

Clifford Chance

Graduate recruitment in Asia Pacific



Why Clifford Chance

As the leading international law firm in Asia Pacific for more than four decades, we approach the recruitment process with a lot of care and attention. New recruits will one day be our future colleagues, partners, or even Regional Managing Partner.

It is so important to pick the right firm and we know it can be a difficult decision. You will need to ensure that the firm matches your interests, values and ambitions, and, most importantly, that it is the right cultural fit for you.

I faced the same decision years ago. I started with the firm in 2000 and I can tell you from my own experience it has been an outstanding place to grow personally and professionally. I credit the firm's strong culture of collegiality in helping me succeed by providing the support and encouragement I needed at different stages to help me pursue my path. I have been able to build a strong career with great clients and been presented with countless opportunities to excel.

Nurturing talent and encouraging mentorship is a key area of focus for the firm. Joining Clifford Chance opens a world of possibilities for you to expand your network and learn from some of the brightest minds in our profession.

We are also passionate about our diversity and inclusion agenda and understand that it is good for our staff and their loved ones, our firm and our clients, and society. We believe that to help achieve these values we have to be champions of, and campaigners for them across our network. The firm is filled with diverse talents bringing their individual life experiences and perspectives to the table which create a dynamic and vibrant working environment.

Enclosed in this booklet are some stories of our people who share their bright career journeys and their top tips for applying to the firm. My suggested tip is to always keep an open mind and be flexible!

“I credit the firm’s strong culture of collegiality in helping me succeed by providing the support and encouragement I needed at different stages to help me pursue my path.”



Connie Heng
Regional Managing
Partner, Asia Pacific
Hong Kong

The global law firm of choice

Our vision is to be the global law firm of choice for the world's leading businesses of today and tomorrow.

Today our firm enjoys a position at the forefront of our profession. We are proud of what we achieve every day, working in collaboration and partnership with our clients and wider stakeholders to secure their long-term, sustainable success.

But we are not complacent.

Our strategy recognises that the world we operate in is changing and that we too must be ready to change if we are to continue to lead and shape our sector:

- Right markets – ensuring we have market-leading capabilities in the geographies that are most important to our clients today, and in those that are likely to be critical to their future growth.
- Right work for the right clients – ensuring we are the best placed firm to advise leading organisations internationally on their most complex, strategic and reputation-critical opportunities and challenges.
- Innovation and best delivery – reshaping our services to make delivery ever quicker, simpler, more efficient and more robust, and deliver a truly world class client service every time.
- Best team – fostering an inclusive, ambitious and meritocratic environment, ensuring we recruit and develop the very best talent, who can enjoy the best careers.

The pursuit of the firm's vision and strategy is grounded in our most important commitment: to act as an ethical and responsible business.

Our firm at a glance

33
offices

22
countries

36
Chambers Tier 1
Rankings in
Asia Pacific

600
fee earners
which include
73
trainees in Asia Pacific

Australian Workplace
Equality Index Award
Small Employer Gold
for two consecutive years

Asian Legal Business
China Employer
of Choice in 2022
and 2023

Our global affinity groups

- ACCELERATE>>> A global gender parity group to encourage commitment in achieving success – in an inclusive and diverse culture.
- ARCUS – An LGBTQ+ global employee network that aims to encourage an inclusive and integrated culture within Clifford Chance that gives colleagues the choice to be open and out.
- ENABLE – A network that seeks to provide a safe, inclusive and open environment for colleagues with disability and long term injury or condition to thrive at the firm.
- REACH – The Race Equality and Celebrating Heritage (REACH) network aims to increase understanding and achieve equality of opportunity at all levels.

Journeys after internship



Latifah Sat
Associate
Office: Hong Kong SAR
Internship year: 2018
Joined the firm: 2023
University: University of Oxford

While I studied law at Oxford University, I knew that I wanted to try something outside of law before applying for training contracts. I was fortunate to secure a role at a think tank in Hong Kong where I focused on land and housing policy research. Whilst working there, I was tasked with a lot of legal research (mostly relating to land and public law) and became a point of contact for anything with a legal focus. This was my first experience of having people come to me for my skills in a particular topic and I really enjoyed it, cementing my decision to become a lawyer.

I joined the Hong Kong Vacation Scheme in 2018 as a part of my Training Contract application. During the four weeks, I rotated through the Global Financial Markets and the Corporate groups, giving me a well-rounded view of what the firm offered. I was surprised by how much attention we received as interns as people seemed to be energised by having us around. I was delegated tasks that allowed me to really understand the role of a junior commercial lawyer including reviewing circle-ups, due diligence, prospectus drafting and legal research.

