

## Whitestone Chambers

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### **From Singapore to Whitestone Chambers**

Spending 2 weeks interning at Whitestone Chambers has been an immense blessing, and an invaluable learning experience.

Coming from Singapore, a jurisdiction that shares the common law tradition, I had a basic understanding of the legal system in the United Kingdom. My time in Whitestone Chambers has perfectly served to deepen my understanding and knowledge of the workings of the legal system here. Coming into this internship, one of my main objectives was to contrast and rationalise the legal system and culture in the UK with what I was familiar with in Singapore. I tried to be cognisant of this objective throughout my stint at Whitestone Chambers.

I particularly enjoyed visiting the numerous courts within and outside Central London. Undoubtedly, the judicial hierarchy and its jurisdiction is more complex in the UK. In order to attend the hearings of some cases it was necessary to take a train to the courts outside of London, a very foreign concept to a Singaporean.

The team at Whitestone Chambers assigned a variety of cases which ensured I had a wide breadth of experience in my short time here. From the Old Bailey, Kingston County Court to the Queen's Bench Division at the Royal Courts of Justice, it was indeed exciting to see the law applied in action. To see young advocates in action in court was also particularly heartening. It was encouraging to see that the young advocates were given the trust and confidence to conduct cases on their own in court - something I do wish will happen more in Singapore.

Before every hearing, either Robert or Farrah would send me the case papers for me to read to understand the case better. Even before attending court, the Whitestone Chambers' barristers still took the time to explain the case and their arguments to me. They were always enthusiastic to share and answer the questions that I had. I appreciated their frankness about the true prospects of the case that was placed before them to argue. After court they also took the effort to explain what the next steps were. It was very refreshing to hear their perspectives about their days as a student, doing the bar and their career at the bar.

While studying law, it is very easy to be drowned in textbooks and cases. This opportunity has allowed me to realise that the law is real and extends beyond understanding the ratio decidendi in *Donoghue v Stevenson*, or *Carlill v Carbolic Smoke Ball Co*. Practising law requires one to remain relevant by being ready to read and understand areas of law that are unfamiliar. I enjoyed summarising the flight delay cases were assigned to me, it felt real and relatable. I enjoyed meeting clients, unlike the neatly typed out hypotheticals in law school, clients come in with random splatters of emotions and problems, and it's your job to sieve through it.

Perhaps the main explanation why I enjoyed my stint at Whitestone Chambers should be attributed to the fantastic team I was working with. They made me feel as if I belonged even before I started, and they were always ready to give me guidance along the way. It was a joy walking into the chambers in the morning and being greeted with a wide smile. Working in a dynamic environment where everyone is passionate in their work there was never a dull moment. When everyone came down for the Christmas party on the 13 December, it was evident how fun-loving this bunch of people are.

Regrettably, I only had 2 weeks with this set of chambers, I wish it could be longer. Nonetheless, I am grateful for the past 2 weeks. Within this time, I have forged friendships, deepened my understanding of the UK, and cemented my interest in litigation. Perhaps one day I will be back.

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