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**BRIGHT JOURNEYS
GRADUATE RECRUITMENT IN ASIA PACIFIC**
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WHY CLIFFORD CHANCE

A message from our Regional Managing Partner

As one of the largest international law firms in the world for more than four decades, we approach the recruitment process with a lot of care and attention. New recruits will one day be our future colleagues, partners, or even Regional Managing Partner.

It is so important to pick the right firm and we know it can be a difficult decision. You will need to ensure that the firm matches your interests, values and ambitions, and, most importantly, that it is the right cultural fit for you.

I faced the same decision years ago. I started with the firm in 2000 and I can tell you from my own experience it has been an outstanding place to grow personally and professionally. I credit the firm's strong culture of collegiality in helping me succeed by providing the support and encouragement I needed at different stages to help me pursue my path. I have been able to build a strong career with great clients and been presented with countless opportunities to excel.

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Connie Heng
Regional Managing Partner,
Asia Pacific, Hong Kong

Nurturing talent and encouraging mentorship is a key area of focus for the firm. Joining Clifford Chance opens a world of possibilities for you to expand your network and learn from some of the brightest minds in our profession.

We are also passionate about our diversity and inclusion agenda and understand that it is good for our staff and their loved ones, our firm and our clients, and society. We believe that to help achieve these values we have to be champions of, and campaigners for them across our network. The firm is filled with diverse talents bringing their individual life experiences and perspectives to the table which create a dynamic and vibrant working environment.

Enclosed in this booklet are some stories of our people who share their bright career journeys and their top tips for applying to the firm. My suggested tip is to always keep an open mind and be flexible!



THE GLOBAL LAW FIRM OF CHOICE

Our vision is to be the global law firm of choice for the world's leading businesses of today and tomorrow.

Today our firm enjoys a position at the forefront of our profession. We are proud of what we achieve every day, working in collaboration and partnership with our clients and wider stakeholders to secure their long-term, sustainable success.

But we are not complacent.

Our strategy recognises that the world we operate in is changing and that we too must be ready to change if we are to continue to lead and shape our sector:

Putting clients first

We expect our people to put the interests of our clients first: we invest in understanding client organisations, their operating context and the opportunities and challenges they face.

Creating the best team

We believe in the power of teams, rather than individuals: to secure successful outcomes, we bring together groups of people with just the right mix of sector, product and jurisdictional knowledge.

Giving product advice

We give practical advice: we draw on the huge range and depth of our expertise to develop commercial, effective solutions for clients.

Nurturing a culture with integrity and respect at its core

We are committed to nurturing a high performance culture founded on robust ethical standards, professional integrity, responsibility, accountability, inclusiveness and kindness. Our values-based Code of Conduct sets the standard for what we expect of ourselves and of each other.

Investing in the future

We invest for the future: we have always taken the view that we must invest today to build the firm our clients will need 15, 20 or more years into the future. As a result, our resources are world-class, whether our people, our know-how, our approach to client service, or our sheer geographic footprint across 32 major financial centres across the Americas, Asia Pacific, Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

The pursuit of the firm's vision and strategy is grounded in our most important commitment: to act as an ethical and responsible business.

OUR FIRM AT A GLANCE



OUR GLOBAL AFFINITY GROUPS

- ACCELERATE>>>** A global gender parity group to encourage commitment in achieving success in an inclusive and diverse culture.
- ARCUS** — An LGBTQ+ global employee network that aims to encourage an inclusive and integrated culture within Clifford Chance that gives colleagues the choice to be open and out.
- ENABLE** — A network that seeks to provide a safe, inclusive and open environment for colleagues with disability and long term injury or condition to thrive at the firm.
- REACH** — The Race Equality and Celebrating Heritage (REACH) network aims to increase understanding and achieve equality of opportunity at all levels.





INTERN TO ASSOCIATE STORIES



Latifah Sat
Associate
Office: Hong Kong SAR
Internship year: 2018
Joined the firm: 2020
University: University of Oxford

While I studied law at Oxford University, I knew that I wanted to try something outside of law before applying for training contracts. I was fortunate to secure a role at a think tank in Hong Kong where I focused on land and housing policy research. Whilst working there, I was tasked with a lot of legal research (mostly relating to land and public law) and became a point of contact for anything with a legal focus. This was my first experience of having people come to me for my skills in a particular topic and I really enjoyed it, cementing my decision to become a lawyer.

