

## **The Exchange Programme for Brazilian Young Lawyers in the UK**

By Luiz Henrique Coppoli Barros

We were working hard in our jobs and companies like normal days, when suddenly we read on the OAB's newsletter there was an opportunity to be part of an exchange programme for Brazilian young lawyers in the UK. We all applied and we were the lucky lawyers who were selected to be on the programme.

Shortly afterwards the chosen delegates and I realised there many issues to address in a very short timeframe before our expected arrival in the UK. Not just in relation to our day-to-day jobs in Brazil, but in terms of applying for the appropriate travel documents and visa which we had to legally obtain to participate in the exchange.

All the lucky lawyers were very excited to go to London for this programme, even more so when we came to realise we would be the first Brazilian young lawyers to take part in such a scheme.

With bags packed and all documentation in order, made the long journey to London. From the very first day of the programme we were all surprised at how detailed and comprehensive the programme was. We had a fantastic reception organised by the Bar Council and Law Society and spent three weeks in both law firms and barristers Chambers. This coupled with time set aside for study, work, training and seminars meant we had a busy but practical schedule. It was great and we were very thankful to be part of it.

It was a short programme, only for weeks, but it was more than sufficient for all of us to understand how the English and Welsh legal system worked along with the British traditions and the international trading agreements as well. The knowledge imparted to us at both a professional and personal level was of great value and was more than we could have imagined.

I know from speaking to my fellow compatriots in the programme that many of us plan to be ambassadors in Brazil. Namely to encourage the continuation of this programme and other future initiatives that can help to increase the bond between Brazil and the UK. This is just the beginning of a long friendship and of future business relationships.