A day in the life of … Matthew Franks, Trainee, Payne Hicks Beach LLP

Departments to date: Property; Private client

8.45am: I arrive at work. Normally I aim to arrive at about 9.00am, but today a training breakfast is taking place. Trainees are encouraged to be in the office as much as possible across the firm.

While my computer loads, I make a coffee and burrow in my desk drawers for any light snacks which I might have been kind enough to leave there for myself. Sadly, today I find only a stapler and some sticky notes. I then review the emails I have received since yesterday evening, making a note of new tasks arising from them.

9.00am: At the training breakfast we are given a brief history of inheritance tax and also, much to my relief, croissants. Many senior members of the firm have an academic appreciation of their specialisms, which helps add colour to the work we do as trainees.

10.15am: As nothing very urgent has come to my attention yet, I consider the note I made of a meeting yesterday with a client who would like us to draft her will. I have been copied in to all the emails with this client, and was asked to attend the meeting by a senior associate, so I feel well-informed and confident enough to draft her will. However, were a complicated issue to come up, I would feel very comfortable asking the senior associate, or indeed any associate in the team, for guidance on that point.

11.30am: Having sent a further few doses of caffeine hurtling through my bloodstream, and with the will's provisions fresh in my mind, I also draft a covering letter to the client explaining the functioning of her will. Although everything I do will be checked by the senior associate (and any amendments explained to me), it feels meaningful to lay the foundations of the work we are doing for this client.

12.00pm: I receive a visit in my room from a partner who specialises in art law. The department has a sociable feel to it, and almost everyone is happy for me to waltz into their room for a brief chat, or to visit me themselves.

The partner asks me to produce a first draft of an exhibition loan agreement for one his clients. This piece of work is good practice for my drafting skills and requires strong attention to detail, as it is quite different to the other documents I have been drafting in my seats so far, such as wills and leases.

12.45pm: Narrowly avoiding a Tupperware spillage down the carpeted office corridors, I head out to lunch with the other trainees. As it is summer, we sit in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Ever the conscientious trainee, I remember 8.45am with a shudder and replenish my stock of edible office supplies.

2.00pm: I print off and tab up for signature some lasting powers of attorney which I have drafted for a meeting with a client.

3.00pm: I attend the meeting, noting the senior associate's client-friendly explanation of the documents. I have already mastered the art of waiting until the client has left in order to eat the biscuits in the conference rooms. Clients do not want crumbs in their wills.

4.00pm: Returning upstairs to my desk, I tidy up my attendance note and prepare to send the LPAs out to the attorneys for their signatures. I also have an informal chat with my supervisor, who takes an interest in the work I have been doing and offers thoughtful advice.

5.00pm: A partner in the family department asks me to conduct some research, as a party to a divorce in which he recently acted has died, and he wishes to understand the consequences of the financial settlement for that party's estate. One of the advantages of training in a firm of this size is that it is easy in each seat to establish working relationships with people across departments.

6.30pm: I record my time and log off. Although I am sometimes required to stay late in order to work on urgent tasks or catch up with my to-do list, today I have important business to conduct at the pub just outside the office.