



Kat Guillemot

From Courtrooms to Cycling: Kat Guillemot's Journey of Passion, Perseverance, and Balance

Kat Guillemot, a Senior Associate in the Dispute Resolution team at Viberts, has carved a remarkable path that combines her sharp legal mind with an unwavering passion for health and fitness. From her early beginnings exploring a teaching career to finding her calling in the dynamic world of litigation, Kat's journey is one of resilience, adaptability, and a love for challenges. Balancing a demanding legal career with her roles as a spinning instructor, Pilates teacher, and sports massage therapist, she proves it's never too late to pursue diverse passions while excelling professionally. Here, Kat shares insights into her unique career path, day-to-day work, and life advice.

What attracted you to a career in law and specifically Dispute Resolution?

After completing my A-levels, I was not sure what I wanted to do career wise. However, I knew that I wanted something that would be varied and which would challenge me. I went to University with a view to becoming a primary teacher. Both of my parents were teachers so it seemed like a good idea! I realised that it was not the direction that I wanted to go in. However, going to University was still invaluable in terms of life experience. I knew other students studying law and found it interesting to listen about what they were learning. It was this that resulted in my pursuing a career in law.

I returned to Jersey after completing my teaching Degree and explored work opportunities locally. I did not want to be a full-time student again but there were Universities and colleges in the UK offering distance learning courses for the Post Graduate Diploma in Law (PGDL) conversion degree. I was fortunate to get employment at a local law firm that also supported me by funding my course fees and giving me study time during the week. After completing the PGDL, I went on to complete the Legal Practice Course in order to eventually qualify as an English Solicitor. Again, this was available as a distance learning course. For me this route into law was perfect. By working at a local firm, I developed

a lot of experience, skills and knowledge of Jersey law and procedure, whilst also gaining my legal qualifications through my further studies. I have also been very fortunate to have great mentors along the way.

In terms of why I chose Dispute Resolution, I was placed in litigation from the outset of my employment and quickly developed a keen interest in all things contentious! The work is varied, challenging, and can be very rewarding.

What do you do day to day?

Every day is different! I like to start the day by reviewing my emails and preparing a list of what I need to work on. It is also important to look ahead at any deadlines coming up and to plan for them in advance. I ordinarily work on multiple cases. These can be my own cases or ones that I am assisting other fee earners on. There can often be various deadlines in place that we need to comply with. It is so important to be organised. I also need to prioritise work accordingly depending on the timeframes I am working within.

My working day often sees me meeting with clients, engaging with other lawyers on matters, reviewing case papers, drafting documents (whether it be letters, pleadings, instructions to experts). On some days I attend at Court, which I enjoy as although I do not have rights of audience as an English Solicitor it is rewarding to see cases that I have been working on being presented to the Court. Aside from working on cases, I also help the firm's paralegals and trainee lawyers day-to-day, by reviewing their work and giving them guidance to help with their ongoing development.

If you were giving advice to your 16 year old self what would it be?

Focus on what is right for you and follow your path. As I have got older, I have certainly come to appreciate the importance of taking better care of myself and focusing on what is right for me.

Don't be so hard on yourself when things go wrong. We are all learning every day. No one is perfect. Things will not go right all of the time, and that is ok! It is so easy to focus on the negative things that happen and waste time an energy beating ourselves up about it. When it happens to me I always stop, take a breath, put things into context and work to find a solution. I am not afraid to admit when I am wrong, and to fall on my sword – it is important to take responsibility for yourself! We can learn from our mistakes, rather than dwell on them.

What do you get up to outside of work?

It is fair to say that my life outside of work is very full on! I have a huge passion for health, fitness and the sheer amazingness of the human body. As well as being a keen cyclist and runner, I am a qualified spinning instructor, Pilates teacher and sports massage therapist. These things are a total contrast to working in law but they bring a huge sense of fulfilment and achievement into my life. I manage my class teaching and sports massage around working full time in law, but I love the variety in what I do and I would not change it for the World. It is never too late to learn and to pursue something that you are passionate about in life.



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