

# Postgraduate Law Careers Guide





Centre for Commercial Law Studies



# **Welcome**

## **An Invitation to Engage and Succeed**

**Experience shows that students who most successfully develop their careers whilst studying for their Postgraduate Law Degree at Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) are those that proactively seek out and engage with all possible contacts and opportunities. Queen Mary PG Law Careers Team is here to help you do this!**

As the time you have as a postgraduate student is relatively short, you need to use a good strategy and organisational skills to develop your career whilst working hard to prioritise your studies to ensure academic success. The PG Law Careers Team take this very seriously and, throughout the year, we work to foster your career and enhance your professional development.

To this end, we have put together a range of resources, opportunities and events that will enable you to engage for success in the legal jobs market by accelerating your professional skills, enhancing your knowledge about the market, and your understanding of the different opportunities and challenges that await you.

You will find this guide a great starting point for your career plans and decisions this year. It will provide an overview on working in different areas of law; answer many of your questions about CVs, interviews and job applications; and hopefully answer some questions that you have still to ask. The PG Law Careers Team is based at Lincoln's Inn Fields (LIF), and in conjunction with QMUL Careers and Enterprise, we run a series of tailored sessions led by internationally renowned employers, alumni and QMUL Career Consultants. Our team sources a limited number of exclusive work experience opportunities for students. We also and provide current and former students with career resources.

### **Above all, this year we encourage you to ENGAGE!**

Engage by visiting your Careers Consultants and participating in as many careers activities as your studies allow. Engage with your peers and attend as many events as you can. Where possible, seek out and engage in short-term work experience. Engage by attending employer-led events and speaking with visiting lecturers. Take every opportunity to build up your network of contacts. Engage for Success!

**We are here to help and you are welcome to contact a member of the Team at any time – just email us at [pglawcareers@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:pglawcareers@qmul.ac.uk)**

**Good luck with your studies and we look forward to connecting with you.**

**From the PG Law Careers Team  
[pglawcareers@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:pglawcareers@qmul.ac.uk)**

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# 1. Essentials

# What you need to know on day one

QMUL offers PG Law students a wide variety of programmes to help you with your career and professional goals

## EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS

### EMPLOYER EVENTS

#### PG Events

Throughout the year, employers, recruiters and alumni attend our PG law career events to offer their perspective on their firm or organisation and provide insider information on what it takes to develop a successful application as well as discuss their legal career. It is also an opportunity to network with them.

From time to time we organise additional exclusive alumni and employer networking events for QMUL students so keep your eye out for these. Information sessions are also delivered by Careers Consultants.

#### Mile End Events

Beyond these dedicated PG Law events, there are further QMUL Employer sessions at Mile End that might be of interest to those considering either the training contract or pupillage path into a UK law career. You will find events with management consultant firms, finance, banking and other business organisations there too.

### LAW CAREER EVENTS

Two events bring together firms and other professionals in the legal field to help Queen Mary students learn more about the range of legal roles available and to network with employers. See the weekly newsletter and events page for more information and timing.

#### Law Fair

This fair at Mile End features the major law firms to help students who want to be solicitors or barristers learn more about their recruitment processes and day-to-day life.

#### PG Law Career Options Event

This exclusive event for postgraduates to be held in the spring term will include numerous employers in the legal profession outside of firms and chambers. Some of the roles represented at this event will not require UK legal qualifications and include compliance and policy amongst others. It is designed to give students an understanding of the range of careers and roles open to them given their legal knowledge and skills.

**Booking is required to attend these events.**

**For more specific information, dates, timing and to book go to:  
[www.qmul.ac.uk/careers/events/](http://www.qmul.ac.uk/careers/events/)**

**See the separate schedule handout, the PG Law Careers Team weekly “Careers and Events” newsletter and QMPlus page also for specific dates and times.**

## OTHER CAREER ACTIVITIES

### ONE-TO-ONE APPOINTMENTS

25 minute appointments are offered with a specialist Careers Consultant all year-round to discuss any careers topic individually. For example, you might like guidance with your career choices or support with your CV and job applications. These sessions can also be used for mock interviews, PhD application support, and opportunities to discuss strategies for finding permanent or part-time jobs, internships or work experience.

Appointments are available on the LIF campus several afternoons a week, or if you are unable to get an appointment at CCLS, with a general Careers Consultant at Mile End.

**To book one-to-one appointments call the Careers & Enterprise Information Desk on 020 7882 8533 or email [careers@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:careers@qmul.ac.uk), leaving your phone number so they can call you back**

### WORK PLACEMENTS AND INTERNSHIPS

Some exclusive opportunities are organised for Queen Mary postgraduate law students. In addition, students are kept up-to-date with numerous other openings that might be suitable.

**QTemps** offers part time and temporary work for students and recent graduates both on and local to campus.

<https://q-temps.co.uk/>

**JobOnline** is a job board exclusive to University of London students for paid positions both part and full time, internships, work experience and volunteering opportunities: [www.careers.qmul.ac.uk/jobs](http://www.careers.qmul.ac.uk/jobs)

**QLegal, part of the QM Legal Advice Centre, offers work experience too.** Here, law students provide legal advice to start-ups and entrepreneurs. See QMPlus for more information

**Check the PG Law Careers Team “Opportunities” e-mails and our QMPlus page for work placement and internship opportunities.**

### International Bar Association (IBA)

#### The International Bar Association (IBA)

This is the world’s leading organisation of international legal practitioners, bar and law associations, and law societies. It can be a source of contacts for students through its student events and conferences, and also offers research internships. Queen Mary PG School of Law has close links with the IBA and has funded student group membership for all its students. The IBA link to group membership can be found at: [Ibanet.org/join](http://Ibanet.org/join)

See QMPlus for login information.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International students wishing to seek a legal career or work experience within the UK need to find out more about visa requirements and the regulations relating to professional qualifications. For more information please see the International PG Law page in this guide.

## OTHER PROGRAMMES

### PhD and Researcher Support

Online careers information and a programme of workshops and events for PhD and post-doctorates can be found online at:

**[www.careers.qmul.ac.uk/researchers](http://www.careers.qmul.ac.uk/researchers)**

### English Language Skills

For English language skills, join the in-session Critical Thinking and Writing in Law programme. See newsletters and QM Plus for details.

## KEY SOURCES OF INFORMATION

### QM Plus

- The Careers & Enterprise area has a wealth of careers and employability information, guides and events information - access it via the Student Life navigation (Careers) at bottom of most pages:  
**<http://qmplus.qmul.ac.uk/>**

### Opportunities newsletters

Look out for these via email:

- PG Law Careers Work Experience & Other Opportunities
- PG Law Careers Newsletter - listing events, resources and other opportunities

## HOW TO CONTACT THE PG LAW CAREERS TEAM

If you have any questions about careers activities other than one-to-one appointments please email us on:  
**[pglawcareers@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:pglawcareers@qmul.ac.uk)**

Discussions regarding CVs, applications, cover letter reviews etc. **cannot** be done via email. Please book a one-to-one appointment by calling the C&E Information Desk on **020 7882 8533** or email **[careers@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:careers@qmul.ac.uk)**



# For international students

**For International PG Law Students** Many of our international LLM students who come to QMUL for the first-rate academic training have already gained a law degree and plan to return home after they complete their studies in London. However, each year we have a group of students who would like to work in the UK either on a short-term basis or permanently. Here are some considerations:

## The UK legal market

The market for both short-term and permanent UK positions is very competitive. Even if you are qualified in your home jurisdiction your qualifications may not be fully recognized and the “Qualified Lawyers Transfer Scheme” (which will be replaced by the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) from 1 September 2021) is not always the answer. Make sure you understand the path to qualification early in the year so you can better assess your options (This is covered under the Solicitor section in this guide and as part of the event programme).

To some degree, it is the larger global firms or companies that international law students may wish to consider for longer term work, as many of these are keen to employ those with language skills, work experience and professional networks in different jurisdictions. This can also be the case for medium-size organisations. Remember that the more your previous work experience relates to the profile and type of work that a firm does, the more attractive you will be to that firm.

Consequently, it makes sense for international students to concentrate on firms or legal organisations that have a business interest in their home jurisdiction.

You might also want to explore alternate areas of the law profession to start your career in the UK that don't necessarily require a UK legal qualification like roles in compliance or a paralegal role. It may be more possible to secure a short term work experience or internship during your time in the UK.

We strongly encourage most students to seek a short term work experience while they are here no matter what their long term goals are.

We are always happy to support you in your search for internships and do our best to seek out and offer a number of exclusive internship positions.

Independent research for internships positions is also necessary and we have found that networking is an effective part of finding opportunities. So take advantage of our careers workshops to hone your networking skills.

Also please see the Legal Work Experience for Postgraduate Law leaflet guide for more information about securing an internship.

## How we can help

Whether looking for part-time, full-time, short-term or long-term work, the most important step is to get started as early as you can. It takes time to identify opportunities, and if you are on a student visa, you only have a limited window of time to undertake a work experience placement.

Given the challenges it is important to have a back-up plan as early as possible too in case you realize your first choice is not working. As we said this might include at least securing an internship before you go home or starting your home job search from here.

## Visa Information

It is important that you keep up-to-date with UK visa requirements for work and be aware of when your student visa runs out.

- The Tier 4 student visa has different time limits depending upon what kind of student you are. There is provision to work within the timing of this visa, but please refer to the following QMUL site to find comprehensive information: [www.welfare.qmul.ac.uk/international/](http://www.welfare.qmul.ac.uk/international/)
- You can also set up an appointment with an advisor through the site above if you do not find the information you need.
- It is important to obtain a UK National Insurance Number if you intend to work while you are here. See [www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number](http://www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number) on how to do this.
- This site below also provides useful information for international students at QMUL <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/careers/how-to/for-international-students/>

## Finding work at home

Careers & Enterprise can help you with a job search at home as well. Please schedule an appointment with a Careers Consultant to discuss this. Also note the events and workshops planned regarding this subject

## More information and resources

- International Careers Support QMPlus page
- Long and short-term UK and International vacancies can be found here: [www.careers.qmul.ac.uk/jobs/index.html](http://www.careers.qmul.ac.uk/jobs/index.html)
- If you want to work abroad, then the best place to start for all your information is Going Global: <https://online.goinglobal.com/>
- QMUL Careers & Enterprise have a subscription that allows you full access to all the brilliant information this site has, including how to write a job application for the country you are interested in, what you might need to know about interviews there, and what cultural differences you might need to be aware of.
- QMUL Careers & Enterprise has developed specific country guides to help with home country job searches:

## **2. Jobs and Internship Search Strategies**

# Jobs and Internship Search Strategies

## Law and Career Fairs

**The Queen Mary Law and Finance Fair** includes City and regional solicitors, chambers, public sector and not-for-profit organisations. While aimed primarily at undergraduates, it is useful for understanding the various organisations. Go prepared with intelligent questions about their firm to learn more about it.

You might also consider attending other career fairs like the **Queen Mary Business and Finance Fair** to explore roles where a legal background might be a plus.

The PG Law Careers Options event is dedicated to postgraduate law students and will include representatives from across the legal profession outside of firms and chambers and roles where a legal background is valued.

These fairs are an excellent opportunity to gather more information about the legal landscape and also to make yourself known to the organisations you are interested in.

Before you go, review the list of employers attending and prioritise the ones you wish to talk to. Do some research and prepare questions beforehand that are not related to things you can find on their website. This will help you with your nerves and can also help you shine through. It is a place for you to make an impression. **DO NOT ASK THEM HOW TO QUALIFY IN THE UK. THEY WILL EXPECT YOU TO HAVE FOUND THIS OUT YOURSELF (YOU CAN ALWAYS ASK US).** From experience we know they are not impressed with that question so it is a waste of their and your time.

See the events calendar on the QMUL Careers website for dates; and for booking, [careers.qmul.ac.uk/events](https://careers.qmul.ac.uk/events) as well as the weekly PG Law Newsletter email.

## QMUL Employer Events

QMUL runs an extensive programme of employer events at CCLS and Mile End over the entire year.

- Check the QMUL Careers website for additional events and booking: [careers.qmul.ac.uk/events](https://careers.qmul.ac.uk/events) and the PG Law Newsletter email
- Read the section on networking in this guide to learn how to maximize these opportunities.

## Law Firm and Chambers Open Days

Most large firms and several sets of Chambers (as well as the Inns of Court) host Open Days. These are a useful occasion to learn more about the practice, understand the application procedure and talk to trainees, partners and tenants.

It is also an opportunity to start a dialogue with your target employer and make an impression. If you aren't successful in getting a Vacation Scheme or mini-pupillage, having attended an Open Day can also positively impact your application for a training position.

Many firms require candidates to complete application forms to attend, so ensure that you apply in plenty of time. See [Lawcareers.net](https://lawcareers.net) for dates and application procedures. Check early in your academic year.

## Vacation Schemes and Mini-Pupillages

See the Solicitor and the Barrister sections for information on these.

## Useful Recruitment Sites

Please refer to each of the specific sections for different legal roles in this guide for other recruitment links.

Many of the recruitment sites below are for qualified lawyers or paralegals.

## JobOnline

- University of London's exclusive job board posts jobs that are only open to UoL students. There are legal jobs internships and work experience in addition to banking, corporate and other roles that might be of interest to you. See [careers.qmul.ac.uk/jobs/index.html](https://careers.qmul.ac.uk/jobs/index.html)

### Legal press recruitment sites for full range of positions

- [jobs.thelawyer.com/](http://jobs.thelawyer.com/) - The Lawyer
- [lawcareers.net/jobs](http://lawcareers.net/jobs) - Law Careers
- [legalweekjobs.com/](http://legalweekjobs.com/) - Legal Week
- [lawgazette.co.uk/](http://lawgazette.co.uk/) - Law Gazette (Law Society)

### Qualified lawyers

- [hughes-castell.com/](http://hughes-castell.com/) - Legal and compliance talent in Asia-Pacific
- [garfieldrobbins.com/](http://garfieldrobbins.com/) - International and UK opportunities. Includes Professional Support Lawyers. Good analysis of the international market provided
- [chaseportland.com/](http://chaseportland.com/) - Includes Magic and Silver Circle firms and US firms in London.

### Qualified Lawyers, Legal Support Lawyers and Paralegals

- [lawabsolute.com/](http://lawabsolute.com/) - Primarily paralegals
- [laurencesimons.com/](http://laurencesimons.com/) - International Legal and Compliance recruitment
- [gmk-legal.co.uk/index.php](http://gmk-legal.co.uk/index.php) - UK and internationally
- [hays.co.uk/job/legal-jobs/index.htm](http://hays.co.uk/job/legal-jobs/index.htm) - Includes UK temporary jobs and contract jobs in addition to permanent
- [taylorroot.com/uk/](http://taylorroot.com/uk/) - UK and internationally.

### Trainee roles, casework, legal secretary and support jobs in addition to qualified lawyer roles

- [totallylegal.com](http://totallylegal.com)
- [jobsite.co.uk/jobs/legal/](http://jobsite.co.uk/jobs/legal/)
- [grlaw.co.uk](http://grlaw.co.uk) - London focus but also recruit globally.
- [legalweekjobs.com](http://legalweekjobs.com)
- [simplylawjobs.com](http://simplylawjobs.com)
- [legaljobsboard.co.uk](http://legaljobsboard.co.uk)



#### **Giovanna Louise Bodin de Saint-Ange Comnene Carlolini – LLM in Computer and Communications Law**

Giovanna was selected to be the specialism student representative for computer and communications Law, a position which allowed her to organise a wide range of activities and creative events. Via this role she strengthened the relationships between students and course professors. Giovanna was awarded the Course Representative Gold Contribution Award, organised by the QMUL Student Union.

The culmination of a great year on the LLM was her gaining a position with Promontory Financial Group as a privacy analyst along with several LLM colleagues after completing an internship there. She is now an Associate in that consultancy. Participating in Promontory's data breach workshop which she helped organize had already given her some insights into the life of a privacy professional. She feels she has totally put her studies into practice. Prior to her studies at Queen Mary Giovanna qualified as a lawyer in Brazil.

# Networking for Jobs or Internships

Networking is one of the best ways for postgraduate law students to find internships and long-term positions. Many postgraduate law students are not on the traditional path towards professional UK qualification; often, they are international, experienced or looking for opportunities outside of becoming a solicitor or barrister. As such, networking is an important strategy for finding work.

Most students – and actually most people - find the thought of networking challenging. It can seem difficult to communicate with strangers and there is a misconception that you have to ‘sell’ yourself - which is uncomfortable.

To grow your networking confidence, book an appointment with a Careers Consultant, and/or attend one of the CCLS Networking events to arm yourself with a process, an understanding of the networking tools available and some top tips, so you can try it out.

## Why Network?

First let's convince you it is important. Through networking you can:

- Gain first-hand industry knowledge from current professionals
- Improve your visibility and career progression in a particular field
- Demonstrate your skills, commitment and initiative
- Find work experience to enhance your marketability
- Access positions that are never advertised: the ‘hidden’ job market.

Meeting or talking with someone can be the best way to gain insider knowledge of a firm or career path and also unearth or even create possible roles.

## Developing a network

### Warm Contacts

One of the better ways to start networking is with what are called ‘warm contacts’ like family, friends, aunts and uncles, your parents’ business acquaintances, neighbours, or former colleagues from previous work. QMUL alumni and your lecturers can also be great sources of contacts.

International students should think of people in their home country and find out who they know in the UK. Former colleagues and managers may be a great source for you as well.

Do not rule too many people out. You never know who your contacts are connected to.

### Employer Events

The Queen Mary Postgraduate Law Careers Team runs at least 10 employer/alumni events a year. In addition, there are other events at Mile End that might be useful for you, including for sectors like banking. These events include QMUL alumni who come back to campus to share their career experiences.

Professional bodies in your chosen sector may also run events and conferences, and employers often run their own Open Days. Law fairs are also useful places where you can find contacts.

Online networking with tools like LinkedIn have also become one of the most powerful ways to network.

### LinkedIn and Social Media

LinkedIn is the essential social media tool for online networking. **We encourage all students to set up a profile as soon as possible.**

- It allows you to look at the CVs of people who have achieved your desired position and see how they got there. It can also help you write your CV by using these CVs as models.
- You can research companies, firms and other organisations by following their pages.
- There are job postings on LinkedIn.
- Most importantly you can contact people, particularly QMUL Alumni!



