

Take Your Place Alumni Q&A series

Lauren's law journey

Lauren went to Sir John Leman High School in Beccles and graduated from the University of Birmingham with a degree in Law. Having completed the Legal Practice Course, she is now in training to be a Solicitor.

What A-levels did you study and why?

I studied English Literature, History and Religious Studies. These were all topics I had really enjoyed at GCSE and so I wanted to continue with them. I also felt they were good A levels in terms of applications for university.

How did you choose your undergraduate university course and how did you find the application process?

Initially I thought I wanted to study history as I'd really enjoyed the subject during my A levels. However, I started the course and after a few months I decided it wasn't for me. So I took a year out to think about it more. Law was something I had always found fascinating and felt suited my skillset. However, I thought that you had to have completed an A level in law to study it at university but I found out it wasn't

I found the application process fine. However, I would recommend getting everything sorted as early as possible to avoid any last minute rush. There are lots of resources online to help you.

What do you enjoy most about your studies and further education?

I enjoyed the independence that studying at university gave me, not only in terms of being away from home but also in my studies. You have a bit more freedom to choose what you want to research and write about.

There were also some incredible extra-curricular opportunities. For anyone who wants to study law, I would really recommend asking about the pro-bono opportunities. It's not only really interesting and fulfilling but also looks fantastic on your CV.

I also loved meeting so many new people from different backgrounds!

What was the typical day/week like on your course?

As a law student I didn't have much contact time (about 8-9 hours a week).

We had three lectures every week and then seminars every other week. I tried to treat my studies like a job, spending 9-5 in the libraries essay writing or preparing for seminars. This gave me evenings and weekends free to see friends and take part in society events.

How has the pandemic affected your studies?

It hit during my final year so I had to complete my final exams and course work from home. It was really tough and I struggled with motivation and concentration. However, it soon became the new normal and I completed my post-graduate course entirely from home.

I think most universities are understanding of the struggles of working from home. However, in choosing a university I would try and reach out to current students and ask what their experience has been because I think the way the pandemic was handled can tell you a lot about a university.

What advice would you give your younger self?

When I first started university I really lacked confidence. I didn't know anyone who was a lawyer and I had no work experience in the area. I worried that I didn't have what it takes to be a lawyer. So, my advice to my younger self would be 'just go for it!'

Do you have any top tips for students applying to university?

My top tips would be:

- Try to go to as many open days as you can
- Don't be afraid to dream - if you want to apply to Oxbridge, do it
- Look at the extra-curricular opportunities offered by universities
- First year does count - at least it does for employers!
- Get onto LinkedIn - look at what university's and courses people in your chosen career went to/ studied

Find out what schemes and other opportunities are available to first year students. If the answers aren't obvious, just ask someone!



