

# Life as a Haynes Boone London Trainee

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November 13, 2024 Christopher Orford, Kayley Rousell, Tenzin Woden

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**PRACTICES** Corporate, Energy, Power and Natural Resources, Investment Management, Shipping

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From joining Haynes Boone as trainees to their experience as fully qualified lawyers, London Associates [Christopher Orford](#), [Kayley Rousell](#) and [Tenzin Woden](#) answer questions about their growing legal careers.

## 1. Tell us about your trainee experience at Haynes Boone.

**Christopher Orford:** My training experience was somewhat unusual as I was both the first-ever trainee the firm took on and spent only a few weeks in the office before the UK government mandated that everyone work from home during the pandemic. Due to this, I spent almost the entirety of my first year working remotely. This could have been an incredibly isolating time as I obviously didn't know anyone at the firm and hadn't even had a chance to speak to everyone before being sent away. My Haynes Boone colleagues were amazing, ensuring that I was involved in matters from day one and more generally involved with the wider London office. I even organised a remote horse racing event for the associates, which allowed me to meet those I hadn't at the time had a chance to work with yet.

The actual training contract was incredibly interesting. Rather than the traditional four seat structure, Haynes Boone offered two yearlong seats when I joined: One in transactional (covering all of our business units) and one in litigation. I started in the transactional seat, working on a wide variety of cases, from M&A deals to shipping contracts. I found this an excellent experience as it allowed me to really sample everything the firm had to offer and find what really interested me. When I moved to litigation, I was fortunate enough to be involved in an arbitration from almost the beginning all the way through to the judgment. My colleagues were also incredibly supportive in letting me stay on matters when I moved seats so that I could see things to fruition and get the "full experience" of certain transactions/matters.

**Kayley Rousell:** I really enjoyed my training contract at Haynes Boone. Due to the smaller team sizes, I was afforded a breadth of opportunities to get involved with more complex aspects of the deals I worked on, providing me with a real sense of responsibility and ownership of tasks. The collegiate culture of Haynes Boone, however, made the real difference throughout my training experience. The teams I have worked with have helped me grow my skillset and have been extremely supportive of my journey to my current NQ position.

**Tenzin Woden:** My experience at HB may be a little different to what many may expect as I had joined the firm as an existing trainee from another law firm, but the welcoming nature of the firm shone through from the first day.

I had the opportunity to gain exposure to both transactional and contentious sides of the corporate world whilst working with individuals at the forefront of their legal practice areas. Such experiences allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the corporate world and how you can and must do to succeed.

## 2. Why did you pick your area of qualification?

**Christopher Orford:** I joined the Corporate Practice Group because I found the work to be interesting and suitable to my skillset. Corporate offers a unique level of variety, allowing me to engage with diverse people and businesses, each with its own distinct characteristics.

I have always been interested in looking “under the hood” of successful companies and seeing how they operate. When I was training, I found that working in the corporate group (be it on a merger/acquisition deal or on an IPO/secondary listing) was exactly that.

This practice also provides the opportunity to still be involved in other areas of law, as in most transactions, there is not just a solely corporate focus. Often, other practices such as employment or intellectual property law must be consulted to close the deal. Because of this process, I am able to gain an understanding of a wider range of topics, allowing me to best develop as a lawyer.

**Kayley Rousell:** I chose to qualify into the Energy and Shipping Transactions Practice Group due to the challenging, international and highly varied aspects of the work. Additionally, I’ve always had a long-standing interest in the energy and maritime sectors. This interest, coupled with my enjoyment of the transactional and mechanical nature of projects (particularly in respect of financings), meant the team was ultimately a perfect fit for me to begin my career as an NQ.

**Tenzin Woden:** The Investment Management Practice Group in the London office deals with fund formation workstream whilst still providing extensive experience on the transaction side, which is unique. One matter may concern you with the management side of the funds world, and another may give you an insight into the legal and commercial nuances of managing startup companies across various sectors/industries. Dealing with startup companies also means that you are at the forefront of technological and commercial innovation and can engage in the exciting new world of tomorrow.

Furthermore, the team itself was another big factor. It was built organically through many years of development with constant regard to the next evolution of the Venture Capital world!

### 3. What is the best part about working at Haynes Boone?

**Christopher Orford:** Without a doubt, the culture. We have the benefit of being both a smaller UK office where everyone knows everyone (and you are an important asset from day one) and a part of one of the biggest law firms in the United States. The firm is also not a normal “US firm.” With the headquarters located in Dallas, there is a very different culture and approach to work than what you would normally find or expect in the London offices of US firms. This, combined with the people who are at Haynes Boone, make it an incredible place to work and develop as a lawyer.

**Kayley Rousell:** The best part about working at Haynes Boone is twofold. On the one hand, I have the opportunity to work on a number of complex, international deals. On the other, there is great emphasis placed on the importance of work-life balance and the endorsement of a positive, friendly working environment. Haynes Boone’s London Office has a fantastic cohort of likeminded and supportive lawyers who are always happy to lend a helping hand or provide some words of advice, particularly at the junior level.

**Tenzin Woden:** Haynes Boone does well navigating between having a progressive, entrepreneurial spirit whilst still retaining its core values and culture, providing the opportunity to succeed at every level, regardless of your age, gender or background.

Personally, I recently attended our Dallas office, meeting our US associates across the pond at the annual HayBoo U new associate orientation program. There, I heard different perspectives on tackling challenges I may face throughout my legal career. Programs like this help forge a deep network of professional individuals to work alongside and learn from, providing the opportunity to become a better lawyer no matter which practice area you are in.