To use it for all these purposes, you must have a profile. See later in this guide for information on how to set up a LinkedIn profile and more information and try to attend any LinkedIn workshops offered.

Twitter and Facebook can also be good sources of information and may connect you to people who are helpful for your career.

### Student and Professional Organisations

These groups often run networking events for students or people involved in the legal profession. Look in the Job Market section for groups for particular area of interest.

QMUL also has a mentoring programme for post-graduate law students. Keep your eye on the weekly newsletter to get updates on its development.

### Direct approaches to employers

It is possible to contact individuals you may not know in firms or legal organisations to gain work experience or to do some speculative job searching. Networking to obtain advice rather than immediately enquiring about a job can be a good starting point for eventually finding a role. Many people are more responsive to this type of approach.

Eventually, you can turn it into a contact for long-term work. It is a particularly good approach into smaller and medium-size legal organisations. The key is to get the name of someone rather than just writing to the HR department.

Below are some websites where you might find some useful professional contacts if you are interested in firms. These sites are also excellent sources of in-depth information about firms to help you with your applications to the bigger firms:

- **legal500.com**
- **lex100.com**
- The Law Society's 'Find a Solicitor' directory (**solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk/**)
- **chambersandpartners.com/guide/uk/1**

Of course LinkedIn can be a source of new contacts too. Just search for the profession in which you have an interest or join a group.

## Networking Techniques

### In Person Networking

To make the most of all the event opportunities to meet employers, consider the following:

- Do your research about who is coming.
- Think about what you would like to know, make sure it's not available on their website first, and then find a moment to speak with them at the event.
- Start the conversation by giving them a very brief overview of yourself and what you are looking for – this is better known as an 'elevator pitch', and you can attend a networking workshop to learn more about this. Don't forget to tell them your name!
- Make a note of their email address, so you can follow up with a thank you note and connect with them via LinkedIn (with a personal note). Try to keep in touch with them, updating your job search, asking additional questions, or expressing your interest in their firm.

Overall, when you meet people at an event, you don't need to talk about your job or placement quest for the entire time. In fact it is best not to. Asking them about their career and being a good listener is a good approach to keeping you at the forefront of their mind. If you are nervous about being direct about your job quest, tell them at some point in the conversation that you are very interested in what they do and ask if you can get in touch to discuss it further.

### Online or Phone Networking

Once you know who you are contacting via phone, email or through LinkedIn, one of the better approaches to this type of networking -especially with people you don't know well - is to avoid asking them for a job and not sending them your CV...at least not right away. In fact, assure them you are not looking for a job interview at this time. Contact them to say that you are seeking their advice and information. This is called an informational interview. In your note or call, briefly tell them about yourself (elevator pitch), what you are looking for and that you would appreciate a short amount of their time to talk about their role and organisation.

This is often more effective than outright asking them for a potential internship or job. If they don't have a role at the time, they might just say there isn't one, ending the conversation. More importantly, most people like to help and give their advice; fewer people are comfortable talking about a position right away with someone they don't know.

If they agree to talk, identify a number of good questions to discuss such as:

- What advice would you have for someone seeking to enter this area of law?
- Why did this type of work interest you, and how did you get started?
- What things did you do before you entered this occupation?
  - Which ones have been most helpful?
  - What other jobs can you get with the same background?
- Given my background, where do you think I can most effectively find a position?
- What does your organisation look for when hiring (LLM's, international lawyers, etc.)?
- Are there any professional organisations I should join?

Having some questions prepared will help reduce nerves too. At the end of the conversation, ask them two things.

- Can you keep in touch with them?
- Can you have the contact details of anyone they know who could give you additional insight?

Commit to getting at least one more contact. When you contact that person, make sure to put the name of the person who referred you in your subject line if you email them. This will encourage them to open the message.

Send your original contact a thank you note telling them what you found interesting and if it feels right, let them know you are very interested in their firm and attach your CV in case anything comes up. Connect with them via LinkedIn with a personal note. Although it might seem preposterous offer to help them in any way you can. It goes a long way in making a good impression.

Do stay in touch with them to keep yourself in their mind, without being overly persistent. Update them about your search or send an article of interest to them.

It is a game of numbers in some ways. Meanwhile, you are learning more about your profession and you are building your network for your long-term career.

## Mentoring

Having a mentor can be one of the most powerful developmental relationships you will experience. Mentors can be established professionals who provide first-hand insights into their companies and law firms and the sector as a whole. They share their experience, and provide constructive advice to those entering the profession. Many professionals see it as a great opportunity to help graduates find their feet and plan their professional goals.

Benefits for you:

- First-hand insight into the working of companies and law firms
- Gain networking opportunities and practical insights into the legal marketplace
- Benefit from the experience and knowledge of specialist solicitors, barristers and industry executives working in a range of fields, allied to your research areas
- Better understanding of a law professional's career journey, to help you make more informed career choices, and realistically set your expectations
- Mentoring helps you identify what's missing from your CV/applications

Mentors are everywhere, but you have to be strategic to find and choose a mentor that is perfect for you. LinkedIn is a useful tool to search for professionals who can potentially mentor you.

CCLS has developed a Postgraduate Law Professional Mentoring Programme as an additional way of assisting our LLM students in their professional development. Our mentors are primarily mid to senior-level legal professionals or QMUL alumni, based either in the UK or across Europe and certain global work destinations.

**For more in-depth information, please see the additional PG Law Guide to Legal Work Experience**

# LinkedIn

## What is LinkedIn?

LinkedIn - linkedin.com - is a free online network with more than 100 million members in 200 countries and 170 industries. Unlike Facebook, which is used to connect with people you know for social purposes, LinkedIn is a powerful tool for finding and reaching people you would like to meet, or connecting with people you already know for professional purposes.

It can be used in a number of ways:

- For job search and career exploration
- To share advice and information with professionals in your field
- To find potential clients and business partners
- For companies to raise their profile and publish job openings
- For recruiters to search for possible candidates and to screen candidates before interviews

## How to create a profile?

**Professional headline** can be your current job title, your career goal (such as 'Aspiring Arbitration Lawyer') or current status (such as Post Graduate Law Student').

**Summary** is a 30-second commercial about yourself, identifying highlights of your experience which relate to your desired career area and focusing on what you have to offer and what you are looking for.

**Experience** contains a shortened version of your CV. Use expressive skill words and accomplishments.

**Specialties** include technical skills, such as programming languages, particular areas of law, foreign languages and other expertise. The words you put here will indicate to LinkedIn what events to recommend to you and also affect in which searches you come up – so it's important to get the right ones for your desired career area. Get ideas of what words to use by looking at the profiles of other people working in the legal field.

**A photograph** of yourself in professional dress is recommended to make your profile more personal and approachable, especially if contacting people you don't currently know.

**Post an update** is perfect for publicising new accomplishments, interesting articles you have come across that relate to your desired career field or information/advice you seek. It maintains your web presence and can attract comment and discussion.

**Add sections** is a feature designed for students so that you can publish your university achievements in your profile. Add awards, publications, student societies you are part of (under the organisations section), projects relating to your desired career area or demonstrating particular technical skills, your final year project or dissertation, volunteer experience and your exam grades. You can choose how many of these sections to add.

**Additional Information** can be a website, Twitter account, and membership of professional societies such as the Postgraduate Law Society or the IBA.

**Applications** enable you to enrich your profile, as well as share and collaborate with your network. Applications are added to your homepage and profile enabling you to control who gets access to which information.

**Get recommendations** by asking past supervisors, part-time work or volunteer colleagues, or people you have worked with at university to write and post a brief recommendation and reciprocate if appropriate. You can only ask someone who is already on LinkedIn. This is an excellent opportunity to add positive information which employers searching for candidates, or looking at your online profile before interviewing you, can see.

**Personalise your URL** by clicking on the 'edit' button next to your public profile link and changing it to something easy to remember, such as [uk/linkedin.com/in/robjones](https://uk.linkedin.com/in/robjones)

## Making Connections

There are four levels of connections - first, second and third degree, and group. Only a first name and last initial are visible on third degree and group profiles. Reaching a second or third degree contact is done by requesting an email introduction from your intermediary contacts. If you ask LinkedIn for an introduction, it will send a generic message to the individual. It is best practice to take the time to personalise this, to show that you appreciate the favour the individual will do in introducing you.

Requesting a connection should only be done for people that you know. If you are contacting someone you don't know for an informational interview, send them an email rather than ask for a connection. Add to your connections by inviting past and current co-workers and - where relevant - classmates, friends and family to connect with you. The benefit of building your network is that it increases the number of professionals you can contact. Within LinkedIn, you can contact only people who are linked to you, to one of your connections, or who are in a group with you.

**Join groups.** More connections give you greater access to the millions of other members, so expand your network by joining groups. Using the search toolbar, choose Groups from the drop-down menu and search the Groups Directory to find groups in your career field of interest and your education. For example, search 'Queen Mary' to join alumni and QMUL networking groups. Once you are in a group, you can comment on and initiate discussions, increase your web presence, browse any jobs advertised and research career paths through looking at members' profiles.

## How to use LinkedIn in your job search

### 1. Networking

Networking is the most effective job search tool and LinkedIn facilitates this. You can greatly increase your chances of finding job leads or even securing an interview by conducting a type of networking conversation called an information interview. The purpose of an information interview is to ask someone working in your desired career field questions to get you inside information. This information will help you write a great cover letter and excel in a job interview. Later on, if you maintain the relationship with the individual, you may be able to ask them to introduce you to a hiring manager or pass your CV along to someone who is recruiting.

To find people for an information interview choose 'People', then 'Advanced Search' in the search menu in the top right corner of the page to locate people in your network who work at companies (including corporate, non-profit, education and government) that you are targeting in your job search, or are employed in the role you would like to do. See the Networking section in this guide for more information.

Follow up after the meeting. Send a thank you note (via email), to reiterate what you learned and to thank the person for taking the time to meet with you. If a position should open up at the company, get back in touch with that person and ask if you can find out some more about the opening and how you can target your application. He or she might even offer forward on your CV for you if you are lucky!

### 2. Research companies and firms

Company pages are a goldmine of information, including current and former employees, career paths, company statistics, selected job openings, similar competitor companies and where their employees have worked before and after working for them. Use the 'Follow Company' option on the company's page to have weekly updates emailed directly to you.

### 3. Find vacancies

Search jobs that are posted directly to LinkedIn by employers. Some listings include the name of the person who posted the opening. This means that you can personalise your cover letter and show that you have done that extra bit of research.

### 4. Search a career path or build your CV.

LinkedIn has millions of CV's. You can find out the step other took to your desired role. In addition you can use the CV's as models for your own.



**Chidozie George Chukwudumogu** - LLM Tax Law

Upon return to his home country Nigeria, Chidozie worked briefly with Perchstone and Graeys, a full service commercial law firm. Currently, he has been admitted to the University of Auckland Business School to commence doctoral research work. Chidozie will begin this programme in September 2016 on full scholarship and his research work is a continuation of my LLM dissertation in international taxation.

Chidozie was admitted to University of Auckland, New Zealand largely on academic merit (i.e. my academic performance at QMUL and other track records). He advises LLM students that to enhance their value in the employment market, students need to put their best efforts in the academic pursuit at QMUL with the aim of getting the best result possible. They may also be engaged in extracurricular activities and other work experience where the requisite skills for a work environment are acquired. With all this, the prospect of getting a job whether in the business or academic world increases significantly. Employers are always looking for people who can add value to their organisation through their knowledge, skills and experience.

# 3. Applications



# CVs

## Understand the purpose of a CV

A CV is a **marketing document**. It shows your unique combination of knowledge, experience, skills and interests. It is a chance to present yourself in your best way for that role with that employer. It should interest the reader enough so that they want to invite you to interview. If you've got an interview, the CV has done its primary job.

## Get the basic format right

There are many different formats for CVs, with preferred styles depending on nationalities, types of role etc. There is no single right way of writing a CV, but for a CV that works in the UK:

**Length:** two pages is about right for most CVs, and you should capture the reader's attention on the first page. Think about how you can edit it or reformat it if necessary. For some sectors - eg, banking or management consultancy - a 1 page CV may be required.

**Style:** Use clear headings and bullet points where possible. Writing in the third person makes it sound more authoritative. Avoid unnecessary jargon or abbreviations – ask yourself whether the employer will know what you are talking about.

### Typical Structure:

- Personal details at the top – name, address and contact details
- Profile – maximum of three points that sum up who you are and what you offer (see later in this section).
- Either Education or Professional Experience - which comes next depends on what will be of most interest to the employer. If you have significant and relevant professional experience, put Professional Experience next. If you do not have this, put Education next.
- Professional Experience or Education - whichever you haven't already covered.
- Any other relevant experience or positions of responsibility - non-legal work experience may well be of interest to the employer as they will want to know about your wider skills.
- Interests and Memberships/Affiliations – this helps to give the reader a sense of you as a whole person.
- References – it is not necessary to include this on a CV but, if you have space, you may want to say simply 'References are available on request'.

## Put yourself in the employer's shoes

This is the most important tip. Ask yourself: 'Am I giving the employer what they want?'

A common mistake is to focus on what's important to you, rather than the person you are trying to impress. Do they really need to know what you did when you were 14? Often, it helps not to get too caught up with every detail, particularly if it's not so recent. But think carefully about each bit of experience or achievement before you leave it out. Can it be written in a succinct way that makes it interesting and relevant to that employer?

You are trying to emphasise that you and the employer would be a good fit – that you mirror each other to some extent. To do this you have to (i) work out what they want; (ii) set out what you offer; and (iii) make the fit between the two by tailoring what you say.

## Do your homework on the employer and tailor your CV to match

Find out as much as you can about the particular organisation or industry sector that you are hoping to work in. You can do this by researching online - eg looking at their website - and by asking for insight and top tips from people who have worked in that organisation or sector. (See Networking section)

Once you have a better idea of who will be reading your CV, and what it is like in their world, you can tailor your CV to match. Using a Profile provides an efficient way to do so (see Profile paragraph below).

When applying for a specific role, make sure the CV covers the main requirements the employer has set out. First, read through the job specification and person specification carefully and underline the skills and achievements they are looking for. For example:

*XCo, a global asset manager, is seeking a contracts administrator on an interim basis, with a potential of a permanent position.*

*You will be responsible for reviewing and finalising contracts and overseeing the contract process in general.*

*Candidates must be fluent in English and French.*

*Ideally you will have experience of working in a fast paced environment and a high volume workload.*

Make sure your CV highlights any obvious matches – for example, if you have reviewed sets of legal documents as part of your degree, and perhaps you are fluent in French and English - but you also have the chance to bring forward other experience that isn't obviously related to that job but requires similar skills. It might be, for example, that you have:

*Worked part-time as a customer services assistant in a busy call centre, remaining calm under pressure managing high volume calls from, often demanding, customers.*

Although this job has nothing to do with law, combined with your legal masters and your language skills, it might be the thing that makes the employer want to meet you at interview. It is evidence that you can work in a fast paced environment with a high volume workload.

Transferable skills are highly valued in the UK market.

## Highlight your skills and achievements

A common mistake is to focus mainly on knowledge, e.g., education and qualifications, but to skip over your skills and achievements. The truth is employers will want evidence of your relevant knowledge and skills and achievements.

Try using the **'STAR' technique** to help you articulate your skills and provide the specific evidence that you have used that skill. Break down your experience based on the:

**S**ituation – what was the context?

**T**ask – what was the problem to be solved or job to be undertaken?

**A**ction – what did you do to make that happen?

**R**esult – and what was the outcome of your action?

Include relevant facts and figures to give a better picture. For example:

*'Helped set up a Commercial Awareness Society at University' could become:*

*Identifying a student demand for an understanding of commercial awareness, initiated and co-founded a Commercial Awareness Society, liaising with the Business School and external speakers. Attracted 90 members within the first year and delivered a series of 6 seminars plus monthly discussion groups. The Society is now in its third year, with 210 members, and has received consistently positive feedback from students and staff.*

This one achievement shows a range of transferable skills that would be attractive to an employer, for example:

- Taking the initiative
- Problem-solving
- Leadership
- Ability to liaise with senior stakeholders
- Organisation (ie, taking the idea from theory into practice)
- Communication

And that's before you even get to the increase in knowledge of commercial awareness!

Later in this guide we provide a list of common skills, ways you might be able to articulate them, and examples of results that you may also be able to adapt to fit your particular experience.

Don't undervalue non-legal or voluntary work - it all counts! Even working in a shop requires skills in communication, developing customer relationships and time management. Law firms are keen to employ well-rounded people who their clients can get on with: ie, those who aren't 100% 'legal' and too academic in focus. Other organisations will be made up of people from many disciplines, so the ability to fit in well is a must.

Some people adopt a skills-based CV format where transferable skills - supported by appropriate evidence – are listed before Education or Work Experience, but this is not yet common in the UK legal sector.

## **Use active verbs and appropriate language**

Use the language that the employer will use, e.g., 'pro bono' rather than 'voluntary' legal work. Also, you will sound more dynamic if you start with bullet points using active verbs appropriate to the role. See later in this guide for a list of examples of suitable active verbs.

## **Make it look good, and easy to read**

The person reading your CV is a human being. They may well be pushed for time. At the application stage, the CV and cover letter is all they have to represent you, so it's important to make a good visual impact, right from the start. It's also important to make it quick and easy for the reader to locate specific information, through clear headings and plenty of white space.

Things to avoid include:

- Including so much information that the overall effect is that the CV is cluttered and hard to read
- Being inconsistent. Don't use too many different fonts or use fonts inconsistently. Similarly, spacing should follow a pattern, as must abbreviations
- Having bullet points out of alignment; ditto, different headings or sections
- Including a photo – this is generally not done in UK applications.

## **Get someone to check it for spelling, grammar and typos**

This is a must. It shows you pay attention to detail. How can an organisation be confident you will represent them well through your written communications with their clients, if you can't get your own CV right?

**Melissa Obi**

9 Dyer Road, London NW6 3LR T: 07123 456789 E: mel.obi@madeup.com

Qualifications

**LLM (Energy & Natural Resources Law) Queen Mary University of London** (due to complete July 2016)

Modules include: International Natural Resources Law; Multinational Enterprises and the Law; and Energy Economics

Dissertation on ‘Comparison of upstream and downstream oil and gas and minerals regulatory trends 2005-2015.’

