

Alternative Career Options For Law Students



Legally-related employment

The purpose of this document is to illustrate ways in which law students can use the many transferable skills developed on an LLB, an LPC or a BVC to find an alternative to working as a solicitor or as a barrister. Some students find that having studied law, they simply do not wish to enter the legal profession. For other students, it may be that applications for training contracts or pupillage have not yet yielded success and that they wish to enter alternative work as a way of gaining legally-related experience. In this instance, the development of key legal skills will help to enhance an individual's CV and may well help them to net that elusive training contract or pupillage.

Law students develop many key transferable skills. When considering alternative careers, it can be helpful to first consider the following points.

Are you considering an alternative career because you simply do not wish to enter legal practice? In other words, are you looking for a career which utilises some of the skills that you have developed, but one which is substantially different and away from the law?

Or would you prefer to enter a career which is substantially legally-related?

Which skill(s) would you most like to utilise?

Here are some of the skills that may be utilised and further developed by an alternative career.

Legal research

Drafting documents

Advocacy/negotiation on behalf of a client

Advisory skills

Interviewing somebody to elicit key information

Translating legal concepts or complex ideas into everyday language

Analysis of complex material/documentation

Problem-solving

Strategic thinking

Networking and the ability to build a client base

Commercial awareness

Law graduates are generally well-regarded by employers because of the extensive range of skills that they are equipped with. In addition, competition for entry to law degrees in recent years has meant that law graduates tend to have achieved high grades before coming to university.

It is impossible to provide an exhaustive list of every career that might be entered. The aim of this document is to provide some alternative ideas.

1. Careers which are substantially related to law

Many students will consider working as a paralegal in private firms of solicitors. This work is dealt with in the Careers & Employability Service document "Work as a Paralegal."

Careers which involve written/research skills

The Law Commission (www.lawcom.gov.uk) runs an annual research assistant recruitment campaign. The Commission was set up as an independent body under the Law Commissions Act (1965) to make recommendations to government for the reform of law in England & Wales. The vast majority of the Commission's recommendations are taken up by Parliament.

There are 5 Law Commissioners, assisted by a team of lawyers + research assistants. A typical project involves researching an area of law where problems have arisen (eg. because current law has been badly drafted and is not achieving what was intended, or there are "loopholes"). The Commission appoints research assistants on a fixed-term 12 month contract, usually recruiting with a closing date of late January/early February for the following September. Applications can be made from January 1 in the year of appointment.

This is a high profile position and is likely to add prestige to a student's CV, thus helping in the search for a training contract or pupillage. It may be of particular benefit to BVC students who are seeking pupillages in areas of law in which opinion writing is important (eg. public law.)

There are a range of other government departments and other organisations which may recruit legal researchers, or require written skills. Here are some examples:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office recently advertised for a legal researcher. This job involved conducting legal research for FCO legal advisors, the primary focus being on public international law. It entailed providing operational briefings for meetings of international legal bodies at which the UK is represented, for intergovernmental negotiations and assisting in the preparation of cases before international tribunals.

To search for positions within different government departments & public agencies, go to the **Civil Service recruitment gateway** (www.civilservice.gov.uk/jobs/index.aspx.) Other departments that might be of interest to law students include the Attorney General's Office, the Criminal Records Bureau, the Health & Safety Executive, the Home Office, the Land Registry, the Office of Fair Trading, the Serious Fraud Office and the UK Border Agency, as well as the various regional Government Offices.

Recent jobs advertised in the Law Society's Gazette, notified directly to the School of Law or MMU Careers & Employability Service have included:

Home Office – Immigration Appeals Presenting Officer
Office of Fair Trading – Assistant Case Officers and Investigation Officers
Office of Fair Trading- Executive Officers
Office of the Attorney General – Know-How Officer
Information Commissioner – Compliance Officer

NB. This document is primarily concerned with jobs outside of practice as a lawyer. The Crown Prosecution Service and Government Legal Service both offer legal trainee schemes, which are a form of training contract or pupillage, and it is possible to secure training contracts in local government with local councils.

Other legal jobs with a written research emphasis

A variety of organisations, particularly those in the not-for-profit sector, may sometimes employ legal research personnel. For example, the **Equality & Human Rights Commission** in Manchester advertised a vacancy with MMU School of Law for a paralegal to provide professional website support. It essentially involved writing & updating the legal content of the Commission's website, having researched significant developments in Sex Discrimination law, including new case law, legislation, tribunal and court procedure.

The housing charity **Shelter** employs legal writers in their publishing division. This job involves legal research into developments in housing law, followed by the drafting of pamphlets & fact-sheets for housing advisors and for publication in housing journals.

Shelter also have in-house legal teams in their Manchester & London offices and can offer legal work experience, although strictly speaking this is not an alternative career opportunity.