The vacation scheme gave me insight into what makes a firm like Clifford Chance successful – having several of our teams work with the same client on different projects across practice areas, the manpower to coordinate and complete cross-border tasks seamlessly, the technology and software that the firm gives to lawyers to make their role easier and the sheer size of the global databases and know-how that the lawyers have at their fingertips.

Top Tip

Don't be afraid to try different things during your law journey – whether it's a different role or some volunteering experience. Getting into this career is not a race and diversifying your perspectives will always be beneficial for your future career.



Grayson Richardson

Paralegal
Office: Sydney
Internship year: 2024/25
Joined the firm: 2025
University: University of Sydney

My clerkship at Clifford Chance has been an enriching experience, both professionally and socially. One of the best parts was spending time in the Singapore office, where we got to explore the city and work alongside the global team. I enjoyed working on international tasks and being involved in transactions and litigation across the firm's global network, which gave me a great sense of the scope and impact of the work here.

I was pleasantly surprised by how well-connected the office is, both globally and within teams. While sitting in only two seats throughout the clerkship, I was able to gain exposure to a wide range of corporate law areas. Experienced lawyers were always available to offer help or explain complex areas of commercial law, which was incredibly valuable. During my clerkship, I worked on mergers and acquisitions, foreign investment approvals, and contract negotiations. It was exciting to see my work put into practice in real cases. I also gained experience in antitrust law, researching competition law across various sectors, which was a completely new area for me.

The recruitment process was transparent and welcoming. In the first round of interviews, I had the opportunity to speak with associates from different practice areas, giving me a well-rounded understanding of the firm. Clifford Chance also offers excellent support through its buddy and supervisor network, who are always available to offer guidance and constructive feedback. Outside of work, I had the chance to participate in the firm's affiliation groups, contributing to events like the Lunar New Year celebration and Christmas party.

Top Tip

It's important to always seek feedback and take it on board to learn and grow during your clerkship.

Training in Asia Pacific



Joel Sherard
Associate
Office: Singapore
Internship year: 2018
Joined the firm: 2021
University: National University of Singapore

When I first considered Clifford Chance, it wasn't just the firm's reputation that caught my attention – it was the opportunity to embark on a global journey. The prospect of international secondments offered immersion into different legal landscapes and cultures, and defined a vibrant environment where junior lawyers could thrive.

During my internship in 2018, I was actively involved in matters, attending client calls and conducting research. The structured programme allowed me to connect with partners, associates and business professionals, building a network that proved invaluable. The open and friendly culture enabled me to interact across teams and seniority levels, which was crucial in securing a Training Contract at the firm.

My 26-month training contract at Cavenagh Law and Clifford Chance offered rotations across teams and an international secondment to London. This exposure, from international arbitration to initial public offerings, broadened my understanding of the legal landscape. I worked with partners and clients in Singapore, Dubai, Hong Kong and London, gaining insights into different jurisdictions and markets. The firm's culture is open and consultative, and the environment encourages interactions between junior and senior colleagues. It is incredibly reassuring to work alongside seniors genuinely invested in mentoring.

The training contract allowed me to rotate through different departments, particularly in a fast-paced team like Capital Markets. Working with both the Singapore and London Capital Markets teams enabled me to engage with a diverse range of clients and transaction types, working on innovative and complex deals globally. This hands-on experience was crucial in making informed career decisions. Furthermore, the firm supports various affinity groups and systems to ensure everyone feels valued and respected. As Co-Chair of the Arcus network in Singapore, I have witnessed the firm's dedication to inclusion firsthand.

Top Tip

To secure a training contract with Clifford Chance, broaden your commercial and legal knowledge in Asia, the UK and the US to make yourself a more attractive candidate. Lastly, speak with former interns or undertake the internship programme to try various practice groups to better understand the process.



Haeyoung Kim
Associate
Office: Singapore
Internship year: 2019
Joined the firm: 2022
University: National University of Singapore

My journey with Clifford Chance began during my second year at university when I organised a pro bono training session hosted by Clifford Chance in its Singapore office. This initiative, in partnership with the firm, was designed to support young people facing socio-economic challenges. At the event, I engaged with their lawyers and gained insights into their experiences. I was particularly impressed by the firm's international scope and global collaboration. This interconnectedness resonated with my career aspirations, motivating me to apply for their summer internship.