**LLB (2:1) University of Lagos, Nigeria June 2011**

**WASSCE Merit, Queen’s College, Lagos July 2007**

Legal Experience

**Legal Adviser: Anico Oil Company, Lagos, Nigeria** Sept 2013 - Aug 2014

On secondment, worked as part of a 6-strong legal team:

- Developed an understanding of the legal processes inherent in a major commercial organisation within the oil and gas sector.
- Participated in all aspects of legal process over a twelve month period in three teams specialising in procurement, environmental impact assessment and drilling bid preparation.
- Assessed the impact of environmental legislation on new production processes advising the company on their statutory liabilities.
- Analysed and advised on procurement contracts providing end of year reports to the senior management team.

**Solicitor: Kanu & Utaka, Lagos, Nigeria** Sept 2012 - Aug 2013

Gained broad corporate and commercial experience within this leading 30 fee-earner firm:

- Represented corporate clients in commercial disputes arising out of international trade, intellectual property infringements, breach of construction agreements, interpretation of company rules and procedures, and recovery of debts and assets.
- Advised entities wishing to supply goods, works and services to the Nigerian government and procurement proceedings.
- Negotiated and drafted service contracts, management contracts, lease contracts and joint venture agreements.

## Melissa Obi

### Other Experience

**Retail Assistant, TopLondon Store Ltd, London** Sept 2014 – date

Part-time role while completing my masters:

- Developed commercial and customer relationship skills, selling to a high end (sometimes demanding) international customer base.
- Exceeded sales targets throughout the period.

**Commercial Assistant, ABC123Ltd, Lagos** June 2009 – Aug 2011

Worked as a commercial assistant in this export firm:

- Conducted internet research into possible markets, contacting potential customers and answering queries on the food products offered by the firm.
- Contributed to the design of a new website and piloted the use of social media to provide trade updates to their customer base.

### Other Responsibility

**'Students Mean Business' Co-founder at University** 2009 - 2010

Set up this society to promote links between students and local businesses in Lagos. Arranged on campus talks by business leaders, and student visits to company premises. It is still going strong, with a current membership of 430.

### Skills

**IT:** proficient in Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Publisher, Outlook

Expert user of internet search engines and legal databases, including LexisNexis and Westlaw.

**Social Media:** have 3,000 followers on Twitter (@melobi).

Have written a legal blog since 2013 (lawandlife.wordpress)

**Languages:** French (fluent); German (basic)

### Interests

**Music:** piano and percussion, including with the Queen Mary Big Band and a jazz quartet

**Running:** Member of the Serpentine Running Club and have taken part in several 10k and half marathons

### References

Available on request

**MATTHEW JENKINS**

99 Michael Lane, London. SE5 6HG    Matt.jenkins99@gmail.com    07816255555

**EDUCATION**

Sept 2014 – date    **LLM in Corporate and Commercial Law, Queen Mary University of London**  
(Part-time Masters, due to complete in 2016)

Sept 2011 – July 2014    **LL.B (2:1 68 %) University of Manchester**  
Dissertation: Shareholder Verses Stakeholder Argument in Corporate Governance.

Sept 2003 - June 2010    **Teal School, London**  
3 A Levels: Economics (A), History (A), Government and Politics (A)  
1 AS Level: Maths (B)  
11 GCSEs:    A\*- B

**LEGAL EXPERIENCE**

**Sept 2014 – date    Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP**

**Paralegal for the Property team in the Corporate Projects & Finance department**

- Work in a small team focused on commercial property and the high-end residential market.
- Gained high quality practical experience of transactions including, creation of charges, granting and renewal of office block leases, re-financings of properties and residential sales.
- Drafted replies to lender/vendor/purchaser enquiries and replies to CPSEs.
- Arranged indemnity insurance relating to missing building regulation certificates, sales at undervalue and lost title deeds.
- Issued notices to break tenancies including s24 notices and obtained statutory declarations.
- Drafted an agreement for the purchase of furniture for a show flat which itself was being purchased by our client; using the Land Registry e-business portal to carry out priority searches of whole and part, obtained office copy entries, index map searches, carry out day list enquiries and bankruptcy searches; removing notice of leases from title registers using the Land Registry CN1 form; online and paper SDLT Return submissions; arranging EPCs.

**July 2013 – Aug 2013    Taylor Wessing LLP**

**Summer Vacation Scheme in the corporate department**

- Assembled disclosure and document bundles; undertook due diligence; legal research; prepared deal bibles; verification of a placing document; filing; billing; and proof-reading.
- Assisted the Corporate Department Head and the Business Development Manager to compile the Legal 500 and Chambers entries for the 2014 editions.



## **OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE**

**July 2012 – Aug 2012 ABC Practice**

**Marketing Assistant (temporary role)**

- Provided support to Marketing Manager of busy commercial Design Studio.
- Wrote and proofread content for marketing collateral, focusing on the Studio website.

**July 2010 – July 2011 House of Fraser**

**Sales assistant promoted to Supervisor**

- Working within the women's accessories department in the flagship store, liaising with customers. Remained calm and professional under pressure during high volume traffic during sales periods.
- Consistent record of exceeding weekly sales targets.
- Promoted to supervisor within 4 months – trained and managed two junior staff.

## **POSITION OF RESPONSIBILITY**

**Sept 2013 – May 2014 Co-Founder and Publicity Officer of the 'Law Forum'**

- With two other members, set up this student society aimed at creating a forum for law students to debate and exchange ideas in order to enhance their understanding of the law.
- From a standing start, reached a membership of 120+ (the majority of which were active members). Liaised with external speakers to contribute to the monthly discussions.

## **SKILLS & INTERESTS**

**Languages:** German (fluent), Russian (basic)

**IT:** Competent user of Mac OS software and Microsoft Office packages including Word, Excel, Powerpoint and Outlook.

**Electronic Research:** Expert user of internet search engines and legal databases such as LexisNexis and Westlaw.

**Music:** collect vinyl records and DJ occasionally at local venues.

**Sport:** captain of school and college cricket teams. Run regularly - just started triathlon training.

**Photography:** member of photography club and have exhibited in group shows.

**References:** Available on request.

# Language for CVs and Applications

When writing job applications or contacting employers, it is important to shape the language you use to articulate your skills and experience effectively. Using the same sort of language as the employer will make it easier for them to see that you fit their criteria.

The following sections ‘Action Verbs for CV Descriptions’ and ‘Behind the Skills Buzzwords’ give a bank of options that you can use.

## Action verbs for CV descriptions

Starting bullet points with active verbs appropriate to the role will make you sound more dynamic.

accelerated	closed	designed	found
accomplished	coached	determined	gathered
accrued	collected	developed	graded
achieved	combined	devised	granted
adapted	commented	devoted	guided
addressed	communicate	diagnosed	handled
adjusted	compared	directed	helped
administered	completed	discussed	identified
advised	composed	distributed	implemented
allocated	computed	documented	improved
analysed	conceived	drafted	incorporated
answered	concluded	earned	indexed
appeared	conducted	edited	initiated
applied	considered	encouraged	influenced
appointed	constructed	endorsed	innovated
appraised	consulted	enlarged	inspected
approved	continued	enlisted	installed
arbitrated	contracted	ensured	instructed
arranged	controlled	entered	insured
assessed	converted	established	interpreted
assigned	convinced	estimated	interviewed
assisted	coordinated	evaluated	introduced
assured	corrected	examined	investigated
attended	counselled	expanded	involved
audited	counted	expedited	issued
awarded	created	experienced	joined
bought	credited	explained	kept
briefed	critiqued	explored	launched
brought	dealt	expressed	learned
budgeted	decided	filed	leased
calculated	defined	financed	lectured
catalogued	delegated	focused	led
chaired	delivered	forecasted	licensed
changed	demonstrated	formulated	listed
classified	described	fostered	logged

maintained	performed	recommended	strengthened
managed	persuaded	reconciled	submitted
matched	planned	recruited	substituted
measured	prepared	regulated	suggested
mediated	presented	replaced	summarised
met	processed	replied	supervised
modified	procured	revamped	surveyed
monitored	programmed	reviewed	tackled
motivated	prohibited	revised	targeted
moved	projected	scheduled	tested
named	promoted	selected	toured
negotiated	proposed	served	trained
observed	provided	serviced	translated
opened	published	set	transported
operated	purchased	solved	travelled
ordered	pursued	sought	turned
organised	qualified	spearheaded	updated
oversaw	ranked	specified	visited
participated	rated	started	worked
perceived	received	streamlined	wrote



### **Fabiola Moya, LLM International Business Law**

Fabiola is currently an Account Manager at Amicorp Group which provides customized regulatory assurance and compliance services, family governance and cross-border structures and many other specialized business support alternatives. Her job specifically includes UK and offshore entity management according to each jurisdiction's rules, assessment of tax regulation for multi-jurisdictional structures, direct and constant contact with clients to offer services and solutions and more.

Previously she worked in local law firms in Venezuela where her last experience involved participation with senior commercial and tax lawyers in advising and implementing international structures for transactional efficiency and succession planning.

Fabiola believes her bilingual skills have been an advantage as clients like to work in their own language. Regulations are constantly changing especially those related to transparency and taxes so this is a dynamic sector to be in.

# Behind the skills buzzwords

Here is a list of common skills, ways to articulate them, and possible results that you may also be able to adapt to fit your particular experience.

BEHIND THE SKILLS BUZZWORDS		
<b>1. Team and Interpersonal Skills</b>		
<b>Behaviours</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enthusing/encouraging</li> <li>• Explaining clearly</li> <li>• Performing reliably</li> <li>• Responding flexibly</li> <li>• Prioritizing team goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrating patience and tolerance of others</li> <li>• Supporting others</li> <li>• Listening/ questioning</li> <li>• Feeding back tactfully</li> </ul>	<b>Results</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased cooperation and compromise</li> <li>• Stronger group motivation</li> <li>• Misunderstandings avoided</li> <li>• Targets exceeded</li> <li>• Discontent dealt with</li> <li>• Talents used efficiently</li> <li>• People enjoy working together</li> </ul>
<b>2. Written and Oral Communication</b>		
<b>Behaviours</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening/ paying attention to others' views</li> <li>• Simplifying/ making things easier to understand</li> <li>• Recommending/ advising on a course of action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiating compromise/agreement</li> <li>• Persuading/ influencing</li> <li>• Presenting ideas</li> <li>• Reporting: verbal or written account</li> <li>• Responding/ answering questions</li> </ul>	<b>Results</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative views taken into consideration</li> <li>• Exchange of knowledge and ideas</li> <li>• Confidence instilled</li> <li>• Complex information conveyed clearly</li> <li>• Appropriate language, style and methods used depending on audience</li> <li>• Increased co-operation and compromise</li> <li>• Misunderstanding avoided</li> </ul>
<b>3. Analytical Skills, Problem Solving and Creativity</b>		
<b>Behaviours</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnosing problems</li> <li>• Researching</li> <li>• Determining/prioritising in order of importance</li> <li>• Delegating/categorising</li> <li>• Assessing/measuring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting/ understanding meaning</li> <li>• Developing ideas</li> <li>• Decision-making</li> <li>• Testing/trying something</li> <li>• Deciding/making up mind</li> </ul>	<b>Results</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying key components of problems and situation</li> <li>• Thinking of new ways to do things</li> <li>• Overcoming obstacles</li> <li>• Being able to place reliance on something</li> <li>• Continued momentum</li> <li>• Forming conclusions based on evidence</li> </ul>
<b>4. Planning, Organisation and Project Management</b>		
<b>Behaviours</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning/ anticipating problems</li> <li>• Prioritising in order of importance</li> <li>• Delegating/ assigning tasks</li> <li>• Reviewing performance</li> <li>• Supervising/ overseeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheduling times/resources</li> <li>• Taking decisions</li> <li>• Assessing/ monitoring progress &amp; performance</li> <li>• Coping/ persevering in face of obstacles</li> </ul>	<b>Results</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efficient use of resources</li> <li>• Clarity of roles</li> <li>• Staff instilled with sense of responsibility</li> <li>• Talents used effectively</li> <li>• Issues &amp; tasks not overlooked</li> <li>• Misunderstandings avoided</li> <li>• Results achieved in timely, quality, cost-effective way</li> </ul>
<b>5. Staff Management and Leadership</b>		
<b>Behaviours</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairing/ managing group activities/discussions</li> <li>• Allocating/ assigning tasks</li> <li>• Convincing/ persuading people</li> <li>• Recommending/ advising on course of action</li> <li>• Handling conflict sensitively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solving problems/ finding answers/ making decisions</li> <li>• Co-ordinating/ controlling situations</li> <li>• Encouraging/ instilling confidence</li> <li>• Coaching/ helping to improve</li> </ul>	<b>Results</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of purpose/direction</li> <li>• Individual roles understood</li> <li>• Communication enhanced</li> <li>• Options weighed-up/ risks evaluated</li> <li>• Misunderstandings avoided</li> <li>• Obstacles overcome</li> <li>• Objectives Met</li> <li>• Staff developed</li> </ul>

Applications

<b>6. Self motivation, initiative and drive</b>			
<b>Behaviours</b>		<b>Results</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• initiating/ originating something</li> <li>• anticipating/ expecting something before it happens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• making decisions</li> <li>• overcoming obstacles</li> <li>• persisting/ persevering/ remaining constant to a purpose</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding better ways of doing something</li> <li>• taking responsibility for own time and effectiveness</li> <li>• making things happen/ moving forward</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not being waylaid by setbacks</li> <li>• reaching goals</li> <li>• working to high standards/ producing high quality output</li> </ul>
<b>7. Commercial awareness</b>			
<b>Behaviours</b>		<b>Results</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• researching/ investigating</li> <li>• measuring: finding size or quantity</li> <li>• originating/ devising/ creating</li> <li>• developing ideas/ making them reality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• budgeting/ assigning financial resources</li> <li>• advertising/ marketing</li> <li>• promoting something/ persuading people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding better ways of doing something</li> <li>• taking responsibility for own time and effectiveness</li> <li>• making things happen/ moving forward</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not being waylaid by setbacks</li> <li>• reaching goals</li> <li>• working to high standards/ producing high quality output</li> </ul>
<b>8. Research</b>			
<b>Behaviours</b>		<b>Results</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• planning: detailed scheme for doing something</li> <li>• cataloguing/ categorising/ ordering information</li> <li>• compiling/ gathering information</li> <li>• observing: watching and recording</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interviewing/ questioning</li> <li>• examining/ investigating</li> <li>• consulting/ obtaining information</li> <li>• publicising/ making known</li> <li>• presenting/ putting before an audience</li> <li>• recommending/ advising on a course of action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understanding problems/ issues</li> <li>• increased understanding</li> <li>• alternative views taken into consideration</li> <li>• exchange of knowledge and ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not being waylaid by setbacks</li> <li>• reaching goals</li> <li>• working to high standards/ producing high quality output</li> </ul>
<b>9. Customer Orientation</b>			
<b>Behaviours</b>		<b>Results</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• listening/ questioning</li> <li>• empathising/ understanding</li> <li>• demonstrating patience/tolerance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explaining clearly</li> <li>• overcoming obstacles</li> <li>• persuading/ convincing</li> <li>• negotiating/ seeking agreement</li> <li>• persisting/ persevering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• needs/ problems/ issues understood</li> <li>• misunderstanding avoided</li> <li>• managing conflict sensitively</li> <li>• discontent dealt with</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confidence instilled</li> <li>• results achieved in timely, quality,</li> <li>• cost effective way</li> <li>• customers feel valued</li> </ul>

# Cover Letters

You've found a job you're interested in, you've researched the employer and you've tailored your CV. How do you make an impact with the first thing the employer gets from you: the cover letter?

Here's a suggested structure for a cover letter. Have 4 clear sections (and no more):

1. Who you are and why you're writing
2. Why you are so keen on this role with this employer
3. Why they should be keen on meeting you - what do you offer them that makes you such a good match?
4. What you want to happen next.

Take a look at the sample letter below to see this structure in practice.

A cover letter is not an exact repetition of your CV, but highlights the elements the employer should focus on.

You can inject a little more personality than you can with a CV. The tone should be professional but human – it doesn't have to be overly formal. Try saying it out loud. Does it sound like something you'd say? If not, think how you can reword it to make it sound more like you.

Make an effort to get the name of a person to address it to. If no name is given in the job advertisement, try calling the HR department and asking the name of the person who will be receiving the applications. It means you can start the letter with Dear Ms Brown or Dear Mr Trent rather than the more formal Dear Sirs or Dear Sir or Madam, which can sound a little too formal and old-fashioned. If you address the letter to a named individual, end it with Yours sincerely. (If it's not directed to a named individual, close with Yours faithfully or Yours truly.)

Sometimes, employers ask for a CV and cover letter to be emailed to them. If this is the case, it's still appropriate to set out the cover letter in a traditional letter format.

To make it look more professional, use the same font, font size and general design as you did for your CV. However, it may get separated from your CV so make sure the cover letter and the CV each work as standalone documents.

A cover letter can be an opportunity to demonstrate some commercial awareness. For example, in the section on why you want the role, you might be able to drop in something you've read about the employer's client base and how that's changing, or why their culture appeals to you, etc.

When you're happy with the content of your letter, read through it carefully several times to check there are no spelling mistakes, typos or grammatical errors. And, ideally, get someone else to look over it as a final check before it's sent.

## Further information and resources:

[prospects.ac.uk/cover\\_letters.htm](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/cover_letters.htm) - Advice on and examples of cover letters

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/cvs-and-cover-letters/cover-letters/cover-letter-by-an-international-graduate> - Example cover letter by an international graduate

## Examples of cover letters

This is a letter to support an application for a paralegal role at a fast-expanding investment claims company. This is what it says on their website:

### **ABOUT US**

*ABCCo has expanded rapidly since we started in 2011. From an initial team of 3, we now have 38 full time members of the team and manage over 2200 claims, with a total value of over £1.22bn .Looking to the future, we see more of the same. In fact, with some of the technology innovation we are working on today, we expect these numbers to increase tenfold in the next two years.*

### **CAREERS**

*ABCCo is looking for a paralegal (preferably with practical litigation/regulatory experience) to help progress a diverse financial products caseload. This will involve case assessment, consideration of merits, loss analysis and engagement with external suppliers. ABCCo would particularly like to receive email expressions of interest with cover letter and CV from tax and financial regulatory compliance students.*

*Even if your experience doesn't quite fit the bill, we're always looking for talented people to join our team. So if you think ABCCo is for you, email your CV and a cover letter to John Blackthorn at ...*

*The letter below follows the structure set out in the note on the previous page and is tailored towards this particular role with this particular employer- it aims to make the best match. It is too short without enough detail, but is here to demonstrate a possible structure:*

.....