I joined the Hong Kong Vacation Scheme in 2018 as a part of my Training Contract application. During the four weeks, I rotated through the Global Financial Markets and the Corporate groups, giving me a well-rounded view of what the firm offered. I was surprised by how much attention we received as interns as people seemed to be energised by having us around. I was delegated tasks that allowed me to really understand the role of a junior commercial lawyer including reviewing circle-ups, due diligence, prospectus drafting and legal research.

The vacation scheme gave me insight into what makes a firm like Clifford Chance successful – having several of our teams work with the same client on different projects across practice areas; the manpower to coordinate and complete cross-border tasks seamlessly; the technology and software that the firm gives to lawyers to make their role easier and the sheer size of the global databases and know-how that the lawyers have at their fingertips.

Top Tip: Don't be afraid to try different things during your law journey – whether it's a different role or some volunteering experience. Getting into this career is not a race and diversifying your perspectives will always be beneficial for your future career.



Max Beavis
Associate
Office: Sydney
Internship year: 2019
Joined the firm: 2020
University: University of New South Wales

Our firm's culture is tangible from the interview stage – unlike other firms you are given the opportunity to meet lawyers of all levels, this is refreshing as it gives you insight into the different personalities and backgrounds we have here and allowed me to decide whether this was the right firm for me. The interviews in Australia are CV-blind which ensures the process is unbiased and also gives me impetus to be my true self during the interview.

I joined the Sydney office Winter Clerkship in 2019 where I rotated through the Corporate and Litigation & Dispute Resolution teams. A huge highlight for me was the week-long trip to Hong Kong that the firm arranged which allowed us to experience and understand the global network the firm offers. For me, this reinforced the importance of working for a firm that would provide me with every opportunity to better my skills as a lawyer and develop my commercial acumen. Through my clerkship I saw the firm's structure and flat hierarchy translate into practice - everyone is accessible, and you are always working with a wide range of people throughout the network.

Top Tip: Be ambitious! Clifford Chance is a firm which rewards people who are willing to step outside their comfort zone, be challenged and are committed to taking that extra step for the clients.





TRAINING IN ASIA PACIFIC



Sae Kawakami
Senior Associate
Office: Tokyo
Internship year: 2014
Joined the firm: 2017
University: University of Cambridge

While working in the Tokyo office as a vacation scheme student, I was impressed by the intelligence of the lawyers and their ability to find solutions to complex legal and commercial issues. I thought that a career in international commercial law at Clifford Chance would be rewarding due to the cross-border nature of work and interaction with the clients, combined with the expertise and collaborative nature of the team.

I'm now an associate (solicitor in England and Wales) specialising in international capital markets, including international debt and equity offerings, convertible bonds, medium-term note programmes and repackaging programmes.

The sense of development motivates me and keeps me at the firm. For example, I enjoy learning about how our transactions are structured and the reasons behind them, discussing the legal and commercial issues with our clients, negotiating the terms with counterparties and searching for the most optimal outcome. When approaching difficult problems, I try to understand the commercial drivers of the clients' decisions, think about the possible legal and business issues, discuss my proposed solutions with colleagues and then explain them to the clients.

Top Tip: When applying for a vacation scheme or a training contract, do not be afraid to be your true self, as there is no typical Clifford Chance lawyer. Having worked in our London, Singapore and Tokyo offices, I feel that we embrace diversity, and that each and every one of us brings something unique to the firm.



Daniel Ng
Associate
Office: Singapore
Internship year: 2017
Joined the firm: 2020
University: National University of Singapore

I remember being daunted by the firm's application form (it was slightly long!). When I did start the process I really enjoyed it because I was able to show different facets of who I am. More importantly, it showed that the firm was interested in getting to know me beyond my academic transcript. The firm wanted to explore my way of thinking, how I consider commercial matters, what I thought about the future of law, and other deeper issues, enabling me to show more of myself. The interviewers were very welcoming, and interested in me as a candidate and as a person which made the overall process more interesting and fun.

I have noticed since training here that my peers and colleagues have a very strong stance on promoting the firm's values which is remarkable. There is a huge culture of care and collaboration – everyone is driven, responsible and takes ownership of what they are doing. It is a great feeling to be challenged yet well supported – Clifford Chance creates such an environment!

I have been very involved in pro bono work for quite a while even before law school, in particular youth mentorship. I'm glad that I have had opportunities to work on pro bono cases with lawyers that truly care and go the extra mile for pro bono clients, as we do for our commercial clients.