Interning at Clifford Chance in 2019 was a transformative experience. I rotated through the Litigation & Dispute Resolution (L&DR) and Derivatives, Structured Products & Regulatory (DSPR) teams, assisting with legal research, drafting and attending client calls. The collaborative culture among lawyers and staff was evident, and the internship helped me build relationships and assess the firm's environment, confirming my decision to accept a Training Contract offer.

During my training contract, I rotated through various teams, including a six-month secondment with the Private Equity team in London. These rotations provided a comprehensive view of the legal process, from acquisitions and financing to litigation. The international secondment exposed me to a wide range of practice areas and diversity. I chose to qualify in the Projects team due to the diversity of deals and the opportunity to work with clients from various jurisdictions and sectors. The dynamic nature of the deals, ranging from offshore wind in Taiwan to mining in Indonesia, keeps the work exciting and intellectually stimulating.

The supportive culture at Clifford Chance has been crucial to my development. From the outset, I was encouraged to ask questions and seek feedback. This helped me grow and feel confident in sharing my thoughts and suggestions. It has been rewarding to witness my own growth with the firm, whether in terms of technical skills or soft skills.

Top Tip

I highly recommend applying for the summer internship to those aspiring to secure a Training Contract with Clifford Chance. It allows you to engage with people from diverse backgrounds and seniority levels, providing insights into the firm's culture and career paths. Also, enjoy your university experience – pursue electives and activities that genuinely interest you.



Patricia Veng
Law Graduate
Office: Sydney
Internship year: 2022
Joined the firm: 2024
University: The College of Law Australia

My favourite thing about working at Clifford Chance is the people. Entering the legal profession in private practice can be intimidating, but my colleagues here have been so friendly and considerate of my learning and development. I feel supported by both junior and senior team members.

One of my highlights of the graduate programme was attending the 2024 APAC Global Financial Markets Offsite in Bangkok. I met our APAC colleagues and learned more about the firm's APAC network. It was a privilege to experience this so early in my career.

I have had the opportunity to rotate through the Corporate and GFM teams during my first year of the graduate programme. Both teams encourage graduates to work with multiple partners and practices, which was useful for my training as a junior lawyer. I have learned more about the sub-teams across Corporate and GFM (like Projects, Real Estate, LevFin, etc). Since some teams at the firm can be leaner, it allows grads to get exposure to good work and allows us to add real value to the matters.

All graduates go through a comprehensive training programme in the beginning, but each practice group has its own training for new rotators. The firm has a range of resources available to graduates (both practice group-specific and more general), and I appreciate that we have access to training materials across our APAC and global network. Furthermore, being a part of an affinity group has been a great way to work with people from different teams, offices and contribute to the firm's culture. I have been involved with the REACH (Racial Equality and Celebrating Heritage Committee), which works on multiple initiatives, including hosting educational events and celebrations for various cultural days of significance.

Top Tip

Be curious and enthusiastic. So much of my learning from the clerkship and graduate programme came from asking questions and engaging with the work. These qualities have allowed me to make the most out of my graduate experience so far.

Journeys after training



Callum Florance
Law Graduate
Office: Sydney
Internship year: 2022
Joined the firm: 2024
University: The Australian
National University

My clerkship at Clifford Chance's Sydney Office was an incredible opportunity to understand the firm's local, regional and global dynamics. From hands-on experience in week one to travel to the Singapore office, every moment was enriching. The graduate programme deepened my understanding of commercial and corporate law, exposing me to both litigation and corporate rotations. Unlike many firms, Clifford Chance fosters collaboration over competition, creating a supportive environment where teamwork thrives.

A standout feature is the firm's approachable culture – everyone, from partners to business professionals, is open to sharing experiences. This helped me build meaningful relationships and work seamlessly on matters and deals. I was also encouraged to take initiative. Whether organising social events, legal tech training, or business development projects, I had the autonomy to contribute, boosting my confidence and ownership.

A unique highlight of the graduate programme is the guaranteed six-month international secondment. Attending the APAC Corporate and Litigation offsite in Bangkok strengthened cross-border collaboration and expanded my regional network. The programme's rotation model offers exposure to corporate, litigation and global financial markets. In litigation, I worked on commercial disputes, regulatory matters and takeovers. My corporate rotation covered M&A, private equity, real estate and privacy law.

Formal training, hands-on learning and partner mentorship have shaped my commercial law expertise. As part of the Enable Network and Sydney Social Committee, I also lead initiatives to foster inclusivity.