Dear Mr Blackthorn,

I see from your website that you are looking for paralegals to help progress your expanding caseload. I am soon to complete my LLM in Tax Law at Queen Mary University and am eager to put my legal knowledge and practical experience to good use, so enclose my CV.

I am particularly attracted to ABCCo in view of its keen client focus and innovation in delivering legal services.

Having read your site carefully, and spoken with your colleague, Anna Fernandez, at a recent event, I believe there could be a very good match, as I have:

- A good grounding in English tax law – I scored 82% in the Tax elective of my LLB; and am on course for a Distinction in my LLM.
- Practical experience of analysing complaints and working with diverse stakeholders – in my two years as a part-time Customer Relationship Executive within a credit card insurance company, I responded to numerous letters of complaint or enquiry from customers, and escalated them where appropriate.
- A genuine interest in using technology to improve business efficiency – in my spare time, I make and sell greetings cards, using design software and web-based platforms to create and promote the goods.

I would very much appreciate the opportunity to discuss this with you at interview and, in any event, look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Here is another example of a letter for a different role:

**Job Specification:**

*Allen & Undery, a leading international law firm, is seeking a mid-level associate to join its growing Employment team. The role will provide you with a significant amount of responsibility, and you will act predominantly for respondents. The clients include well-known tech and media sector clients and household names.*

*The work will be wide-ranging and include tribunal litigation, advocacy at preliminary hearings and other forms of dispute resolution, providing advice on a variety of employee relations issues, drafting and advising on HR policies, employment contracts etc, and also, on occasion, acting for HNW individuals and dealing with High Court proceedings.*

**Required skills and attributes:**

- *Qualified lawyer with 3-6 years PQE, with a good technical knowledge of employment law*
- *Familiarity with the range of dispute resolution options available in this area*
- *Strong commercial awareness and interpersonal skills*
- *Foreign languages an advantage*

*To apply, please send a CV and cover letter to our recruitment partner, Andrew Smith. The application deadline is 31 August 2016.*

.....

Dear Mr Smith,

I would like to apply for the role advertised in the Lawyer's Post (the August 2016 edition) for a solicitor specialising in employment law at Allen & Undery and so enclose my CV.

I have 4 years' practical experience, acting for both employers and employees, and have just completed a Masters degree at Queen Mary, University of London, which included a module on Arbitration and the Workplace. My final dissertation focused on the increasing recourse to arbitration in the workplace and how the system can be made even more efficient, user-friendly, but above all, more likely to produce results of mutual satisfaction. I understand from practice how important it is for organisations to maintain respectful relationships with employees, even where there are matters of contention, to reduce the risk of reputational damage and the spread of ill will among the remaining workforce.

I see from the firm's website that Allen & Undery has increased their taking up of workplace arbitration cases by 18% over the last two years. The firm's commitment to and expertise in this field is one of the reasons I am so drawn to the role. Direct experience of the strains and motivations of staff and their employers when involved in the arbitral process have helped me develop a more comprehensive appreciation of such disputes and are qualities I would be able to draw on if I ever presided over a workplace dispute on behalf of Allen & Undery.

With the narrow margin between wages and prices set to be part of the landscape for the foreseeable future, employment disputes are likely to be a feature of the coming years. I would hope that I could put my knowledge and experience of conflict resolution and workplace practice of employers towards their employees to good use within your firm. I also think my language skills and overseas contacts (I am an Italian native speaker, but am fluent in Spanish) could complement a firm that clearly has further international ambitions as well as an already healthy and expanding UK portfolio.

I very much look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Giovanni Zaramella



Sample letter below is for a law firm training contract. Please note the structure of letter as well as the content

Suki Thomas  
25 Charter House  
London, E3 2BG  
+44 (0) 7597 759398  
sukijthom@gmail.com

Amanda Morris  
Simpson & Bell LLP  
7 Emery Square  
London, EC4X 1LH

9 March 2017

Dear Ms Morris,

I am a postgraduate Medical Law student at Queen Mary University and am interested in undertaking work experience at Simpson & Bell.

I am particularly attracted to Simpson & Bell due to the firm's expertise in clinical negligence litigation. Throughout my legal studies, I have found the multi-faceted nature of clinical negligence the most intellectually stimulating. Hearing from medical law specialist David Body allowed me to appreciate the complexities involved in these claims, in particular his handling of the landmark CJD litigation. I am keen to face the challenges presented by litigation work myself. The ability to use my knowledge and skills in order to help claimants obtain the compensation they deserve and help dramatically improve their lives is what lies behind my interest in practising in this field.

I am a firm believer in self-improvement and always strive to develop outside of my academics. Having taken the initiative to found the Queen Mary 21st Century Ethics Society, I was elected Vice President which allowed me to strengthen my teamwork and communication skills. I liaised with our chosen charities, organised various fundraising events and pushed for inclusivity.

Gaining skills from a practical work environment has been important for me as well. I have thoroughly enjoyed acting as a Student Advisor at the 'qLegal' clinic, as it gave me the opportunity to lead client interviews, research independently and produce letters of advice. This has given me the confidence to apply knowledge practically, cultivate positive client relationships and to work well under pressure.

Given my background knowledge of clinical negligence, my skills in legal research and appetite to work in this field, I believe I could be a natural fit at Simpson & Bell. I thank you in advance for your consideration and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Suki Thomas

# Online Applications

This note is about online applications - where an employer asks you to complete a form online rather than send in a CV – rather than the generic application process.

## Why do employers use online applications?

By asking for specific information from each applicant, employers can focus on the particular attributes they are looking for. Also, the process makes it easier to compare applicants.

Employers put a lot of work into designing their application forms and you should expect to put a lot of work into completing them. It's not something you can do well at the last minute, so get going as soon as possible and **allow plenty of time** (at least a couple of days) to complete the form, before the application deadline.

What does an application usually cover?

Generally there are questions relating to 6 areas:

- Basic **factual information** - your personal details
- Evidence of your **knowledge** - your education and qualifications
- Evidence of your **experience** – details of your jobs, including part-time and voluntary roles, and any extra-curricular activities
- Evidence of your **skills** – sometimes called 'competencies', your qualities and abilities
- Your **motivation** – why you want this role
- Your **commercial awareness** – to demonstrate you have a wider focus beyond your academic studies including what you know about the firm, the legal sector, the business environment etc; and to prove you can express an opinion on topical issues.

Sometimes a single question will cover two or three of these areas as they can overlap.

## What sort of questions might I get asked and what is the employer looking for?

Here are three questions taken from a recent training contract application form. The questions look simple but take time to think carefully what the employer wants to know. Think about (i) the obvious things the employer is looking for and (ii) qualities the employer is interested in that may be **hidden within the question**:

***Please describe an achievement of importance to you.***

The employer is giving you a chance to pick out an impressive achievement. It does not have to be related to law, it could be something outside your work and studies.

Give facts and figures to paint the picture, and try using the STAR technique. Try to avoid using set phrases that lots of other applicants will also be using – you want to stand out! (see chapter on CVs).

Choose an achievement that demonstrates skills that will be of interest **to the employer**, such as potential leadership, drive and initiative, organisational skills and problem-solving. Generally, it's better to use more recent examples where you can.

Ensure that you don't fake your enthusiasm – make sure the achievement really is important to you. This question is also looking for clues as to your motivation. What you consider important will help them determine what's driving you and how committed you might be.

**Please list the activities outside of academic study that you have been involved in during the last three years, detailing your contribution. Please also give details of any positions of responsibility you may have held during this time.**

What might the employer be looking for here? Perhaps someone who can demonstrate they:

- Are a well-rounded character, who would get on well with clients and can talk about things other than law
- Have useful skills, apart from legal knowledge or the ability to research and write essays
- Can manage their time effectively, juggling study with outside activities
- Have made a difference in some way, even if working as part of a team or by influencing others.

**Tell us why you think your characteristics, qualities, experience and ambitions make you a strong candidate to contribute to our firm?**

This question is about showing that you would be a good match with the firm. The clue to answering it well is to think about it in three parts before writing anything:

1. What are your characteristics, qualities, experience and ambitions that set you apart from other people?
2. What is it that this firm wants in its employees? How can you best use this opportunity to show you have done your research on this firm and you understand its needs? (In itself, this shows commitment to the role.)
3. Most importantly, how can you link your answer to 1. with your answer to 2?

Often, questions come with a tight word limit. The employer wants to know that you can select, organise and communicate relevant information in a succinct and professional way. This is an important skill in itself that will almost certainly be required in the role. Stick within the word count!

Another key skill employers look for is attention to detail. By making sure your application is grammatically correct with no spelling mistakes, and is also neatly laid out and formatted, you are already demonstrating you have this skill.

## 5 Top Tips

1. **Research the employer thoroughly** before you start applying. Look at the employer's website, directories and student guides, any press articles (Google them), and use your network to get personal insight.
2. **Think: why they are asking this question?** Put yourself in the employer's shoes. Once you have worked out what that employer is trying to find out, it's much easier to write your answer.
3. **Be original and authentic** – successful applicants clearly link what the employer wants with good examples from their experience, written in a natural way, without clichés.
4. **Take time and be thorough** – treat it as if it is the only application you'll ever make: ensure it has well-thought out examples and is without any spelling mistakes or typos. Quality is better than quantity.
5. **Do what they ask** – follow each requirement that the particular employer sets out: eg word limits, and make sure you hit the deadline. Many online applications look similar so beware copying and pasting and don't be caught out!

## Further information and resources:

[prospects.ac.uk/applying\\_for\\_jobs\\_write\\_a\\_successful\\_job\\_application.htm](https://prospects.ac.uk/applying_for_jobs_write_a_successful_job_application.htm)

<https://www.lawcareers.net/Explore/Features/30062020-How-to-apply-for-a-training-contract-a-four-step-master-class>

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/applying-for-jobs/example-questions-and-answers>

# Assessment Centres

Assessment Centres have become a corner stone in the recruitment process for trainee lawyers in most medium to large firms and legal organisations. Law organisations find they are a more fair and accurate means of determining your suitability for a trainee role.

The assessed activities you undertake gives them broad insight into how you behave in different situations and with different people. Often firms use exercises that simulate the sort of work you might do as a trainee. It is not so much about the right answers, but how you cope in a work situation.

Although they might seem scary, they actually provide you with more than one chance to shine and demonstrate your strengths. So, if you can, look at them as a blessing in disguise, and pat yourself on the back for being asked. They are normally the last step to getting a training contract, Vacation Scheme or pupillage, so being invited is very positive. With some preparation, you can turn down the pressure.

## What do they entail?

Each law firm actions their assessment centres differently. Here is the range of things that might happen (although, generally, not all of these would be done at one centre):

### Interviews

The interview is most likely with a partner and can focus on your motivation to work at the firm, commercial awareness and competencies. Regarding commercial awareness, they are looking at how you express your opinions and argue your point of view. It is a good idea to bring a topic to the interview.

Partners may also put some different scenarios to you to see how you think on the spot and analyse key factors. The focus is on how you think. Please have a look at the Interviews section of this guide for more guidance.

### In tray exercises or e-tray exercise

These assess how you prioritise and your ability to work under pressure.

### Role playing

This could be a mock client call, court hearing or similar. It is about communication abilities, negotiation skills and how you retain and organize information.

### Group exercises

This helps the assessors to understand your team work and generally is a problem-solving roleplay. They are looking for your leadership skills, sensible and substantive contributions, listening skills, decision-making and how you interact with a group.

### Presentations and Case Studies

Becoming increasingly popular, case studies test your ability to read and analyse text quickly and effectively in a limited time frame. They are also evaluating your powers of persuasion and ability to form a legal argument. It is important you gather relevant information from all angles so you'll be able to talk to the counter-arguments. Think from a client perspective and be solutions-oriented.

You may be asked to present your findings during an interview later in the day. Be prepared to support your recommendations or conclusions. To practise, read articles in newspapers like the Financial Times and pull out key facts and information.

### Psychometric tests

These are done online, generally before the assessment centre day. They might test critical thinking, situational judgement and verbal and numerical abilities,

## 10 Tips for Acing Assessment Centres

1. **Remind yourself what the firm is looking for** and review your application so you know the key behaviours, attributes and skills they are looking for in a candidate – for example, “brightest legal mind”, and “team players”.
2. **Get a good night’s sleep** – assessment centres can be all day affairs, so it’s important you feel rested and energised.
3. **Listen**– the introduction session will provide important instructions for the day. It might also share updates that you might refer to over the day.
4. **Be yourself** – it’s important to show your strengths, but trying to be something you aren’t will look superficial – so try to relax and be yourself at the very top of your form.
5. **Assessors** – they will be there to assess you but they aren’t there to catch you out – so don’t think about what they might be writing down, or whether what you said was bad or good.
6. **Picking yourself up** – if there are several exercises over the day, you may find that some go better than others. If you’re unhappy with your performance in one area, remind yourself you have done well to get there in the first place – and focus on giving the next task your best shot.
7. **Informal office tours and networking lunches** – there is no real time to turn off. Office walkabouts with a trainee and a lunch with partners are chances for you to find out more about the firm and the people who work there. Have some questions prepared that aren’t something you can find on the website.
8. **Commercial awareness builds up.** You can’t gain it overnight, so follow news stories that you are genuinely interested in with relevance to clients and think about the role of the lawyer in the situation.
9. **“Leadership” is not dominating the conversation.** It is a balance and about giving structure to the group work, summarizing, moving the conversation along and persuading. It is also about impact throughout the day. What do the partners remember about you?
10. **QMUL Careers and Enterprise can help you with mock interviews, practice psychometric tests** and runs assessment centre workshops to give you a sense of the process. Often a law firm’s website will tell you exactly which tests and assessments they will be using.

## Resources

[www.traineesolicitorsurgery.co.uk/practice-assessment-centre-tests/](http://www.traineesolicitorsurgery.co.uk/practice-assessment-centre-tests/)

On the QMPlus careers page there are links to assessment centre practice websites. They also include information on and practice psychometric tests. QMUL subscribes to these sites for students and they include extensive information and exercises.

# Interviews

Being invited for an interview means the recruiter was impressed with your application and would like to find out more about you. This is a great opportunity for you to showcase your skills and experiences.

For law firms, you may do two interviews: one with the recruiter and another with a partner. One could even be a panel interview. Interviews are often part of an Assessment Day and your interview may be combined with a case study discussion. Whatever the case is for you, make the most of this chance by preparing well. This will help you to perform to your best on the day.

## How do you get started?

### Know yourself

Start by re-reading your application form, CV or covering letter. Think about it from the employer's point of view. What are your strong and your weak points? What areas might need clarification? Is there anything not on the forms that they need to know?

Anything you put on your application form or in your CV is fair game for an interviewer to question you on, so be ready to explain any of the information you have given. It could even be the interest in baroque music you included in your CV so be prepared to discuss it.

### Know the job

Familiarise yourself with the job description and the skills and qualities needed for the job. Think ahead about which examples from your own experiences you could use to demonstrate that you have certain skills and qualities.

Your examples will act as evidence to show employers you have the skills and ability to do the job. These should be from a variety of situations - your course, work experience or extra-curricular activities.

Structuring your skills examples using the STAR method can have more impact and help you remember your examples on the day. See the CV section for information about this method.

### Know the organisation

Find out as much as you can about the employer. Visit the organisation's website, Facebook or LinkedIn page. Read through their annual report or visit the City Business Library website to find out more. Be aware of the company's mission, vision statements or key principles, so you know what is important to them and how they see their future.

Keep your eyes on the news or on Twitter for any stories about the organisation or about their industry. What are their current cases or latest deals? If something significant has occurred (eg a change in legislation) try to think what impact that could have on the organisation, or the sector. Also be clear about why it has interested you.

Some useful sources for information about the industry include:

**[legalweek.com](http://legalweek.com)**

**[thelawyer.com](http://thelawyer.com)**

**[chambersandpartners.com](http://chambersandpartners.com)**

**[lexology.com](http://lexology.com)**

The Financial Times which you can access via the library.

Attend Open Days and QMUL employer events, which are an opportunity to get some insider knowledge about the organisation and meet some of the people you might be working with.

### Know the details

Check the time of the interview, the date, the location, and the name and job title of the interviewer(s). Take the letter or email inviting you to interview along with you. Have the phone number available in case anything goes wrong or you are delayed. Make sure you know how to get there and how long it will take (and plan an alternative route just in case)!

## Practise, practise, practise

QMUL has several useful tools to help prepare for your interview including an interview simulator. Go to this page and sign in: <https://www.graduatesfirst.com/university-career-services/QMUL>

When you have been offered an interview, book an appointment for a practice interview with a Careers Consultant. You'll be asked to send in the job description and your application form so the interview can be created specifically for you. These sessions are a great way to get some constructive feedback and improve your interview performance.

**To book a mock interview with the careers team call 0207 882 8533 or email [careers.qmul.ac.uk](mailto:careers.qmul.ac.uk).**

## How to perform on the day

Interviewers will not just be looking at your answers to their questions. They will also consider other factors such as how you dress, how you greet reception staff, and the questions you ask them.

## First impressions count

Always arrive on time – being early is preferable. Be aware of your body language: firm handshakes, smile, make eye-contact, be attentive and do not fidget. Make sure you're comfortable when you first sit down as this will help you to relax.

## Their questions

Employers may ask you a variety of questions, but basically want to know four things:

1. Can you do the job? Do you have the right qualifications, intelligence, knowledge, skills and experience? Can you think on your feet?
2. Will you do the job? Do you have the right motivation, commitment and enthusiasm? Are you really keen to do the work of this legal organisation or firm and want to specifically work there?
3. Will you fit in? Will you fit in with the people who work there and with the culture of the organisation? Would people enjoy working with you? Can you see yourself working with these people?
4. Are you world-aware and do you have commercial acumen and an understanding of how that impacts their business?

## Commonly asked questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why did you choose law as a career?
- Why did you decide to pursue an LLM?
- Why did you select the particular focus of your LLM?
- Are you satisfied with your academic achievements to date?
- Why are you interested in our firm/agency/organisation?
- What makes you think you are a good lawyer/will be a good fit for this role?
- What do you know about our firm?
- Tell me about a major accomplishment.
- What are your long-term career goals?
- What interests you most about the legal system?
- What are your weaknesses?
- How has your education and experience prepared you for the practice of law?
- What other firms did you apply to?

