Essential Resources: The student guides

These help you understand the strict deadlines and processes for applying successfully. Online versions are up-to-date paper copies are available from Careers. These guides help you find many but not all of the firms in which you may be interested. They are particularly good for commercial and corporate firms and the larger firms nationwide. You will be able to identify both opportunities for work experience (sometimes known as vacation schemes) and the two year period of training (the training contract).

LawCareers.net
www.lawcareers.net

News, advice, profiles of firms, vacancies for those considering law careers as solicitors or barristers. The hardcopy equivalent is the Training Contract and Pupillage Handbook, available from your careers service library.

What we like: Probably the most comprehensive of all directories, it allows you to look at firms and specialisms nationwide. Full of useful information and advice. Within ‘My L.C.N’, you may also set up a personal ‘locker’ to help you store your careers research, and manage deadlines and applications.

Chambers Student Guide: The Legal Profession in England and Wales
www.chambersstudent.co.uk

This is an excellent companion to LawCareers.net (above).

What we like: It provides readers with clear, concise and objective information about what they should know about each firm AND the guide makes it very easy to search for firms by their specialist practice areas.

TARGETjobs Law
www.targetjobs.co.uk/law

Resource with lots of industry insight and advice for budding trainees. Tends to concentrate only on the largest firms.

What we like: Has a useful grid of firms and specialisms to help you compare and contrast firms.

King’s Career Networks - Law
www.facebook.com/kingslawcareers

Our Facebook page specifically focuses on law careers, where we feature interesting internships, remind you of job-search essentials, and keep you up-to-date with news.

Employability Skills for Law Students (Finch/Fafinski) is an excellent reference book available in Careers which includes coverage of commercial awareness, practical legal skills and assessment and selection including psychometric tests and case studies.

Deadlines and Voluntary Code for the Recruitment of Trainee Solicitors

Many law firms support the Voluntary Code for the Recruitment of Trainee Solicitors and it is important that you are aware of both the firms' and your responsibilities.


Important tip: you should apply well before the official deadlines as law firms review applications on a rolling basis. If all their interview slots are filled by the time they receive your application, you will not be short-listed.

The student guides tell you more about each of the following steps:

First Year
Apply for First Year Programmes (these may be mainly for law students, so check first), ‘Insight’ events and Open Days during the autumn and spring terms. Over the summer vacation, do your research on a variety of law firms and understand what/who they are looking for.

Second or Penultimate Year (or Final Year for non-law students)

Autumn term
Continue to research firms, attend events, and start applying for work experience in the autumn term. The larger firms often open their Vacation Scheme applications from 1st October. Apply before the deadlines e.g. if these are January apply before Christmas but only once your applications are of a very high standard.

Spring term
Complete the applications with later deadlines for work experience and attend interviews.

Summer term
Apply for training contracts. Many firms now close before 31st July so you must check directly with firms.

Participate in vacation schemes over the summer, and attend interviews for training contracts in August and September.
It is the large corporate/commercial firms that tend to work to these deadlines. A High Street firm or a niche practice may recruit much closer to the start date of the training contract or vacation scheme.

It is important to check all deadlines with the individual firms on their websites. If in doubt, contact them.

**Note:** The training contract has been the established route to qualifying as a solicitor but changes were introduced and a new term, the *Period of Recognized Training* (the PRT) will allow qualification as a solicitor for those with equivalent work experience. The rules are complicated. Although it’s early days, initial market reaction is that it’s more likely to be relevant to firms who are struggling to fund training contracts now (perhaps those in legal aid, criminal, family etc.). You will need to watch what happens. Details can be found on the ‘equivalent means, period of recognized training’ page of the SRA website.

**Representation and Discipline**
The Law Society is the representative body for solicitors while the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) is the regulatory body for the profession. The Law Society website is useful for information about the wide range of support available to solicitors. The SRA website is useful for information on the requirements for qualification as a solicitor, including the areas of practice a training contract must include.

http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/
http://www.sra.org.uk/home/home.page

The Junior Lawyers Division of The Law Society is for LPC students, paralegals and junior lawyers
http://communities.lawsociety.org.uk/junior-lawyers/

**The business guides**
The business guides are an excellent source of information on individual firms and practice areas, which can help you decide which firms to target both in the UK and internationally. They enable you to deepen your research before applying.

