

Law Careers

The field of law offers a wide range of careers to both law and non-law graduates.

Solicitor

A solicitor provides expert legal advice, support and services to clients, and usually specialises in a certain area of law such as property, finance or family. Solicitors are regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). They may work in private practice, in-house for commercial organisations, in local or central government or in the court services.

Qualifications and Training

A new route to qualify as a solicitor in England and Wales was introduced on 1st September 2021 and now requires completion of a new common assessment, the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE).

You will need the following to qualify through the SQE route:

- A degree in any subject or equivalent qualification or experience
- Pass both stages of assessment – SQE1, which concentrates on functioning legal knowledge, and SQE2, which focuses on practical legal skills.
- Complete two years full time (or equivalent part-time) of qualifying work experience (QWE)
- Meet the character and suitability requirements set by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA)

For information and up-to-date advice on the SQE, please see [SRA Becoming a Solicitor](#)

There are many courses that can help with preparation for undertaking SQE including [Legal Practice LLM](#) at University of Worcester.

Legal Practice Course (LPC) route

For those who already started training to become a solicitor before 1st September 2021, you will have the choice of qualifying via the Legal Practice Course (LPC) route until 31st December 2032 (as long as the course remains available) or through the SQE. For information on the transitional arrangement please see the [SRA](#) website.

Apprenticeship route

It is possible to train as a solicitor via the graduate solicitor apprenticeship route. This route usually takes around two to three years to complete, if you have a degree. Information on this route can be found at [solicitor apprenticeships](#)

For more information on training as a solicitor:

www.lawcareers.net/Solicitors

www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/solicitor

The Beginner's Guide to a Career in Law: <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/578514344/>

For information on training as a solicitor in [Scotland](#) or [Northern Ireland](#).

Barrister

A barrister provides specialist legal advice and generally tends to represent individuals and organisations in higher courts and tribunals. Usually, they are hired by solicitors to represent a case in court and only become involved once advocacy before a court is needed. Many are self-employed in chambers, while others work in government departments or agencies such as the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). [Advocates](#) play a similar role in Scotland.

Qualifications and Training

There are three routes available to qualify as a barrister:

- Three-step – academic, vocational followed by pupillage/work-based.
- Four-step – academic, vocational component in two parts, followed by pupillage/work-based.
- Integrated academic and vocational pathway – combined academic and vocational followed by pupillage/work-based.

To become a barrister, you need to complete the following components of training:

Academic – Degree at 2:2 or above. If your degree is not in law, you will need to complete a law conversion course such as the Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL), Postgraduate Diploma in Law (PGDL) or Common Professional Examination (CPE)

Vocational – The vocational component of training provides you with the specialist skills, knowledge, attitudes and competence needed to become a barrister. To pass this component, you'll need to complete a Bar course.

From September 2020, the Bar Professional Training course (BPTC) has been replaced by a number of new [Bar courses](#) which include:

Bar Course

Bar/Barrister Training Course (BTC)

Bar Practice Course (BPC)

Bar Vocational Course (BVC)

Bar Vocational Studies (BVS)

The new courses are split into two parts, and you will not move on to the second part of the Bar course until you have passed the first part.

In order to start the vocational component for training, you will also need to join one of the Inns of Court and complete 10 qualifying sessions of training provided by your Inn:

[Grey's Inn](#)
[The Inner Temple](#)
[Lincoln's Inn](#)
[Middle Temple](#)

Once you have completed a Bar training course and the 10 sessions at your Inn, your Inn will 'call' you to the Bar.

Pupillage or work-based learning – Intending barristers must complete a pupillage (work-based component) in order to practice. There are two parts to a pupillage:

- First six - non-practising six months
- Second six – practising six months.

Pupillage should be applied for via the [Pupillage Gateway](#) operated by [The Bar Council](#). Applicants can apply for up to 20 chambers or [Authorised Training Organisations \(ATO\)](#), and competition for places is fierce.

National Pupillage Fair: [The Bar Council Pupillage Fair](#)

For more information on training as a barrister:

www.lawcareers.net/Barristers

www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/barrister

www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/training-qualification/becoming-a-barrister.html

The Beginner's Guide to a Career in Law: <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/578514344/>

The Bar of Northern Ireland: <https://www.barofni.com/>

Other roles within Law

If the role of a solicitor or barrister is not for you, here are some other roles you might want to consider in the field of law:

Arbitrator	Legal Secretary
Barristers Clerk	Licensed Conveyancer
Chartered Legal Executive	Mediator
Company Secretary	Paralegal
Coroner	Patent Attorney
Judge	Trademark Attorney
Lecturer of Law	Usher

For other career ideas: www.lawcareers.net/MoreLaw/AlternativeCareers

Law work experience

In the competitive field of law, it is essential to have some legal experience. Here are some ideas of where you can gain experience:

Virtual law work experience – platforms such as [Forage](#) offer a wide range of law virtual work experience, open to law and non-law students and graduates.

Vacation schemes – a placement which provides an insight to law firms and helps to build knowledge and understanding of the field. Usually a month long. For more information on [vacation schemes](#)

Mini-pupillages – short work placement aimed at aspiring barristers or those who are unsure if to take the barrister or solicitor route. Competition for places is intense. Chambers in the Midlands that offer them include [St Ives Chambers](#) and [St Philips Barristers](#)

Legal internships - typically lasting one month to a year offer valuable professional experience and skill development, and can be scheduled around your studies—either during summer or after graduation. While some law firms offer these opportunities, most internships are found within the in-house legal departments of large organisations.

Insight days – also known as workshops or open days. Enable students interested in becoming a solicitor to discover what a law firm does. Usually aimed at second and third year students. For a list of [insight events](#)

Work shadowing – can allow an insight into understanding the work of a lawyer. Usually not advertised so a speculative application would need to be made.

Debates and mooting – a moot is a mock court where opposing pairs of counsel argue a fictitious case. There are national mooting competitions. More information can be found via the law faculty or law society at the university.

Law societies – [University of Worcester Law Society](#)

Pro bono work – the delivery of free legal advice. If you are studying law, your school will have links to organisations.

Law fairs- these run throughout the year usually at universities with the majority of fairs being open to all. Fairs are a great opportunity to meet law firms, barristers' chambers, find out about courses and attend workshops. More information about law events and fairs can be found at [law fairs](#)

Court visits – schedules for Crown or county cases can be found on their websites or by contacting court staff.

Marshalling – involves shadowing a judge. Opportunities for marshalling are usually found via an Inn of Court or local Crown or county court.

Extra-curricular activities – gaining experience outside of your course can help to increase and develop your skills. You might want to get involved in student clubs and societies, student journalism or politics, part-time work or volunteering.

Local volunteering opportunities

Citizens Advice Witness Service

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/support-us/volunteering/volunteering-for-citizens-advice-witness-service/

Citizens Advice Worcester

<https://citizensadviceworcester.org.uk/index.php/volunteer/>

West Mercia Youth Justice Service

<https://westmerciayouthjustice.org.uk/about/volunteering/>

Appropriate Adult

Adults - <https://www.onside-advocacy.org.uk/appropriate-adult>

Young people - <https://www.yss.org.uk/>

Community Advocacy volunteering

<https://workwithonside.co.uk/volunteer/>

For more ideas on how to gain law work experience:

www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors/law-sector/law-work-experience

Alternatives to Law

Many employers will accept applications from graduates with any degree subject, and law graduates can be found working in a wide range of career sectors such as the [civil service](#), [public services](#), [police](#), [politics](#), [banking](#), [finance](#) and [business](#).

For more information on alternatives to Law:

[Prospects 'What can I do with a degree in Law?'](#)

[Target Jobs 'What else can I do with a Law degree?'](#)

Further support

If you would like to book a careers appointment, please visit:

<https://worcester.targetconnect.net>

myCareer

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Careers & Employability

www.worc.ac.uk/careers