It's been interesting to learn about cultural norms and ways of doing things in Hong Kong. The biggest challenge I would say was passing the Overseas Lawyers Qualification Examination (OLQE). Although I studied to qualify in Australia, and sat the Qualified Lawyers Transfer Scheme exams to qualify in England, I completed the OLQE in Hong Kong while working and with a young child.

What do you find attractive about working as a lawyer in Hong Kong?

Kelly: It's a dynamic international city. My clients are all interesting people, with diverse backgrounds, jobs, and outlooks.

What skills or experience from your time working in London were useful in helping you adapt to working and living in Hong Kong?

Kelly: There are a lot of similarities between living and working in London and Hong Kong. The skills I learned in London were helpful in settling into working life in Hong Kong. For example, living in a big city means that clients want to sort their legal disputes quickly and cost effectively, they appreciate it when you streamline work and cut through all of the noise and distraction that legal disputes often come with.

What advice would you give to anyone looking to establish a legal career in Hong Kong?

Kelly: Seek out opportunities, network, and get to know people. While Hong Kong is a big city, it is a welcoming place and it's easy to get to know people here. It is also

a small world. Just yesterday I was speaking to counsel on the phone and we worked out we had gone to the same university.

What upcoming opportunities in the legal industry/space in Hong Kong do you find exciting?

Kelly: I'm interested to see the development of technology in the legal space in coming years. For example, I'm interested to see what technology the Court might bring in for filing documents online and whether it will make litigation more efficient. I think Hong Kong has the advantage of having the opportunity to observe what other jurisdictions have done, and what worked and what did not. Hong Kong has not been locked into clunky technology contracts early which means it can take advantage of more efficient technology that has developed in this space.

What are some unique skills or experiences you have gained as a result of working as a lawyer in Hong Kong?

Kelly: Learning more about the intersection between Hong Kong and other jurisdictions. Hong Kong has given me the opportunity to work on cases which intersect with China, the US, Europe, and Australia. In particular, I have found it interesting to learn more about China and Southeast Asia. Australia, England and Hong Kong have common law systems and so it is always a learning curve when working with clients who have connections and interests in jurisdictions which are not common law countries and do things differently. This makes you a better lawyer as you have to adapt your way of thinking.



Kelly's Hong Kong admission, with Caroline McNally, partner at Hugill & Ip
Kelly 獲取香港律師資格,與高葉律師行合夥人
Caroline McNally 合昭

高葉律師行高級助理律師 Kelly Merris



日益互聯的世界中,法律專業已經真正全球化。香港是個充滿活力的樞紐,來自世界各地的法律人才匯聚於此,帶來多元化的經驗和獨特的視角。

在本期的「全球法律視野」中,我們訪問了經驗豐富的家事律師 Kelly Merris。她在西澳洲展開事業,之後在倫敦執業,後來以香港為 家。Kelly 的經歷提供獨特的角度,讓我們了解法律專業人士在轉移 到新的地方後面對的挑戰和機遇。她在不同法律體系中駕馭複雜的 家事法,以及適應香港充滿活力的法律環境的經驗,構成了引人注 目的專業成長和文化適應的故事。Kelly 與我們分享了她移居香港的 動機、她在倫敦時期所學到的技能,以及她對考慮在香港從事法律 工作的人的建議。

能告訴我們更多您的背景嗎?您為何會投身法律工作?

Kelly: 在西澳洲的大學修讀法律。我有興趣學習法律、 法律歷史、執業與程序及不同的法律領域。我認 為這可為我的事業打下良好基礎和提供更多機 會。在大學的最後一年,學生通常會每週在律師 行工作一天。機緣巧合之下,我在家事法小組 工作。之後,我代表大學參加 2010 年在坎培拉 舉行的澳洲全國家事法模擬庭辯論比賽 的代表隊在決賽中勝出。該決賽由首席大法官 Bryant、副首席大法官 Faulks 和 Kay 法官組成的 法庭擔任評審。翌年,我指導大學代表隊出賽, 他們也在悉尼的決賽中獲勝。之後,我在西澳洲 家事法院擔任 Moncrieff 法官的助理,後來又擔 任首席法官 Thackray 的上訴助理。此後,我在倫 敦和香港從事私人家事法執業。

是什麽原因令您來港工作?

Kelly: 我的丈夫也是律師,他和我已經準備好迎接新挑戰。我們一直住在倫敦,但有機會在 2023 年初搬來香港。香港是個充滿活力、令人興奮的城市。移居香港讓我們更接近在澳洲的家人,住在了不起的城市,為年幼的兒子提供優質的照顧和教育。我們都很高興能夠在香港取得律師資格,並在此從事律師工作。我們覺得香港為年青專業人士和年青家庭提供了很多機會,現在是在香港生活的好時機。

您剛開始在這裏工作時遇到了哪些挑戰(如有的話)? 您如何克服它們?

Kelly: 香港的家事法與英國的家事法非常相似,但也有一些棘手的不同之處。執業和程序在很多方面都與澳洲和倫敦不同。這也是我第一次在英語不是唯一語言的環境下工作。學習香港的文化和處事方式非常有趣。我認為最大的挑戰是通過海外律師資格考試(OLQE)。雖然我已在澳洲取得資格,並在英國通過律師執業資格轉化評估取得資格,但在香港考OLQE時我必須一邊工作工作,一邊照顧年幼的孩子。

您認為在香港當律師有什麼吸引力?

Kelly: 香港是充滿活力的國際城市。我的客戶都是有趣的人,他們有不同的背景、工作和觀點。

您在倫敦工作時的哪些技能或經驗,有助您適應香港的 工作和生活?

Kelly: 在倫敦和香港生活和工作有很多相似之處。我在倫敦學到的技能對我融入香港的工作生活很有幫助。例如,在大城市生活意味著客戶希望以快速且符合成本效益的方式解決法律糾紛,他們會很欣賞你簡化工作流程,擺脱法律糾紛經常伴隨的噪音和干擾。

對於希望在香港建立法律事業的人,您有什麼建議?

Kelly: 尋找機會、建立人際網絡、結識朋友。雖然香港 是個大城市,但這裏非常友好,結識人也很容 易。世界其實很細小。就在昨天,我和一位律師 通話時竟然發現我們曾就讀同一所大學。

香港的法律行業/領域中有哪些即將出現的機會令您期待?

Kelly: 我很有興趣看看未來幾年科技在法律領域的發展。舉例,我很有興趣看看法院會引進哪些技術便利線上提交文件,以及這些技術會不會令訴訟更有效率。我認為香港的優勢在於我們有機會觀察其他司法管轄區的做法,決定哪些可行、哪些不可行。香港並沒有過早被綁定在笨拙的技術合約上,因此我們能夠發展出更高效的技術。

在香港從事律師工作令您獲得哪些獨特的技能或經驗?

Kelly: 學習更多有關香港與其他司法管轄區之間的交集。香港讓我有機會處理與中國、美國、歐洲和澳洲交集的案件。我覺得學習更多有關中國和東南亞的知識很有趣。澳洲、英國和香港都採用普通法,因此在與客戶合作時,總是需要學習,因為這些客戶與非普通法系國家的司法管轄區的行事方式與普通法系國家不同。這些經驗令你成為更好的律師,因為你必須調整思考方式。

