



so you want to be a solicitor?

Start your training
contract with us

wilkin chapman llp
solicitors

wilkinchapman.co.uk

why choose Wilkin Chapman solicitors for your training contract?

As the largest law firm in the region, with legal offices in Grimsby, Lincoln, Beverley and Louth, the opportunities to learn and excel in your training contract are endless.

- **4 offices** across Lincolnshire and East Yorkshire
- Over **400 partners and staff**
- **Over 20** different areas of contentious and non-contentious law for private and business clients
- **Mentoring support** from some of the best legal minds



In a fascinating and complex history spanning over 100 years, where the past has shaped the present, one of the constants is the firm's core values which place the client at the heart of what we do.

Our recoveries department is recognised as a leading national firm. We also provide our extensive range of commercial legal services to a national client base ranging from SMEs to major blue chip organisations.

Wilkin Chapman is a fast moving law firm. Over the last ten years we have spread geographically and doubled the number of partners and staff.

- As a modern progressive firm we have **52 partners** who have an **average age of 45**
- The average time for staff to progress to partner status, from joining the firm, is **6 years**
- **17 of our 52 partners** trained with the firm
- We work to a set of values and behaviours known as our '**STAIR**' Values - the bedrock of Wilkin Chapman. They define who and what we are and underpin everything that we do

We are committed to providing a highly professional, efficient and personal service with a client-centred focus

What you can expect from us

- Great mentoring philosophy, providing hands-on support and advice from solicitors and partners throughout the firm
- Early involvement in cases ranging from straight forward cases to multimillion pound development work
- Early responsibility of files
- The opportunity to work at one of the region's largest and most progressive law firms



The speed, professionalism and depth of expertise that I have found within Wilkin Chapman in the space of 10 minutes amazes me, the faith that I have in the advice given is absolute.

Client testimony

What our clients think

96%

stated our service met their expectations

96%

of clients would return to Wilkin Chapman

96%

rated our solicitor expertise as Excellent/Good

Legal 500

Future Lawyers

The student's guide to the legal profession from the world's leading directory.

Their verdict

Trainees at Wilkin Chapman 'get given real work and are actively involved in cases' whilst also being 'well supervised: the balance of supervision and independent working is very well done'.

Trainees were quick to highlight that there are several diversity programmes that Wilkin Chapman is involved in, such as 'non-traditional ways of getting into law' and 'working with schools and trusts to provide information to help students get an idea of the sector'.

The firm invests in its trainees for the future, with many current partners having trained at the firm themselves. It follows that Wilkin Chapman is a Future Lawyers award winner for 'confidence of being kept on post qualification'.

Chambers

Student

True Picture offers independent, unbiased reviews of trainee life at the leading law firms.

Their verdict

The firm's approach to training is for new starters to 'learn by doing', which provides trainees with a lot of early responsibility. 'You're going to make mistakes,' the current crop of trainees acknowledged, 'but you're free to get stuck in headfirst knowing you've got that supervision.' The work is considered varied and interesting, with one trainee 'working on the largest corporate deal Wilkin Chapman has ever dealt with'.

The home-firm feel of Wilkin Chapman might offer a more familiar place to begin. Hours at trainee level are largely 9 to 5, there are a number of trainee-focused events and dinners throughout the year, and, as far as the culture is concerned, 'that's key to the success of the firm - everyone is friendly and approachable, has a chat, and asks how your day is going'.

from trainee to partner



James Marsden

Training Contract: 2009 Qualified: 2011 Works in: Beverley



I can genuinely say that I have enjoyed every day so far.

James Marsden, Partner and Head of Family

Many people may not realise, especially on the North Bank of the Humber, that Wilkin Chapman is one of the largest firms in the Leeds, Norwich and Newcastle triangle. From the outset, this was an extremely attractive selling point, especially as I was applying when the recession had started to bite and had heard of a number of people whose training contracts had been cancelled.

The breadth of legal areas on offer at Wilkin Chapman was appealing. I had no idea which field would interest me and knew that I would be able to keep my options open and gain experience in a number of different disciplines.

Unlike some of the city firms who take on hoards of trainees each year, most of whom end up undertaking trivial tasks for the duration of their training contract, I knew

that Wilkin Chapman had a sensible approach to the number of trainee intakes, ensuring the quality of training on offer was of a higher calibre. I was also aware that the firm had a high retention rate for trainees, which was extremely important.

What is it like to work at Wilkin Chapman?

I can genuinely say that I have enjoyed every day so far. Whilst new challenges are thrown at you on a daily basis, and it has not always been plain sailing, support is always there for you when you need it, from the CEO and equity partners downwards, and is very much like working in a close knit family unit.

I have always been given an appropriate level of autonomy, even from my first day in the office, which has developed me as a solicitor far quicker than if I had trained at another firm.

Encouragement is always given to progress within the firm. You don't become a mere number as is so often the case with firms of such standing.

views from a past trainee

Lucy Reding

Training Contract: 2015 Qualified: 2017 Works in: Lincoln



TIP: What you enjoy whilst studying is not necessarily the same as what you enjoy in practice so keep your options open and pick a firm that can offer you variety.



Working as a trainee solicitor in any legal practice can be challenging, but at Wilkin Chapman you are well supported to meet this challenge.

Lucy Reding, Senior Solicitor

About the area

Lincoln is a vibrant city with a wide range of bars, restaurants, cinemas and clubs catering both for the university student population and young working professionals in the area too.

When looking for a training contract, I knew I needed to find the firm with the right fit for me. I was clear that I did not want to work in London and had undertaken work experience at other larger city law firms, but it didn't feel right.

I was born in Lincoln and very keen to return to the area after university. I therefore started to research firms in and around the region. It was hard to miss Wilkin Chapman as the largest law firm with roots firmly set across Lincolnshire and East Yorkshire and growing year on year.

At the beginning, I didn't know which area of law I wanted to specialise in, but I wanted to work for a full-service law firm which allowed me to spend time across a variety of different departments and offices, throughout my training contract; a range that wasn't an option at other law firms.

I felt this would give me the opportunity to find out which area was the best fit for me and to meet different people and learn from their expertise.

What is it like to work at Wilkin Chapman?

From the moment I entered the door for my interview, I knew Wilkin Chapman was right for me. The people here are friendly and approachable which is an excellent place to be when learning. I would describe the culture as true camaraderie throughout offices and departments with people willing to help each other. In some respects, there is no such thing as hierarchy as most of the offices are open plan and the partners see themselves as part of the team, even helping with the tea round which I am told doesn't happen in all law firms!

During my training contract, I was actively encouraged to get involved in more complex cases rather than simply reading files or shadowing. I was regularly speaking to clients, had exposure to court hearings and advocacy, and drafting documentation and letters which were then checked by a solicitor with conduct of the case. I never felt that I couldn't ask for help if I was struggling and the same applies now despite being qualified.

Working at Wilkin Chapman comes with a strong social element! Regular social events are organised by the firm throughout the year. These are a mixture of office specific and firm-wide events giving everyone the chance to get to know their colleagues across the firm.

I genuinely believe I have had the opportunity to work on cases and had experiences during my time here that I wouldn't have had elsewhere.

The training contract and programme has given me great foundations for my development as a professional.



our big move

Rachael is a partner and head of the real estate department in Grimsby and moved to a village in East Lindsey with her family from Bristol in 2013.



Where did you move from?

My partner Dave and I relocated from Bristol in May 2013 to a beautiful coastal village. We live here with our three children.

Did you have any concerns about moving here?

I relocated to the area when Dave secured a job working in Lincolnshire. I was on maternity leave at the time. I was concerned that I would not be able to find a job as I knew Grimsby would be a different market to a city like Bristol. However, Wilkin Chapman is one of the largest law firms operating out of Lincolnshire, South and East Yorkshire. The timing of my relocation was perfect, I just sent my CV off and the rest is history.

How do you feel about the area now?

I know it sounds cliché but the amount of blue sky you can see is amazing. Seeing the sea every morning is magical after growing up two hours away from the nearest coast.

This area offers everything I am interested in and it's also not as far away from the big cities like Leeds and Manchester as people might think.

How does the quality of life compare to other places you have lived?

One of the major pluses is that my commute into work is massively reduced. It takes me only 30 minutes to drive the 18 miles to work in Grimsby, yet in Bristol city centre it took me the same amount of time to travel just three miles.



There's so much more space, less pollution, and the lifestyle is so diverse.

Rachael Dicken, Partner and Head of Real Estate

The value for money is outstanding here, particularly in terms of property. We live in a four bed detached house, in an idyllic rural area, for the same price as our previous two bedroom terrace in Bristol. Living here lets you choose where you want to live, not just where you can afford.

What's the best thing that the area has to offer people who are moving here?

There's so much more space, less pollution and the lifestyle is so diverse. It's great that we now have the beach two minutes away and the countryside also only a stone's throw away.

There are very few places where you can live in a rural location but have such variety on your doorstep.

Why would you recommend living and working here?

You can have the best of both worlds, city living or a more rural lifestyle to suit your preference or personal circumstances. This area gives you the perfect balance and our firm gives real opportunities to progress and develop your professional career.

why we excel in law

We are committed to providing the best service we can to our clients, along with achieving and maintaining quality standards such as Lexcel - The Law Society's accreditation standard and ISO 9001 in our recoveries department.

