

Legal Career Options

Barristers

Barristers offer advice on specific legal issues and are on the front line, representing clients in court. For further information, visit www.barcouncil.org.uk.

Solicitors

Solicitors give advice and assistance on matters of law; they are the first point of contact for those seeking legal advice and representation. For further information, visit www.lawsociety.org.uk.

Chartered Legal Executives (FCILEx)

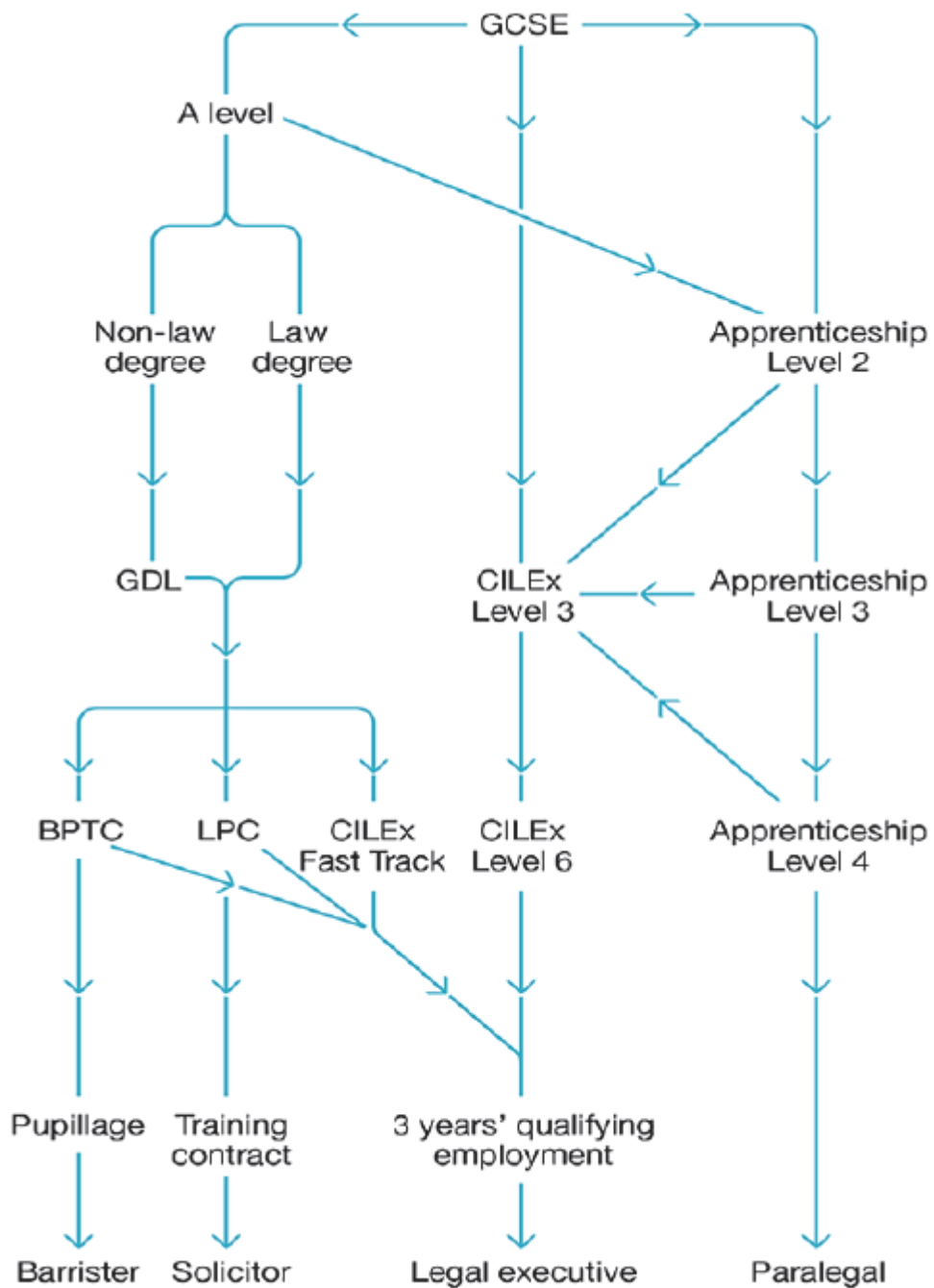
It is also possible to practise law as a Chartered Legal Executive - a qualified lawyer (though not a Solicitor) who is trained to specialise as an expert in a particular area of law. The route to qualification is to complete CILEx 3 and CILEx 6 (or CILEx Graduate Fast Track for those with a law degree) and three years' qualifying employment. For further information, visit www.cilex.org.uk.

Legal Apprenticeships

A Legal Apprentice is someone who joins a law firm straight from school, rather than going to university, to work in a role similar to that of a paralegal and gain qualifications that contribute toward becoming a Chartered Legal Executive. As of September 2016, it is possible to embark on a six-year Trailblazer Solicitor Apprenticeship. For more details, visit www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/apprenticeships.

Paralegals

Paralegals have traditionally worked alongside Solicitors in law firms as support staff, although in practise many Paralegals do the same work as their trainee or newly-qualified solicitor counterparts. Paralegal roles provide a good route into the profession for students and graduates, either as valuable work experience before applying for a training contract or as a way to fulfil the Solicitors Regulation Authority's qualifying requirements without undertaking a formal period of recognised training.



Legal Career Qualification Requirements

GCSEs

The foundation of your career and the essential first step – good grades are vital if you want to progress in your legal career.

A Levels

The academic stage between GCSE and undergraduate level – again, good grades are essential. Some universities favour traditional, academically rigorous subjects such as history (A level law is not usually specified).

Law Degree

The qualifying law degree covers seven compulsory subjects: public, criminal, contract, tort, property, equity and trusts and EU law.

Non-Law Degree

Lawyers are not required to have studied law at university. It is possible to do a non-law degree and then do the Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL).

Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL)

Like the Law degree, the one-year GDL course concentrates on the seven foundations of legal practice. When combined with a non-law degree, it is equivalent to a law degree.

Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC)

The one year BPTC is the vocational stage of training to be a solicitor.

Legal Practice Course (LPC)

The one-year Legal Practice Course (LPC) is the vocational stage of training to be a solicitor.

Pupillage

Pupillage is a compulsory, yearlong, apprenticeship before qualification as a Barrister. Pupils practise under the guidance and supervision of a pupil supervisor.

Training Contract (Recognised Period of Training)

The period of recognised training (traditionally known as a training contract) is a period of paid employment and training with a law firm or other approved organisation before qualification as a solicitor. In most cases, this will take the form of a two-year traineeship.