International students and qualified lawyers from around the world regard an LLM from a UK university as a valuable addition to their CV.

This is a general guide to alert you to the most common terms and questions you ask us. It does not constitute individual advice and it does not suggest that one method of qualification is more appropriate for you than others. You will need to do your own research, attend relevant events and speak to careers consultants. You will need to be very sensitive to the needs of the individual firms in which you are interested. Also regulations can and do change, so it is important you keep up-to-date.

What are the main employment opportunities in the UK legal job market?
Most lawyers work as solicitors in private practice, having completed the Legal Practice Course (LPC) and a two-year training contract. Most legal recruitment taking place at universities is aimed at attracting trainee solicitors. A much smaller number of lawyers practise as barristers. These will have studied the Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC) and undertaken one year of pupillage. Other lawyers, both solicitors and barristers, are employed in the in-house legal departments of, for example, banks, multinational companies, and government.

Is there a set path I should follow?
As an LLM student, the path you take to working in legal services in England will vary depending on factors such as whether you have what’s known as a “qualifying” law degree, whether you are qualified outside of England, and the level of your previous experience. There is no one route for all students to follow. You will need to research the routes available and determine the way ahead. King’s Careers and Employability can help you with this.

I’m qualified in my home jurisdiction. Can I practise as a solicitor in England and Wales?
For an overseas qualified lawyer to qualify as a solicitor in England and Wales, they must satisfy the Solicitors Regulation Authority requirements for the Qualified Lawyers Transfer Scheme (QLTS). The Solicitors Regulation Authority must be contacted to check your eligibility. You may also need to take an English language test. If you do not meet the eligibility criteria you may wish to consider applying via the training contract route. Irrespective of whether you are eligible to take the QLTS or not, some firms may still prefer to recruit and train you via the training contract route. In order to maximise your opportunities, be prepared to do this if required. Some of you may find the QLTS more valuable for returning to a home jurisdiction. It is vital that you check which firms would value it before undertaking it.

Practising in England and Wales without re-qualifying
In some limited situations, overseas qualified lawyers practise in England & Wales without re-qualifying. Whether this is appropriate for you will depend on your precise qualifications and experience. Speak to the lateral hire recruitment teams at firms you are interested in applying to if you think this route may be applicable to you.

I’m qualified in my home jurisdiction. Can I practise at the Bar?
As the regulations are complex, please contact the Bar Standards Board for further information. "If you are a ‘foreign qualified lawyer’ ie a member of a legal profession regulated in a jurisdiction outside England and Wales and entitled to practise as such, or a European Lawyer, there are various ways in which you may be admitted to the Bar in England and Wales. Refer to the “transferring lawyers” section of the Bar Standards Board website in the first instance.”

I’m not qualified to practise in any jurisdiction. How can I practise as a lawyer in England and Wales?
Unless you have a “qualifying Law degree” (a degree which covers certain prescribed areas of English law), you will be required to take the conversion course known as the Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL). However, depending on the content of your law degree, you may be exempt from some units. On completion of the GDL, you will take the LPC or BPTC depending on whether you wish to be a solicitor or a barrister. After this, you will need to complete the practical stage of training, either a training contract (solicitor) or pupillage (barrister). Please see our Solicitor and Barrister hand outs for more information. You can also check out the “equivalent means” section of the SRA website http://www.sra.org.uk/students/resources/ equivalent-means-information-pack.page however, it is expected that this will apply to only a few.

How can I find law firms that might be interested in my international background?
Directories of firms, such as “Chambers and Partners” and “Legal 500”, indicate firms’ areas of operation and international interests. It is also worth talking to any contacts you can make, for example, through lists of college alumni or associations of international lawyers. Once you have identified suitable firms, make sure your approach is targeted to the person with the appropriate speciality. If you have
worked in the legal sector in another jurisdiction, think about contacts you may have with links to firms here.

Student publications such as The Training Contract and Pupillage Handbook and its website LawCareers.net are useful starting points.

Some firms actively market their opportunities to LLM students, but the majority expect you to do research and apply speculatively or via the training contract route. Some may have immediate vacancies (i.e. for you to apply for throughout the LLM year and start soon after its completion) whereas others may expect you to apply two years ahead (i.e. the same timeline as undergraduate law students).

