

Meet the Outset team

Carla Loveday
Senior Paralegal



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Describe your role and how you support our clients (in no more than 100 words)

I specialise in company secretarial practice, company law and governance. On corporate transactions, I work as a support lawyer and am the transaction support team lead, which means that I am responsible for training members of the support team, monitoring progress toward completions and liaising with our main buy and build client on technical elements of their instructions relating to due diligence.

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Give us a brief timeline of your career so far

Due to personal reasons, I left university at the end of my first year and had to rethink my career path. I initially took some time to figure myself out and worked in retail, for Oasis. I quickly progressed into management and was handpicked as the assistant branch manager for the (then) new flagship store and training branch in Knightsbridge, opposite Harrods. Taking my grass roots business knowledge, training and management skills and customer care experience with me, I joined a small start-up and found my way into company secretarial practice.

From there, I moved to J Sainsbury plc and Informa Group plc to gain FTSE and listed experience. I've also worked for local government as a committee administrator and within the TMBC planning policy department.

I've freelanced as a consultant company secretarial and paralegal practitioner, both as a sole trader and via my own company.

I have been Company Secretary and Governance Co-ordinator for The Kenward Trust, a national alcohol and drug rehabilitation charity, a school governor and director of a property management company in my old neighbourhood. I first started working as a corporate paralegal in 2007, specialising in buy and build projects.

I am a part-qualified Chartered Secretary with the ICSA and went back to university as a mature student and working mum (my children were just 1 and 3 at the time), to finish my first stage of the law degree I always wanted to achieve. I completed it with distinction, was awarded the Stanton Prize for best performance of a mature student and came away with a Certificate in Law and Society.

That's not very brief, is it?! But...I have a colourful timeline, so what part would I miss out?!

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3 What do you wish someone had told you when you started out? Or what piece of advice were you given early on that has stuck with you?

Having role models and mentors is a crucial element of our self-development at all stages in life, but it's so easy to slip into imitation and not application. So remain humble, have a teachable spirit and be challenged to be the best version of you. Apply what you learn. Be authentically you, embracing all that you are and run your own race. Stay in your lane!

4 What has been your biggest challenge in your role

If I'm speaking completely honestly, it can be my own personal hang-up (which occasionally pops up) that I'm not a qualified solicitor and whether to the outside world, I am seen as of less value, experience and ability.

But I think that the second part of this question, is well then how do I overcome it?

Through the work of the National Association of Licensed Paralegals and the Institute of Paralegals (IoP), we are fast becoming increasingly recognised as a credible fourth arm of the legal profession. Experts in our field, and to high standards

Since 2016; I have been a member of IoP, able to refer to myself as a Professional Paralegal Practitioner, elected a Fellow of IoP, permitted to use the professional designation letters F.Inst.P, and recognised as a Tier 4 member of the Professional Paralegal Register. It's been a wonderful recognition of my 20 years' experience.

From our CEO and MD, throughout the firm, Outset has completely embraced me and I'm considered one of them. A lawyer in my own right. Just differently to how I once planned to get there.

Challenges are our opportunities to change the narrative.

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What do you enjoy most about your job?

The people, the problem solving and the pursuit.

I've learnt that I am a hand holder, and consider it a real honour to be able to do this for clients who are starting out with a new venture, stepping out of their comfort zone in order to grow or diversify, or ready to press the button on their exit strategy.

Company law, company secretarial practice and governance, it's all about translating the legislation, regulations and obligations and breaking them down into practical and meaningful bite-size action points and guidance notes for the business owners and senior managers we work with.

Simply reciting the law does not add commercial value. What does it mean for the client we're working with and where are their obstacles and barriers? How can we help them overcome them? As a team, we share knowledge, work the problem together and bounce ideas off of each other until we find the answer.

Working on corporate transactions, I love getting to know the client and a feel for what is important to them. We take the time to really understand what their objectives are and where their sweet spot is. So across the entire project team, there is an electric buzz from the time a new deal comes on, throughout due diligence and disclosure, each round of negotiations and then our favourite part...the chase down to completion.

The adrenalin kicks in, we work as a finely tuned team and we push until the deal is across the line. In 2018, we completed on 112 deals. In 2019, we completed our first hat-trick of completions in one day....amazing!!

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6 What do you think sets Outset apart?

The whole ethos of Outset rests on us being progressive, innovative and dynamic. We're not afraid to break the mould and challenge the status quo of how legal and business services are delivered. Our Primed subscription service is a great example of this.

Our focus is on people; offering cost-effective legal, employment and health and safety services that our clients need rather than expecting them to fit into the remit of a more traditional offering. Our objective is to add real commercial value and pragmatic solutions. And this flows naturally from the investment made in our team mates. I have the privilege of working with a diverse group of technically brilliant people, but who are so much more. We are a work family and daily source of support, companionship and laughter to one another.

7 When you were young, what did you want to be when you grew up?

Ever since the first episode of LA Law I watched (many more years ago than I care to remember!), I've always been drawn to the law. But it was after the Rodney King beating in March 1991 that I knew I wanted to practice law and wanted to become a civil rights lawyer in the US. All these years later; I find it a saddening reality and ongoing travesty of justice, watching events unfold following the death of George Floyd.

8 What do you enjoy doing when you are not working?

Walking with my friends is a great way for me to clear my mind of the day, mull things over and keep fit. I'm a complete nature freak and am often found quite literally smelling the roses!

9 Who inspires you most and why?

Maya Angelou. Mute for almost five years after being abused as a child, she went on to find her voice as a poet, singer, civil rights activist and published seven autobiographies, receiving more than 50 honorary degrees. Maya's grit, gumption and tenacity show us that we can overcome; each chapter of our life may well shape us but does not have to define us. When we face adversity and challenges, it's not about what happens to us but how we choose to respond. Success comes in many forms and our opportunity to realise it, more often than not, comes from our availability, not our ability. As the world is currently turned on its head, I find her words more poignant than ever.

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10 What piece of advice would you give someone in business?

Professionally, the quote that became my personal mantra is a sentence from a famous Steve Jobs' quote:

"...And the only way to do great work is to love what you do..."

My journey with Outset started out with me working as a consultant. Incorporating my own company and taking that momentous step to freelance was scary, I worried about failing, not being good enough. My accountant asked me the question, "do you know that you can deliver the services you're offering and deliver them well?" That one question was my guide to every decision I took.

So, my advice? Time is an investment that must be more fiercely protected than any cash investment. So have fire in your belly and do something you love, that makes you want to get out of bed in the morning. Surround yourself with people who will lift, inspire and encourage you, and look to do the same for others, raise up leaders within your organisation. And most importantly, FEAR is most often False Evidence Appearing Real – so trust, believe in yourself, take that leap to the next step.

And lastly...

What is one thing you've learnt during lockdown?

I've enrolled with some colleagues on the BSL Introducing British Sign Language course. It's something that Rachel and I have been talking about doing for over a year and now is an ideal opportunity.



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Scan the QR code with
your phone camera to
download and save Carla's
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