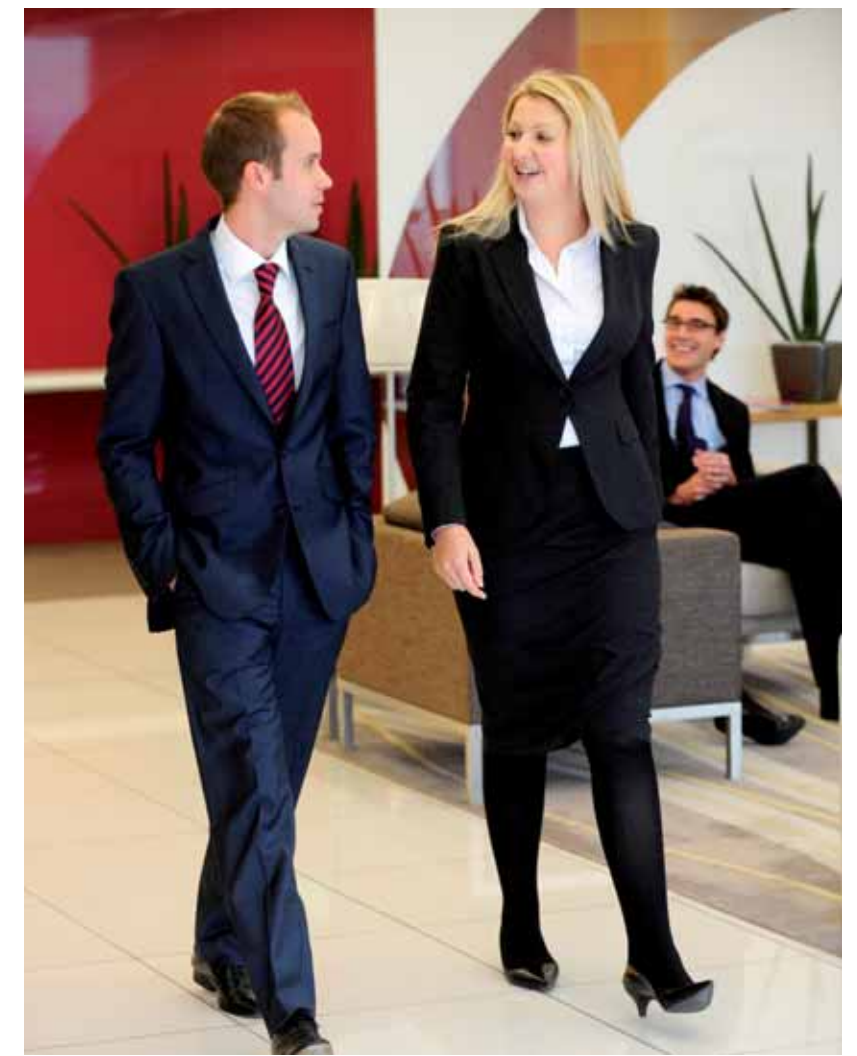
CYP enables our trainees, and solicitors in the early stages of their career, to experience networking events and to begin building up their own contacts from different organisations across the business community. Events are organised and run by our trainees and

previous activities have included a casino evening, race night, treasure hunt, networking seminar, beach party, an annual pool competition and a stand up comedy night.

Each office currently has a database of over 400 contacts and regular attendees range from accountants, property developers, surveyors, media professionals, corporate bankers, designers, management consultants and so on.

Along with expanding your list of contacts, CYP offers a vital opportunity to socialise and get to know your colleagues from across Cobbetts. The events are also a great way to support our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives and fundraising activities are generally incorporated into each event.

With the increasing support of our partners, along with the enthusiasm from our trainees, the future of CYP is going from strength to strength.



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

There are three main strands to our CSR strategy:

Community Support

Partners and staff link up with local charities and voluntary bodies, such as Business in the Community, to donate our time and our expertise. The projects we work on benefit our own personal development as well as the communities within which we work and live.

Ethical Purchasing and Consumption of Goods and Services

We encourage all our staff to make informed, ethical decisions when buying goods and services for the firm and we encourage environmental awareness when using or disposing of items, for instance, by recycling printer cartridges, mobile phones and CD-ROMs.

In addition, all our offices have motion-sensor-controlled lighting systems to reduce the amount of wasted electricity.

Charity of the Year

Working with a charity helps us build stronger relationships with the communities in which we operate. Each year, we nominate and vote for a single charity on which to focus our fundraising efforts. Charities we've worked with in recent years include Cancer Research, NSPCC, Macmillan Cancer Research, the Alzheimer's Society and the British Heart Foundation.

As a firm, our aim is to raise as much money as possible for worthwhile causes such as these.

STARS OF THE FUTURE...



Variety of work

FIN WOLOHAN
Trainee Solicitor

“The first year of my training contract has flown by. The range and variety of seats on offer is one of the main reasons why I chose to join Cobbetts. Upon leaving law school I was keen to experience as many practice areas as possible, and this is certainly something that the training contract has allowed me to do.

In each of my seats so far I attended a one-day induction session run by fee-earners and professional support lawyers in the respective departments. These sessions focused on the tasks or areas of the law which a trainee is most likely to get involved with so you can hit the ground running when you start the seat.

The supervision in my different seats has been first rate. Supervisors can have different styles or approaches; however, what they have had in common is that they have a genuine interest in my professional development. Supervisors and trainees meet together at the start of a seat to set objectives for the coming months, with appraisals and progress meetings half way through the seat and at the end of the seat to assess the trainee's performance and ensure trainees continue to develop their skills.