NB. A number of not-for-profit organisations, pressure groups and think-tanks offer general, non-legal research positions and internships. Here are some examples:

Shelter- research team, Policy Division
Institute of Public Policy Research- Research Internships, employed in both policy research & the Centre for Cities Team
Omega Research- human rights charity based in Manchester, recently offered a research placement to LLB students
New Policy Institute- Intern Researcher
UN Refugee Agency-Legal Protection Intern
Law Centres Federation- Research & Policy Officer

Work placements & internships may well be unpaid, but may lead to permanent researcher positions eventually.

The charity **Amicus** deserves special mention. This organisation provides assistance and legal representation to prisoners awaiting capital trial and punishment in the US. Obviously the work can be very distressing as you would be involved in helping prisoners awaiting the death sentence and some students may feel it not be for them. However, it could represent an opportunity for students who are specifically interested in human rights work.

Amicus offers internships to UK law students. Interns can be placed in any state in the US which has the death penalty and will be generally placed with defence attorneys. The work involves:

Assisting in the preparation of legal submissions for trial
Interviewing witnesses, to ascertain facts or to prepare points in mitigation
Interviewing jurors to ascertain whether a trial was conducted fairly & properly (permissible under US law)
Interviewing the family of the deceased
Legal research
Statistical analysis

Applicants must successfully complete Amicus's training programme, which is run several times a year. Internships are unpaid and the cost of living in the US can be high. There is a funding programme but competition for this is stiff. See the website www.amicus-alj.org for further details.

Justice- this charity/pressure group is a leading human rights organisation, aiming to promote human rights issues and access to justice, as well as advocating law reform and improvements in the criminal justice system.

Internships

Justice offer 2 legal research internship programmes and strongly prefer applications from law students & graduates.

- (1) Summer- usually 2 places available, runs June-September; closing date usually mid-May
- (2) Winter- 5 week period, covering mid-January to the end of February; closing date usually late November/early December.

Application is by CV/covering letter, closing dates will be posted on the charity's web-site www.justice.org.uk at the appropriate time.

Justice take volunteers on an ad hoc basis throughout the year, the work tends to be of an administrative or support nature. If you wish to be considered, submit a CV and covering letter, which will be held on file for 12 months.

Justice runs a Student Human Rights Network Programme, with events aimed at helping students to become involved with the charity. To subscribe, send an e-mail to jshrn@justice.org.uk.

JUSTICE advertises positions of paid employment in The Guardian and/or The Times. All details are also put on the [In The News](#) section of their website.

For further information on all these options, contact Hayley Smith, Justice, 59 Carter Lane, London EC4V 5AQ.

E-mail: hsmith@justice.org.uk

Tel: 020-7762-6422

Opportunities in the not-for-profit sector in general

Opportunities in the not-for-profit sector tend to vary; it is also worth trying the individual websites of organisations that you may be interested in. The charity recruitment website www.jobsincharities.co.uk advertises some vacancies that may interest law students; use the job-search section under “Legal.”

Other websites that may be of use include:

www.policyjobs.net Public Policy Jobs & Internships

www.policylibrary.com Policy Library

www.politicaljobs.net Political Jobs

www.appc.org.uk Association of Professional Political Consultants

Legally-related positions with not-for-profit organisations are sometimes advertised in the Times Legal Supplement or on the web-site www.lawcareers.net.

Jobs within the Courts Service

Magistrates’ Courts offer trainee legal adviser positions. This is a form of training contract. However, these positions are currently very rarely advertised externally, and a more likely entry point is to enter in an administrative position and then apply for a trainee legal adviser position internally. In some cases, the Courts Service may fund a law graduate to do the LPC. A student who has already successfully completed the LPC will obviously be in a position to enter a trainee position immediately. Jobs throughout the Courts Service are advertised on the website www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk.

However, other positions are sometimes also advertised in the Law Society’s Gazette and the Times Legal Supplement. Examples of jobs that have been advertised recently include working as a judicial assistant for the Court of Appeal and a judicial support summary writer working for the Criminal Appeal Office.

Placements with international institutions

Traineeships with the European Union

Various institutions and bodies of the EU offer traineeships to university graduates. These are traineeships lasting up to 5 months; placements with the European Commission, the European Court of Justice and the European Ombudsman will be of particular interest to law graduates. Some traineeships are paid, some are not and the competition can be severe. Information on traineeships is available at http://europa.eu/about-eu/working-eu-institutions/index_en.htm, from where you can click through to the information on traineeships at each individual institution or body.

