



LAW



CAREERS IN LAW

There are a number of careers within Law, in both the Private & Public sector.

Here are a few examples of law careers:

- **Barrister**
- Barrister's Clerk
- **Solicitor**
- Paralegal
- Chartered Legal Executive
- Licensed Conveyancer
- Patent Attorney
- **Trademark Attorney**
- Legal Secretary
- Company Secretary



Highlighted in bold are the careers we are going to discuss today in a little more detail!

SOLICITOR

Solicitors take instructions from clients and advise on necessary courses of legal action. Clients can be individuals, groups, public organisations and private companies.

Depending on your area of expertise, you can advise on a range of issues, including:

1. **Personal Issues** - Buying and selling residential property, landlord and tenant agreements, wills & probate, personal injury claims and criminal litigation
2. **Commercial Work** - Helping new enterprises get established, advising on complex corporate transactions and business related disputes
3. **Protecting Rights** - Making sure individuals receive compensation if unfairly treated by public or private bodies.

The actual work carried out varies depending on the setting, your specialist area and the nature of the case.

You can also use some of your time to give free help to clients who are unable to pay for legal services. This is known as Pro-Bono work.

How to become a Solicitor:

The Solicitors Qualifications Examination is a new form of exam all potential solicitors will have to take before qualifying. The aim of the SQE is to ensure all solicitors entering the profession will meet high standards.

From Autumn 2021 to become a solicitor you will need:

- **A degree (in any subject) or equivalent qualification**
- **To pass Stage 1 of the SQE (Legal Knowledge)**
- **Have a substantial amount of relevant work experience**
- **To pass Stage 2 of the SQE (Practical Legal Skills)**
- **To meet the SRA's character and suitability requirements**

Having a large amount of work experience will enable you to gain a substantial amount of knowledge prior to you completing your degree and the SQE.

You can find work experience in a wide range of different settings such as, law firms and county councils, but can also find opportunities in things like Law Societies, Mooting and Mock Trial competitions as well as Pro-Bono work.

BARRISTER

Barristers (in England & Wales) are specialists in advocacy and represent individuals or organisations in court. They're independent sources of legal advice and can advise clients on their case. They are generally hired by solicitors to represent a case and only become involved when advocacy is required.

As a Barrister, you'll plead the case on behalf of your client and the client's solicitor. Members of the public can also go directly to a Barrister to ask for advice and representation in court.

Many Barristers are self-employed meaning they can be approached by anyone and are not tied to a certain law firm. Others can work in government departments or agencies such as the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and the Government Legal Profession (GPL). An increasing number of Barristers are also choosing to work in other organisations such as charities.

Those who are self-employed will work in offices known as chambers where you will have your own, or share, a workspace with others.

How to become a Barrister:

In order to qualify as a Barrister, you must undertake three components of training which are:

- **Academic**
- **Vocational**
- **Pupillage (work-based placement)**

To complete the academic portion of training, you will need a minimum 2:2 degree. If it is a subject other than Law, or if your Law degree is older than 5 years, then you will need to complete a law conversion course called the Graduate Diploma in Law.

In order to start the vocational component of training, you'll need to pass the Bar Course Aptitude Test, which tests your critical thinking and reasoning skills. You must also join one of the following 4 chambers: **Gray's Inn, The Inner Temple, Lincoln's Inn** or **Middle Temple**.

Each of the Inns will provide you with educational and social support, including libraries, dining halls and common rooms. The choice of Inn doesn't affect the areas of legal practice open to you.

Barrister Training:

The aim of the vocational section of training is to provide you with the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes and competences need to become a successful Barrister. This will all be done via the Bar Practice Course (BPC).

Once your vocational training is complete, intending Barristers must complete a pupillage in order to practice. This is a work-based exercise and is divided into two sections which are the Non-Practicing six months & the Practicing six months.

Be sure to make your pupillage application before starting your Bar Course via the Pupillage Gateway, which is operated by the Bar Council. This will help ensure you are ready to transition from one to the other.

Also, relevant work experience is essential. Any legal experience is useful as it demonstrates your interest in the subject, but a mini-pupillage (a short period of work experience and shadowing - typically a week) is regarded very highly by recruiters. Other forms of experience you can take include Pro-Bono work & Marshalling (shadowing a judge for week.)

TRADEMARK ATTORNEY

Perhaps one of the most unique legal jobs in the world, Trademark Attorneys are responsible for giving advice to clients on how to keep their trademarks and trademark rights protected, whilst also enforcing them. In doing so, you will ensure companies protect their identity and integrity of their brands. You may also give advice on issues such as, **Copyright, Registered Designs & Licensing.**

Many firms with IP (Intellectual Property) departments will hire graduates as trainees and will give you time off to become qualified. As a trainee, you will work under the direct supervision of one or more qualified Trademark Attorneys and learn the relevant law and practice your work on the job.

You'll need a degree grade of 2:1 to be accepted onto the qualification process, unless you have substantial work experience as, for example, a Trade Administrator or Paralegal.

Employers look favourably on Law degrees, and this can help you avoid some of the qualification exams, although this is not compulsory as degrees in Modern Languages, The Arts & Business, as well as others, are welcomed.

TRADEMARK ATTORNEY

In order to formally qualify as a Trademark Attorney, you will need to complete 2 years as a trainee under the supervision of a qualified Trademark Attorney or other suitable professional. You will also need to register with the CITMA and study for the following professional exams:

- Either the **Postgraduate Certificate Trademark Law and Practice** (1 year, part-time course at Queen Mary University of London) or the **Postgraduate Certificate Intellectual Property** at Bournemouth University
- On completion of either of these certificates, you can then study towards the **Professional Certificate in Trademark Practice**, ran by Nottingham Law School as a part-time course over ten months.

As this is a relatively narrow profession, competition for job positions are fierce. Getting involved in law or marketing societies whilst at University will help show employers your interest in the sector and in branding issues.

- Working as a Trade Administrator or Paralegal can be a great way for you to transition into the Trademark Attorney profession and will provide invaluable experience.