



ENTRY INTO THE UK LEGAL PROFESSION



The Legal Profession in the UK

There are two main routes to qualify as a lawyer in England and Wales. You can qualify as a solicitor or a barrister. Lawyer is a generic term that encompasses both sides of the legal profession. These separate branches of the profession are regulated by different regulators. Solicitors are regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). Barristers are regulated by the Bar Standards Board (BSB). There are three stages to qualification for any aspiring lawyer: (i) degree (ii) vocational course and (iii) work-based learning.

The Academic Stage: UK Transfer Programme

Your law degree covers all of the foundation modules needed to advance to the next stage of your career aspirations, either at the Bar or a solicitor. At Liverpool Law School, you will complete your studies, taught by world leading researchers. Our academic staff have advised Governments on law reform, been cited by senior members of the judiciary in their judgments and opinions, have had their research published in the leading journals, written leading textbooks and are frequently found on broadcast and

social media discussing current topics of interest.

Entry to the UK Bar: Vocational Course

Post-degree, for barristers the vocational course is known by a number of different names depending on the provider. These course names include the Bar Practice Course (BPC), and, the Bar Training Course (BTC). This stage involves more vocationally orientated skills modules such as advocacy, drafting, and negotiation. There are currently ten (10) providers of the vocational stage of training, so it is the norm for most law students to do the vocational course at a provider other than the University at which they did the degree. Most Liverpool students either do the vocational course at the Inns of Court in London, or, if they want to stay more locally, at providers in Liverpool or Manchester.



At this stage of your route to qualifying as a barrister you will also join one of the four Inns of Court (Gray's Inn, Lincoln's Inn, Middle Temple, Inner Temple). These historic institutions provide financial and other support to their barrister members. Upon completion of the vocational stage of training you are



'called to the Bar' of England and Wales by your Inn of Court. However, you cannot practice as a barrister until you have undertaken the next, and final, stage of training.

Entry to the UK Bar: Pupillage

Barristers will spend a minimum of one year doing a "pupillage" for their work-based learning. This is usually divided into two "sixes", i.e. two blocks of six months. The pupil barrister (as they are known) will have a pupillage supervisor who they will shadow for at least one of the sixes. Typically they will have a different barrister supervisor for each "six".

Becoming A Solicitor: Vocational Course

For solicitors the route to qualification has changed recently with the introduction of the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (the SQE) in September 2021. The SQE will eventually replace the Legal Practice Course (LPC) although we are currently in a transition period and if you started your Qualifying Law Degree in 2021, you may be able to choose whether you want to qualify via the LPC or SQE route. Under the SQE you will sit a two-stage examination process covering many aspects of law and legal skills, and submit a portfolio of evidence of Qualifying Work Experience. The first stage (SQE Stage I) takes the form of two, multiple choice assessments and the second stage (SQE Stage II) is comprised of a mix of written and oral tasks. Details of the SQE and the transition period are available here:





Becoming A Solicitor: Work-Based Learning

Whether you take the LPC or the SQE, work-based learning is a key part of your journey to qualification. Under the SQE you must complete two years' full-time (or equivalent) Qualifying Work Experience (QWE). This can be done at any time during the qualification process, and can be completed either in different stages (at up to four different organisations) or in one block, such as via a two-year training contract. Work-based learning under the old LPC route is called a Training Contract. This is a two-year period spent working in a law firm taken after completion of the LPC. Whichever your route to qualification, at the end of the process, you apply to the Solicitors' Regulatory Authority to be admitted as a Solicitor of the Senior Courts of England and Wales.

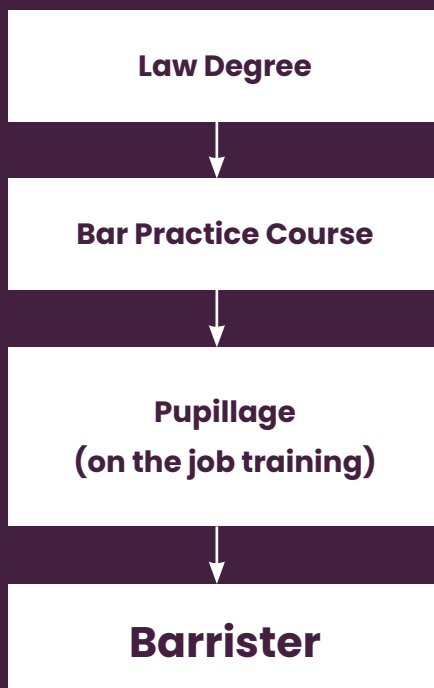
Partnering with the University of Law

The Liverpool Law School has partnered with the University of Law to provide vocational training for both solicitors and barristers on-site in the School of Law and Social Justice building. They provide courses offering both SQE preparations and also the Bar Practice Course.



Supporting Your Professional Choices

Liverpool Law School has supported thousands of students in their career aspirations in the legal profession and beyond, via focussed employability sessions (e.g. LawExtra), working with student societies (Bar Society, Law Society) and through academic support (e.g. the Academic Support Hub).



Chloe Lee LLB Hons, Pupil, Spire Barristers

From Day One I was given opportunities to develop my own interests and work towards pursuing my goal of becoming a barrister. The Law School was invaluable in connecting me with a wide range of people and the work experience offered was fantastic, including legal internships overseas in the Hague and Shanghai. I couldn't have asked for a better start to my career.

The University of
Law