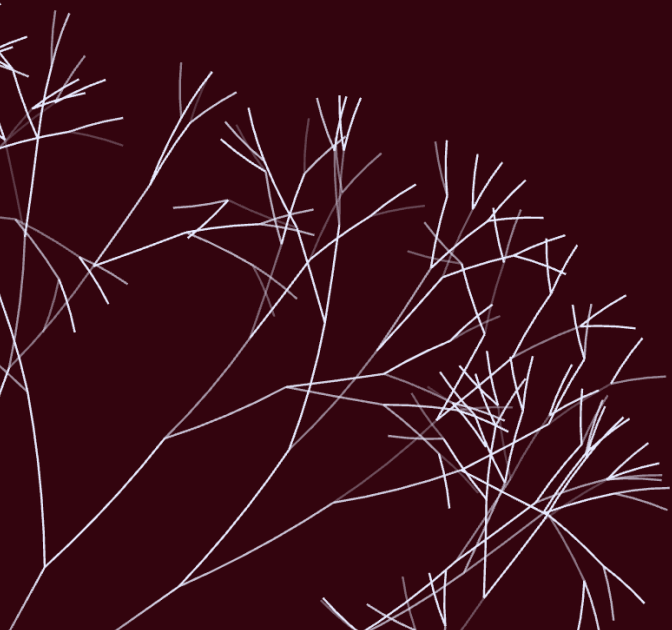




Cooley

UK TRAINEE

Your Future in London

About Cooley

Cooley is a global law firm that partners with many of the world's most innovative companies. From startups taking their first steps to established public companies operating on a global scale, we help clients navigate critical moments throughout their growth journeys. We are particularly known for our work in the technology and life sciences sectors, advising clients on transformative transactions, complex intellectual property and regulatory matters and high-stakes disputes.

Founded in the US in 1920, Cooley has grown into an international firm with offices across the US, Europe and Asia. In 2015, we opened our London office to support our expanding global client base and strengthen our international platform.

Today, our London office is home to more than 200 lawyers and business professionals who work together to support clients across a broad range of industries and matters, including venture capital and private equity investments, mergers and acquisitions, capital markets transactions, technology transactions, intellectual property, employment, tax, competition, data privacy, investigations and complex disputes. Working closely with colleagues across the firm's global network, our lawyers regularly advise on cross-border matters for innovative companies at every stage of growth.

What sets Cooley apart is our collaborative and entrepreneurial culture. We believe everyone has a meaningful role to play in our success, and we encourage our trainees to contribute from day one while receiving support from colleagues who are invested in their development. The London office combines the opportunities of a growing international practice with the resources, experience and reach of a leading global law firm.



Programmes

Spring and summer programme

Our two-week spring and summer programmes (vacation schemes) are the gateway to becoming a trainee at Cooley London. Designed to give you a genuine insight into life at an international law firm, the programmes combine meaningful work experience, professional development and opportunities to build connections across the firm.

Working alongside our lawyers on active client matters, you'll gain exposure to the innovative companies, investors and founder-led companies that Cooley is known for advising. Depending on the work taking place during your programme, you may attend meetings, participate in conference calls, assist on transactions, conduct legal research, support litigation matters or contribute to wider client and business projects.

Alongside your work experience, you'll take part in skills sessions, presentations and networking events that will help you develop your commercial awareness, legal skills and understanding of Cooley's culture.

You'll also hear directly from trainees, associates and partners about their experiences and career journeys.

With approximately seven participants on each programme, you'll benefit from a highly personalised experience. You'll be supported throughout by a supervisor, a trainee buddy and our graduate recruitment team, who will help you make the most of every opportunity and provide guidance as you explore a career with us.

Our goal is simple: to give you meaningful exposure to our work, our people and our culture, while providing a platform for you to demonstrate your potential. By the end of the programme, you'll have a clearer understanding of what it means to be a Cooley trainee and whether a career with us is right for you.



ELIGIBILITY

Please note that we can only consider one application per recruitment year. Candidates may apply to either programme, but we kindly ask that only one application is submitted.

SCHEME DATES

Spring:
5 – 16 April

Summer:
28 June – 9 July

Programmes

Diversity Fellowship

The UK Diversity Fellowship is designed to support talented aspiring solicitors from underrepresented backgrounds by providing early access to opportunities, meaningful financial support of up to £12,000 and a unique pathway into our trainee recruitment process.

What makes the Fellowship distinctive is its two-year approach. Following your first summer programme, you'll have the opportunity to return to Cooley for a second programme, giving you two opportunities to experience the firm, build your confidence and demonstrate your potential.

As a Diversity Fellow, you will join our summer programme one year earlier than students are typically eligible to participate. This gives you a valuable head start in exploring a career in commercial law, developing practical skills and building relationships across the firm.

You'll gain firsthand experience of life at Cooley through meaningful work on active matters, professional development sessions and opportunities to connect with trainees, associates, partners and business services colleagues. From supporting transactions and litigation matters to attending training sessions and networking events, you'll experience the breadth of our work and the collaborative culture that defines our firm.

As our summer programme plays a key role in our trainee solicitor recruitment process, the Fellowship offers an exceptional opportunity to prepare for and ultimately progress through that journey with the benefit of additional experience and support.



