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Pathways to Law, run by the Sutton Trust and supported by the Legal Education Foundation, is a two-year programme which supports academically-able students in year 12 and 13 from non-privileged backgrounds who are interested in a career in law. The programme was set up with support from major law firms, following research by the Trust which showed that the top echelons of the profession were drawn from a narrow range of social backgrounds, and that law firms were not making full use of the talents of students from non-privileged homes.

The programme delivers a full and varied timetable, including:

• A number of sessions over two years at the host university, covering a diverse range of topics
• E-mentoring from undergraduate law students
• Work experience in the legal sector
• A trip to the Inner Temple and Royal Courts of Justice in London
• Visits to open days at the other Pathways universities
• A residential conference in the summer between years 12 and 13 to give students a taste of life at university

Eligibility criteria
The Pathways programme recruits 400 students a year across the country. Students join the programme in Year 12, and must be able to participate for the full two years of their A levels.

In order to be eligible for the programme, students must:

• Demonstrate an interest in a career in law
• Attend a state school or college
• Have at least 5 As or A*s at GCSE
• Be either the first generation in their family to attend university, or be or have been eligible for Free School Meals (or, where this information is difficult or sensitive to obtain, the participant attends a school that is significantly above the regional average in terms of number of students eligible for free school meals)

In addition, preference will be given to those students:

• In schools with below average levels of attainment / progression to university
• In schools with high free school meal rates
• From deprived postcodes as evidenced by POLAR, IMD or ACORN.

For more information, please visit www.suttontrust.com/applypathways/

Sneha Kumar
Pathways host university: LSE
Currently a first year Law LLB student, LSE

Pathways to Law provided me with opportunities which would have otherwise been unavailable. Through the academic sessions at LSE I was able to learn about law such as Human Rights and Family law, whilst the work experience at Edwards Wildman Palmer that I gained through the programme gave me the practical insight I needed to decide whether or not a career in law was for me.

During my preparation for applying to university, my student mentor was on hand to guide me through the university application process and provided vital support by proof-reading countless drafts of my personal statement!

Pathways to Law was instrumental in guiding me on my route to university and I am now thoroughly immersed in student life at LSE!

Jessica Smith
Pathways host university: Leeds
Currently a Trainee Solicitor at DLA Piper

“Having enjoyed studying law at A-level, I was keen to find out more about law at university and a legal career, although this proved difficult having only limited contacts in the legal sector.

Being involved with Pathways to Law gave me a great insight into studying law at University, and the information on the application process and obtaining work experience proved invaluable. Having struggled to get legal work experience in the corporate sector, it was fantastic to have the opportunity to complete a placement at a large corporate firm, providing a much needed insight into my chosen career and boost to my CV.

I was extremely fortunate to be mentored by a solicitor at DLA Piper. One of the crucial factors when considering which firms to apply to was the culture of the firm and atmosphere in the office, without Pathways I would not have had this experience. Taking part in Pathways to Law was a fantastic opportunity.”