



Lawyers training systems in the EU

England and Wales

Information provided by: **Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA)**

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DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM FOR LAWYERS in England and Wales

1. Access to the Profession

Higher education / university education	YES (candidates must hold a Qualifying Degree)
A law degree is compulsory	NO
Steps to becoming a fully-fledged lawyer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional skills course (PSC) completed prior to admission • Assessment of candidate by the Law Society • Evaluation of the candidate and acceptance by a law firm • Completion of an induction period • Examination • Registration with the Law Society of England and Wales <p>Entry routes:</p> <p>Qualifying law degree + LPC (Legal Practice Course) + 2 year training contract</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Non law degree + GDL (full year conversion course)+ LPC + 2 year training contract</p> <p>All candidates have to follow a LPC (Legal Practise Course) + 2 year training contract (which can be offered by a law firm, a public sector body or company legal department)</p>

Alternative routes to the profession:	<p>YES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeship in lieu of a degree • Transfer routes from other professions (legal professions from other countries) <p>It is possible to enter at the LPC stage by the legal executive route (ILEX) which involves part-time study +experience in lieu of an undergraduate degree. The requirements of this route to admission are then the same from this point on as for those candidates entering by the traditional routes.</p> <p>QLTS route (Qualified lawyers transfer route) – for lawyers qualified elsewhere – involves taking examinations and meeting the required suitability requirements</p>
2. Training during induction period	
Is there an induction period?	<p>YES</p> <p>Legal basis:</p> <p>SRA Training Regulations 2011 http://www.sra.org.uk/students/lpc.page http://www.sra.org.uk/students/training-contract.page</p>
Compulsory	<p>YES</p> <p>Set length: 3 years (2 years training contract + approx. 1 year for the LPC) (up to 6 months can be deducted for prior equivalent experience)</p>
Types of structures responsible for organising induction training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • private practice firms and in house legal departments in commercial organisations - provide the second stage of the induction period, the training contract (workplace practical experience) • non-private practice organisations (e.g. national and local government bodies and in house legal departments in commercial organisations) - provide the second stage of the induction period, the training contract (workplace practical experience) • Commercial providers – commercial providers are like private universities specialising sometimes in professional qualifications. they will have received both academic accreditation from the Qualifications Assessment Authority of the UK and accreditation from the SRA (they provide the first stage of the induction period, the Legal Practice Course) • Universities (The first stage of the induction period, the Legal Practice Course, is provided by universities)

Form of induction training		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeship supervised by a private practice • Law training with specific curriculum common to all trainee lawyers • Law training with personalised curriculum • Training on non legal professional skills • Training on legal professional skills
Entrance exam / check before induction period	YES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • check/verification of diploma • Suitability Test <p>http://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/handbook/suitabilitytest/content.page</p>
Set curriculum during induction period	YES	<p>For the LPC and during the training contract, 3 distinct areas of law must be covered including at least one area of contentious and non-contentious law</p> <p>LPC outcomes: http://www.sra.org.uk/documents/students/lpc/LPC-Outcomes-Sept2011.pdf</p>
Specificities regarding EU law and linguistic training:	NO	<p>But prior to commencing LPC, students are expected to have knowledge of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The principal EU institutions - sources and interpretation of EU law - the relationship between EU law and national law - relevant human rights conventions and legislation <p>EU Law is taught and assessed pervasively throughout the LPC when it touches on the area of law in question</p>
Induction period divided into different stages	NO	
Post-induction period assessment / exam	YES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written exams • Oral exams • exams take place at the LPC stage, the contract period is signed off by the training partner responsible with no further examinations
3. Continuous training system		
Differentiation between continuous training / specialisation training	YES	<p>However, specialisation training may also count against CPD requirements and it is not compulsory unless a solicitor is engaging in very specific types of work, such as Criminal Advocacy.</p>

		<p>Criminal advocacy is the only specialisation available so far in the English lawyers training system.</p> <p>Legal basis: SRA quality assurance scheme for Advocates (Crime), regulating the practice of Criminal Advocacy in England and Wales</p>
Obligations regarding continuous training	YES	<p>Compulsory training obligations as stated in the internal regulations of the Law Society</p> <p>Legal basis:</p> <p>Regulations that govern the continuous training requirements for Solicitors of England and Wales:</p> <p>http://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/cpd-accreditation.page</p> <p>http://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/handbook/cpd/content.page</p>
Obligations regarding specialization training	YES	<p>There never used to be but the picture is becoming more complex. There are mostly non statutory specialist qualifications which solicitors can obtain which are like quality marks – clients like government and banks use these specialist accreditations increasingly as a factor in selecting their panels. However, more recently (2013) a new compulsory specialist accreditation has been launched called the Quality Assessment Scheme for Advocates (QASA), this requires criminal advocates to hold this specialist qualification in order to appear in courts.</p>
Obligations regarding learning foreign languages	NO	
Obligations regarding EU law content in relation to continuous/specialization training?	NO	
4. Accreditation systems and training providers		
Possibility for accreditation		<p>YES, Possibility of accreditation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of national training providers • of training providers from all member states <p>Accreditation process</p> <p>Providers offering continuing professional development (CPD) activities may become in-house or external CPD providers, provided that they meet the criteria for authorisation and that they are subject to monitoring</p> <p>http://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/cpd/training-companies.page</p>

Number of training providers offering continuous training activities	More than 50	
Type of training providers developing accredited continuous training activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law Society • Organisation managed or established by Bar/Law society (including law centres or local groupings of solicitors) • Accredited private commercial training provider • Accredited private or public non-for-profit training provider 	
Number of training providers organizing training in preparation for specialization	More than 50	
Type of training providers developing accredited training activities in preparation for specialization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law Society • Organisation managed or established by the Law society (including law centres or local groupings of solicitors) • Accredited private commercial training provider • Accredited private or public non-for-profit training provider 	
Activities and methods		
Type of training activities accepted under the obligations of continuous or specialization training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending face to face training sessions • Completing distance training sessions • Completing e-learning modules • Watching a webinar • Completing blended-learning* activities • Attending training conferences* • Participating in training activities as trainer or teacher • Writing/publishing <p>25% of the annual continuous training requirement must be training undertaken via accredited providers</p>	<p>Participation in training activities in another Member State: It can count towards continuous training obligations but it depends on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the training provider being accredited in the Member State of the participant before participation • the type of activities
5. Supervision of training activities		
Organizations involved in supervising continuous training activities	YES	Law Society

Supervision process	Assessment of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the quality of contents • the quality of training methods 	
Organizations involved in supervising training activities towards specialization	YES	QASA is supervised by the SRA, the Bar Standards Board and Professional Institute of Legal Executives who each administer the common standard for criminal advocates on behalf of their members/those they regulate.
Supervision process	Assessment of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the quality of contents • the quality of training methods 	

Source: Pilot Project - European Judicial Training: "Lot 2 – Study on the state of play of lawyers training in EU law", carried out by the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) and the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA)