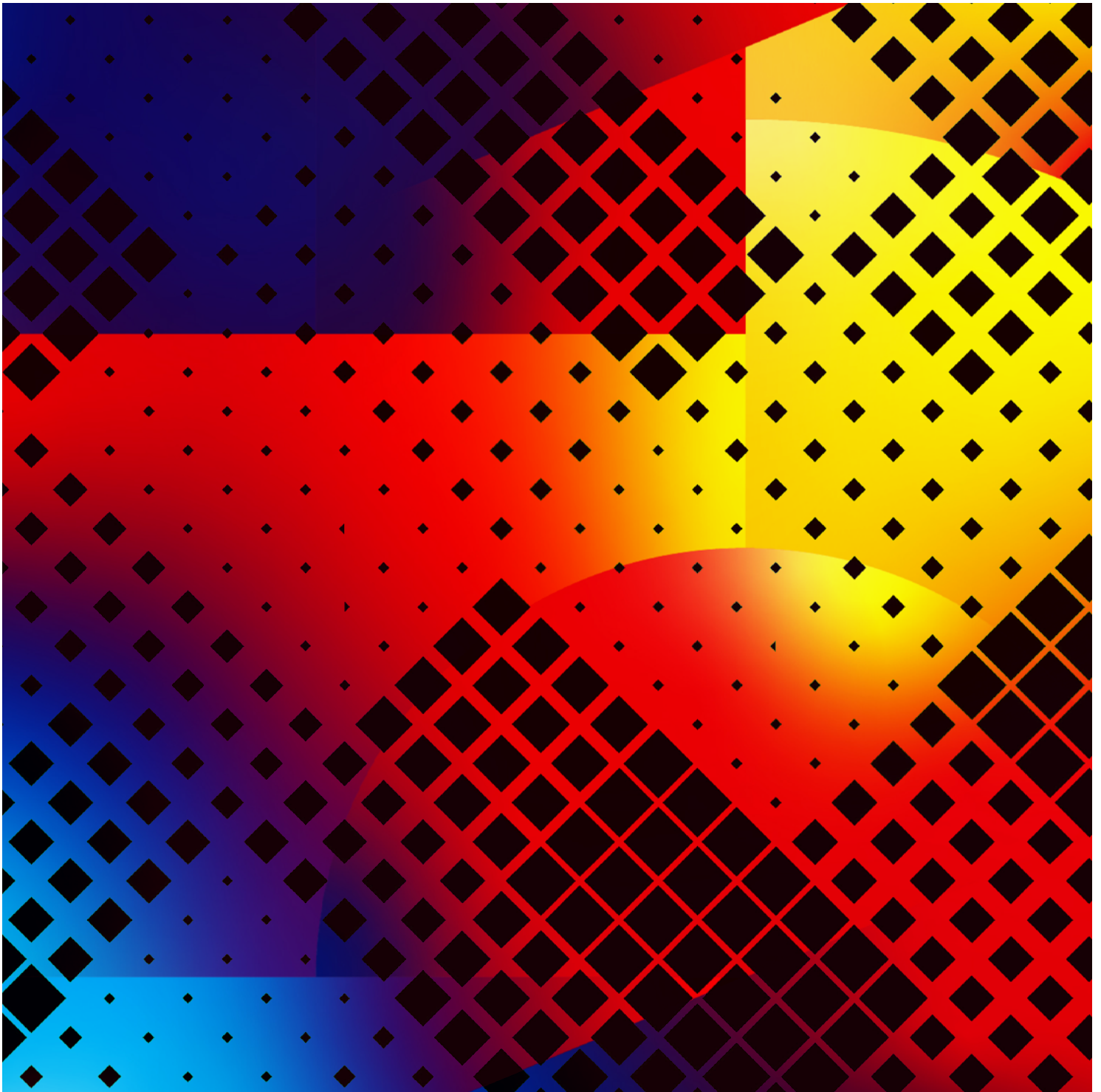


University Law Fair Guide

How to prepare for a law fair:





Make sure to ask questions about the person you are speaking to as well, as they'll have valuable insights.



Before the fair:

1. Research firms

Find out which firms are attending the fair via your university careers service. Research what each firm specialises in and highlight the firms that practice in the area/s you are interested in (which might be quite broad depending on how far into your studies you are). This will give you a list of stands to visit on the day – make sure you take this with you and tick them off, as it can be overwhelming at the fair and easy to miss busier stands. If you have time once you've visited your preferred stands, have a look at some others to broaden your knowledge and help you to reaffirm the type of law you are interested in.