- What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses? or What is your biggest failure and your biggest success?
- Why do you wish to practice in the UK?
- Why should we hire you over other candidates?
- What questions do you have?

Request the detailed sample interview question list available from QMUL Careers & Enterprise. It is important also that you also research the types of questions asked for specific job categories. For example, questions for trademark lawyers might be quite different.

## Your answers

- Try to relax and be yourself. Breathing slowly and deeply before you go in can help.
- Be enthusiastic, interesting, animated, or whatever else comes naturally to you (within reason).
- Pay attention to the interviewer. Answer the question they ask - not the one you wish they had asked.
- Speak slowly and clearly. Ask for a moment if you need time to think. Having some water to sip while you think is always a good idea. Ask for one at the beginning of the interview.
- Don't give yes or no answers. Volunteer relevant information about yourself. Your responses should be long enough to answer the question, but not too long.
- Watch the body language of the interviewer. This can often tell you whether you need to expand on something or bring that answer to a close.
- Avoid going off at a tangent or becoming involved in unnecessarily detailed explanations.
- Be truthful but positive. If you have to present negative information (e.g. a failure or a weakness), say how you learned from it or overcame it.
- Ask for clarification if you do not understand the question.

## The “Commercial” question

This is the most feared question for many students. But it doesn't have to be hard.

First, think why they are asking you this question. They want to find out:

- Do you have a good awareness of the world around you? They know you are not a BBC presenter but want you to be able to discuss cases or world events.
- How you think through a complex problem. Can you break it down and think it through holistically?
- Can you think on your feet? You are asked something you couldn't anticipate as you will be in your legal career. The ability to think fast in a coherent manner will be important.

## How to prepare for this question

Reading the paper for the important stories both on the front page and in the business section over time (not simply the night before the interview) will be useful. If the issue asked is more obscure and you are not familiar with it, you can request further background details.

Make sure you are answering their question. Ask for clarification if you need it.

It may be general or about legal issues. Either way, it is important to see the big picture and see the cultural, economic and political aspects of the situation. For instance, it may be the cultural difference of the two parties in a legal issue that will most impact its resolution.



## Video Interviews

More and more graduate recruiters are using pre-recorded video interviews as part of the interview process. Typically, these are virtual, recorded interviews in which applicants are asked a number of pre-recorded questions; frequently, applicants have 30 seconds thinking time and 60 seconds to answer each question. Compared to traditional telephone interviews, where you might be given sufficient time and prompts by the interviewer, pre-recorded video interviews can be quite a challenge.

Recruiters are increasingly using this technique for a number of reasons including the ability to screen larger numbers of applicants than traditional methods. Here are some tips:

- **Research:** As with other interviews, ensure you do your research beforehand; you will not have time to think on the spot! List competencies the employer is asking for and write down examples of how you have used these in at least one situation. Use the STAR (**S**ituation **T**ask **A**ctions **R**esult) technique to prepare.
- **Focus mainly on actions in STAR:** In 60 seconds you need to focus on the action section of the star technique. If you are describing a time when you worked in a team, there is no time to get lost in describing the various roles of other team members! Focus on the actions that you took e.g. **I prioritised** the team goals, **explained** the brief to the team, **fed back** the results to the client etc.
- **Use ‘spoken’ bullet points:** It can sometimes help to use phrases that tell the listener how many points you are going to cover e.g. ‘there are two main reasons why I have applied for this role’ or ‘I will first tell you about my interests and then tell you about my expertise.’
- **Don’t worry about the perfect structure:** In such a short time, the content and your actions are more important than a perfectly constructed answer. Recruiters will make allowances for a less than perfect structure.
- **Assume you are doing fine.** As you will not get any feedback as you go e.g. a nodding head or a ‘yes’, it’s sometimes difficult to keep going. In your head, you might be thinking oh no that was rubbish, but ignore that thought and keep going! Also, don’t get too hung up on one or two less than perfect answers. The assessors will look at your answers overall.
- **Practice, practice, practice.** Most companies allow you to have a practice question and answer but you can practice ahead of the interview. Use your phone or computer to practice your answers beforehand, setting a timer for 90 seconds, i.e. 30 seconds to think and 60 seconds to answer.

**Queen Mary Careers & Enterprise has software for you to practice interviewing** (including video interviews). Please go to the Careers page on QMPlus for the link.

## A word about “Strengths Based” interviews

Firms are increasingly moving to add strengths based interview questions vs. just skills and competency questions. They feel that competency questions can be over-prepared and do not adequately distinguish candidates.

They also want a more genuine understanding of what energizes and engages you, which should be the clearest indicator of motivation and interest in the job. These types of questions are considered particularly useful with people who don’t have a great deal of work experience.

Some examples of these questions are: ‘What do you do well?’, ‘When do you feel you are most like “yourself”?’, ‘When are you at your best?’, ‘What part of your job do you enjoy the most?’, and ‘What part of the job did you least enjoy?’ They might ask quickly to elicit the most candid response.

The preparation for these questions is different. Look at your CV or application and think about what you have enjoyed and taken pride in and why. What do you love doing even outside of work? Think about how your preferences suit the organisational culture and the job requirements and emphasise those.

## Your questions

It is important to prepare some questions so you can get a better understanding of the legal organisation. They should not be things you can find on their website.

Here are some example questions you could ask:

- How did you become interested in X practice area/subject matter?
- Did you focus on X while you attended were studying?
- Do you recommend any courses or clinics that would enhance my understanding of X field?
- Why did you choose this firm/organisation over others?
- What do you like most about this firm/practice group/organisation?
- What makes someone successful in this role?
- Tell me about the firm/practice group/organisation culture.
- How is work distributed/how will I receive assignments?
- What type of assignments do lawyers of my level typically work on?
- Will I work with the same partners/senior associates often or will I be assigned to projects with different partners/senior associates?
- How will my work be evaluated? What kind of feedback can I expect to receive?
- How do you think the firm will grow in the next five years?
- How does the firm train junior associates to develop business?
- Tell me about a memorable case/deal/issue you worked on while working at this firm/organisation.
- Can you explain the firm's/organisation's management structure to me in greater detail? Does the headquarter office dictate the actions of the other offices?
- What type of interaction do lawyers in this office have with lawyers at the firm's/organisation's other offices?
- What do you find most challenging about your practice?
- What are the biggest challenges facing the firm/organisation right now?
- What is the next step in the hiring process?

Avoid asking about salary, holidays or anything you should already know from details they have sent you.

## After the interview

- Make a note of the questions they asked. Were you satisfied with your answers, or could you do better next time?
- If they do not contact you when they said they would or if it has been a long time since the interview (more than two weeks), try ringing or emailing to check the situation.
- If you are rejected, try asking for some feedback so that you can gain an idea of where improvements need to be made.

**Book a mock interview with QM Careers to practice and get constructive feedback. Please contact us on 0207 882 8533 or email [careers@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:careers@qmul.ac.uk) to arrange this as soon as you are invited to interview.**

# **4. The Job Market**

# Overview of the Job Market for QMUL PG Law Students

This section is designed to give you a broad overview of some of the career options available. It may help you if you are:

- Thinking about career direction and want to see a wide range of potential careers
- Not planning to qualify as a solicitor or barrister (although these options are included)
- Looking at areas for a short-term role to make a career decision, gain relevant skills to enhance your CV, or gain some work experience while in the UK.

## It covers three areas:

1. **Qualifying as a lawyer in the UK and advising clients.** Here you can find the steps you need to take if you want to become a solicitor or a barrister. It includes a section on the role of paralegals and legal executives, Trademark and Patent Attorneys: ie other options for carrying out legal work for external clients.
2. **Carrying out legal work within an employing organisation.** This outlines options where your 'client' is your employing organisation rather than for external clients. Working in-house may be an option at many stages of your career – as a paralegal, as a route to qualification, or as a fully qualified lawyer.
3. **Working in a non-legal role but building on your legal education.** This gives a brief summary of some of the more popular roles for people with a legal academic background. These are areas where your legal knowledge and the skills you learn while studying law - eg analytical thinking, problem-solving, assimilating large amounts of information quickly - are particularly valuable.

The information is not meant to be comprehensive. It will give you a brief overview of career options and signpost you to more information. It also does not cover all possible opportunities, especially for the specific areas of specialism. This information will be provided over this academic year through the Specialism Groups.

You might find it helpful to discuss your career options with a Careers Consultant as soon as you can. **To set up an appointment call 0207 882 8533 or email [careers@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:careers@qmul.ac.uk).**



### **Vivian Marangoni, LLM Public International Law and Energy and Natural Resources Law**

Vivian is currently General Counsel for the Department of International Trade (UK). Her role is to advise on the legal aspects of the vast majority of the trade Agreements that the EU has concluded with third party countries and with whom the UK is now engaging in discussions to replicate their effects. This is to ensure the continuity of trade relations and market access after the UK is no longer bound by EU law.

Previously Vivian was with Ofgem, the UK electricity and gas regulator. Here she designed policy and legislation including leading the Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive Public Inquiry and working to modify the supply licenses and industry codes to enable innovation.

Her career started as a human rights lawyer working for organizations like Amnesty International. She is qualified as a lawyer in Brazil and is now undertaking QLTS to qualify as a UK lawyer. Vivian believes being open to opportunities outside of law firms has allowed her to find a career that is more creative, but where they still value her legal skills. Pursuing bigger international organizations and graduate schemes is better for international students. "The most important thing is to get your foot in the door somewhere then you can decide if you want to go back and practice."

# Solicitor

Traditionally in the UK there have been two routes into law: solicitor or barrister. To some extent this distinction has become blurred, but essentially solicitors provide advice and assistance on matters of law for clients and are normally a client's first point of contact. (Barristers tend to be used only for court work and specialist advice – see the Barristers section.)

Clients include individuals, groups, public sector organisations and private companies. In some cases lawyers qualified as solicitor advocates are able to appear on behalf of their clients in courts, but this is typically done by barristers.

Solicitors generally advise on commercial issues such as complex commercial transactions including mergers, acquisitions, sale and purchase agreements as well as contentious work and business disputes and arbitration; personal issues such as selling residential property and family matters; and rights protection including individual employment issues.

The majority work in private practice, but others work in-house, in the legal departments of corporations, banks and other organisations.

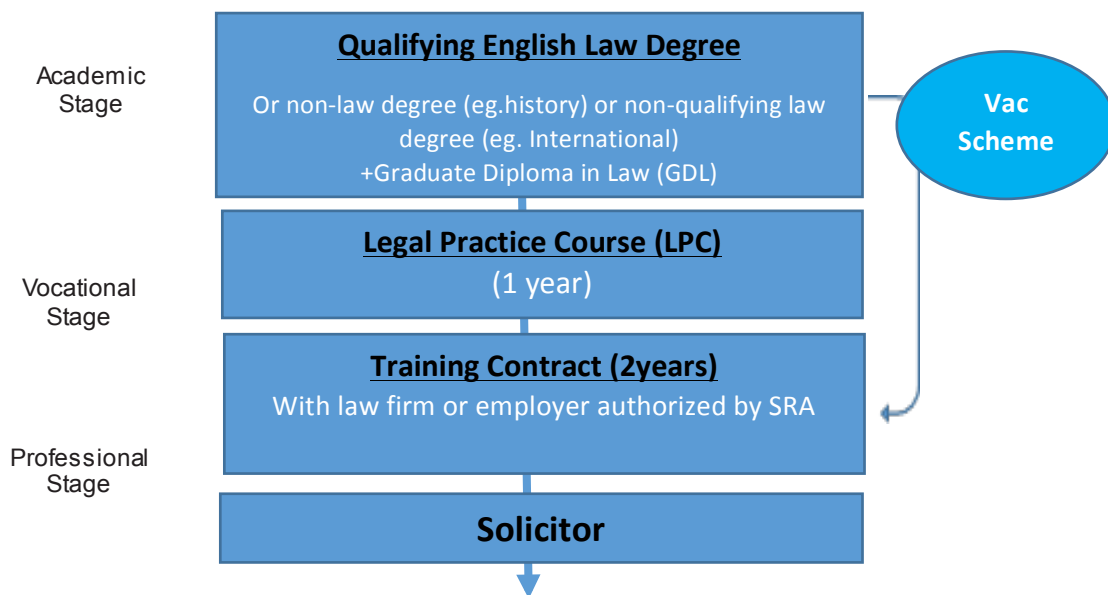
## How to become a solicitor

Information for this article taken from LawCareers.net <https://www.lawcareers.net/Solicitors/the-solicitors-qualifying-examination>

The route to become a solicitor is in a period of transition. The Solicitor Qualifying Exam is a new system of exams that will be introduced in autumn 2021. It has been introduced to ensure that any solicitor in which ever manner they have trained (apprentice, training contract, etc.) meet a common standard of legal knowledge and competence at the point of qualification. It also is in line with international practice so easier to understand globally and potentially less costly.

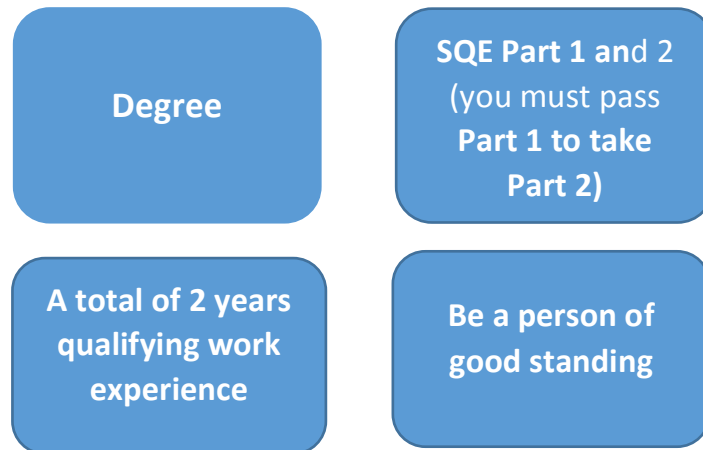
For a period of time the old and new system will run in parallel. So if a student has started their LLB or Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL) before 2021 they can continue with the existing system.

### Current Regime for Qualification



- You start applying to firms at the academic stage
- 50-100% of trainees recruited by vacation schemes depending on the firm, particularly large ones
- Large firms pay for LPC and GDL.

## New regime for qualification



The SQE is like the bar exam offered in other countries. It has two parts SQE 1 and 2. You must pass 1 to take 2. Preparation education providers are not being regulated by the SRA (Solicitors Regulation Authority) so anyone can set up a course.

Essentially this new process makes two big changes. First **the qualification** itself and second is how you acquire **qualifying legal experience**

### The Qualification

**SQE 1: Functioning legal knowledge** – knowledge of the law and how you would apply it in real-life situations as a solicitor

SQE1 is made up of two exams, each containing 180 multiple-choice questions (MCQs)

The first 180-question exam covers:

- business law and practice;
- dispute resolution;
- Contract;
- tort;
- legal system of England and Wales; and
- constitutional and administrative Law and EU law and legal Services

The second SQE1 exam covers:

- property practice;
- wills and the administration of estates;
- solicitors accounts;
- land law;
- trusts; and
- criminal law and practice.

**Once you pass SQE1 you have a 6 year time limit to gain 2 years qualifying work experience and take SQE Part 2**

## **SQE 2: Core legal skills**

Four oral skills assessments and 12 written skills assessments, which take place over multiple days

SQE2 assesses the following five key skills:

- client interviewing;
- advocacy/persuasive oral communication;
- case and matter analysis – including planning negotiations;
- legal research and written advice; and
- legal drafting

These skills are assessed across five practice areas:

- criminal practice;
- dispute resolution;
- property;
- wills and the administration of estates; and
- business practice.

## **Qualifying Work Experience**

Qualifying work experience can be gained in the following ways:

- on placement during a law degree
- working in a law clinic
- at a voluntary or charitable organisation such as Citizen Advice or a law centre
- working as a paralegal
- on a training contract

**Or** a combination of the above

- Up to 4 different employers possible
- Must be signed off by a solicitor or COLP
- It can be acquired during or after you sit the SQE assessments and can be in England, Wales or overseas
- It appears however that large firms will still require a 2 year traineeship with them

**This transition is not fully settled and there are still some challenges being made by the solicitor community.**

**Keep up to date via**

**<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/law-careers/becoming-a-solicitor/sqe-overview/>**

**<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/policy/sqe.page>**

## Work Experience, Internships and Open Days

Work experience is vital for gaining a training contract. Law Firms offer Vacation Schemes to provide this type of work experience. The first deadlines for winter schemes are in November, so pay attention to getting your applications in on time. There are also schemes in the spring/summer.

As obtaining places on Vacation Schemes is very competitive, attending Open and Insight Days at law firms can also be useful to give you a better understanding of the firm, allow you to network and to demonstrate your enthusiasm.

See the following site for dates of Open Days and deadlines for Vacation Schemes and training contract applications:

**lawcareers.net/Solicitors/WorkPlacementDeadlines**

Work experience outside of a law firm is also valued, particularly if you can gain the skills that law firms are looking for like commercial awareness and team work. Work-shadowing is useful too and can help you make a decision about which firm to apply to. Please see the Internship section.

Please note that that this is a short overview of the route to qualifying as a solicitor. It is important to look at the resources suggested at the end of this section for further information, and also to attend the career events at CCLS.

## International Students – Qualified Lawyers Transfer Scheme (QLTS)

**Once the new SQE is established the QLTS route will discontinue and the SQE replace it.**

A qualified lawyer is someone who holds a legal professional qualification which allows them to practise in England and Wales or another jurisdiction.

Qualified lawyers need to do the following to become a solicitor in England and Wales:-

- have a degree in any subject that is equivalent to a UK degree or level 6 qualification or other qualification and/or experience equivalent to this
- pass the SQE1 and SQE2 assessments unless your qualification has an agreed exemption or you wish to apply for an individual one
- meet the SRA's character and suitability requirements.

You are not required to do qualifying work experience as the SRA will recognise your existing qualification and experience.

Find out more about the SRA approach by visiting the SRA website **www.sra.org.uk** and visit the qualified lawyers section.



