

## Further career resources

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## Your ongoing career FAQs

Once I have qualified, how can I keep up to date and progress my career?

### **Keeping up to date**

All qualified solicitors must adopt the Solicitors Regulation Authority's (SRA) approach to continuing competence which requires reflection on your practice and keeping your skills and knowledge up to date through appropriate and regular learning and development. Any activity that helps you meet your learning needs counts towards continuing competence, and there is no target for the number of hours you have to spend learning. You will be expected to make an

annual declaration to the SRA to confirm you have done this, when you renew your practising certificate, even if you do not identify any learning needs.. The SRA provides a toolkit to support qualified solicitors with this.

The Law Society runs a range of continuing professional development (CPD) events to support qualified solicitors stay up to date with their formal and informal learning and development.

The Law Society provides support for networking and hosts various networking groups which offer support based on your demographic or practice type. Solicitor apprentices, trainee solicitors, LPC students and graduates and newly qualified solicitors (up to 5 years qualified) will find registering with the Junior Lawyers Division of the Law Society a helpful support network during their early career.

In addition, you will find other networks outside of the Law Society, including local law societies and junior lawyers divisions as well as international groups. Other networks which can provide you with professional support, learning, mentoring and networking opportunities include, among many others:

- The Legal Aid Practitioners Group
- Young Legal Aid Lawyers
- Women in the Law UK
- Association of Women Solicitors
- The African Law and Tech Network
- The Black Solicitors network
- The Society of Asian Lawyers
- The International Bar Association
- Commonwealth Lawyers Association

The Law Society Gazette can provide informal learning opportunities and links to the latest news, updates and events.

### **Progressing your career**

The Law Society provides useful information to help guide your career once qualified, whether that be broadening your expertise or changing career direction. Guidance includes:

- Working in the judiciary including as part of the judicial assistant scheme in the High Court
- Considering a move from High Street to City or vice versa
- Becoming a solicitor-advocate or a barrister
- Becoming a QC
- Working as a sole practitioner
- Moving into undergraduate and postgraduate teaching

You may also wish to inform developments in the law. As a member of the Law Society, qualified solicitors can provide input into campaigns, influence the Law Society's work via involvement in the Council and contribute your views on issues affecting the profession.

The Law Society also provides careers clinics throughout the year to qualified solicitors, as well as to Legal Practice Course (LPC) paralegals and final seat trainees.

If you want to consider developing a portfolio career (time permitting!) or consider roles other

than a solicitor as your career progresses, you may find alternative jobs in law of interest, as well as roles outside the legal sector.

## Ensuring your wellbeing and mental health as a future lawyer

The following provides a range of useful resources to support your mental health and wellbeing.

### **LawCare**

LawCare provides information and support to anyone in the legal community experiencing mental health and wellbeing issues. This information and support includes factsheets, toolkits, guides, and an online webchat and helpline (Helpline 0800 279 6888 Mon-Fri 9.00-5.30).

### **The Law Society**

The Law Society provides additional resources to support practitioners' health and wellbeing. They offer helplines for both personal and professional issues and other support services.

It has specific guidance and resources on mental health and wellbeing.

The Junior Lawyers Division of the Law Society has also run campaigns on mental health and wellbeing.

The Law Society hosts a short piece on embracing change for mental health awareness week (May 2021).

The Leeds Law Society ran a webinar, accessed via the Law Society website, on wellbeing at their September 2020 diversity and inclusion conference.

### **The Solicitors' Assistance Scheme**

The SAS offers free confidential help and advice for all solicitors in England and Wales, their families and employees on any problem troubling them, whether personal or professional.

### **Claiming Space: evening sessions**

For junior lawyers (10 years PQE or less) working in legal aid and social justice law, Claiming Space: evening sessions provides a non-judgmental monthly space to learn, share and reflect on legal practice. First Monday of the month, every month (other than bank holidays when it will be moved to the next Monday) 17.30 - 18.30 on Zoom.

### **National resources**

**Mind** is a national charity offering guidance and support with mental health issues.

**Student Minds** is the UK's student mental health charity, empowering students and members of the university community to look after their own mental health, support others and create change.

**The Samaritans** offer emotional support and guidance on mental health and other issues.

**The NHS website** provides a portal for mental health concerns.

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**Source URL:** <https://www.lawcabs.ac.uk/further-career-resources>