



ON SECONDMENT

# Strategic secondment benefits client





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DANNY HATCH, SENIOR  
ASSOCIATE, HOUSTON

**S**enior Associate Danny Hatch got an invaluable insight into key client Occidental during his five-month secondment with the energy giant.

Houston-based Danny joined the Firm in 2019. He works on the Project Development and Finance team and is involved in energy transactions, mergers and acquisitions and joint ventures, with much of his work in the international oil and gas sector.

The secondment strengthened an already close relationship with Occidental.

He says: “I’d worked with them at my previous firm and that continued at White & Case so, when they needed a secondee to cover maternity leave, I was asked if I’d like to do it.

“It was an opportunity I was keen to take. I’ve not done a secondment and it gave me the chance to get to know the client in a way you can’t working as external counsel.”

**“While I already had a good grasp of their business, there is no substitute for sitting in their legal team and seeing how matters originate, their priorities and the pressures they operate under.”**

Danny joined Occidental’s business development legal team, which is responsible for handling legal issues on the company’s transactional projects.

He says: “The work was varied. I helped wherever I was needed but particularly on matters connected to Occidental’s low-carbon ventures.

“This involved working with commercial teams to identify potential targets and helping with the legal documentation and agreements, for example on transportation agreements, land acquisition deals and joint venture and partnership agreements relating to renewable energy projects.”

According to Danny, working on these projects was the highlight of his time with the client.

He explains: “Low carbon ventures are a new but increasing focus of our energy clients and a lot of the work we were doing was cutting edge and hadn’t been done before.


“I found it interesting to figure out how to make things work, especially because there often wasn’t a legal precedent to guide us.

“It was challenging but extremely rewarding and will only benefit me as this type of work increases in the future.”

The secondment also gave Danny a priceless glimpse of the internal workings of the client.

He says: “While the actual work was similar to what I do at the Firm, it was interesting to see the origination of the deals and to get involved from an earlier stage.





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“It gives you a perspective into the groundwork that takes place and the thinking behind the decisions.

“You also get to see the strategy and coordination that’s involved behind the scenes and I strengthened relationships, not only within the legal team, but with the wider business.

“Working in-house, I gained a better understanding of the client’s priorities and needs and how everything works together.

“While I already had a good grasp of their business, there is no substitute for sitting in their legal team and seeing how matters originate, their priorities and the pressures they operate under.”

Looking forward, Danny is confident that the secondment has been beneficial in many ways.

He says: “I think it builds their trust in us and strengthens the relationship, because we helped them out in filling a need.

“From the Firm’s point of view, it builds on our already strong partnership and is another small element that sets us apart from our competitors.

“Finally, from a personal perspective, it gave me a perspective into the client that will benefit me in the future. I’d recommend it to anyone.

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