Top Tip

Keep an open mind and explore various opportunities – from pro bono work to legal tech and commercial practice. Trying new things will help you develop invaluable skills and relationships.



Cecilia Chan
Senior Associate
Office: Hong Kong SAR
Internship year: 2014
Joined the firm: 2017
University: University of Sydney

During my training I rotated through the Corporate practice (Public Companies), the Global Financial Markets practice (Restructuring), Corporate practice (M&A) and Litigation & Dispute Resolution.

When qualification time arrived, I found it a challenging decision because each seat had offered something unique and I had thoroughly enjoyed my time with all the teams. I discussed my decision-making process extensively with our Graduate Recruitment Manager, who had been my focal point of contact throughout my training and a great sounding board. It was key for me to understand what the day-to-day work entailed for each of the groups, not least because a trainee's work is very different from that of an associate. The rotations really helped me build a formidable network that spanned all the different Clifford Chance offices, so I was able to speak to other associates and partners and get a real sense of the types of work that the lawyers were working on which cemented my understanding of each practice group.

Eventually I settled into the Corporate practice (M&A) and have been in the team for two years (and counting). It is great being part of a collegiate team of like-minded individuals here, and it is especially exciting that the work is so closely intertwined with 'real life', as we have the opportunity to work with household names and industries. There is a huge variety of work and I continue to learn about the business of the clients in diverse sectors and geographies with every project we complete. There is also the sense of satisfaction as we help clients achieve their commercial goals. Something I see in my seniors which inspires me daily is their ability to not only provide astute legal advice, but also navigate issues from multiple viewpoints and ultimately offer practicable, commercially sound solutions for clients that exceed their expectations.

Top Tip

Try to demonstrate you have thought about the issue at hand and considered different perspectives when asking questions of your seniors.

Journeys from trainee to Partner



Mark Chan
Partner
Office: Hong Kong SAR
Joined the firm: 2017
Became Partner: 2019
University: University of New South Wales

I grew up in Sydney and studied Commerce and Law at University of New South Wales and applied directly to the Hong Kong office for a training contract, which I commenced in 2007. During the programme, I rotated through Litigation & Dispute Resolution, Capital Markets and Corporate (M&A) whilst on secondment to our London office and finally, Global Financial Markets.

I qualified into our Capital Markets group and throughout my time here have developed my practice as well as contributing in other ways to the firm. Some highlights include being on the Graduate Recruitment panel for over six years – I enjoy meeting new people at our recruitment events and sharing my experience and sitting on the regional Regulatory team where I work closely with colleagues globally to ensure we are at the forefront of any changes that affect our clients. Setting up the office football team has also been great fun. Importantly, I am an active Arcus Ally which means I promote an inclusive and integrated culture within Clifford Chance that gives colleagues the choice to be open and out.

The opportunities to do market-leading work as well as to take part in interesting projects is a real benefit of the firm and I feel I am truly immersed in our culture. The diverse people we have across our offices create and maintain our culture. When I think of the people I work with, I think they have common traits such as intellectual curiosity and desire to take responsibility.

Top Tip

When doing your internship, think about the work you have been assigned – how do we as a firm fit into the project? What value can we generate for the client? Take the time to understand the context.



Valerie Kong
Office Managing Partner
Office: Singapore
Internship year: 1999
Joined the firm: 2002
Became Partner: 2014
University: University of Cambridge

I am a lifer at Clifford Chance. I started as an intern in the Singapore office in my second year of university, I enjoyed my internship and therefore applied for a training contract with the firm in London.

During my training, I did my fourth seat in the Corporate M&A team in Singapore. I liked it so much that I decided to qualify in Singapore instead of London. I have now been in this office for every stage of my legal career from trainee to associate, then from counsel to Partner. I'm currently a member of the firm's global Partner Selection Group and heavily involved in internal partner promotion and also lateral partner hiring process. I do feel like it's been a full 'life cycle' at Clifford Chance and it's been a wonderful journey so far.

Qualifying into the Singapore office gave me access to exposure and close interactions with partners during my career which was very meaningful and enjoyable for me. The approachability and availability of senior lawyers was very important for my development. I think our system of Trainees and Supervisors, Mentors and Buddies ensures that there is mentorship, support and a good supply of tea and coffee all around, making sure that we don't lose that sense of belonging in a team.

