

# TCLA's Practice Interview Question Bank

## Motivation for Commercial Law:

1. Why commercial law?
2. Why law?
3. Why the City?
4. Why do you want to be a City lawyer?
5. (If your CV contains accounting experience) Why not accounting or the Big Four?
6. Why a legal adviser rather than business management? What are the key differences between these two careers?
7. Why do you want to be a solicitor and not a barrister?
8. What seats are you interested in?
9. If you could not be a commercial solicitor, what would you be instead and why?
10. Have you considered any other career paths and how did you rule them out?
11. What do you think the role of a trainee entails?
12. What do you think a trainee solicitor does day to day?
13. Tell us about where you are in your life and how you have ended up here today.
14. Why have you applied for a TC and not a VS?
15. If you were unsuccessful in converting a VS, why were you unsuccessful? Do you think the feedback provided was fair or accurate?
16. Follow up question: What have you learnt about yourself or improved on since failing to convert that VS?

## Character and Personality:

17. Would you say you prefer to work in a team or be a leader?  
What do you do in your spare time?
18. Tell me about yourself.

19. What motivates you?
20. How do you motivate yourself when doing less exciting tasks?
21. What have you read that has recently interested you and why?
22. How do you manage your time?
23. What do you want out of a training contract?
24. Tell us why you would be a good trainee?
25. How do you define taking responsibility?
26. What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?
27. How do you deal with constructive criticism?
28. What do you think you might struggle with as a trainee?
29. Why London (or another city/region)?
30. What do you do for fun?
31. What would your friends say are your best and worst qualities?
32. What qualities do you have that would make you a good lawyer?
33. What criticism do you think people would level at you?
34. What would others describe as your strengths?
35. Describe the best of yourself in 3 words, and your worst in 2.
36. What are you looking to get out of an international secondment?
37. Tells us about a new skill that have you recently acquired? What have you learnt?
38. Name a leader in the media you admire and explain why.
39. What are your values? When have these been tested and what did you do?
40. What is your greatest life achievement?
41. If you could change one law, what would it be, and why?
42. What law would you enact if you were Prime minister?

43. Where have you applied for university and why did you decide to attend that university?
44. How did you find university?
45. What are your modules for [insert] year?
46. Which was your favourite module/subject and why?
47. Which was your least favourite module/subject and why?
48. Which module did you perform the worst in and why do you think that was? (Note: this could also be a question on an A-level subject or even GCSE – look at your poorer grades and have an explanation for why that was).
49. Which module did you perform the best in and why do you think that was? (Note: this could also be a question on an A-level subject or even GCSE – look at your poorer grades and have an explanation for why that was).
50. What was your dissertation on and why did you choose that?
51. Why did you choose your degree subject?
52. Anything else you have not mentioned but would like to bring up?

### **Motivation and Firm Knowledge:**

53. Why this firm?
54. Which other firms have you applied to? Why?
55. Why did you apply to our vacation scheme?
56. How does [firm you are interviewing at] stand out from its competitors?
57. What has been your application strategy?
58. What makes us stand out against [insert firm name – perhaps one on your application/CV]?
59. What role do you think [firm you are interviewing at] plays in the [insert] sector, and why does that appeal to you?
60. If you were offered a training contract at all the other firms you have applied to asides from [firm you are interviewing at] which one would you accept and why?
61. How is [firm you are interviewing at] different?

62. How would you pitch [firm you are interviewing at] to a client?
63. What would your main criteria be when ultimately choosing which firm you would want to train at?
64. Why not work in-house for a legal team?
65. Where does [firm you are interviewing at] sit in the market?
66. Why are you interested in private equity?
67. Where do you think we should open our next office?
68. What do you think are the challenges we are facing at the present time?
69. What do you think are the opportunities we could/should capitalise within the next X years?
70. Would you be interested in doing an international secondment, if so, where?