Chambers and Partners
www.chambersandpartners.com
Directory of solicitors and barristers in the UK and law firms overseas.

Legal500.com
www.legal500.com
Online version of this authoritative directory with sections for many countries.

|What we like:| Both of these publishers produce additional guides focusing on specific jurisdictions such as EMEA and other areas. They also provide information on firms' clients and prominent cases – essential reading for your research when preparing an application. |

| **Working in-house**| Training contracts – albeit in much smaller numbers – are sometimes available in in-house organisations including The Government Legal Service, local government and commercial organisations. See separate handout for a full description. |

|What we like:| You can sometimes create your own work experience opportunities in these organisations. Come to Careers to ask how. |

**Careers Events**
Attending events is crucial to enable you to understand the increasingly complex legal market.

**Events at King’s**

**Legal Week:**
This is the on-campus law-themed week to help you prepare for King’s Law Fair the following week and your vacation scheme applications. You will meet firms, chambers and alumni who will help you understand the current legal market, specialisations and do better research on law firms, apply successfully and get hired. There will also be networking opportunities, such as the King’s Law Alumni Mentoring Event and an informal networking session with current trainees at a nearby pub.

**King’s Law Fair**
Probably the largest university law fair in UK! Nearly 70 employers over three days – this is your chance to stand out, make a great first impression and find out more about these firms and chambers.

**Other legal events**
You can attend numerous events related to careers in law (and other sectors), both in King’s and within law firms’ own offices. Find details of these on our site
www.kcl.ac.uk/careers/events
Events offered by the various slaw-related societies are often posted on our Facebook page.
www.facebook.com/kingslawcareers

**Off Campus**
Mainly occurring in the autumn term and early spring term these include:

- Open Days (some are year-specific, with events for first years)
- Presentations and networking evenings
- Workshops

Listing: www.kcl.ac.uk/careers/events and also on our Facebook page:
www.facebook.com/kingslawcareers

**Networking**

**King’s Law Alumni Mentoring Scheme**
King’s Law Alumni Mentoring Scheme and King’s Connect
Join the online community, King’s Connect, to meet the King’s global network of Law alumni and find a mentor. Access exclusive events and skills workshops and get ahead in your career!. Please email mentoring@kcl.ac.uk for further information and to request an application form. After you submit an application, you will be invited to attend an interview session.

**Junior Lawyers Division (JLD)**
The JLD is part of the Law Society and its website contains useful resources for students and trainees, including conferences, workshops and webinars (e.g. for human rights, criminal, family and other areas).
http://juniorlawyers.lawsociety.org.uk/

**Diversity**
There are an increasing number of programmes or associations that promote diversity within the profession. Some of them are listed below:
The Law Society’s Diversity Access Scheme

Reach
http://reach.thecareersgroup.co.uk/
Portal for news which often features schemes such as those run by SEO, Employ-Ability, City Disabilities, Aspiring Solicitors and Rare Recruitment.

Black Lawyers Directory
www.onlinebld.com
Listings of UK individual black minority ethnic (BME) lawyers.

Group for Solicitors with Disabilities
www.gsnet.org.uk
Aims to achieve equality of opportunity for people with disabilities, whether they are solicitors, would-be-solicitors, or clients or members of the general public.

Getting Work Experience

Work experience in law is essential if you want to work in law. How much depends on several factors – such as what you have already done, how good a candidate you already are and more. Talk to us for specific advice.

The Essential Resources above tell you all you need to know about work placements and vacation schemes in the larger City firms. If, however, you are looking for alternatives to commercial and corporate firms, here are some useful starting points. Come and talk to us to find out more as well as consulting our additional leaflet on Human Rights and Public Law.

The Law Society’s Directory of Solicitors and Barristers
www.lawsociety.org.uk/choosingandusing/findasolicitor.law

What we like: The search facility allows you to locate firms or solicitors by name, postcode/location, and area of law.