## International Students - Before you decide to qualify

- Network with UK solicitors via employer events, Open Days etc and learn their recruitment processes: many firms can have different processes
- Obtain work experience/work shadowing in the UK
- Check the costs with the SRA to apply, the cost of doing the test, and the cost for a preparation course with a provider like BPP if you wish to do that
- Ensure you meet the eligibility requirements for the SRA
- Check that your jurisdiction/degree is recognised by the SRA
- Establish the English language requirements
- Calculate how long it will take to become qualified
- Check your visa/immigration regulations

You should note that even if you become UK qualified, that does not guarantee you will find employment in the UK.

We **urge** you to attend the events: What it Really Takes to Enter the UK Job Market and Training Pathways to a Career in Law. See the events schedule and newsletters for dates and times.

### To get started

Research possible firms as soon as possible, considering location, areas of practice, commercial sectors etc. Then identify the ones most suited to your skills, work experience and interests.

Applications must be tailored to the firm to succeed, so sending identical applications to numerous firms will not work. You are better off choosing around five specific firms, doing your research and spending time on the application to maximise your chances. See the Applications section in this guide.

### Is there funding for LPC and GDL courses or eventually the SQE?

The training to qualify as a solicitor is expensive, so it's worth knowing what financial support is available from law firms, bursary schemes, loans and elsewhere. In addition, if you are considering funding these two courses yourself, you should have a conversation with a Careers Consultant to determine if this is the best path for you due to the cost. A good overview of funding sources is available at:

**<https://targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors/law-solicitors/305519-which-law-firms-will-fund-your-lpc-and-gdl-course-fees-and-pay-maintenance-costs>**

### More information and resources

LawCareers.net: **[lawcareers.net/solicitors](http://lawcareers.net/solicitors)**

Prospects: **<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/solicitor>**

Chambers Student Guide: **[chambersstudent.co.uk/](http://chambersstudent.co.uk/)**

SRA: **[sra.org.uk/students](http://sra.org.uk/students)**

Seek advice via a one-to-one with a Careers Consultant to see if being a solicitor is right for you. You need to be passionate about the choice given the longer pathway and competitiveness of the market. In addition, you need to find out if it is possible given your visa stipulations.

# Barrister

## What is a barrister?

In England & Wales, there is a split legal profession. Broadly, this means there are two main routes to legal qualification: solicitor and barrister. Both these roles fall within the general term of 'lawyer'. Barristers are sometimes referred to as 'counsel'.

Most aspiring lawyers opt to qualify and practise as a solicitor, as it is viewed as a less risky option. There are currently just over 15,000 practising barristers (self-employed and employed) whereas there are nearly 133,000 practising solicitors.

The main role of a barrister is to provide advice on specific points of law and to represent clients in court. Their work comes via solicitors who 'instruct' a barrister on a particular case, where they need a specialist opinion, or advocacy, on behalf of their clients in court.

In other words, clients go first to a solicitor and only if further, specialist help is needed does the solicitor bring in the barrister to help on specific areas.

## Where do barristers work and how do they get paid?

There were around 16,598 self-employed barristers in 2018. Known as 'working in private practice', these barristers group together in 'sets of chambers', enabling them to share overheads and resources as well as taking advantage of the chambers' brand. As they are self-employed, there is no guarantee of an income (unlike the case of lawyers working in law firms), so it is often viewed as a more precarious career choice compared to being a solicitor.

People who are attracted to the Bar often cite the independence, thrill of court work, and potentially lucrative and high-status career path as reasons for their choice.

## What is the route to qualification?

There are three main stages to qualification as a barrister in England & Wales: the academic, vocational and professional stages. As the training period is long and challenging make sure you understand what you are up against. Fewer than 50% (2018 figure was 43%) of students who complete a Bar training course manage to gain a pupillage and many do not obtain one on their first application.

## The Academic Stage = Qualifying Law Degree: ie an LLB or Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL) for those without an LLB. (Please note: an LLM is not a Qualifying Law Degree.)

The GDL is a one-year, full-time course for people without a UK law degree and is designed to get them up to speed with the fundamentals of English Law. Applications are made via a Central Admissions Board -lawcabs.ac.uk/ - and may be made from September onwards in your final year at university. There is no closing date as applications are considered on a rolling basis.

While still at the academic stage, it is a good idea to gain insight into the work and culture of a particular set of chambers, and to improve your chances of being offered a pupillage and funding. There are short work experience schemes available to do this that are called 'mini-pupillages'. For more information on mini-pupillages, visit:

**[chambersstudent.co.uk/the-bar/mini-pupillages](http://chambersstudent.co.uk/the-bar/mini-pupillages)**

## The Vocational Stage = Bar Training Course + 12 'Qualifying Sessions'

The Bar training course is a one year, full-time (or two years, part-time) course designed to introduce practical skills needed at the Bar, including advocacy, case preparation, conferencing, negotiation and legal research.

Applications for Bar training courses have to be made to each individual Bar training provider. The first stage is usually filling out an online form/questionnaire. You can find details of the application process for each provider on their websites.

As part of the application, students must take the Bar Course Aptitude Test (BCAT) to assess suitability for the Bar training course. For further details, see: **<https://bsbstaging.pixl8.london/training-qualification/bar-qualification-manual/part-2-for-students-pupils-transferring-lawyers/b2-the-bar-course-aptitude-test-bcat.html>**

A further requirement is that students are fluent in English (ie holding a minimum score of 7.5 in each section of the IELTS academic test).

For a list of institutions offering Bar training courses,, see: <https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/training-qualification/becoming-a-barrister/vocational-component/aetos-from-2020.html>

Students taking a Bar training course must have joined one of the four Inns of Court by 31 May of the year their course will start. The Inns are ancient institutions which support barristers, and they are responsible for ‘calling someone to the Bar’: ie qualifying. The four Inns are:

**Lincoln’s Inn** - [lincolnsinn.org.uk/](http://lincolnsinn.org.uk/)

**Gray’s Inn** - [graysinn.org.uk/](http://graysinn.org.uk/)

**Inner Temple** - [innertemple.org.uk/](http://innertemple.org.uk/)

**Middle Temple** - <https://www.middletemple.org.uk/>

Students cannot be called to the Bar unless they have completed 12 ‘Qualifying Sessions’ at their Inn. Previously known as ‘dining’, the idea is that student barristers have an opportunity to mix with their peers and practising barristers, gaining an insight into the Bar and its practices. Some of the sessions include formal lectures or advocacy practice.

The Inns are important sources of **funding** for aspiring barristers as they each offer a range of bursaries and awards to their members (please note: you can’t receive funding from more than one Inn). Funding is available at each stage of the qualification process, including the GDL, so it’s important to keep a close eye on application deadlines. Generally, funding applications for the GDL close on the first Friday in May before the GDL course begins; and the Bar training course funding application closes the first Friday in the November before the Bar training course begins - in other words, pretty much as soon as you start your full-time LLM (assuming you don’t need to take the GDL first). **Details of available funding can be found on the Inns of Court websites.**

If you have passed the Bar training course and completed your Qualifying Sessions, you will be ‘called to the Bar’ by your Inn. This means you can say you have qualified as a barrister, but you cannot practise as one in the UK without completing the professional stage (ie, pupillage). Some students stop here and use their barrister qualification as a route into paralegal and other roles.

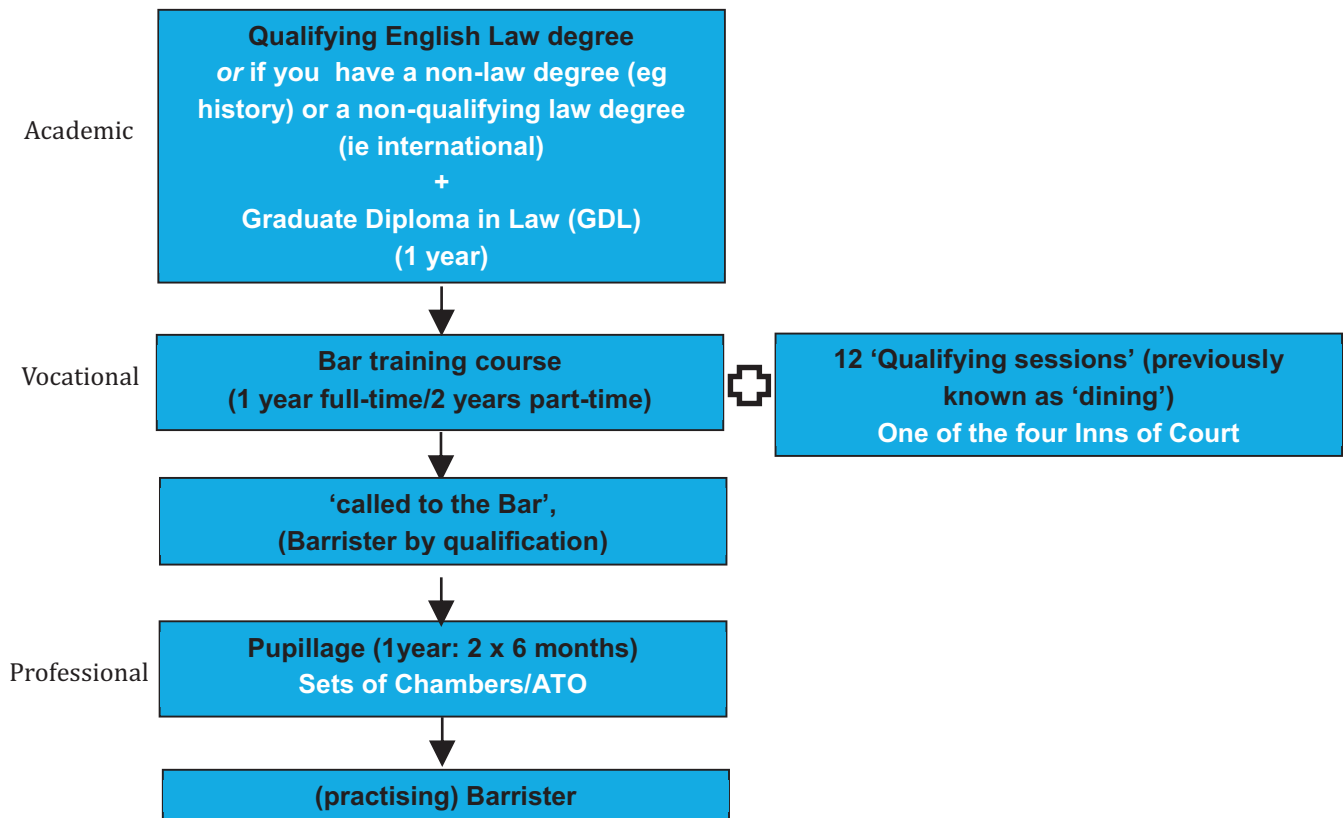
## The Professional Stage: Pupillage

Pupillage is the stage where academic and vocational knowledge and skills are applied in a real-life setting. Pupillage lasts a minimum of a year and may be divided into two ‘sixes’ (two sets of 6 months). Some public bodies and large organisations also offer the option of doing pupillage in-house as an alternative to Chambers. These organisations are known as Authorised Training Organisations (ATOs).

Pupils are assigned a pupil supervisor – a practising barrister of at least 5 years’ Call – whom you shadow and undertake supervised work for during the first six. For the second six, you can carry out some paid work yourself.

Many pupillage applications are administered via a central system, the Pupillage Gateway, and all pupillages should be advertised there (even for those Chambers receiving applications directly): [pupillagegateway.com](http://pupillagegateway.com). For pupillages administered via the Gateway, applications open in April and close in August. Generally, you should apply 18 months before you wish to start pupillage.

Pupillages administered directly by Chambers/ATOs will have their own application deadlines so you need to check the dates carefully via the Gateway – see: [lawcareers.net/Barristers/PupillageDeadlines](http://lawcareers.net/Barristers/PupillageDeadlines).



You can apply for pupillage with up to 12 Chambers/ATOs. You can apply for pupillages for up to 5 years after passing the Bar training course. Roughly, 1,700 people complete a Bar training course each year yet there are only 450 pupillages available.

However, as previous graduates can also apply, this works out at approximately 8 applicants per pupillage. Once you have successfully completed your pupillage, there is a strong chance of being taken on by your Chambers as a tenant, where you are a fully-fledged self-employed barrister within that set.

Pupillages are paid – the minimum is £12,000 for the year, but some Chambers offer up to £60,000 and some allow early drawdown to help with the expenses of the Bar training course year.

## As an international student, can I qualify as a barrister and can I practise in England & Wales?

An LLM is not a Qualifying Law Degree so international students with a law degree from their home country and a UK LLM will have to sit the GDL (subject to the possibility of exemptions – see below).

Passing the Bar training course confers the title of 'Barrister' but does not give rights of audience: you are not entitled to practise in the UK court. Students without rights of employment and residency in the UK may not practise in the UK.

Qualified lawyers from other jurisdictions may be exempt from the academic, vocational and/or professional stages of training, subject to passing certain sections of the Bar Transfer Test, which must be taken at a single sitting. For further details, see: <https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/resources/bar-transfer-test-handbook.html>

### More information and resources:

For a useful summary of becoming a barrister, including a helpful jargon buster section, see: <https://www.barcouncil.org.uk/becoming-a-barrister/students-and-graduates.html>

For more general information from the regulator, see: [barstandardsboard.org.uk/](https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/)

To find out about different sets of Chambers and to apply for mini-pupillages, see: <https://www.chambersstudent.co.uk/>

# BPP Bridge Programme

There is a set of new careers resources as part of a collaboration with BPP University Law School.

The resource is called “The Bridge Programme”, and is a free, career development programme you can complete in your own time, housed on BPP’s own learning platform.

The programme will give you useful information and development activities for all of you who wish to qualify as a solicitor or barrister in England and Wales, helping you to make the career-related decisions you have ahead of you, as well as developing some of the critical skills you will need to demonstrate in the recruitment process.

## What does the Bridge Programme cover?

A range of modules for you to undertake alongside your postgraduate studies - bridging the gap between your studies and the next stage of your legal training;

a self-study, flexible online programme which contains a variety of interactive exercises and some ‘live’ online events to attend during the academic year. You can come and go to the module materials throughout your academic year.

The Bridge is two programmes in one: Bridge to the SQE (for prospective solicitors) and Bridge to the Bar (for aspiring barristers) - you simply choose which one to enrol on.

## What are the benefits of completing the Bridge Programme?

As well as being free, students who complete at least half of the Bridge Programme, will have the chance of being awarded a scholarship in 2022, which works as a fee reduction against the cost of BPP’s GDL, LPC, SQE, BTC programmes. Because Queen Mary has signed up to the Bridge with BPP, one £5,000 scholarship is guaranteed and up to three more (worth £2,000 each) may be awarded – more details about the scholarships will be published in spring 2022 as the programme progresses. All students who complete the Bridge will also be awarded a Certificate of Completion – a great addition to your CV.

## How to access the Bridge programme

### Bridge to the SQE – how to self-enrol and access the materials

To access BPP’s free, no obligation **Bridge to the SQE\*** programme, please follow the following instructions.

**I HAVE NEVER PREVIOUSLY REGISTERED AN ACCOUNT WITH BPP** (These will be the default instructions for most students):

1. Please follow this link: [https://www.bpp.com/account?registration\\_type=bridge\\_to\\_sqe](https://www.bpp.com/account?registration_type=bridge_to_sqe)
2. Create an account as instructed.
3. Activate your account via the email you will receive (please check your SPAM/JUNK if you do not receive this).
4. Once logged in, you will see the “Bridge to the SQE” under “My Learning”.

**OR**

**I HAVE PREVIOUSLY REGISTERED AN ACCOUNT WITH BPP (OR WHEN I USE THE GUIDANCE ABOVE, IT STATES MY EMAIL IS ALREADY REGISTERED):**

1. Login via the bpp.com website (<https://www.bpp.com/account>) – use the forgotten password link if you cannot remember your account details. If you wish to use a different email address and create a new account, please use the link ABOVE.
2. Once logged in, please click on this link: <https://www.bpp.com/my/help-support/learning-support/bridge-to-sqe-bar>
3. Follow the onscreen instructions.

**OR**

**I HAVE REGISTERED FOR AN ACCOUNT AND CAN ACCESS ‘BRIDGE TO THE BAR’ BUT I NOW WISH TO ACCESS ‘BRIDGE TO THE SQE’:**

1. Ensure you are logged in to the BPP Hub, as above.
2. Use this link <https://www.bpp.com/my/help-support/learning-support/bridge-to-sqe-bar>
3. Select the option you wish to enrol on and follow the onscreen instructions.

\* To self-enrol onto the **Bridge to the Bar** programme, please see the next page

If you have any questions about the Bridge to the SQE, please email [LawBridge@bpp.com](mailto:LawBridge@bpp.com)

**Bridge to the Bar – how to self-enrol and access the materials**

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**I HAVE NEVER PREVIOUSLY REGISTERED AN ACCOUNT WITH** (These will be the default instructions for most students):

Please follow this link: [https://www.bpp.com/account?registration\\_type=bridge\\_to\\_bar](https://www.bpp.com/account?registration_type=bridge_to_bar)

1. Create an account as instructed.
2. Activate your account via the email you will receive (please check your SPAM/JUNK if you do not receive this).
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**OR**

**I HAVE PREVIOUSLY REGISTERED AN ACCOUNT WITH BPP (OR WHEN I USE THE GUIDANCE ABOVE, IT STATES MY EMAIL IS ALREADY REGISTERED):**

1. Login via the bpp.com website (<https://www.bpp.com/account>) – use the forgotten password link if you cannot remember your account details. If you wish to use a different email address and create a new account, please use the link ABOVE.
2. Once logged in, please click on this link: <https://www.bpp.com/my/help-support/learning-support/bridge-to-sqe-bar>
3. Follow the onscreen instructions.

**OR**

**I HAVE REGISTERED FOR AN ACCOUNT AND CAN ACCESS ‘BRIDGE TO THE SQE’ BUT I NOW WISH TO ACCESS ‘BRIDGE TO THE BAR’:**

1. Ensure you are logged in to the BPP Hub, as above.
2. Use this link <https://www.bpp.com/my/help-support/learning-support/bridge-to-sqe-bar>
3. Select the option you wish to enrol on and follow the onscreen instructions.