The bodies and institutions offering traineeships are:

- The European Parliament
- The Council of the European Union
- The European Commission
- The European Court of Justice
- The European Court of Auditors
- The European Economic and Social Committee
- The Committee of the Regions
- The European Investment Bank
- The European Central Bank
- The European Ombudsman

International Criminal Court

The ICC runs an Internships and Visiting Professional Programme, welcoming applications from candidates with outstanding academic qualifications to serve as Organs of the Court for a period of up to 6 months.

Internships/clerkships are offered in:

- Presidency and Chambers
- Office of the Prosecutor
- Registry

Further details can be found at <http://www.icc-cpi.int/Menus/ICC/Recruitment/>.

Legal publishing

The legal publishing industry represents an opportunity for students to make a career using written research skills. Broadly-speaking, roles can be divided into editorial; production; sales & marketing; rights. Graduate first jobs include editorial assistant; copy editor; production assistant; rights assistant; sales representative. There may also be work involved writing & updating the content of legal websites.

Publishing companies, houses & publications producing legal news & features include Target Law, GTI Specialist Publishers, Legal Week, The Law Society's Gazette, The Lawyer (Centaur Communications Ltd), Hobson's Law Casebook, CRAC/Hobson's Publications, Globe Business Publishing, Oxford

University Press, Prentice Hall, Lexisnexis Butterworths, Butterworths On-Line, Thomson Sweet & Maxwell, Blackwell's, Blackstone Press, Lawtel, Kluwer Law International, Hammicks- Legal Booksellers, Legalease.

Examples of vacancies advertised on the Immediate Vacancies section of www.lawcareers.net:

Legalease - Graduate Trainee, Book Production Department.
Sweet & Maxwell - On-Line Customer Support Executive
Globe Business Publishing - Researcher
International Law Office - Researcher
Practical Law Company - Research Editor

Advocacy

These opportunities may be of particular interest to BVC graduates.

Time spent as an advocate following completion of the BVC may aid in the search for pupillage, as you will be getting real-life advocacy experience. There are some advocacy agencies which specialise in providing advocacy services for clients bringing or defending proceedings in various courts & tribunals, including the County Courts & Employment Tribunals.

Legal Practice Clerks - this organisation's Agency Service provides advocates for County Court hearings throughout England & Wales and also at some High Court hearings. The types of hearings covered include mortgage possession, return of goods, Landlord & Tenant hearings, small claims trials & allocation hearings. Advocacy work generally involves appearing before a district judge in chambers; however, you may also undertake outdoor clerking work, including sitting behind counsel, gathering witness statements, conference with counsel, and the issuing and lodging of documents.

http://www.lpc-law.co.uk/lpc_law_advocacy_service.php

Peninsula Business Services - this is an Employment Law and Health & Safety consultancy. Peninsula's in-house advocacy team provides advocates on behalf of employers to defend claims brought by employees at both Employment Tribunal hearings & Employment Appeal Tribunals. (They also employ consultants in non-advocacy roles to advise client companies.)

www.peninsula-uk.com

Vista Employment Services Limited is an employment law & strategic HR support consultancy based in Stockport. They offer employment law advice to client companies aimed at improving HR strategy, the advice being focused on issues such as recruitment of staff, dignity at work, performance management & managing discipline. They also offer training for human

resources & operational staff, as well as advocacy & representation at Employment Tribunals & Appeal Tribunals.

Vista Employment Services Limited, Regent House, Stockport SK4 1BS.

www.vista-online.co.uk

Tel. (0161) 475 1720

Contact: Lin Myers

Lloyds Employment Law Consultancy is based in Grantham, Lincolnshire and offer advice & representation at Tribunal hearings to SMEs.

They seek BVC graduates in **Legal Consultant (Tribunal)** roles. They also offer non-advocacy consultant roles which include advising SMEs on a helpline and drafting employment contracts and policies for companies.

www.lelc.co.uk

Some other organisations such as the **Immigration Advisory Service** also offer **Immigration Counsellors** the opportunity to do advocacy, representing refugees & asylum-seekers at the Immigration Appeal Authority. A law degree or professional legal qualification, such as the BVC or LPC, is required to enter as an Immigration Counsellor, although in practice previous experience and/or Legal Services Commission accreditation is required and law graduates may more realistically enter as a casework assistant.

www.iasuk.org

Advisory work

There are a number of organisations & agencies which will give LLB, LPC & BVC graduates the opportunity to develop interviewing and advisory skills. These will involve frontline positions, where you would interview a client to elicit key information and then advise that client on legally-related matters. Often the best way to gain a “foot in the door” is to volunteer for such an organisation. (Students who are seriously considering legal volunteering should also see the separate Careers & Employability Service hand-out “Law Students and Voluntary Advice Work.”)