Top Tip: It's very important to think through the WHY behind the WHAT. Why law? Why practise? Practising law is tough and if your WHY is not strong enough then it will be difficult to push through and have the stamina to work long hours. Also, be your authentic self.

TRAINING IN ASIA PACIFIC



Ryan Siu
Associate
Office: Hong Kong SAR
Internship year: 2017
Joined the firm: 2019
University: University of Hong Kong

After completing my LLB and PCLL, I was not quite sure what kind of lawyer I wanted to be, so I chose a firm that would allow me to explore and have a varied experience. With Clifford Chance’s broad range of practice areas, many of which are ranked Tier 1, I knew this would be the best platform for me to start my career.

There is a great consistency in my training: the level of supervision and trust my seniors have given me, the constant feedback on all tasks (no matter how big or small) and the knowledge that people here have and are willing to share! As a first seater, I had a lot to learn, not just the technical legal skills, but also things like adjusting to work life, the firm’s culture and the day-to-day tasks of a junior lawyer. The firm’s induction and the amount of attention and care given during this process is second to none, enabling me and my fellow trainees to really find our feet and have the best possible foundation for our training.

The work throughout my training has been complex and challenging at times and I am constantly surprised by the learning curve I have achieved over the past two years. The programme here doesn’t just give you the technical training, it also builds your confidence and wider skillset so you can become a commercially minded legal advisor.

Top Tip: Invest time in improving your commerciality by following global news and trends. Ultimately, we are business advisors as well as legal professionals and it’s important that you have a good business grounding in addition to your legal education.

JOURNEYS AFTER TRAINING



Evan Thomson
Associate
Office: Sydney
Internship year: 2018
Joined the firm: 2020
University: Macquarie University

I started my career with Clifford Chance in July 2018 as a Winter Clerk during the penultimate year of my combined Bachelor of Laws / Bachelor of Commerce degree. I then continued as a paralegal in my final year of studies before commencing my graduate program in 2020.

The graduate program at Clifford Chance is a fantastic platform to commence your legal career. Given the program is structured as four 6-month rotations, you are immersed in the full range of work and clients that the firm offers.

During my graduate program I rotated through Litigation & Dispute Resolution, Global Financial Markets and then completed my final two rotations with the Corporate team, where I ultimately qualified. My decision to qualify into the team was largely driven by the work – I enjoy the fast pace of M&A and being a part of our clients’ most important transactions.

I currently work as an associate in the Corporate team with a focus on private equity transactions. The step from trainee to associate was seamless thanks to my previous experience with the team. Since starting as an associate there’s certainly been an uplift in responsibilities and the types of tasks you get involved with. I’ve also found that you continue to learn on the job every day, much in the same way as you do as a trainee.

The settling process was a natural one. Given the flat structure of the teams at Clifford Chance, as a trainee you develop close relationships with everyone from associates through to the Partners. The conversations around settling flow naturally with Partners and by the time you come toward the end of your graduate program you have generally had several opportunities to discuss your settling preferences with the Partners, who are also happy to assist in deciding.

Top Tip: My top tip would be to make the most of all the opportunities that a career at Clifford Chance has to offer. From the opportunity to work in one of our many offices within the network to taking a client secondment or getting involved in various responsible business committees, there is something for everyone and you will get out what you put in.



Natasha Kim
Associate
Office: Singapore
Joined the firm: 2016
University: King’s College London

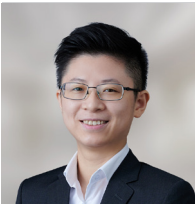
Looking back on my training contract journey, I’m grateful for the opportunity to have experienced life as a junior lawyer in four different practice areas. I learnt so much throughout my rotations across the Asset Finance, Litigation & Dispute Resolution, Derivatives & Structured Products, and Funds & Investment Management departments. I especially enjoyed my secondment to our Finance 50H team in London, as everyone was super warm and welcoming. All the teams I worked with have been nurturing and friendly, and many of the seniors I looked up to as a trainee have now become my good friends today.

Deciding which practice area to qualify into was a difficult decision. Thankfully, my supervisors and partners took the time to share their stories and what I could expect from a career in their teams. Their guidance, along with my experiences in each seat, allowed me to make an informed decision on my qualification choice. Ultimately, I decided to qualify as an associate with our Funds & Investment Management team as I felt that the practice area combined what I loved most about each of my trainee seats.