\*\* To self-enrol onto the **Bridge to the SQE** programme, please see the previous page

If you have any questions about the Bridge to the Bar, please email [LawBridge@bpp.com](mailto:LawBridge@bpp.com)

We hope that you take advantage of this set of resources to enhance your employability, skills and knowledge. If you have any questions about The Bridge, please email [LawBridge@BPP.com](mailto:LawBridge@BPP.com)

# Lateral Hires

If you are a qualified lawyer and wish to make a move from your home jurisdiction to the UK, or if you already have experience of working in one area of law, but wish to move to another, then studying for a postgraduate law degree can assist your aims, but cannot guarantee a smooth sideways move from your existing position to a job of similar standing.

## How easy is it to work as a solicitor in the UK having qualified in a different jurisdiction?

The Solicitors Regulation Authority does not impose any formal experience requirements on non-UK lawyers who can take steps to re-qualify within this jurisdiction (see Solicitor section).

However the fact that the English legal system is based in Common rather than Civil Law, and those with experience elsewhere can make it a challenge to work within the UK. A rule of thumb is that employers often discount the amount of legal experience gained by non-UK lawyers by 2-3 years. Those with about two to three years of post-qualification experience (PQE) can therefore find themselves looking for entry positions together with a large number of UK law students seeking a training contract – the traditional path to qualification as a solicitor in England and Wales. The competition for these places is high and difficult to secure, especially as hiring takes place up to two years before the start of a job.

## Why is it difficult to make the move between areas of law?

If you are studying for a postgraduate law degree as a starting point for a new role in a different area of law, it is important to remember that even with first-rate academic teaching, it is often difficult to organise an opportunity to show a prospective employer that you are the best person for a job. Certainly, the transferable skills gained through previous employment and study can help you make the transition, but expect to take on a more junior role than before and to work your way up. If you are a qualified lawyer, it can be difficult to find an entry point in many areas as trainee solicitors often fill the positions that require less experience.

## What steps can help you make a sideways move into a new job?

Being in the right place at the right time is often key to finding a job in your specialist area or jurisdiction of choice. As such, to widen your chances of success, it is necessary to engage with all contacts (professional, family or personal). You never know who might be in a position to introduce you to a person or firm who can assist you in your move. (See pages on networking.)

- Engage with contacts from previous firms or those with whom you used to do business. These individuals have first-hand knowledge of your ability and are an excellent means of connecting with those who might be looking to hire for a particular role.
- Employers often use the services of recruitment consultants to fill lateral hire positions so no matter how experienced you are make sure you sign up with one that deals with your area of law (for details of recruitment sites in the Job Search Strategies section).
- Be prepared to take on a temporary or junior role as a means of making contacts, proving your ability and finding out about new opportunities as they arise.

## Why are language skills and interim roles useful?

The cross boundary nature of legal work means firms frequently seek interim workers for translation or document review work and need candidates with strong language capabilities. UK students are not famed for their great language skills, so if you have a strong command of English and another language, you have a good chance of securing one of these roles. Once embedded within a firm, you will not only gain an opportunity to make valuable contacts but add valuable skills to your CV so that you are more ready for a more permanent position when it becomes available.

# Patent and Trademark Attorneys

Trademark attorneys are specialist legal professionals who advise clients on registering, protecting and enforcing their trademark rights so they cannot be copied. The work of patent attorneys has similar aims; however, it covers inventions that are new and innovative and therefore eligible to be patented.

## Trademark Attorneys

Typically trademark attorneys deal with brands, logos and design as well as all related material including advertising and marketing information. A vital area of their work is dealing with trademark infringements where either the client is accused of infringing or a third party is infringing the client's trademark.

## Patent Attorneys

Patent attorneys work with inventors across many sectors including software, drugs, digital platforms, science and engineering to guide individual inventors or companies through the required process to obtain a patent. They then act to enforce their rights if patents are infringed. Patents are granted by the government and give inventors the right to prevent other parties from using or copying their invention for up to 20 years.

## What they have in common

Attention to detail is critical for both professions because the trademark or invention needs to be comprehensively registered or patented to cover all possible infringements. An understanding of the client's business and its objectives is also important because these items need to be protected for the long term.

Dispute negotiation skills are crucial in either role and if a case does go to court, the attorneys are responsible for all necessary back up and support.

Given market globalisation, both positions deal with patent and registration authorities and challenges on a global and local basis, as well with third parties. Thus they must have a solid knowledge of trademark and patent protection in all relevant territories.

## Becoming a trademark or patent attorney

Usually trademark attorneys have a legal or design background. To be registered, an undergraduate degree is required along with two exams preceded by a course and two years of experience under the supervision of a registered trademark lawyer. Often, trainee positions in specialist firms are provided where the course/examination is funded by the firm while also completing the two year requirement.

The majority of patent attorneys work in private firms, with the rest employed by large manufacturing organisations across many branches of industry, or in government departments. Generally, patent attorneys have a science, technology or engineering degree, a legal background and - as patents are international - language skills are valued.

The legal skills for being a patent attorney are acquired through in-house training along with academic studies, along with exams. It takes four to five years to qualify.

Many firms combine trademark and patent services.

## More information and resources

[ipreg.org.uk/](http://ipreg.org.uk/) - Regulatory body for intellectual property: provides registration for patent and trademark attorneys

### Trademark Attorneys

[insidecareers.co.uk/career-advice/a-careers-as-a-trade-mark-attorney/](http://insidecareers.co.uk/career-advice/a-careers-as-a-trade-mark-attorney/) - general info on this career option

[itma.org.uk/careers/becoming\\_a\\_trade\\_mark\\_attorney](http://itma.org.uk/careers/becoming_a_trade_mark_attorney) - Institute of Trademark attorneys, professional organisation

### Patent Attorney

[insidecareers.co.uk/career-advice/what-is-a-patent-attorney/](http://insidecareers.co.uk/career-advice/what-is-a-patent-attorney/) - general info on this career option

<https://www.cipa.org.uk/> - professional body of patent attorneys



# Alternative Business Structures (ABSs) and New Roles in the Legal Sector

## What is an ABS?

An ABS is a new type of structure that is licensed to provide legal services. Previously, clients had the option of either going to a law firm (a partnership owned and run by solicitors) or to a self-employed barrister. The Legal Services Act 2007 changed this by allowing the formation of a new type of business structure which can include non-lawyers in professional, management or ownership roles and which can attract outside investment (eg private equity).

The ABS structure opened up the possibility of existing businesses expanding into legal areas. An example of this type of multidisciplinary professional practice is Schillings, who offer legal services focused on privacy and defamation, complementing their risk consulting and cybersecurity operations. Similarly, large retailers can offer legal services to their customers in addition to their traditional consumer products and services. For example, the Co-operative Group now has a legal services arm.

Many large law firms have themselves set up an ABS. Having this flexible structure gives them the potential to attract new investment and new talent from outside the law. In personal injury claims work, the bulk of revenue is generated by ABSs. They tend to adopt a flatter structure than a traditional law firm, having a few legally qualified people at the top with hundreds of non-qualified staff dealing with clients via a call-centre.

For an overview of ABSs and their impact, see:

<https://www.lawcareers.net/Explore/Features/24052016-An-alternative-legal-future-ABSolutely>

## What sort of opportunities do they offer?

Some ABSs are practically the same as traditional partnership model law firms, offering training contracts as a route to qualification as a solicitor. For example, law firm Mishcon de Reya is an ABS.

Because of the varied nature of the services provided, plus the focus on innovation in the delivery of legal services, ABSs may provide a wider range of legally-based roles, including ones open to people who are not fully qualified lawyers.

## New Roles within the Legal Sector

Even within traditional law firms, there are new opportunities opening up for people with a legal background who may or may not be fully qualified. The need to reduce costs, new technological developments, and the introduction of new competition in the form of ABSs, have meant that lawyers are increasingly looking at the processes they go through when working on a matter with a view to making the overall service more efficient. See: [legalfutures.co.uk/latest-news/goodbye-lawyer-hello-legal-workflow-and-process-analyst](http://legalfutures.co.uk/latest-news/goodbye-lawyer-hello-legal-workflow-and-process-analyst)

## How do I uncover possible opportunities?

Through general recruitments sites, including:

**The Lawyer:** [jobs.thelawyer.com/](http://jobs.thelawyer.com/)

**Guardian Jobs:** [jobs.theguardian.com/searchjobs/?Keywords=legal&radialtown=&LocationId=&RadialLocation=30](http://jobs.theguardian.com/searchjobs/?Keywords=legal&radialtown=&LocationId=&RadialLocation=30)

**Totally Legal:** [totallylegal.com/](http://totallylegal.com/)

## Other organisations offering new opportunities within legal services include:

**Axiom:** [axiomlaw.co.uk/](http://axiomlaw.co.uk/)

**Lawyers on Demand:** <https://www.lodlaw.com/>

## Further information and Resources

[legalfutures.co.uk/tag/alternative-business-structures](http://legalfutures.co.uk/tag/alternative-business-structures) – Article on Legal Futures site

# In-House Legal Departments

The number of solicitors working in-house has more than doubled over the last 15 years, from almost 13,000 in 2002 to almost 28,000 in 2017, according to figures from the Law Society. <https://www.lodlaw.com/>. They are primarily solicitors, and work in commercial organisations like financial services, manufacturing, retail, construction, media, transport and telecommunications. However, they can also be found in the public sector like the Government Legal Service (GLS) and in non-profit organisations like charities, trade unions and local authorities. All of these sectors want in-house legal expertise.

## What they do

The type of work in-house lawyers do depends on the sector and the size of the organisation. Some organisations are interested in lawyers with a specialism such as construction or finance law. In large organisations you might have individual specialists like an IP lawyer and a real estate lawyer, or in a smaller company, there may be one or more in-house lawyers who offer a broad base service including contracts, employment law, compliance etc. Charities might employ a legal expert related to the interest of the charity, such as human rights law for Amnesty International.

## How to become an in-house lawyer

In-house lawyers are most often solicitors or barristers from private practice who have developed some expertise in a particular area of law, so this is a career pathway for more experienced lawyers.

There are a growing – but limited - number of companies offering training contracts (3% of all training contracts) including EDF Energy, Tesco, EY, Vodafone, and even some local authorities. Finding out which companies offer in-house training contracts is challenging but there is a list of authorised providers that can be obtained by emailing the Law Society: [inhouse@lawsociety.org.uk](mailto:inhouse@lawsociety.org.uk). Bear in mind that while some companies have the authorisation to offer training contracts, they might not actually do it.

In-house legal departments also hire paralegals, but they would tend to be fairly experienced. However, look on the recruitment sites for any opportunities.

It is very important if you apply for an in-house position that you know the company very well, along with their commercial goals and the way that they work. You will be in many ways an in-house advisor working to help divisions achieve their business goals so for interviews you need to understand the entire company

## Internships and work experience

Most likely, there will be less formal internship opportunities for in-house lawyers; however, they might consider internships on a needs basis. Look on websites to see if there are formal internship schemes. This is an area where networking may make a big difference - use LinkedIn for research and finding contacts starting with Queen Mary Alumni.

## More information and recruitment

- **The Commerce and Industry Group** focuses on solicitors in commerce and industry. Their regional UK groups may also be a good networking source:  
[inhouse@lawsociety.org.uk](mailto:inhouse@lawsociety.org.uk)
- **The Bar Association for Commerce, Finance and Industry** focuses on barristers: [bacfi.org](http://bacfi.org)
- **Law Society's In-house Division** has a wealth of information relevant and organizes events for networking:  
[communities.lawsociety.org.uk/in-house/](http://communities.lawsociety.org.uk/in-house/)
- **Government Legal Profession** also hires in house lawyers:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/civil-service-government-legal-profession>
- See the legal recruitment sites in the Job Search Strategies section
- **Law Careers.Net:** [lawcareers.net/MoreLaw/AlternativeCareers/In-house](http://lawcareers.net/MoreLaw/AlternativeCareers/In-house)
- **Guardian:** [theguardian.com/law/2013/mar/13/becoming-inhouse-lawyer](http://theguardian.com/law/2013/mar/13/becoming-inhouse-lawyer)



**(Bo) Simon Goa, MSc Management of Intellectual Property**

Simon chose to enter the world of investments and is now a Senior Investment Manager at Beijing Zhongji Huaruan IP Investment Fund Management Ltd in China. His focus is investment in hi-tech companies so his legal expertise in IP is critical. With this exciting experience and having worked at the global law firm Simmons & Simmons in China previously, Simon is not ruling out returning to a law firm in the future.

As there aren't many international law firms recruiting in China he obtained his role at Simmons & Simmons from networking via LinkedIn with an alumnus of Queen Mary. Here he handled international cases related to IP prosecution, enforcement and litigation in cooperation with other Simmons & Simmons offices across Asia.

Simon advises students that networking with alumni, firms and companies has been very important for him. Most of the big corporations and firms organize networking events which can provide insight and contacts. Staying in touch with QMUL Alumni when he returned to China has also been useful and not just for immediate job opportunities.

# Legal Work in International Organisations

## Careers

Usually such companies create their own database of experts or they also use expert databases created by specialized organisations such as Devex [www.devex.com](http://www.devex.com), [www.assortis.com](http://www.assortis.com), etc. Look at these websites or Consultant website to learn how to do this.

One again the best way to start to work in international development consultancy is to get work experience in international organisations through their internship program or to start to work in government sector or private companies to get experience for further developing career in international consulting companies. [TargetJobs.co.uk](http://TargetJobs.co.uk) is an excellent site for exploring Consulting roles.

## Law Firms

If you aspire to become a lawyer to work in this area, you have the possibility to become a barrister or a solicitor. Please go to the relevant section in this guide to learn how to qualify as a lawyer in the UK.

There are private law firms that specialise in public international public law such as Volterra Fietta. Here is a link that identifies the major law firms working in this area:

<https://www.legal500.com/c/london/dispute-resolution/public-international-law/>

## NGOs and Think Tanks

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), think tanks or research institutions play an important role in the production and dissemination of knowledge in areas such as international trade, human rights and environment, political risk and more.

Organizations like the Oxfam, Advocates for International Development and International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development. Graduates are able to among others prepare or assist in the preparation of agreements and contracts with governments, NGOs and other public and private entities, as well as in the negotiation and settlement of claims and disputes and in handling private international law and international trade law matters, conduct extensive legal research and analysis and prepare studies, comparative studies, briefs, reports and correspondence.

Studies in International Economic Law, Environment Law and Human Rights Law for instance, is a perfect starting point for entry-level employees beginning a career in public policy, as well as an ideal place for professionals at all levels to contribute to and develop in areas of non-profit organizations which has an atmosphere rich with critical thinking.

## Careers

As there is no one path one place to start considering a career in this area is by reading about the experiences of those who have already found employment within the field on LinkedIn. Also you can check websites for the non-governmental organisations, think tanks or research institutions. You should also consider signing up for email alerts from vacancy websites.

Below are some of the websites to visit:

Advocates for International Development - Our Placement Directory is a wide-reaching collection of short term and longer term legal placements currently available at NGOs around the world. Visit

<http://www.a4id.org/jobs-internships>

EuroBrussels - Covers vacancies in EU institutions and law firms operating in Brussels, as well as NGOs, political organisations and think tanks. Visit <http://www.eurobrussels.com/>

Idealist - Global job site, particularly strong for NGO roles. Visit <http://www.idealist.org/>

The Guardian - Occasional vacancies for law/rights related work. Visit <http://jobs.theguardian.com/>

Indeed – Visit <http://www.indeed.co.uk/>

Global Trade Negotiations - <http://www.cid.harvard.edu/cidtrade/site/tradengo.html>

# Compliance and Risk Management

## Compliance

Banks and other financial services companies recruit law and non-law graduates into their compliance units as well as more experienced lawyers, who take on the vital role of advising senior management on how to comply with the laws, regulations and rules that govern the sector. Due to the proliferation of financial regulation, the importance of compliance departments has grown enormously so that in larger banks, they're often equivalent in size to in-house legal teams.

Compliance officers can also be found across any heavily-regulated industries like insurance, food companies, retailers, auto companies, oil companies and more. In addition you can work with compliance regulatory bodies like the Finance Conduct Authority or for the companies or industries subject to regulation. Roles can also cover risk and issues like money laundering.

It is a fast-growing field with substantial demand and a legal background is appreciated. Given the shortage of candidates, salaries are rising and some financial institutions like Goldman Sachs are offering summer internships in this area.

The role of compliance officer or analyst requires astute advice, clear guidance, reliable professional judgement and the ability to work in a team. Attention to detail and a determination to see the consistent application of compliance policies and practices are essential.

A minimum 2:1 degree is standard for most - but not all - successful applicants for city jobs, together with the skills, competencies, experience and approach sought by the employer. Salaries are typically comparable with other graduate trainees in the City. With some compliance teams numbering more than 100 staff, there's plenty of scope for career development. Several banks run a two-year compliance analyst training scheme, over the course of which a trainee will gain a broad base of business knowledge and technical experience.

## Risk Management or Consulting

Risk managers or consultants are related to this area as well. They advise organisations on any potential risks to the profitability or existence of the company. They identify and assess threats, put plans in place for if things go wrong and decide how to avoid, reduce or transfer risks.

Risk managers are responsible for managing the risk to the organisation, its employees, customers, reputation, assets and interests of stakeholders. They may work in a variety of sectors and may specialise in a number of areas including: enterprise risk; political risk; corporate governance; regulatory and operational risk; business continuity; information and security risk; technology risk; market and credit risk.

It can include work such as designing a risk management process, assessing risk and estimating the consequences, planning, designing and implementing an overall risk management process for the organisation; evaluating risk in terms of costs, legal requirement etc., helping to define the level of risk a an organization should be willing to accept and more. It can also be a job to identify political risk for countries working internationally

There are entry level roles and people with a legal background are appreciated. The requirements are similar to compliance roles



**Alice Winstanley, LLM FT Immigration Law 2017/2018**

Alice undertook three of the internships offered through the Immigration LLM. These were with Redress (the anti-torture charity), Kingsley Napley solicitors, and ECRE (the European Council on Refugees and Exiles). Each of them offered a valuable insight into, and practical experience of, a different field of immigration/asylum work. She believes "the knowledge and skills I gained from these internships encouraged me to apply successfully, after the LLM, for a further six-month internship at UNHCR and then a job in the asylum policy field." They are, in her view, a really beneficial feature of the course.

## MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

### Compliance:

[news.efinancialcareers.com/uk-en/119862/sectors-explained-compliance-and-risk-management-2/](https://news.efinancialcareers.com/uk-en/119862/sectors-explained-compliance-and-risk-management-2/)

### Professional organisations for Compliance:

[int-comp.org/Home](https://int-comp.org/Home)

Recruitment sites for research and potential positions: <https://www.laurencesimons.com/>

### Risk Management:

[prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/risk-manager](https://prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/risk-manager)

Institute of Risk Management: [their.org](https://their.org)

Recruitment site: <https://www.ipsgroup.co.uk/>

Global Association of Risk Professionals: [garp.org](https://garp.org)



### Marie Monique Claude Sicard, LLM Intellectual Property

Marie started a 1 year internship in September 2018 at EUIPO, the European Intellectual Property Office working in the Customer Service Department which is in charge of the relationship with EUIPO's users to improve their experience and provide analysis of customer service. As each member of the team has a different background and language she is finding it an enriching experience.

Before her year at Queen Mary Maria thinks she would never had been offered this internship. Being part of Qlegal, the legal clinic at QMUL was the primary factor in gaining it. Meeting real clients, writing advice letters, creating a podcast, doing marketing, gave her comprehensive experience. She was also part of the EIPIN (EU IP network and closely associated with EUIPO) where she met student from various European universities during 2 congress in Maastricht and Strasbourg. Help with cover letters and lecturer support were also instrumental in getting this internship.

Maria advises students to take advantage of their year at Queen Mary to 'say yes' to new people, to networking, to asking for help, to helping others and to work experience or any new experience even it wasn't you first goal.

# Accountancy, Financial Management and Tax

The stereotype is that accountants 'do numbers' while lawyers 'do words', though in practice there can be a significant overlap between lawyers, accountants and tax specialists. Some of your legal knowledge (contract, company law, finance law, tax etc) will be relevant in addition to your analytical and problem-solving skills.

There is a range of career options, including audit, corporate recovery, business advisory, corporate finance, risk assessment and tax advisory.

## Employers

This area is dominated by the four largest firms known as the 'Big Four': PwC, Deloitte, KPMG and EY. Each has a comprehensive graduate recruitment section which is essential reading.

**PwC:** <https://www.pwc.co.uk/careers/student-jobs/work-for-us/graduateopportunities.html>

**Deloitte:** [deloitte.com/uk/en/careers/students.html](https://deloitte.com/uk/en/careers/students.html)

**KPMG:** [kpmgcareers.co.uk/graduates/graduate-programmes](https://kpmgcareers.co.uk/graduates/graduate-programmes)

**EY:** [https://www.ey.com/en\\_uk/careers/students](https://www.ey.com/en_uk/careers/students)

The Big Four rely on their own aptitude tests rather than past academic achievements and have a record of sponsoring Visas, so this might be an attractive option if you didn't get a 2.1 or are an international student with the equivalent.

There are also many large and medium-sized firms offering a good client base and route to qualification.

- For a breakdown of the top 75 accountancy firms in the UK, see: **Top 75 UK firms | Accountancy Daily**
- You can also qualify within government and other public sector organisations - eg with the National Audit Office: [graduate-jobs.com/scheme/national-audit-office](https://graduate-jobs.com/scheme/national-audit-office), or HMRC: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tax-professional-development-programme>

## Professional Bodies and Qualifications

Employers typically fund a relevant professional qualification which is gained while working via part-time study. Generally, it takes 3 years and the employer will provide suitable training. The type of qualification will depend on the area of work you are in. Common qualifications include:

Chartered Accountant: ACA, the qualification of the professional body, ICAEW  
<https://www.icaew.com/learning-and-development/aca?fromSearch=1>

Chartered Certified Accountant: ACCA, [accaglobal.com/uk/en.html](https://accaglobal.com/uk/en.html)

Management Accountant: CIMA, [cimaglobal.com/](https://cimaglobal.com/)

Chartered Tax Adviser: CTA, offered by CIOT (Chartered Institute of Taxation) [tax.org.uk/students\\_qualifications/newtastudents](https://tax.org.uk/students_qualifications/newtastudents)

Chartered Financial Analyst: CFA, see <https://www.cfainstitute.org/programs/cfa>

Chartered Public Finance Accountant: CIPFA - [cipfa.org/qualifications](https://cipfa.org/qualifications)

## Further information and Resources

Like any job, it is very helpful to have gained relevant experience before you apply. For vacancies including work placements, internships and graduate schemes, see [insidecareers.co.uk/search/jobs/type/all/profession/chartered-accountancy/](https://insidecareers.co.uk/search/jobs/type/all/profession/chartered-accountancy/)

# Banking and Finance

Many law students are attracted to the high status, financially rewarding careers based in the City. Your proven intellectual ability, analytical approach, interpersonal skills and technical knowledge may make you attractive not only to law firms, but to the financial sector too. For a comparison of careers in law, banking and accountancy, see <https://jobs.thelawyer.com/article/career-choices-law-banking-or-accountancy-/>

The financial sector offers a wider range of career possibilities than City law firms. For an overview of, and insight on, types of employers and roles, take a look at

[insidecareers.co.uk/professions/banking/](https://insidecareers.co.uk/professions/banking/); and

[news.efinancialcareers.com/uk-en/en/students/about-the-industry](https://news.efinancialcareers.com/uk-en/en/students/about-the-industry)

## How do I get into banking and finance?

Banks that seek out students with legal backgrounds include all global and international Banks. Many students equate finance with the global, full-service investment banks. The most prestigious of these (known as the 'bulge bracket') include Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan, Deutsche Bank and Barclays.

Getting into one of these organisations is a highly competitive process. A minimum of a 2.1 is required, plus a demonstrable passion for the world of banking, finance/global economics as evidenced by (i) relevant experience and (ii) commercial awareness. For an introduction on how to get into investment banking, see **Accountancy, banking and finance (targetjobs.co.uk)**

In addition to the well-known big players, there are many **boutique or niche firms** who specialise in a particular product such as hedge funds or derivatives; or in a particular area, eg independent advisory services. These may be a very good option in terms of gaining experience and/or as an alternative to a bulge bracket or other large institution.

And for further insights and first-hand accounts of getting into banking, see the forum on [canarywharfian.co.uk/](https://canarywharfian.co.uk/)

## How do I increase my chances of getting in?

If applying for a graduate scheme at one of the large banks, get your application in early: start your search and get going with application responses by late summer/early autumn. Consider which role you want to focus on. There are an increasing number of roles in risk management and compliance as the financial services sector is heavily regulated (see the Compliance section). Make sure you have built up relevant experience - it could be via a formal summer scheme, but also through speculative applications to smaller institutions.

## More information and resources

Attend some of the other career fairs that QMUL organizes to learn more about this area, such as the Business and Finance Fair, Career Options Mini Fair and perhaps the Technology Fair. See [qmul.ac.uk/events](https://qmul.ac.uk/events) for details on these and other events that might be useful.

For placement and graduate opportunities, see:

<https://allaboutfinancecareers.com>

<https://www.cityjobs.com/>

[insidecareers.co.uk/search/jobs/type/all/profession/banking/](https://insidecareers.co.uk/search/jobs/type/all/profession/banking/)

Good sites for developing commercial awareness plus information on banking and finance-related areas include:

The Economist [economist.com/](https://economist.com/)

The Financial Times [ft.com/home/uk](https://ft.com/home/uk)

Investopedia [investopedia.com/](https://investopedia.com/).



# Management Consulting

Management consultants help organisations to solve issues, create value, maximise growth and improve business performance. They use their business and organisational skills to provide objective advice and expertise.

Your specific legal knowledge is valued by consultancies, along with the leadership, communication and analytical skills you will have gained through your studies or from your work experience. From this background, you will have gained an ability to address multiple conflicting points of view to solve complex problems. This is essential to the success of consultants. In fact, a substantial number of management consultants have studied law.

Management consultants are primarily concerned with the strategy, structure, management and operations of an organisation. They will identify options for the organisation and suggest recommendations for change, as well as advising on additional resources to implement solutions.

Consultancy firms range from larger firms that offer end-to-end solutions to smaller or niche firms that offer specialist expertise and skills in certain industry areas like health, manufacturing, retail etc.

## How do I become a Management Consultant?

Graduates typically start with a training scheme. Some firms recruit year round, but many have deadlines in November and December for their training schemes so search early in the academic year for deadlines connected to the consultancies you are interested in.

They normally require a strong academic background of at least a 2:1 at undergraduate level, and previous experience like internships is a plus. They are also interested in extracurricular activities that demonstrate teamwork and leadership.

As the field is so wide and securing a role competitive, it is important you do your research about the sector and choose consultancies to target where you think your skills and background will match their needs and give you an advantage. Understanding the difference between the firms and demonstrating your passion for your selected firm has the same importance as when you are applying to law firms, so don't leave your applications to the last minute.

Many of the graduate job sites list entry level roles for management consultants. See the Job Search Strategy section for links. Networking to gain more information and make possible inroads to an organisation can also be important.

## More information and resources

Attend some of the other career fairs that QMUL organizes to learn more about this area, such as the Business and Finance Fair, Career Options Mini Fair and perhaps the Technology Fair. See [qmul.ac.uk/events](http://qmul.ac.uk/events) for details on these and other events that might be useful.

## More information about careers and applications in the sector:

<https://targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors/consulting/283483-how-do-i-get-a-graduate-job-in-consulting>

[prospects.ac.uk/management\\_consultant\\_job\\_description.htm](http://prospects.ac.uk/management_consultant_job_description.htm)

[insidecareers.co.uk/professions/management-consultancy/](http://insidecareers.co.uk/professions/management-consultancy/)

## Professional organisations to potentially join to demonstrate your commitment:

<http://www.iconsulting.org.uk/>

For news about the profession: [mca.org.uk/](http://mca.org.uk/)

# Law Firm Management

This is an emerging field as the legal sector transforms itself for the 21st century. The 2008 Recession, technology, globalization, increased competition from new types of legal organisations like ABSs and changing regulation has pushed law firms to invest in a more sophisticated business approach to building client bases and managing legal practices. In other words, they have had to become more commercial, customer-focused and efficient. This is opening new professional opportunities for people with a legal background.

Marketing, business development, IT, HR, compliance, finance, knowledge management and client relations are all becoming an integral part of law firms and part of their strategies for growth.

This offers up roles such as CEO, COO, Business Development Officer, Marketing Manager and more. In some of these roles such as marketing, many firms value a legal background over experience in the specialist function because they can provide training for the other skills required.

## How to find a role in this sector

These roles are not fully established in all firms; however, according to Tim Skipper of Totum Partners, a recruitment specialist in this area, the field is growing rapidly in the UK and entry level positions can be found in HR, knowledge management, marketing and business development.

Undertaking an internship in these functional areas whether in a law firm or not will be very useful. Permanent openings are listed in the recruitment sites listed in the Job Search Strategies section, as well as the sites below. However, networking will be one of the most useful strategies to securing a position whether short or long term.

You do not necessarily have to be a qualified lawyer for these roles, but a legal background is valued. If you can demonstrate commercial skills and if the prospect of helping run a business is exciting to you, consider this cutting-edge area of legal practice.

## More information and resources

**[totumpartners.com/](http://totumpartners.com/)** : Recruitment site and some good articles about the future of law

**[legalfutures.co.uk/](http://legalfutures.co.uk/)** : Has news, blogs and market intelligence about future trends in the law

**[law21.ca/](http://law21.ca/)** : Jordan Furlong's blog which he is currently revamping but there is excellent information in his existing posts

**[www.lod.com](http://www.lod.com)**: This is a recruitment site for "project lawyers" who are usually experienced lawyers; however, there is excellent information about trends in the law field on the site.



### Rutger Metsch, LLM Comparative and International Dispute Resolution

Rutger is currently a Trainee Solicitor at Herbert, Smith, Freehills. After completing his LLM he interned in the arbitration department of a global law firm in Hong Kong. He then returned to CCLS as the White & Case Research Fellow in International Arbitration. In addition to this he assisted in the day-to-day operations of the School of Arbitration and started teaching a half module.

He recommends that LLM students who are looking to find a job when they complete the course is to start with the end in mind. The academic year flies by and it is important to think about what you would like to achieve professionally and academically before you get caught up in course work and a busy social life. QMUL (and London in general) offer ample opportunities to help with your career development, but you will have to show some initiative at times. Therefore, once you have set your goals for the year, I would advise you make good use of the services offered by the careers team, attend events and conferences both internal and external, and to establish personal contacts in the areas of law in which you are interested.

If you take these steps you will be prepared for the job market and, moreover, meet interesting people. However these experiences are worth considerably less if you do not achieve good results. So study!

# Publishing and Media

Many people associate legal publishing with the textbooks and journals they use while studying. This is only part of the range of products and services that legal publishers now provide. Many publishers are at the forefront of developing technology-based products which are changing the work that lawyers do and the way they do it. From online practical guides to case management software, automated document drafting to supplying legal services through an affiliated Alternative Business Structures (ABS), legal publishers are playing a key role in the changing legal landscape.

As in many areas, there is a blurring of lines between publishing and media. The fact is that with digital technology, organisations are publishing their output through numerous forms of media.

Graduates who 'speak law' and have an understanding of the legal market are attractive to legal publishers as they are selling to a legal customer base.

There is a variety of potential career options for law graduates within this area. Some roles are relatively easy to identify - eg editor, where technical legal knowledge is combined with traditional publishing skills. Many graduate entry roles are lumped together under the generic title 'paralegal'. These may serve as a useful temporary step, providing relevant experience while graduates apply for a training contract. In other cases, these paralegal roles may be a stepping stone to a management career within business as the skills required and experience gained is wider than purely legal aspects.

## Who are some of the main employers?

**LexisNexis:** [lexisnexis.co.uk/en-uk/careers.page](https://www.lexisnexis.co.uk/en-uk/careers.page) includes a link to their vacancies page which has paralegal and editor positions open to law graduates

**Thomson Reuters:** For general careers information including on internships and graduate schemes (not specifically relating to law), see [thomsonreuters.com/en/careers.html](https://www.thomsonreuters.com/en/careers.html)

**Wolters Kluwer:** This is particularly strong on tax, financial management and accountancy-related areas. For the general careers page, see [careers.wolterskluwer.com/](https://www.careers.wolterskluwer.com/)

**Jordans:** A privately owned publisher which is particularly strong in Family Law but also covers many other areas [jordanpublishing.co.uk/about-jordans/company](https://www.jordanpublishing.co.uk/about-jordans/company)

**Pearson:** Is known for its educational titles, including those related to the study of law. <https://www.pearson.com/uk/about-us/jobs.html>

**Legal Directories, eg Chambers,** [https://chambers.com/careers](https://www.chambers.com/careers) a regular recruiter of graduate researcher roles with an opportunity to build a network within the legal sector.

**The Lawyer (Centaur Media):** [centaur.co.uk/careers](https://www.centaur.co.uk/careers)

## How do I find a job in legal publishing?

Publishers tend not to have formal graduate recruitment schemes. It is necessary to look on each publisher's site and to use general recruitment sites and agencies (see below). This is a sector where well-written speculative applications can be productive and where gaining insight and connections through effective networking can uncover potential opportunities.

**Recruitment sites:** The Guardian's jobs board can be filtered by sector, including publishing and legal: [jobs.theguardian.com/jobs/publishing/graduate/](https://www.jobs.theguardian.com/jobs/publishing/graduate/)

Also roles are often filled via legal recruitment agencies who advertise the positions in The Lawyer, see: [jobs.thelawyer.com/](https://www.jobs.thelawyer.com/).

## More information and resources

For more vacancies, try: [indeed.co.uk/Legal-Publishing-jobs](https://www.indeed.co.uk/Legal-Publishing-jobs)

# Academia including PhD's

A doctorate is a research degree. It consists of a research project and a substantial thesis which outlines the research question tackled, the methodology, the results discovered and a discussion of their significance. It will also include a comprehensive review of the existing literature related to the topic. Getting a PhD is not easy. Many students work in isolation without official classmates or peers and need to learn how to manage the progress of their study independently under the guidance of one or two supervisors. Typically, the research will take at least three years with a period of up to a year for writing up.

A PhD is the standard requirement for those who want to become researchers and academics. If you are really motivated and wish to study an aspect of law in great depth then this is a path for you to consider. However, if you are contemplating other career routes, and are not convinced yet that you really need to do a PhD, wait for a while and do not rush into it.

## Will a PhD improve my career prospects and future earnings?

### If you wish to work in academia:

A PhD is increasingly necessary but cannot guarantee a successful career. The competition for roles in this sector is very high and at least 50% of PhD graduates do not go on to academic jobs. Compared to those who work in the private sector, remuneration is limited and there is less security of tenure these days.

### If you ultimately wish to work in business:

A PhD will be useful in demonstrating your academic ability, but can be overall less useful when applying for a job or practical work experience. 'Know-how' and expertise is so valued by employers that income rises dramatically according to experience. Research shows that a PhD can provide an earnings premium of 3% over a one-year masters degree, but by spending four or more years in study, you will ultimately have fewer years overall where you will earn at a higher level. Essentially, you are becoming more qualified in order to earn less.

## Application Process

You will need to apply to the university directly, and the application will depend on both the institution and course, so check instructions carefully. The admissions committee considering your application will be interested in the following things in roughly this order: your grades (minimum requirement is usually a good Merit level LL.M with a Distinction in the dissertation), your research proposal, your references, your work experience and your personal statement. All are important, but a great personal statement or fabulous work experience will not compensate for a bad proposal.

## Funding

The first place to start your search for funding is the departmental website of an institution. Here, you should find out information about funding and bursaries specific to that department. Queen Mary School of Law is particularly keen to support studentship applications in most fields of law and details of their postgraduate research studentships can be found at [https://www.qmul.ac.uk/postgraduate/research/funding\\_phd/studentships/](https://www.qmul.ac.uk/postgraduate/research/funding_phd/studentships/)

[prospect.ac.uk/your\\_phd\\_what\\_next\\_non\\_academic\\_jobs.htm](https://prospect.ac.uk/your_phd_what_next_non_academic_jobs.htm)

[careers.qmul.ac.uk/students/study/index.html](https://careers.qmul.ac.uk/students/study/index.html)

There are also excellent, comprehensive funding databases on [prospect.ac.uk](https://prospect.ac.uk)

If you are a student from outside of the UK, try [educationuk.org/scholarships](https://educationuk.org/scholarships).

**For further information contact:**

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