Legal Aid Practitioners Group
www.lapg.co.uk/
Association of legal aid service providers.

What we like: News and information about firms that can be hard to find. No list of trainee vacancies but a good starting point.

Young Legal Aid Lawyers
www.younglegalaidlawyers.org/jobs
A very useful website for finding qualified and non-qualified roles in non-commercial practice areas such as criminal law, human rights, immigration, and mental health.

The Law Centres Federation
www.lawcentres.org.uk
They provide free representation for the disadvantaged in solving legal problems. You may find opportunities for case work or administration. Particularly useful if you want to work in areas like housing, crime, employment and immigration (but check each centre carefully).

Pro Bono Community
http://www.probonocommunity.org.uk/
This is a charitable initiative that provides a centralised and structured training and accreditation programme for volunteers to work in Law Centres.

What we like: Gives volunteers the training and confidence they need to work at a Law Centre; helps Law Centres maintain a high quality and sustainable volunteering programme.

I-probono
http://i-probono.com/
The first online network to connect organisations in need of legal assistance with lawyers and students who want to use their legal skills for the public good.

KCL Pro Bono
http://kclprobono.org.uk/
KCL’s Pro Bono society provides support and advocacy for those in need, around London.

What we like: The excellent practical experience the projects offer.

LawWorks
http://lawworks.org.uk
Brokers free legal help for individuals and communities.

What we like: One page shows work opportunities either at Law Works or other organisations.

Free Representation Unit
http://www.thefru.org.uk/
Volunteer with the FRU if you would like to represent real clients in front of the Social Security or Employment tribunals. FRU will train you before you handle a case.

Advocates for International Development
http://www.a4id.org/
A charity that empowers lawyers to use their skills to fight world poverty.

Totally Legal
www.totallylegal.com
This is a portal for legal recruitment agencies who offer vacancies for those with experience.

What we like: Can be very useful for LLM students. Sometimes this has vacancies for experienced paralegals too.

King’s CareerConnect
www.kcl.ac.uk/careerconnect

King’s CareerConnect is our exclusive online career portal enabling students and recent alumni to engage with our services. Once logged in, you can access our vacancy board and search hundreds of part-time roles, placements, internships and graduate-level opportunities, book one-to-one careers or application guidance appointments, apply for exclusive King’s Internships and view our full events calendar to book attendance at our many events throughout the year.

News & Commercial Awareness

Professional journals are an essential means of developing commercial awareness and understanding the sector, as opposed to just gaining a theoretical, academic understanding of law. Make a habit of reading these regularly.

Lawyer 2B and The Lawyer
The former is the student version so a great place to start.

What we like: The Lawyer provides easy-to-read market information, enabling you to keep up-to-date with latest news about the legal sector. Lawyer2B also manages to be an entertaining read – a rare achievement in legal publishing!
Researching alternatives to corporate or commercial law firms

When thinking about the type of firm you would like to join, consider its practice areas (e.g. banking, capital markets, real estate, human rights, criminal law, and so on), its clients (e.g. charities, NGOs, global corporations and private clients), and its size or location. Another way of thinking about firms is whether they are ‘global’ ‘niche’, ‘high street’, ‘national’ or ‘regional’ firms. Thorough research will help you understand the differences between the types of law firms. Please ask for our additional leaflet on Human Rights and Public Law as well as consulting the Getting Work Experience resources above.

Other Resources

Roll On Friday
http://www.rollonfriday.com/
Inside information on law firms and practical tips provided by trainees and junior lawyers working in those firms – honest, useful and entertaining material.

Lex 100
www.lex100.com
Useful directory of top law firms. Commercially focused, but useful for the anecdotal (anonymous) stories from current trainees.

All About Law
www.allaboutlaw.co.uk
Another excellent and comprehensive site, with details of deadlines, law schools, alternative careers and much more.

Government Legal Service
www.gls.gov.uk
Employs solicitors and barristers who work in a wide variety of government departments such as the Treasury and the Foreign Office. You will have opportunities to meet their alumni on campus throughout the year.