

Bowmans Break: Winter Programme 2021

At Bowmans, the Vacation Work Programmes grants an opportunity to participants to meet some of the firms' top lawyers, and gain insights on some of the top legal work while enjoying the collegial culture. These are not only important to us but are equally important to an aspiring attorney who aspire to join Bowmans and experience the firms' values, culture, and the type of work practice on a day-to-day basis.

We host our Vacation Work Programmes across Sandton and Cape Town offices, twice a year. The Winter Programme takes place between June and July and while the Summer Programme takes place between November and December. Due to Covid-19 regulations effecting the usual method of hosting the Vacation Work Programmes, we sought to seek out ways of changing the offering in a compliant manner and the team thought of ways around how we can realize the objective of offering our Vacation Work Programmes virtually.

In 2021, we launched the Bowmans Virtual Winter Vacation Programme which commenced across 2 separate weeks in July with 81 law students accepting our invitation to participate in the programme by means of the Forage platform.

The screenshot shows the Forage interface for the 'Bowmans Break: Winter Programme 2021'. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a profile picture and the text 'I CHOSE BOWMANS...'. The main header includes 'Bowmans Break: Winter Programme 2021' and navigation links for 'Home', 'Schedule', 'Winter Programme 2021 Hub', and 'Networking'. Below the header, a welcome message reads 'Welcome to the Bowmans Break: Winter Programme 2021'. The main content area features a 'Welcome Reatile' section with a hand icon, followed by a description of the firm's culture. To the right, there is a 'GRADUATE RECRUITMENT' banner with various icons and an 'Edit profile' button. Below this, a 'Your Next Events' section states 'When an event is about to start, click the 'Go to event' to open a meeting link - your attendance will not be registered unless you access the event via the link.' A grey box indicates 'You currently have no upcoming events'. At the bottom left, there is a 'Help' button and a link to 'view more events'.

Each participant had an opportunity to choose their 3 preferred options of corporate law practice areas. The choices were indicative of their keen interests and as such, were the specialties that the participants worked in for the duration of the week. The time spent in the various areas prompted engagement with the specialist teams of lawyers and participants were required to submit their work to the team ahead of the specified deadlines.

The Virtual Vacation Programme involved a variety of activities to ensure that candidates were exposure to most of the practice areas on offer at Bowmans, to get a chance to engage with partners across the firm and begin their journey at growing their understanding of firsthand experience while being immersed in Bowmans culture from the comfort of their own homes.

The programme further incorporated social events, interactive sessions, and team meetings to create a realistic experience for the 81 participants. By successfully hosting the largest audiences in one season of Bowmans Vacation Programme, we learnt that although working virtually posed many changes, those changes offered new horizons too.