

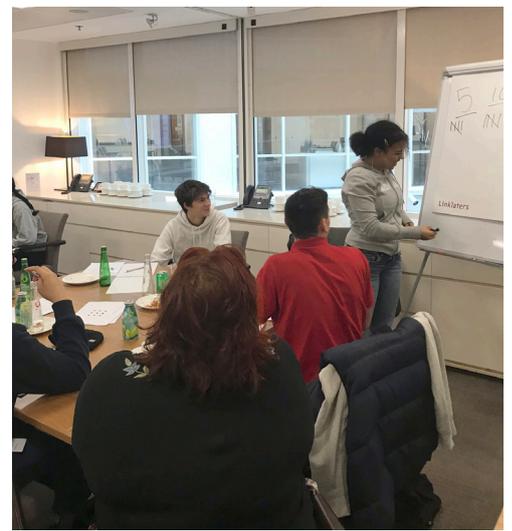
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LINKLATERS CAREERS DAY



Diversity & Ethics in Legal Technology And Security





“A” level programme launched with a fanfare at Linklaters Careers Day

It is not an everyday occurrence for Matt Peers, COO of Linklaters to share his life experience and career tips with a group of 18 “A” level students from 5 North London schools in socially and economically disadvantaged catchment areas. Yet, thanks to Bruna Pellicci, Linklaters CTO and DELTAS Panel member, that is exactly what we achieved.

Ultimately the event was not about Linklaters, or even about the DELTAS programme. It was about the real impact this type of intervention can make on the lives and career choices of young people, how we can inspire and guide them to successful career outcomes for their personal benefit, and also to the benefit of our sector and society at large.

It will take years to assess the overall impact of the DELTAS programme, however being in its second year, we can't put off an ultimate analysis of outcomes in the distant future. We have to invest our resources, energy and commitment now, and then learn through trial and error what is effective. Only then can we hope to secure a vibrant talent pipeline, a greater degree of social and economic equality and a fairer, more just society.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM FEEDBACK ON THE DAY:

1 The students had varied profiles: 6 girls and 12 boys. 5 students were studying Maths and / or Computer Science (1 girl and 4 boys). All 5 of them expressed an interest in pursuing a Tech or Security related career. The remaining 5 students expressed an interest in pursuing a career in law, and the rest were either intending to pursue a career in the humanities or were undecided.

Sadly, by the time they reach "A" levels, girls have already been discouraged from pursuing tech careers. It is for this reason that the DELTAS programme is now committed to capturing and focusing the interest of younger girls and boys (from age 11), in order to stimulate and then maintain their interest in STEM subjects. However what is highly prevalent is that by the age of 16 (A Levels), interests and career paths for girls have already been set.

2 11 students (**61%**) would definitely recommend attending a similar day to their friends, and 4 were less emphatic (**22%**). None of the students responded that they would not recommend a similar day to their friends.

3 To the question: "would you like to work in a law firm?" the average response was 3.39 (out of 5). Given that 5 of the students would definitely NOT like to work in a law firm (which brought the average down), amongst 13 of the students (**72%**) the response was either 4 or 5 (out of 5).

4 As to be expected, we found a direct correlation between those who expressed an interest in a legal career and those who would definitely want to work in a law firm. In addition, some of those whose interests were in humanities or who were undecided were also positive about working in a law firm. Finally, 3 of the 5 students who expressed an interest in Tech / Security were either highly positive, or positive about working in a law firm.

5 The highest overall score (average of 4.11 out of 5) was to the question "How much did you learn about the importance of technology in a law firm?"

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Conclusion of the day: As an important overall indicator of the success of the day, 83% of the students found it such a valuable experience that they would recommend it to a friend. 72% of students would like to work in a law firm – this includes those on a legal career path, some of the "undecided" or "humanities", and 3 of the 5 Tech orientated students. These results are encouraging, both for Tech and for Law.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Even though overall, the DELTAS / Linklaters initiative was perceived very positively by all concerned (the students, their career advisers and the Linklaters personnel who participated), there are lessons to be learnt:

- The interactive session with Ali McBurney (Senior Training Manager) elicited a great deal of enthusiasm. Challenging students to think outside the box, to be innovative and creative proved to be a highlight of the day. We will include more of these sessions in future events, which will fully engage the students' attention and elicit the "spark" we need to light.
- The students were hugely impressed by the Linklaters' environment, and would like to have had the opportunity to see more of the building. This will undoubtedly pose security and logistical problems for law firms, but we can understand the students' urge to see what "real" workplaces are like.

Overall

Whilst DELTAS achieved the overarching objectives for this event:

- To broaden students understanding of career options (3.9 average on response to relevant question)
- To expose students to the importance of Tech in Law firms (4.2 average on response to relevant question)
- To encourage students to consider Law/ LegalTech as a career (72%)

There is a great deal more work to be done. We need to start our initiatives with a far younger age group – which is part of the DELTAS 2019/2020 programme - and then reinforce the message at all stages of the pupils/ students progress through secondary school and 6th Form. In addition to a CyberGirlsFirst event for girls ages 11 to 14 in January, a session on Cybersecurity for GCSE students in February and a series of follow on Champion talks and master classes at schools. The current cohort of A level students will be prepared for the DELTAS work placement programme scheduled for August 2020. This will offer the opportunity for 15 to 20 students to get involved.



Written by

Thereza
SNYMAN

DELTAS ambassador and legal IT strategy consultant

DELTAS is your initiative too

Please get in contact:

eventops@netlawmedia.com
020 3176 4206

