

Choosing your GCSEs with a view to a law career?

There is no need for you to choose particular GCSEs (or equivalent qualifications) subjects if you intend to go into a legal career.

However, subjects which will help you develop skills in written communication (English language and literature, history), analysis and critical thinking (maths, science subjects) and develop your confidence in public speaking (drama, English literature, modern languages) will benefit you further along your chosen career path. The main thing is to ensure that you choose non-mandatory subjects that you enjoy and think you will do well in, as you will need to achieve five GCSEs 9-4, or equivalent, including English, maths and possibly science to progress into legal apprenticeships, A levels (or equivalent) or university..

Image



After GCSEs (or equivalent)

Once you have completed your GCSEs (or equivalent qualifications), there are a range of options available to you if you are keen to pursue a career in the law that don't all involve going to university.

- Leave school after GCSEs (or equivalent) and work in a legal (e.g. legal secretary, court usher, trainee conveyancer etc) or non-legal setting, while studying for specific legal qualifications (e.g. CILEX introductory – level 2 - qualifications, Licensed Conveyancer, Costs Lawyer);
- Leave school after GCSEs (or equivalent) and work in a solicitor's firm, first developing on the job before applying for a level 3 paralegal or CILEX apprenticeship and studying while you work;
- Continue on to A levels or equivalents at school, sixth form or Further Education (FE) college for access to other legal career pathways.

Try before you buy!

Studying law is challenging, so why not do some free taster sessions to see if you like the subject first? The Open University Open Learn offers free taster sessions in various aspects of the law and we have highlighted some on our Career in Law page for you.

Ask your school to get involved in the Young Citizens' Mock Trials so you can experience what it's really like working as a legal professional in a court case! Mock Trials are available as Magistrates' Court mock trials for 12-14 year olds and as Bar mock trials for 15-18 year olds.

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