ELIGIBILITY

We welcome applications from outstanding university students who:

- Are enrolled full time at a UK university, with an anticipated graduation date from a UK law school no later than 2029.
- Demonstrate a commitment to promoting inclusion.
- Will not receive an inclusion award from another law firm between 1 April 2026 and 31 August 2027.
- Can participate in the 2027 UK summer programme (14 – 25 June).





“I loved Cooley’s summer programme and felt welcomed by the firm from day one. I gained hands-on experience across a range of client matters, enjoyed getting to know lawyers across the firm and saw the “Be Cooley” ethos in action through the support and mentorship I received.

As a Diversity Fellow, the opportunity to take part in the scheme a year early and gain insight into a leading US law firm was especially valuable.”

– TATIANA NICHOLAS, 2026 DIVERSITY FELLOW

Training at Cooley

We believe the best way to learn is by doing. From the outset of your training contract, you'll be entrusted with meaningful work and encouraged to contribute to matters that have a real impact on our clients. Many trainees are surprised by the level of responsibility they are given and the opportunity to work directly with associates, partners and clients from an early stage.

Our goal is to provide trainees with exceptional client exposure, hands-on responsibility and the support needed to develop into outstanding lawyers. Whether you're assisting on a transformative transaction, a complex dispute or a cutting-edge technology matter, you'll be encouraged to contribute, learn and grow from day one.

Our two-year training programme is structured across four six-month seats, providing exposure to a range of practice areas and helping you develop the skills needed for a successful legal career.

You can expect to gain experience in a variety of contentious and transactional practices. One compulsory seat will be within our general corporate practice, which includes M&A, capital markets, private equity and venture capital.

The other compulsory seat will be with our business litigation team, which may include commercial litigation, disputes, investigations, international arbitration, or product compliance and litigation matters.

Other seat opportunities may include life sciences and healthcare, financial services, technology transactions, cyber/data/privacy, compensation and benefits, or labor and employment.

While seat options will evolve in line with client demand and business needs, we work closely with trainees to understand their interests and provide opportunities to build experience in areas that align with their career ambitions.

Professional development

Your development is a priority from day one. Alongside on-the-job experience, you'll participate in a comprehensive training programme delivered by partners, associates and our professional development team. The programme is designed to help you build both technical legal expertise and the professional skills needed to thrive in a modern law firm.

SQE and law school support

Cooley's London office has transitioned to the Solicitors Qualifying Exam (SQE) route. For future trainees who secure a training contract before beginning their legal studies, Cooley provides full payment of law school fees and a maintenance grant of £20,000 per year.

Salary

We offer a competitive reward package designed to support your well-being, development and success.

- First-year trainee: £55,000
- Second-year trainee: £60,000
- Newly qualified solicitor: £157,000

Our application process

Cooley lawyers are excited by solving business and legal challenges. The work we do is complex, so our lawyers must relish developing the intellectual and analytical mastery needed to find difficult answers to thorny questions. We're seeking candidates who share this passion, as well as an appreciation of how to develop effective business and working relationships.

Cooley's academic requirements are a minimum 2.1 at degree level for any discipline and 128 UCAS points (ABB at A Level) or equivalent, not to include points from AS levels or general studies. We will accept applications from individuals who do not meet these requirements if they have clear and valid mitigating circumstances, and have otherwise demonstrated excellence at another point in their academic or professional history.

If you receive and accept an offer to join Cooley, you will hear from the firm regularly throughout the period before formally joining us. Future trainees are invited to various events, helping them to integrate and grow their connections with people at the firm before starting their training. It is important to us that trainees are included and feel a sense of belonging at Cooley from the beginning.



01

Submit your
application

02

Bright Apply
interactive
conversation

03

Meet us for a
Zoom interview

04

Join our
assessment day

05

Experience the
vacation scheme

06

Receive a training
contract offer

Industry recognition

The Legal 500 UK:

20 practice areas recommended, two partners named to the Hall of Fame and 11 partners recognised as Leading Lawyers (2026)

Chambers UK:

Eight practice areas and 24 lawyers ranked (2026)

Chambers UK:

Band 1 – Life Sciences: Transactional (2026)

Legal Cheek Awards:

- Best law firm for quality of work – Highly commended (2026)
 - Best law firm for perks – Highly commended (2026)
 - Best law firm office – Highly commended (2026)
 - Firm of the year – Highly commended (2026)
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The Lawyer's European Awards:

European Competition/Antitrust Team of the Year (2023)





British Legal Awards:

Shortlisted for Corporate Team of the Year (2023)

The Lawyer Awards:

Shortlisted for City Firm of the Year and Litigation Team of the Year (2022)

Women in Law Empowerment Forum (WILEF):

US Gold Standard Certification

Diversity Lab:

Mansfield Rule Certification Plus, US and UK

Lawyers for a Sustainable Economy:

Founding member

Seramount:

Best Law Firms for Women

Contacts

Sarah Donoghue

Senior graduate recruitment manager

Rachael Driscoll

Legal talent coordinator

Nicola Squire

Partner and training principal

graduaterecruitmentteam@cooley.com

Cooley LLP

22 Bishopsgate

London EC2N 4BQ

+44 (0) 20 7583 4055

