Legal Services and Intellectual Property

The legal sector is open to both Law and non-Law students. In the UK the role of ‘attorney’ is split into two main branches – solicitor and barrister roles. Both have different training routes, although both begin with work experience and a Qualifying Law Degree (QLD). Our LLB Law is a QLD, but LLB Legal Studies is not.

A one year QLD is available (at other institutions), called a Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL), also known as the ‘Law Conversion Course’.

After work experience and a QLD, solicitors then study a one year LPC course and then (if they are successful in application) take a two year trainee job called a ‘training contract’ to complete their qualification. Barristers instead study a one year BPTC course and then (again, if they are successful, and it’s much more competitive), take a ‘pupillage’ at a chambers. It’s worth noting that around 1,500 people do a BPTC and there are only around 400 pupillages each year available, making the barrister role suitable for only the most competitive of applicants.

As qualification through either route is both lengthy and competitive, work experience is vital. Start with less formal opportunities – shadowing or local work experience – and then progress to competitive work experience opportunities – called ‘vacation schemes’ for aspiring solicitors and ‘mini-pupillages’ for aspiring barristers.

If you would prefer a more flexible way to work in the sector, explore our links below to learn about chartered legal executive roles, as well as other related fields, such as patent attorney work.

Key Resources

Prospects – graduate jobs in Law
Detailed information on different legal jobs including patent attorney, trade mark attorney, chartered legal executive and barrister’s clerk

Law Careers
Industry-leading site with searchable training contracts, pupillages, vacation schemes and other work experience with excellent articles designed for applicants

Target Jobs - Law
Contains searchable training contracts, vacation schemes, pupillages, and mini-pupillages, plus lots of good advice

All about Law
Useful articles and advice for law and non-law students

Lawyer 2B
Sister paper of The Lawyer, designed for aspiring trainees. A great way to learn more about the industry and prepare for interviews

Central Applications Board
Central applications site for all GDL and LPC courses

Access this page and more industries at reading.ac.uk/careers/resources
Bar Standards Board
Key information about becoming a barrister, including the Health Warning

Bar Student Application Services
Central applications site for all BPTC courses

Pupillage Gateway
Central applications site for pupillages (used by many, but not all, chambers who offer pupillage)

Cilex Law School
Advice on qualifying as a Chartered Legal Executive (including a graduate fast-track route)

You may also be interested in...

- Accountancy and Financial Services
- Administration and Office Work
- Banking, Investment and Insurance
- Biology and Biotechnology
- Business, Management and Consultancy
- Charity and Development Work
- Engineering and Manufacturing
- Government and Public Administration
- Pharmacy and Pharmaceuticals
- Property
- Social and Community

Access this page and more industries at reading.ac.uk/careers/resources