



Paul Wakefield

Scores top associate partner promotion

Associate partner, Paul Wakefield talks about how he went from history to law and has now 'hit the back of the net' with his promotion to associate partner.

Paul gives us an insight into how got into law, his greatest achievements and who he'd have over for dinner!

You originally did a history degree, what attracted you to a career in law?

In my final year, I was elected vice president of my student union, which was a year long sabbatical post. During that year I took on a lot of academic appeal work which I found really interesting. After that year finished, I wasn't really certain what I wanted to do and so I had a few temping jobs here and there but nothing really struck me as a good career path. After some reflection, I realised that I'd really enjoyed the appeals that I'd been involved with and that led me to consider law as a career. I enrolled on a conversion course and then got a trainee role at Marrons (before it merged with Shakespeare Martineau) and, as they say, the rest is history...excuse the pun!

Describe yourself in three words...

I'd probably say I'm tall, northern and competitive.

What would you say is your most memorable moment so far at Shakespeare Martineau?

I've worked on some great projects over the last 12 years, but the stand out one has to be dealing with the planning for a sustainable urban extension comprising 1,700 homes in Mansfield. The planning agreement involved a large number of stakeholders and dealt with a number of complex issues and it was great to be part of it.

What do you value most about Shakespeare Martineau?

I'm very much on board with the direction in which Shakespeare Martineau is heading. There are so many opportunities available to all employees. The Academy (the firm's learning and development centre of excellence) is something I believe is very valuable and not something other law firms I'm aware offer. Culture and growth are very important in any industry, and the firm has a good understanding of both those things. I can't see any other law firm currently moving in the same direction as Shakespeare Martineau.

You mentioned the Shakespeare Martineau Academy? Have you ever taken part in it?

I have indeed. I took part in a development programme last year, which helped with my progression to the partnership, and I have attended a number of other courses. I'd definitely recommend taking advantage of the Academy. It's a fantastic way to develop your career within the firm.

Who would be your ideal dinner guest?

I think the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, would be a great dinner guest. I'm sure he'd start some very interesting conversations. I'm not sure what I'd cook him though!

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I'm a big football fan, so in my spare time I play in defence for Trent Vineyard FC here in Nottingham.

And finally, what song describes you as a person?

That's a tough one... I think I'd have to go with Wonderwall by Oasis.



Location: Nottingham



Years of service: 12



Area of law: Planning