



Lawyers training systems in the EU

Northern Ireland

Information provided by: The Law Society of Northern Ireland

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DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM FOR LAWYERS in Northern Ireland

1. Access to the Profession

Higher education / university education	YES
A law degree is compulsory	YES
Steps to becoming a fully-fledged lawyer:	<p>A candidate must register with the Law Society as a student lawyer. Conditions for registration are:</p> <p>(a) that he/she possesses an acceptable law degree and (b) that he/she has been offered a place in the Institute of Professional Legal Studies or the Graduate School of Professional Legal Education by passing the entrance examination to one of these bodies (c) have obtained a Master (a solicitor with whom the applicant proposes to serve his/her apprenticeship)</p> <p>Legal Basis: Solicitors Admission and Training Regulations 1988</p>
Alternative routes to the profession:	<p>YES</p> <p>Entrance to the solicitor's profession in Northern Ireland may also be done by</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Non-law degree route</u>: In place of condition (a) above, if a candidate has a non-law undergraduate degree he/she must demonstrate that he/she has knowledge of the core legal subject. The Master of Legal Science from Queen's University Belfast is

		<p>considered as acceptable evidence. Steps (b) and (c) as outlined above must also be satisfied.</p> <p>2. <u>Other routes</u>: Until April 2015 a route into the profession is provided for candidates without a degree but who can demonstrate the appropriate level of educational attainment and experience.</p> <p>3. <u>Foreign lawyers</u>: May be admitted via requalification as a solicitor either in England and Wales or Ireland.</p>
2. Training during induction period		
Is there an induction period?	YES	Legal basis: Solicitors Admission and Training Regulations 1988, Solicitors Admission and Training (Qualification of Masters) Regulations 1988 and (Solicitors Admission and Training (Qualification of Masters) (Amendment) Regulations 1992
Compulsory	YES	Set length: 2 years
Types of structures responsible for organising induction training		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law Society • private practices and law firms • Universities (Institute of Professional Legal Studies or the Graduate School of Professional Legal Education)
Form of induction training		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeship registered with the Law Society • Apprenticeship supervised by private practice • Training on legal professional skills delivered by the Institute of Professional Legal Studies or the Graduate School of Professional Legal Education Graduate Professional
Entrance exam / check before induction period	YES	<p>Applicants must satisfy the Society's Education Committee as to their suitability to be accepted as students of the Society and produce such evidence as to character and fitness as the Committee may require. No applicant will be registered if he/she is an undischarged bankrupt or if he/she has been convicted of a criminal offence of such a nature as to make his/her registration undesirable or if for any other reason he/she fails to satisfy the Committee as to his/her fitness to be a solicitor.</p>
Set curriculum during induction period	NO	
Specificities regarding EU law and linguistic training:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No EU law sessions (this is covered explicitly at undergraduate level); • No linguistic training.

Induction period divided into different stages	YES	The 2 year apprenticeship runs as follows: (a) September to December - spent in-office, (b) January to December - spent at the Institute of Professional Legal Studies or the Graduate School of Professional Legal Education, (c) January to August - spent in-office. Different periods at the institute cover different topics.
Post-induction period assessment / exam	YES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By examinations conducted by the Institute or Graduate School • By evaluation of Master in charge of individual's apprenticeship
3. Continuous training system		
Differentiation between continuous training / specialisation training	NO	All solicitors must complete a minimum of 3 hours Client Care and Practice Management.
Obligations regarding continuous training	YES	Compulsory training obligations as stated in the internal regulations of the Law Society Legal basis: Solicitors Training (Continuing Professional Development) Regulations 2004
Obligations regarding specialization training	NO	
Obligations regarding learning foreign languages	No obligations	
Obligations regarding EU law content in relation to continuous / specialization training?	No obligations	
4. Accreditation systems and training providers		
Possibility for accreditation	Accreditation may be done by submitting details of proposed courses on the Law Society's website	
Number of training providers offering continuous training activities	The Society does not accredit or endorse external activity and as such does not have a list of training providers.	

Type of training providers developing accredited continuous training activities	The Society does not have an accreditation scheme.	
Number of training providers organizing training in preparation for specialization	Not applicable	
Type of training providers developing accredited training activities in preparation for specialization	Not applicable	
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 • Attending training conferences 	Participation in training activities in another Member State: Yes, it can count towards continuous training obligations
5. Supervision of training activities		
Organizations involved in supervising continuous training activities	YES	The Law Society CPD coordinator
Supervision process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of contents • Quality of training methods • How written requirements of the Law society are fulfilled • Whether the activity fills in gaps/answers needs which have been previously listed 	
Organizations involved in supervising training activities towards specialization	Not applicable	
Supervision process	Not applicable	

6. National reform of training system

A review of the education and training system was undertaken in 2008, no further review is currently planned.

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)