### **Competency Interview Questions:**

71. Tell us about a time you had to work in a team and any challenges that arose.
72. What skills do you think a trainee needs to have?
73. Tell us about a time you had feedback. What was the feedback?
74. How do you balance your busy life schedule?
75. Tell me about a time a situation made you feel emotional.
76. Tell me about a time you've dealt with a complex task.
77. Please give us an example of a time where you have shown flexibility.
78. Tell me about a time when you've had to handle difficult people.
79. How do you balance multiple pieces of work with tight deadlines?
80. What are some trainee tasks and how would you be good at these?
81. Tell me about a time when you had to think outside the box?
82. How do you manage conflicting deadlines?

83. How do you prevent falling behind in your work?
84. Describe a time where you had to do something you hadn't done before?
85. When have you displayed initiative?
86. When have you been innovative?
87. When have you shown cultural awareness?
88. Name a time where you've had to convince a superior of your ideas/views.
89. Tell us about a time where you've had to jump teams at the last moment.
90. When did you have to deal with a difficult situation?
91. When did you have to explain a difficult concept to someone?
92. When did you work towards a goal?
93. When did you work as part of a team?
94. Describe a situation where you have had to use your problem-solving skills.
95. When have you worked in a team to overcome a challenge or difficulty?
96. When have you had to change someone's mind?
97. When have you disagreed with someone?
98. Tell us about a time that you displayed your organisational skills.
99. Tell us about a time when your organisational skills failed. What did you learn from it?
100. Tell us about a time when you had to deal with a difference of opinion within a team.
101. When have you had to display commercial awareness in a situation?
102. Tell me about a time you went above and beyond for someone.
103. When did you learn something new?
104. Tell us about a time where you were resilient.
105. Tell us about a time you demonstrated learning and developing in yourself.
106. Tell us about a time you worked through a challenge.

107. Tell me about a time where you had to work in a team but did not agree with some of your teammates. How did you handle this?
108. Tell me about a time you made a mistake and what did you do?
109. Tell me about a situation where you have demonstrated leadership?
110. Tell me about a time when you made a significant contribution to a team? Were there any complications when working in that team?
111. Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a large workload and manage your time efficiently?
112. Tell us about a time where you failed and how did you deal with that?
113. When have you worked in a successful team and why did you think it was successful?
114. Tell us about a time your integrity was questioned.
115. Tell us about a time you had to make a difficult decision, and would you have done anything differently?
116. Tell me about a time you had to really work to gain someone's trust.
117. Example of a time you have had to build a relationship with someone you disagreed with.
118. Give us an example of a time you received negative feedback.
119. Talk about a time when you had to come up with a creative solution.
120. When have you had to manage a large amount of information/data?

### **General Commercial Awareness:**

121. Tell us about a recent story in the news and why it relates to [firm you are interviewing at] and how would it impact the firm?
122. How do you stay up to date with the news?
123. What threats are being faced by our clients?
124. What is debt?
125. What is equity?

126. What are the advantages/disadvantages of both debt and equity?
127. What are other forms of financing?
128. If a company was acquiring another foreign company, what are some considerations to be thought of/what would they have to instruct local counsel to do?
129. If you were leading a research project at your university, where would you look for funding and why? What kind of issues do you think you would get with regards to getting this funding?
130. If you were a doctor who had produced a new program which would help other doctors diagnose disease, what kind of liability do you think you might encounter? How would you give other people the rights to use your program, and what legal issues might arise?
131. Why does your news story relate to the work that [firm you are interviewing at] does?
132. What does the EEA stand for and name some countries a part of it?
133. What is a derivative?
134. What is the difference between a bond and a share?
135. What is the difference between an executive director and non-executive?
136. What is a future and a forward?
137. What does LBO stand for and what does this mean?
138. What does M&A stand for and what does this mean?
139. What is the current pound/euro exchange rate?
140. Name some US and UK regulatory/government authorities.
141. What is a stranded asset?
142. Why are share prices of oil and gas companies falling?
143. Follow up question on how consumers could also impact the falling share price of such companies?
144. How can state-owned companies react differently to public companies?
145. How is legal tech shaping the legal industry?
146. What is private equity in layman's terms?