Becoming an associate was daunting and exciting at the same time. The quality of the Clifford Chance training programme, as well as the skills trainees pick up along the way, truly prepares us for the transition from trainee to associate. My team was also great in encouraging me each step of the way. During the lockdown, we had weekly team catch-ups to check in on one another and organised virtual team events. This supportive and collegial spirit is one of my favourite things about Clifford Chance, and it is empowering to know that you are part of a world-class team who will equip you with the knowledge and tools necessary to develop your career.

Top Tip: Be kind to yourself. We tend to be our own biggest critics at times, but with just a little self-confidence, positivity and an open mind, you will surprise yourself with what you can accomplish!

JOURNEYS AFTER TRAINING



Cecilia Chan
Senior Associate
Office: Hong Kong SAR
Internship year: 2014
Joined the firm: 2017
University: University of Sydney

During my training I rotated through the Corporate practice (Public Companies), the Global Financial Markets practice (Restructuring), Corporate practice (M&A) and Litigation & Dispute Resolution.

When qualification time arrived, I found it a challenging decision because each seat had offered something unique, and I had thoroughly enjoyed my time with all the teams. I discussed my decision-making process extensively with our Graduate Recruitment Manager, who had been my focal point of contact throughout my training and a great sounding board. It was key for me to understand what the day-to-day work entailed for each of the groups; not least because a trainee’s work is variously different from that of an associate. The rotations really helped me build a formidable network that spanned all the different Clifford Chance offices, so I was able to speak to other associates and partners and get a real sense of the types of work that the lawyers were working on which cemented my understanding of each practice group.

Eventually I settled into the Corporate practice (M&A) and have now joined the team for two years (and counting). It is great being part of a collegiate team of like-minded individuals here, and it is especially exciting that the work is so closely intertwined with ‘real life’, as we have the opportunity to work with household names and industries. There is a huge variety of work and I continue to learn about the business of the clients in diverse sectors and geographies with every project we complete. There is also the sense of satisfaction as we help clients achieve their commercial goals. Something I see in my seniors which inspires me daily is their ability to not only provide astute legal advice, but also navigate issues from multiple viewpoints and ultimately offer practicable, commercially sound solutions for clients that exceed their expectations.

Top Tip: Try to demonstrate you have thought about the issue at hand and considered different perspectives when asking questions of your seniors.



JOURNEYS FROM TRAINEE TO PARTNER



Mark Chan

Partner

Office: Hong Kong SAR

Joined the firm: 2007

Became Partner: 2019

University: University of New South Wales

I grew up in Sydney and studied Commerce and Law at University of New South Wales and applied directly to the Hong Kong office for a training contract, which I commenced in 2007. During the programme, I rotated through Litigation & Dispute Resolution, Capital Markets, and Corporate (M&A) whilst on secondment to our London office and finally, Global Financial Markets.

I qualified into our Capital Markets group and throughout my time here have developed my practice as well as contributing in other ways to the firm. Some highlights include being on the Graduate Recruitment panel for over six years – I enjoy meeting new people at our recruitment events and sharing my experience and sitting on the regional Regulatory team where I work closely with colleagues globally to ensure we are at the forefront of any changes that affect our clients. Setting up the office football team has also been great fun. Importantly, I am an active Arcus Ally which means I promote an inclusive and integrated culture within Clifford Chance that gives colleagues the choice to be open and out.

The opportunities to do market-leading work as well to take part in interesting projects is a real benefit of the firm and I feel I am truly immersed in our culture. The diverse people we have across our offices creates and maintains our culture. When I think of the people I work with, I think they have common traits such as intellectual curiosity and desire to take responsibility.

Top Tip: When doing your internship, think about the work you have been assigned – how do we as a firm fit into the project? What value can we generate for the client? Take the time to understand the context.



Valerie Kong

Partner

Office: Singapore

Internship year: 1999

Joined the firm: 2002

Became Partner: 2014

University: University of Cambridge

I am a lifer at Clifford Chance. I started as an intern in the Singapore office in my second year of university, I enjoyed my internship and therefore applied for a training contract with the firm in London.

During my training, I did my fourth seat in the Corporate M&A team in Singapore. I liked it so much that I decided to qualify in Singapore instead of London. I have now been in this office for every stage of my legal career from trainee to associate, then from counsel to Partner. I'm currently a member of firm's global Partner Selection Group and heavily involved in internal partner promotion and also lateral partner hire process. I do feel like it's been a full 'life cycle' at Clifford Chance and it's been a wonderful journey so far.