We invest a lot as a firm in the training programme and it's really an opportunity for a young lawyer to experience what it's like across our different practice areas. It's only through exposure and on-the-job experience that you know which area you feel motivated by. With that, I say, always keep an open mind – do not be afraid to ask questions and remain curious.

Top Tip

We're seeking juniors who are interested in our clients and our business, who possess resilience and who have the same values as us. Do your research and think how you can demonstrate this during the application process.



Yufei Liao
Partner
Office: Beijing
Joined the firm: 2009
Became Partner: 2021
University: Peking University

I joined Clifford Chance immediately after graduation – I studied my Bachelor of Law at Peking University and an LLM at Tsinghua University. I undertook the two-year training period in Beijing which was mainly within our Capital Markets group. This was a great experience and confirmed to me that I wanted to further pursue a career in law. I then took some time away to complete my LLM at Harvard University before taking the New York Bar. I then re-joined the firm in our Hong Kong office, in the Corporate (M&A) group.

I think the breadth and depth of the training systems offered by our firm is extremely beneficial to junior lawyers, particularly the ability to rotate around several market leading teams – I personally have benefited from the ability to spend time in different teams.

The integration of the firm and our global network is also second to none. We help Chinese clients seeking to conduct cross-border transactions, offer local law advice and interact with the network to deliver our legal services seamlessly.

Top Tip

Develop your commercial awareness – it is one thing to be a good lawyer, but you also need to possess sharp commercial awareness to understand the business needs of the clients. Together with technical legal skills means that we can provide the most commercially viable solutions to our clients.



Natsuko Sugihara
Partner
Office: Tokyo
Joined the firm: 2006
Became Partner: 2017
University: University of Cambridge

I was born in Japan but spent time in the Netherlands and UK growing up. After studying law at Cambridge University, I got to know Clifford Chance and applied for a London training contract.

During my training I rotated through Banking, Litigation & Dispute Resolution – where I also completed a short pro bono secondment at Law4all, and following a secondment to the Tokyo Corporate team, I finished my training back in London, joining the Telecoms, Media and Technology (TMT) team. Throughout the two years, I had a wide range of experience which was very important for my future career.

I eventually qualified into Corporate (Private Equity) and after two years, moved to the Tokyo office, initially on a secondment. The Tokyo office is like a big family – we are all very close and work on wide-ranging and interesting deals.

On a personal level, I was very determined to become a partner as well as a mother. These things tend to come at the same time in our lives. The firm was very clear that me taking maternity leave would not in any way affect my path to partner. I had my first child just before making partner. This really demonstrated our values in action and the profound level of support the firm offers. This is one of the reasons I am very involved in Accelerate, a group that promotes gender parity within the firm.

Top Tip

Don't be afraid to set personal goals as well as professional goals, and discuss with your mentors in achieving them, as the support you will get from the firm, across multiple offices, is immense.

Working for a sustainable future

Our Responsible Business strategy concentrates on our most material issues: those that are most important to our stakeholders and those with the greatest potential to affect the sustainability and success of our firm.

The strategy is made up of four key pillars and we encourage all of our people to get involved:

- 1 **Doing Business:** We establish and promote market-shaping practices in relation to ethics, professional standards and risk management.
- 2 **People:** We realise the potential of our people by creating a safe, healthy and inclusive workplace, and by broadening our skills and experience.
- 3 **Community:** We partner to support our community by widening access to justice, finance, and education.
- 4 **Environment:** We manage our footprint and contribute to developing a more sustainable world.

Being a Responsible Business is a hugely important part of who we are, to learn more about our work in this area and our plans for the future, take a look at our annual Responsible Business Report.

Reshaping legal services

Our profession is seeing fundamental change and disruption thanks to technology and innovation. It isn't a period of drastic or rapid change. Nor are these 'events' necessarily easy to identify. As a law firm, however, we are committed to ensuring we don't miss anything. It's this approach that keeps us at the forefront of our profession. But we must first be aware of the disruptive trends and influences before properly harnessing technology's impact on legal services.

We want to equip our people with the understanding, tools and resources that allow them to perform and evolve as a lawyer of today and tomorrow. That's why we connect our trainees and graduates with the relevant teams as a standard aspect of our training programmes and encourage them to embrace innovation.

From coding camp to involvement in the project management process to help improve client delivery – participation is key in achieving our strategy of being the global law firm of choice.



Start your exceptional journey with Clifford Chance

Clifford Chance is one of the world's top law firms because we think differently.

The firm runs a variety of events, internships and training programmes across the region annually.

For more information and details of how to apply, please click the button below.

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