

VIBERTS FAMILY LAW TEAM



Rose Colley joined the Jersey law firm ‘Viberts’ in 2000 and heads its family law team. Rose has established an enviable reputation for success for her clients and is widely regarded as the pre-eminent lawyer on family matters in Jersey. Under her leadership, Viberts are recognised as having the premier family law practice in Jersey – which is ranked in the top tier by the Legal 500 2021 legal directory.

Rose has been involved in many of the most significant family law decisions made in the Royal Court of Jersey since 2000 and is recognised as a ‘Leading Individual’ by the Legal 500 UK 2021 edition.

As of September 2020, she was appointed Jersey’s first female President of The Law Society of Jersey.

Describe your typical day in the office?

This is a difficult one as I don’t really have a typical day in the office. The combination of my work as a family lawyer and President of the Jersey Law Society often means that I spend parts of most days away from my desk. This can be in court for clients or at meetings dealing with Law Society matters. When I am at my desk, I am invariably dealing with emails for a whole variety of clients and other issues. I am also part of the Viberts management team which also adds variety to my working life.

Did you always dream of such a career?

The easy answer to this question is ‘no’. I sort of fell into law as I became interested initially with constitutional law as part of my political science degree many decades ago. I then decided to train as a solicitor in England and worked both in Local Government and Higher Education for several years. My interest in family law didn’t really happen until my late 20’s and since then has always been my legal passion as it is such a fascinating area of law.

Describe a particular moment or achievement that stands out in your career?

There are two such moments – the first back in 1999/2000 when I passed all my Jersey Law exams, at the first attempt, and was one of the first advocates sworn in at the start of the new millennium on 6th January 2000. The second was very recently when I was elected as the first female president of the Jersey Law Society.

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What do you enjoy about your job?

I flourish on solving problems and dealing with people. My job allows me to experience both in droves. I could never be the sort of lawyer who drafts documents all day as this is not my skill, but family law enables me to hopefully find solutions for clients in a cost-effective way. I also have a great team to work with at Viberts and this all adds up to me loving the work that I do.

What do you do in your spare time?

I enjoy a whole variety of things from cooking, to watching dramas to tending my little garden that faces the sea and it is a real challenge to get anything to survive!

Is there a phrase you live your life by?

Nothing is impossible – always remember that the difficult will, with time and effort, become achievable.

Tell us a few things about you that no-one else knows

I have only failed one exam in my life and that was crucially my 11 plus exam.

Until the age of 15, I had only left Kent (where I lived as a child) once and that was when I was taken to London when I was about 7 or 8.

I once sang a solo at the Albert Hall for the Salvation Army when I was about 13.

What's your favourite holiday destination?

I have two very contrasting answers. Iceland where I have been twice and, on both occasions, I was struck by the absolute beauty and emptiness of that country. Visiting the world's first Parliament for me was fascinating as well as travelling to the most northerly point where you can literally walk up to puffins. In recent years, I have fallen in love with the area of rural Spain where my son in law's family come from and in particular a village called Torrebaja. I long to be able to go there again soon.

And your favourite city?

London. I lived there for many years in my 30's and 40's and I grew to know it well as a city. All my three children were born there and all the defining moments of my time as an elected politician were there. Whenever, I go back there now, the vibrancy of London still hits me even though I am very grateful to be able to get back to the peace of Jersey!

Any life changing moments?

I would probably say, my decision to apply for a job in Jersey in 1997. This enabled me to start a new chapter in my life that has proved very interesting and successful for me. Leaving London was a really difficult decision to make but I don't regret it.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY (TEAM)

Any advice to those considering a similar career?



Jamie Orchard Partner

Despite what you may see on "Suits", being a lawyer isn't a solitary profession where you are the star of the show who turns up to court and wins the cases on your own. Being a lawyer requires you to be able to work within a team. This applies in terms of being able to work alongside people but also to delegate when you move up in your career. Also, you shouldn't worry if you aren't sure what area of law you want to specialise in. You will find that you will naturally gravitate towards the areas that most interest you, but you should keep an open mind to try new areas when you are starting out.



Alexandra Cohen English Solicitor

Law is a highly competitive profession and as such companies will expect you to have experience in working in the legal profession. Where possible, you should try and take advantage of any opportunities (paid and unpaid) to work in a legal environment. Often you can send speculative letters to firms and companies offering to help with big cases which might be ongoing. Sometimes you can show initiative by looking out for big cases in the news and writing to firms who are acting off the back of that.



Kiera Jones English Solicitor

Write to numerous law firms and apply for holiday work experience – being exposed to as many different departments and firms will help you gain a real understanding of the job.

If you are unsure about whether to embark on a law degree, think about a degree in a subject that would really interest you and then follow it with the law conversion course. This won't make you any less desirable to prospective employers but will arguably make your CV more interesting. If this is not financially possible, some Universities offer the chance to take a non-law module in the final year (I chose forensic science – as you can imagine it was a very different but a welcome change to the law of evidence or tort law!)



Jonathan Bernardino Legal Assistant

Don't focus too much on which area of law you want to go into (unless you are certain you wish to specialise in a specific area). Experience as much law as you can, and you may surprise yourself as to which area of law you end up loving and wish to specialise in.

For instance, my favourite subjects at university were contract law and equity and trusts. At the time, family law was not an area that I thought I would ever work in, but I have loved every moment of it.