

# Getting started...



Your essential pocket guide to becoming a solicitor

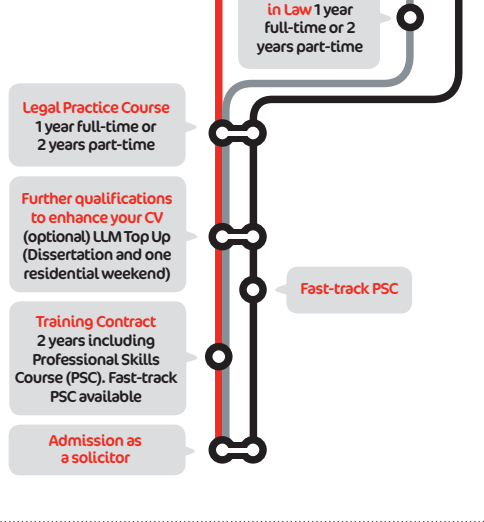
just think

NCLT

National College of Legal Training

2011/12

## Your route to becoming a solicitor



## Your training timetable

2nd, 3rd year law students & GDL students

<b>September</b>	Start 2nd year of law degree
<b>October / November</b>	Identify law firms you want to approach for training contracts Research LPC training providers Attend law fairs, careers events and training provider presentations Apply for Christmas law firm work placement schemes (www.lawcareers.net provide details on how to apply)
<b>November</b>	Non-law degree students apply for the FT GDL via <b>CAB</b> . For the PT GDL apply directly to the institution
<b>December</b>	Attend Christmas work placement scheme
<b>January / February</b>	Apply for Easter work placement scheme
<b>March/ April</b>	Apply for Summer work placement scheme Attend Easter work placement scheme
<b>June</b>	Apply for training contracts (closing dates for applications vary, check with each firm) Attend interviews (see tips later on)
<b>July/ August</b>	Attend Summer work placement scheme
<b>September</b>	Start 3rd year of your law degree/ start GDL (1 yr FT or 2 yrs PT)
<b>October</b>	For 3rd years, apply for the FT LPC via CAB N.B. NCLT study centres are listed on CAB under UWE/NCLT
<b>November</b>	Providers start making offers of LPC places Check with <b>SRA</b> when you should apply online for <b>student enrolment</b> and your academic eligibility certificate
<b>September</b>	Start LPC (1 yr FT, 2 yrs PT)
<b>June</b>	Finish LPC
<b>September/March</b>	Start your training contract and complete your PSC (2 years) Good luck
<b>2 years later</b>	Qualify!

**NB** This timetable refers mainly to law firms which recruit two years in advance. Check with individual firms for their application deadlines.

## Getting the most out of law fairs

Law fairs take place in the autumn term. Visit [www.lawcareers.net](http://www.lawcareers.net) for a list of fairs

### Top tips for attending law fairs

- Dress smartly
- Make a list of the firms you wish to speak to
- Be confident when speaking to firms
- Ask interesting questions i.e. size and culture of the firm
- Give recruiters your name
- Be professional – don't ask for the freebies!

## Applying for a training contract

**Duration:** Two years

**Minimum salary recommendations by SRA 2011/12:**

- £18,590 (London)
- £16,650 (rest of England and Wales)

**When to apply:**

- Second year of law degree/final year of any other degree

**How to apply:**

- Each law firm has its own application process
- The Training Contract and Pupillage Handbook lists law firms and application procedures. Visit [www.tcph.co.uk](http://www.tcph.co.uk) to order a copy

**About the training contract:**

- Some larger firms pay/part-fund GDL/LPC
- It's not unusual to start the GDL/LPC with no training contract
- You will undertake the mandatory PSC (NCLT offers the PSC)

## Interview tips

Be fully prepared to impress employers with your talents and experience

- Research the firm
- Practise answering 'potential' questions in advance
- Know why you want to be a solicitor
- Get reading - be ready to discuss commercial/business issues that you have been following
- Ensure you can explain any weaknesses on your CV
- Identify your unique selling points
- Have some questions to ask at the end
- Find out the dress code and dress accordingly
- Arrive early – plan your journey in advance
- Be confident, maintain eye contact with your interviewers and smile!
- Listen carefully – avoid asking for the question to be repeated
- Make sure you can substantiate everything you say

## Enhancing your CV

**Apply for law firm work placement schemes**

- Good opportunity to gain a training contract

**Personality**

- Stand out to recruiters with an interesting CV i.e. participation in mooted competitions, travel, holiday jobs

**Gain legal work experience**

- Gaining any legally related work experience will undoubtedly enhance your CV

**Target and tailor your application**

- Target specific firms in the practice area that best suits your skills and experience

## Careers support from NCLT

At NCLT you are not just another student – we do our best to give you personal guidance and careers support throughout your study

- NCLT is well connected with law firms
- Assistance with applying for training contracts
- Designated LPC Careers Officer
- Careers events led by practitioners
- Support starts when you accept NCLT's offer of a place!

## Eligibility requirements

### LPC

- A recent law degree; or
- A Graduate Diploma in Law; or
- Appropriate professional qualifications, which the SRA accepts as equivalent

### GDL

- A non-law degree or a 'stale' honours degree from a UK institution; or
- A degree of comparable standard from an institution outside the UK; or
- Academic/professional qualifications at degree level
- Meet the entry requirements for English language

## Funding your studies

It's not always easy to fund your studies, but there are various organisations that can offer you financial support:

- Professional and Career Development Loans - NCLT/UWE is a learner provider for Career Development Loans
- Loan packages and bursaries from banks
- Firm sponsorship – Some larger firms offer funding
- Local Authority grants – Check with your Local Authority
- Law Society bursary scheme – Email [bursaryapplications@lawsociety.org.uk](mailto:bursaryapplications@lawsociety.org.uk)
- Charities and grant-making trusts – Get in touch with the Education Grants Advisory Service, call 020 7241 7459
- NCLT interest free payment plans – Can be tailored to suit your individual needs

## Useful contacts

**SRA – becoming a solicitor and student enrolment**

[www.sra.org.uk](http://www.sra.org.uk)

**For LPC/GDL/PSC/LLM Top Up courses and careers advice**

[www.nclt.org.uk](http://www.nclt.org.uk)

**Law fairs and law firm work placement schemes**

[www.lawcareers.net](http://www.lawcareers.net)

**Applying for the full-time LPC/GDL**

[www.lawcabs.ac.uk](http://www.lawcabs.ac.uk)

## Glossary of terms

### CAB

- Central Applications Board – a central online applications system for all institutions providing a full-time LPC/GDL

### SRA

- Solicitors Regulation Authority – sets the standards for qualifying as a solicitor and monitors the profession

### Student Enrolment

- You must enrol as a student with the SRA to undertake your LPC and training contract

**NB** We have made every effort to ensure that the information provided in this guide was correct at the time of print, however some content may be subject to change. Therefore you may wish to check key information yourself.

# Get in touch today

**t: 0121 362 7529**

**e: [nclt@nclt.co.uk](mailto:nclt@nclt.co.uk)**

**[www.nclt.org.uk](http://www.nclt.org.uk)**

LPC • GDL • PSC • LLM Top Up  
London, Manchester, Coventry,  
Southampton, Derby, Sunderland

**NCLT**

National College  
of Legal Training

*NCLT is a collaboration between CLT, the leading trainer for lawyers, and UWE, the University of the West of England.*

Like us on  Follow us on 