**Which law firms have targeted LLM students in the past and when do they do so?**
Large corporate/commercial firms often recruit LLM students to their home jurisdictions. Check their websites or contact their graduate recruitment staff for more information. Others advertise posts on JobOnline. The time of targeting tends to vary from year to year. Do your research early in the Autumn term and then contact firms individually to find out when they will recruit if you do not see them advertising.

Firms’ overseas offices that have targeted LLM students in the past include Bonnelli Erede Pappalardo, Linklaters, Stibbe, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, Laga,Mannheimer Swartling, Noerr, Latham & Watkins, Allen & Overy, Baer & Karrer, Baker & McKenzie, Clearly Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton, CMS Hasche Sigle, Clifford Chance, De Pardieu Brocas Maffeii, Debevoise & Plimpton, Hengeler Mueller, Hogan Lovells, Mayer Brown JSM, Pestalozzi,Shearman & Sterling, Simmons & Simmons, Skadden Arps, Meagher & Flom, Walden Weiss, White & Case, Vischer, Taylor Wessing, Wolf Theiss and more. If they are not currently advertising contact them and to find out more.

**Can I apply for vacation schemes in law firms?**
These schemes are often particularly marketed at second year law and third year non-law students who will ultimately apply for a training contract to start in two years’ time. Some firms may recommend their winter schemes for postgraduates. It is important that you check. You should only apply for vacation schemes if you eventually want to undertake a training contract. The schemes are not there to provide casual work experience. The schemes may take place at Christmas, Easter or in the summer. www.lawcareers.net is a good starting point. You may be more likely to find open evenings, dinners, and other shorter events for LLM students. Some will be emailed to you, some will appear on JobOnline but the majority you will have to find yourself through using all the recommended resources. Your visa may restrict your opportunities for some of these schemes. If you are not sure you must check with King’s Student Advice.
http://www.kcl.ac.uk/campuslife/services/student-advice-support/StudentAdvisedrop-ins.aspx

**How can I find an internship or short-term contract work in a law firm?**
There are few advertised opportunities. If you do want to try to obtain short-term work, approach firms speculatively, stating clearly how you can be of immediate use to them and emphasizing any relevant legal and administrative expertise including but not restricted to languages. A recommendation from a law firm from your home country may help, especially if they have an association with a particular firm here. Legal recruitment agencies may be able to offer advice, especially if you have substantial experience. Be flexible about what you will do and only submit carefully crafted speculative applications. Careers Consultants can help you do this.

**What about paralegal work?**
Paralegal work varies enormously. It can consist of anything from photocopying to specific research, even sometimes akin to the work of a trainee solicitor. Students who have completed the LPC or BPTC are usually preferred. If you haven’t done these courses yet you must be clear what legal/administrative skills you offer. Many paralegal vacancies are never advertised, since firms receive so many speculative applications. Agencies tend to handle paralegal vacancies for those with existing paralegal experience. Firms and in-house legal terms may also use job titles such as “Legal Assistant” or “Caseworker”.

**Can I get a job outside of law?**
Many employers recruit staff from all degree disciplines. Law graduates are well regarded and a legal background can be a particular advantage in other fields e.g. finance, insurance, policy, risk and consultancy but this will depend on your interests, motivations and aptitudes.

**I’m an international student. What sort of visa do I need to get to work after or during my studies?**
There are several possible options depending on the type of work you will be doing and where you are from. For more information visit:
https://internal.kcl.ac.uk/student/advice/services/Employ/internat-after.aspx
https://internal.kcl.ac.uk/student/advice/services/Employ/internat-during.aspx. Remember, if you’re an overseas student Masters student you may not be able to work full time during the summer. Book a drop in appointment to find out:
http://www.kcl.ac.uk/campuslife/services/student-advice-support/StudentAdvisedrop-ins.aspx

**Regulatory Bodies**
Solicitors Regulation Authority - www.sra.org.uk
Bar Standards Board - www.barstandardsboard.org.uk

**Law specific web sites**
The Lawyer - www.thelawyer.com
Legal Week - www.legalweek.com
LawCareers.Net - www.lawcareers.net
TotallyLegal - www.totallylegal.com (for qualified lawyer and experienced paralegal posts) and indeed.co.uk

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The Careers Group believes that all information provided in this publication is correct at the time of publication but it is important that you check with the firms in which you are interested and the regulatory bodies. Also check visas using the links and services described above. This material can be provided in alternate formats. Please discuss your requirements with a member of staff.