

Work experience project brief set by [Ashurst](#)

Access Ashurst – Commercial Awareness Project

Project Brief

As part of [Access Ashurst](#) week, students were assigned a project designed to provide an insight into professional scenarios and help develop their commercial awareness.

Designed in partnership by [Causeway Education](#) and [Ashurst](#), the brief was to produce a set of guidance notes (1,000 words limit) for the partners in the corporate team to refer to during a fictional presentation for a client's board of directors.

Logistics

Participants on Access Ashurst are in year 12. They were provided with an introduction to the task on the first day of the 5-day week and were encouraged to spend 2-3 hours over a 2-day period to complete and submit their individual project.

To structure their notes, students were provided with a core article to refer to and a list of topics to include. They were not limited to the single article, and it was acknowledged that they may wish to carry out additional research – two examples were provided. Each signposted article was accessible on the firm's website.

A set of guided questions were provided to help in taking an analytical approach to the research, whilst a glossary was provided to define terms that may have been unfamiliar.

On the first day in their departments, students were sent an email which included an overview of the task, the deadline and guidance on how to submit their completed project.

To ensure that students received feedback in good time, members of staff from the firm volunteered to review submissions. The volunteers were provided with the context of the scenario and explanations for what good/strong responses might look like across each of the required sections.

The task

The Partners in the Corporate Team have been invited to the offices of a major banking client to discuss how the development of AI can provide opportunities within the financial services sector, as well as the legal risks associated with this. In preparation for the meeting with the client's board of directors, the Partners have asked you to put together a list of bullet points for discussion. The list will be used as guidance notes and talking points for the Partners when presenting to the client. The bullet point list should be no longer than 1,000 words and be clear and easy to read quickly, and you should look to incorporate the following topics:



- *A brief introduction / background to AI.*
- *Describe some of the different ways in which AI can be harnessed by financial services organisations to support their business functions.*
- *Discuss the key risk factors involved with the use of AI in the workplace within the financial services sector.*
- *What does the regulatory landscape within the UK currently look like in addressing these risks? What regulatory issues would a banking client need to think about when developing / using AI?*
- *Explain the responsibility of (i) senior managers and (ii) the board of directors in mitigating the risk factors and being compliant with regulation.*
- *How might financial services organisations proceed with the use of AI and what key principles should spearhead its development?*

Student impact and benefits

Through the completion of the written case study, students gained first-hand experience of a task which commonly features in law firm assessment centres. Specifically, students developed their:

- Written and research skills.
- Confidence completing a case study task.
- Understanding of what assessors are looking for in similar tasks, through the individual feedback provided.

Employer insights

Lessons: It's important to think carefully about the student group and to set a case study task that is the right level for the students.

Considerations: At Ashurst, the written case study is updated every 2-3 years, to ensure that the task remains current and relevant to students.