Qualifying into the Singapore office gave me access to exposure and close interactions with partners during my career which was very meaningful and enjoyable for me. The approachability and availability of senior lawyers was very important for my development. I think our system of Trainees and Supervisors, Mentors and Buddies ensures that there is mentorship, support and a good supply of tea and coffee all around, making sure that we don't lose that sense of belongingness in a team.

We invest a lot as a firm in the training programme and it's really an opportunity for a young lawyer to experience what it's like across our different practice areas. It's only through exposure and on-the-job experience that you know which area you feel motivated by. With that, I say, always keep an open mind - do not be afraid to ask questions and remain curious.

Top Tip: We're seeking juniors who are interested in our clients and our business, who possess resilience and who have the same values as us. Do your research and think how you can demonstrate this during the application process.



JOURNEYS FROM TRAINEE TO PARTNER



Yufei Liao

Partner
Office: Beijing
Joined the firm: 2009
Became Partner: 2021
University: Peking University

I joined Clifford Chance immediately after graduation - I studied my Bachelor of Law at Peking University and an LLM at Tsinghua University. I undertook the two-year training period in Beijing which was mainly within our Capital Markets group. This was a great experience and confirmed to me that I wanted to further pursue a career in law. I then took some time away to complete my LLM at Harvard University before taking the New York Bar. I then re-joined the firm in our Hong Kong office, in the Corporate (M&A) group.

I think the breadth and depth of the training systems offered by our firm is extremely beneficial to junior lawyers, particularly the ability to rotate around several market leading teams – I personally have benefited from the ability to spend time in different teams.

The integration of the firm and our global network is also second to none. We help Chinese clients seeking to conduct cross-border transactions, offer local law advice and interact with the network to deliver our legal services seamlessly.

Top Tip: Develop your commercial awareness – it is one thing to be a good lawyer, but you also need to possess sharp commercial awareness to understand the business needs of the clients. Together with technical legal skills means that we can provide the most commercially viable solutions to our clients.



Natsuko Sugihara

Partner
Office: Tokyo
Joined the firm: 2006
Became Partner: 2017
University: University of Cambridge

I was born in Japan but spent time in the Netherlands and UK growing up. After studying law at Cambridge University, I got to know Clifford Chance and applied for a London training contract.

During my training I rotated through Banking, Litigation & Dispute Resolution – where I also completed a short probono secondment at Law4all, and following a secondment to the Tokyo Corporate team, I finished my training back in London, joining the Telecoms, Media and Technology (TMT) team. Throughout the two years, I had a wide range of experience which was very important for my future career.

I eventually qualified into Corporate (Private Equity) and after two years, moved to the Tokyo office, initially on a secondment. The Tokyo office is like a big family – we are all very close and work on wide-ranging and interesting deals.

On a personal level, I was very determined to become a partner as well as a mother. These things tend to come at the same time in our lives. The firm was very clear that me taking maternity leave would not in any way affect my path to partner. I had my first child just before making partner.

This really demonstrated our values in action and the profound level of support the firm offers. This is one of the reasons I am very involved in ACCELERATE, a group that promotes gender parity within the firm.





Top Tip: Don't be afraid to set personal goals as well as professional goals, and discuss with your mentors in achieving them, as the support you will get from the firm, across multiple offices, is immense.



WORKING FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Our Responsible Business strategy concentrates on our most material issues: those that are most important to our stakeholders and those with the greatest potential to affect the sustainability and success of our firm.

The strategy is made up of four key pillars and we encourage all of our people to get involved:

-  Doing Business: We establish and promote market-shaping practices in relation to ethics, professional standards and risk management.
-  People: We realise the potential of our people by creating a safe, healthy and inclusive workplace, and by broadening our skills and experience.
-  Community: We partner to support our community by widening access to justice, finance, and education.
-  Environment: We manage our footprint and contribute to developing a more sustainable world.

Being a Responsible Business is a hugely important part of who we are, to learn more about our work in this area and our plans for the future, take a look at our annual **Responsible Business Report**.



START YOUR BRIGHT JOURNEY WITH CLIFFORD CHANCE

Clifford Chance is one of the world’s top law firms because we think differently. We’re seeking future bright minds to join us.

The firm runs a variety of events, internships and training programmes across the region annually. For more information and details of how to apply, please scan the QR code below.



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