My legal training has continued through the Professional Skills Course. This is run in-house, and courses such as advocacy have proved very relevant to some of the work that I have undertaken in my litigation seat.

Cobbetts also encourages trainees to get involved with a variety of social and marketing activities. CYP allows trainees the chance to organise large scale events to network with other business professionals.

I feel that I've really developed over the last year, and I'm looking forward to what the next year brings.”

Preparing for my Training Contract

AMY GREGORY
Future Trainee



“The support I was given before joining Cobbetts made the prospect of starting my training contract much less daunting. As soon as I accepted my offer I was allocated to my buddy, a current trainee solicitor. My buddy kept me informed of developments and made me feel like part of the firm. I had the opportunity to meet her and other trainees through various organised buddy and social events. By the time it came around to study the LPC+ I had met a number of my future colleagues who would join me on the course.

The Cobbetts LPC+ at The College of Law made me feel like an employee from day one and the Cobbetts specific electives gave me an invaluable insight into how the firm operates. Cobbetts' future trainees are taught together on the LPC+ enabling trainees to get to know one another before joining the firm. We also had the opportunity to get to know a number of partners and solicitors through their attendance at the elective classes where they shared their knowledge of practice helping to reinforce the messages delivered by our tutors. In addition to the electives, the group completed a diversity project giving us a great opportunity to work as a team and drive forward an important project for the firm. The LPC+ has really helped to prepare me for the start of my training contract and made me more confident about starting with the firm.”

Preparing for qualification

LEMI MCAULEY
Newly Qualified Solicitor



“As I approach qualification into Cobbetts' business restructuring services team, I can say with certainty that my training contract at Cobbetts has well equipped me for my future career. I have been given high levels of responsibility in all the teams I have worked in during my training contract and this, coupled with excellent supervision for the firm's trainees, gives me confidence making the transition to a newly-qualified solicitor.

At every stage of the training contract I have been given opportunities to meet clients and act as their day-to-day point of contact. The support has always been there if necessary but I have been encouraged to be pro-active and take responsibility for the handling of client engagements. My development as a solicitor has been monitored throughout my training contract and a structured appraisal system has ensured that I have been able to develop to my full potential. All this is done with qualification in mind and there is a real sense that Cobbetts is investing this time to help you fulfil your potential. With this thorough training I cannot wait to get started in the BRS team. Obviously there will be plenty of new experiences and challenges ahead, but with the excellent training I have received I could not be better placed to meet them.”



Good supervision

NICK DAWSON
Associate and Trainee Supervisor



My role as a trainee supervisor is to delegate work to trainees, monitor the quantity and quality of work the trainee receives from other fee-earners, and support and encourage learning and development. It may sound like a cliché; but the more a trainee puts into their seat, the more they get out of it. The greater your level of understanding, the greater the level of responsibility you are given, so it always pays to ask plenty of questions and read around the subject matter you are dealing with. Knowledge sharing and developing our people is a way of life at Cobbetts and I've never come across anyone who isn't willing to explain matters clearly, concisely and, most importantly, within a practical and commercial context. Those are skills which clients value and they are the skills that fee earners demonstrate everyday when supervising trainees.

Clients are key

JUDITH WATSON
National Head of Employment



I was once a trainee at Cobbetts and feel proud to have been part of the firm's evolution, and not just from a size perspective but also in terms of our talent. Not only do we operate from key financial locations, but we offer a wide range of specialisms to cater for the needs of our national clients. The opportunity to develop my own skills has always been a possibility and a couple of years after qualification I moved from commercial work into employment and helped to build the fantastic reputation of the talented team that I now head today on a national scale!

At Cobbetts you'll get great people and great clients to work with. I can guarantee that you'll be stretched, but you'll also be supported. A good trainee must have a can-do, enthusiastic approach. You should definitely be ambitious but be able to work well as part of a team and above all make sure that you listen to clients. The best piece of advice I can offer to any future trainee is to put yourself in the client's shoes. Be proactive and communicative to ensure that clients always receive exceptional care and attention. Tell your client what is going on – even if it's nothing and don't wait for them to chase you! Attention to detail is vital, you can't be a good solicitor without this skill but that doesn't mean you have to be stuffy!

My career highlight at Cobbetts was without a doubt when I was made a partner. However, one of my most cherished moments has to be celebrating one of my team's best billing months by dressing up as Britney Spears and delivering with great enthusiasm, if not perfect pitch, 'Hit me baby one more time!' Thank goodness the figures were good as I am not sure that the singing was a winning performance!

Career prospects

MARK BARKER
Partner



A lot has changed since I started as a trainee at Cobbetts. The way IT has revolutionised our daily working lives and the way we work as one virtual office are the two best examples of this. However, what has remained constant is the firm's policy of recruit, train and retain, and the very real expectation that today's trainee is tomorrow's partner. We expect a lot from our trainees but I believe we offer a great deal in return – a structured training contract with real career prospects at the end of the two years and the opportunity to make a real and valuable contribution from day one. Cobbetts has always focused on its most important asset, its people, providing them with genuine opportunities to advance their careers and to expand their knowledge and, today, this is truer than ever as the firm continues to evolve and innovate. Most days bring a new challenge even after 20 years in the business and it has always been, and continues to remain, great fun to work here.



WHAT NEXT?

HOW TO APPLY

Like what you hear? Apply online for training contracts and vacation schemes. Visit www.cobbettsgraduate.com for more information plus blogs, videos and trainee profiles.

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