147. What are some of the issues facing the [insert] sector?
148. London is the financial hub of the world – discuss.
149. What would we have to consider when opening a new office in a different country?
150. What challenges might be facing our clients at the present time?
151. What is a direct listing?
152. What 3 practice areas within [firm you are interviewing at] would you say are the key departments for IKEA as a client?

### Scenarios and Ethical Questions:

153. What would you do if a client asked you to do something which you didn't think was the best move for them to make?
154. What would you do if you have a flight to catch in the morning and work to get done tonight but a partner asks you to attend a client dinner?
155. What would be your view on if the firm worked with very wealthy oligarchs?
156. A fellow trainee is being rowdy at an event. How would you approach this?
157. What would you do if a staff member was being rude to you? Would your response differ if they were a partner?
158. What would you do if a client tells you that you've performed a piece of work extremely badly?
159. If you were sat on the train and you saw opposing counsel reading a confidential bundle about your case, which you could read, what would you do?
160. If you finished a meeting and were clearing out papers and you realised that opposing counsel had left a confidential document on the table, what would you do?
161. You're a trainee going into new seat – how do you prepare?
162. You're a trainee. You're moved to another team by an associate. You were doing well so don't know why you were moved. You aren't familiar with the new deal team's work. What do you do?
163. How would you make a client presentation 'innovative'?



164. There is a client meeting for a signing of a contract but the partner and senior associate on the case are running late. The printer has messed up the documents which you have gone to collect, and the clients have now arrived. What do you do?
165. A partner invites you to a client dinner, but you have a lot of work, what do you do?
166. A client wants you to sign a deal, but the partner is not there, what do you do?
167. Should [firm you are interviewing at] decide not to take on certain types of clients?  
Follow up question: Then, specifically, should [firm you are interviewing at] agree to do work for North Korea?
168. You put your money in a vending machine and don't end up getting your item. You are a particularly litigious person and want to sue someone for it. Who would you sue and why?
169. The other party has made a mistake on a joint venture agreement that benefits your client, what do you do?
170. What are your thoughts about diversity quotas?
171. What is your perception of the firm's D&I initiatives?
172. What would you do if you were asked to close down a family factory?
173. What would you do if a partner and an associate asked you to do the same work and it was the same deadline?

### **Law Firms as a Business:**

174. How does the role of a trainee differ from a partner?
175. If you were the managing partner of the London office, then what practice areas would you increase, and which would you decrease?
176. What is your view on automation defeating the excellent client service law firms seek to provide?
177. Do you think automation is bad for future trainees and do you think it still allows them to grasp the bread and butter of being a good lawyer?

### **Technical Case Studies:**

178. Calculate the value of the target company. (Note: only a select number of firms require candidates to undertake calculations and they tend to provide you with the formula needed for the calculation and a calculator itself).

179. What are the potential legal issues over the target's patents?
180. What are the commercial problems associated with the target's leases?
181. What is the impact of key individuals on the business?
182. Is the ongoing litigation a threat?
183. What does this secret payment look like?
184. What further information would you want to see?
185. How would we protect our client from X matter?
186. What are the differences between a warranty, an indemnity, and a representation?
187. What are the ways you can finance an acquisition?
188. Why is the balance sheet important?
189. What do we mean by an SPV?
190. What would be your approach if the company had a breach of cyber security?
191. Which is more efficient, an asset sale purchase or a share sale purchase?
192. What is the role of warranty & indemnity insurance in protecting our clients?
193. Should all companies be required to report on gender pay gaps?
194. Which jurisdiction would you choose to register an SPV for the purposes of this acquisition?
195. Is tax the only consideration relevant when deciding where to base a SPV?
196. How would a company deal with a press scandal?
197. What do you understand competition to mean in an antitrust context?
198. How can the Buyer (client) shield themselves from litigation action against the Target?
199. Should the client opt for an asset or a share acquisition? What is the difference? What specific considerations in this case would be relevant?
200. What are the pros and cons of equity vs debt financing? Which is more appropriate in the case at hand?