2. Think of what you'd like to know

There will be lots of different people representing firms at the law fair – this might be the recruitment team, trainee solicitors, or qualified lawyers and Partners. Our Training Principal even attends some of our fairs, so it's a great opportunity to build your network. If possible, try to ask specific questions which are based on your research but that aren't information already available online. Make sure to ask questions about the person you are speaking to as well, as they'll have valuable insights. You want to make a good impression, as even out of hundreds of applications, firms will remember specific people who ask genuine questions that show their interest in the firm.

Question examples –

- Where do you see the firm in 5 years' time and what impact will that have on trainee development?
- In what way does the firm support in the transition of moving seats as a trainee?
- What work do trainees do on business development?
- How do I use all of my work experience, including non-legal roles, in my application when they aren't as applicable to the role of a trainee?

3. Think of what you'd like to know

When preparing to attend, you should think about what you're going to bring to the law fair. It's always good to take a notepad and pen with you to make notes as many firms are now moving away from freebies – we are part of the Sustainable Recruitment Alliance and are committed to reducing our carbon footprint. It's also a good idea to think about how you will present yourself as the fair is an opportunity to network with professionals. Firms will not expect you to attend in a three-piece suit, but it is good to dress smartly. If you use LinkedIn, tidy up your page before attending the fair so that you can connect with representatives.

4. Creating your elevator pitch

“

We'll be ourselves to give you the best idea of what it might be like to work for us, so please be yourself too.

”

You could also think about your 'elevator pitch' – this is a brief way of introducing yourself and is a way to start a conversation with the representatives. To plan your pitch, think of how you can outline yourself in summary. Let the representatives know your name, course and which year of study you are in, what your reasons are for being at the fair and how your skills align with the role they are advertising. Your elevator pitch should only be around 30 seconds long as a rule of thumb.

5. Route to take

Your university will have given you information on where firms are situated during the fair, so you can plan the order you will visit each in. Most people go round the fair in order of stands from the entrance, so if you're attending from the beginning, the fairs furthest away may be slightly quieter and it could be a good decision to visit these first if you find the crowded stands overwhelming or want to make the best use of your time. It could also be a good idea to speak to a few other firms first before heading to your top choice so that you can build up your confidence and get used to speaking to recruiters.

On the day:

6. Independent is best

It can be tempting to walk around the fair with a group of friends, however it is better to speak to firm representatives on your own. This allows you to demonstrate professional skills from the outset, and also have a meaningful conversation with the firm. When in a larger group, voices often get lost and the conversation is less effective. It will also help you to build your confidence!

7. Always start by introducing yourself

You've created a short and sweet elevator pitch, now it's time to put it to use. Representatives meet hundreds of students across all of the career fairs they attend, and more often than not, students forget to introduce themselves. By introducing yourself, it is likely that the representative will remember you when your application comes in.

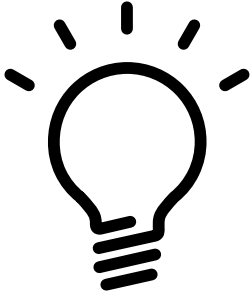
8. Be you!

Don't go into a conversation saying what you think the recruitment team want to hear. We'll be ourselves to give you the best idea of what it might be like to work for us, so please be yourself too.

9. After the fair

Ask the representative if they're happy for you to connect with them on LinkedIn and follow up with the people you met after the event, whether that is via LinkedIn or email. The recruitment team remember people who have actively reached out.

Top Tips



Whilst this guide is relevant to anyone attending a law fair, you may want to adapt your focus on the day depending on what year of study you are in.

Top tips for first year law students or second year non-law students:

- You may not know what area of law you are interested in yet, so do some brief research on all of the firms and aim to speak to as many as possible. You should still know basic information like office locations and major practice areas, but firms won't expect you to have the same level of detail or understanding at this stage, and will appreciate you just wanting to find out more.
- Use the fair as an opportunity to build your confidence. We understand that some students can feel nervous approaching a stand but we love talking about what we do so are happy to lead the conversation if necessary! Pushing yourself out of your comfort zone is great experience for when you start attending assessment centres and interviews.

Top tips for second year law students or third year non-law students:

- You'll be ready to make training contract applications after the fairs, so make sure you ask questions about what to expect from the application and recruitment process.
- Try not to ask the firm what makes a candidate stand out – this is personal to each candidate and we don't know you yet! Instead, give some thought to what you think makes you a great candidate and tell us how you plan to bring that out in an application – we can then help you think about how to improve even further.

Top tips for final year law students and postgraduate students:

- If you've applied for training contracts before and haven't been successful, tell us about the feedback you received so we can help you with how to address your development areas.
- Whilst most firms recruit 2 years ahead, some may have opportunities for you to join them sooner. Make sure you ask about all of the options available if you want to avoid a 'gap' between university and training.