

Clare Lewis - Saturday job to full time career

My first introduction to both conveyancing and law was in my late teens /early twenties. I worked as a receptionist where I also helped secretaries with their typing if needed and covered holidays. It was then that I decided I wanted to be more involved with law and decided to become a legal secretary.

My next job was a legal secretary in property litigation and then I moved within that firm to residential property and new homes sales. It was in this department where I felt I had found my niche. Over the next few years I realised that information regarding property transactions was becoming second nature to me and I started thinking about progressing my career to being more than a legal secretary.

I always told myself that when I had wanted to achieve something, I wouldn't let anything get in the way. It was in my job where my employer approached me about becoming a Licensed Conveyancer. They had already put a few employees through the CLC course with successful results. This appealed to me as I knew I wanted to stay in conveyancing and so becoming a Licensed Conveyancer was the perfect fit.

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My motivation has always been to progress my career and it was really helpful that several other colleagues were also training through the CLC and so there was a healthy level of friendly competitiveness.

Since starting the CLC course I have been employed by three firms, I started as a legal secretary, then progressed to become more of an assistant role, and then took on more responsibility to become a case handler with my own client files. In each conveyancing position the thing I enjoy most is being able to phone the clients on the day of the completion to tell them they can collect the keys to their new home. Whether the transaction has been smooth or slightly more complicated there is nothing more satisfying than being able to make this call to clients.

Because I had a full time job I managed to do all my studies in the evening. I would make notes and then type them up the next day in work on my lunch hour. This freed up the weekends, and even though I enjoyed the course it did not take over my social life.

I did not really have a study game plan as such, because it was something I really wanted to achieve I worked hard and stayed motivated. I even picked up the study folders as soon as I got home from work.

Unfortunately, aspects in my personal life such as being made redundant and losing my mother-in-law put my studies on hold. The CLC course was so flexible that I was able to pick my studies up at a later date

when I was ready so none my previous hard work went to waste.

During my studies, I also moved house, got married and went on a honeymoon. I really found the flexibility of distance learning helped me to successfully manage my study, work-life and home-life balance. There have been highs (passing the exams) and lows (having to resit an exam) but it has all been worthwhile.

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My best moment was finding out I had passed my last exam the day before my honeymoon. My most positive moment was actually receiving the Certificate to confirm that I am a Licensed Conveyancer. My journey has taken a long 8 years and I still can't quite believe it.



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