We believe that this quality, service-led approach is also reflected by the number of accreditations and recommendations that we regularly achieve with the UK's leading legal directories, such as Chambers, The Legal 500 and The Lawyer UK 200.

- We are ranked as a **top tier firm** in a number of areas of law by the Legal 500 in the East Midlands and Yorkshire & Humber regions
- We are ranked in the **top three bands** with solicitor mentions in a number of areas of law by Chambers UK in the East Midlands and Lincoln & Surrounds regions
- We are ranked in the **UK's Top 200 Law Firms** by The Lawyer



personal development

We believe that we can only provide the best service by recruiting and supporting the development of the best people. This is why we place great emphasis on ensuring your training programme is robust, providing you with the best opportunities to develop your career progression to becoming a solicitor.

One of our key strengths is working together as a firm. We have a friendly and professional working environment which focuses heavily on a teamwork approach, ensuring our trainees are highly valued team members.

You will be provided with the opportunity to attend internal training sessions across all departments throughout your time with us as a trainee, expanding your knowledge and expertise.

The Lawyer UK has lifted the lid on the profession's independent practices, identifying Wilkin Chapman as a 'regional trailblazer,' and one of only two firms mentioned in Yorkshire, Humber and the entire East and West Midlands.

The publication also regards the firm as 'ONE TO WATCH'



I started my training contract in 2004 and was fully supported. I was given a variety of work from all levels and was encouraged to have lots of client contact. As a result of this I built some very strong relationships.

I was promoted to senior solicitor in 2008 as the firm was eager to continue my development and reward my efforts. I have continued to progress with the firm and my client base has swiftly grown.

In 2013 I became a partner and, as a result of this, have taken on new tasks and responsibilities. I now supervise and assist our newer members of staff and encourage their development. The firm has recently introduced a mentor scheme which means that more junior partners have another more senior partner to turn to with any issues.

Katie Davies, Partner

your training contract

Typically, your two year contract will provide you with hands on experience in a number of different areas of law, one of them non-contentious. The training period will be split into four six-month placements. For some part of your training contract, you may spend time at more than one of our offices in order to give you experience of different types of clients and work. However, we do flex our training contracts to suit the needs of the business, and you as our trainee.

The departments that you are likely to gain experience in include; dispute resolution, corporate and commercial, real estate, recoveries, family, Wills, estates, tax & trusts, personal injury or regulatory. However, not all services are offered from each office. Full details of services offered in different office locations are available on our website.

The areas of law that you will experience will depend on previous training, your stated preferences, the availability of training placements at the time and the business needs of the firm.



salary & benefits

We offer a competitive salary structure with annual pay reviews and great benefits too. Trainee salaries are reviewed annually and are in accordance with performance and successful progression through the trainee programme.

professional qualification training

From September 2022, where new trainees are offered a placement to commence their LPC/SQE study with the firm, we will fund course fees to a maximum contribution of £13,500. This funding does not apply to existing training contracts, or where the LPC/SQE was applied for or where studying has commenced, before receiving our trainee offer.

professional skills training

You will be expected to attend additional relevant training designed to equip you with the skills required of a practising solicitor. This will be paid for by the firm and areas will be chosen to suit your career path.

work experience

At Wilkin Chapman, we run two separate work experience schemes which are designed for undergraduates and A-Level students. The placements are structured differently across the two groups, which enables us to tailor the experience to your needs to ensure that the time you spend with us is at the right level and is meaningful for you.

our values and behaviours

Our values are the beliefs of the firm and they guide our actions and behaviours. Do you display the values and behaviours of Wilkin Chapman? More information on our values can be found on our website.



Service



Teamwork



Approachability



Innovation



Results



so, you want to be a Wilkin Chapman solicitor

To be considered for a training contract you will need to apply via an online application form. Other information about yourself concerning interests, team work and any previous work experience all help to build up a picture of you as a person. The deadline for applying is 31 January* two years prior to entry. Training contracts commence yearly, in September.

interview process

Shortlisting takes place two years before the intake date. Successful candidates will be invited to attend an assessment centre, which will last approximately four hours. This will include a test, an interview and a case study exercise. You will also be shown around the office and given an opportunity to meet our partners, lawyers and, in particular, our current trainees.

after training

Training contracts are offered in the hope that you will become a solicitor and eventually a partner of the firm. Over the last 10 years, the majority of those who have trained with us have stayed with us.

How to apply

To apply, please visit our website: wilkinchapman.co.uk and go to the careers/training contract page.

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Wilkin Chapman LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales, registered number OC343261. A list of names of members of the LLP is open to inspection at the registered office: Cartergate House, 26 Chantry Lane, Grimsby, DN31 2LJ. Authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority No 509655.

HR02301-14