Here are some examples:

Citizen’s Advice Bureau

CABs offer free advice to individuals on a wide range of matters, including social security, welfare, debt, housing, employment law, immigration law & discrimination at work. The vast majority of CAB advisers are volunteers.

They initially recruit volunteer Generalist Advice Workers who will undergo several months’ training before receiving the CAB Certificate in Generalist Advice Work. Manchester CAB now also recruit Gateway Interviewers who dispense initial frontline advice to clients. Training is done on a part-time basis, different CAB centres in different areas operate differently but in

Manchester, you must be able to give at least 6-10 hours per week + a commitment of a minimum 6-12 months.

Paid positions- it is possible to make a career in the CAB, working as a paid Generalist Advice Worker or Gateway Interviewer, with progression available to:

Caseworker (actually taking on and progressing a case on behalf of a client, rather than pure frontline advice.)

Casework Supervisor- involves managing a client caseload + managing a team of Caseworkers.

Manager

National Association of CABs- www.citizensadvice.org.uk

National Recruitment Line- 08451 264264

Recruitment in Manchester- contact Karen Ashley on 0161 226 9847

Equality & Human Rights Commission

This body was founded on 1 October 2007 and has taken over the work of the 3 previous equality commissions- the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Disability Rights Commission. In addition to the areas that those commissions worked in, the EHRC also deals with matters of age, sexual orientation and religion or belief, as well as human rights. It is a non-departmental body which was established under the Equality Act 2006 and is independent of government. Its role includes the elimination of discrimination, the reduction of inequality and the protection of human rights and it has a mandate to promote understanding of the Human Rights Act.

www.equalityhumanrightsjobs.com

Police Station Representative Work

Firms of solicitors who offer criminal defence services often employ non-solicitors as **Police Station Representatives**. This essentially involves being a first point of advice for clients when they are initially arrested and brought into a Police Station.

A non-solicitor working in this role must successfully complete the Police Station Representatives Accreditation Scheme (PSRAS). You must first register as a Probationary Police Station Representative and find a Supervising Solicitor, as well as an authorised training organisation to train you. Being a probationary PSR involves passing the Written Examination (assesses knowledge of basic criminal law, law of evidence & Police Station procedures) and Part A of the Assessment Portfolio (which involves you observing 2 cases where your Supervising Solicitor gives advice to clients at the Police Station and 2 cases where you are observed giving advice.)

NB. LPC & BVC graduates are exempt from the Written Examination.

You can then go on to complete Part B, which involves successfully advising Police Station clients without supervision, and the Critical Incidents Test. Both must be completed within 12 months of registering as a Probationary PSR. You have then completed the PSRAS.

Some firms of solicitors advertise PSR vacancies in the local press, in the Law Society's Gazette (www.lawgazette.co.uk) & on the website Lawcareers.Net. If seeking PSR work, it is also advisable to make speculative applications with a CV and covering letter to firms which practise criminal law.

Further information on becoming a PSR and a list of accredited training organisations is available on the Solicitors Regulation Authority website at <http://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/accreditation/police-station-representatives-accreditation-scheme.page>.

Law Centres

Law centres offer free initial legal advice on most matters. They employ qualified solicitors & barristers and sometimes offer training contracts. Outside of training to be a solicitor, a variety of roles may be available, including that of caseworkers (often specialising in different areas of law) and housing worker. A variety of staff from different agencies may be based in law centres. The hand-out "Law Students and Voluntary Advice" contains more details on volunteering for a law centre, which will often be the best way to enter as many paid vacancies require some previous law centre experience and/or LSC accreditation.

There are a range of law centres around Greater Manchester, for further information go to www.lawcentres.org.uk. For paid vacancies, check the Vacancies section.

Examples of vacancies that have been advertised include:

- Caseworker (Immigration & Asylum)
- Legal Advice and Support Worker (Older People)
- Employment Law Caseworker
- Housing Caseworker

Immigration Advisory Service

We encountered this organisation in the Advocacy section. The IAS offers a variety of roles advising & representing refugees & asylum-seekers.

Adviser- possession of A levels or any degree sufficient

Casework Assistant- essentially a paralegal position.

Immigration Counsellor- must possess a law degree, BVC or LPC (although in practice previous experience and/or Legal Services Commission accreditation is often required.)

Supervising Counsellors- As with Immigration Counsellor, but also requires 1 year's experience of asylum law & practice, including experience of conducting immigration appeals.

Tribunal Counsellors- the highest level of immigration representative within the IAS.

A range of other organisations offer the opportunity to advise and support clients on legally-related matters. It is impossible to provide a definitive list.

Here are some examples:

Greater Manchester Victim Support & Witness Service

This organisation has a variety of branches around the GM area. The organisation supports victims of crime and court witnesses, explaining Police & court procedures, undertaking liaison with other agencies on the victim's behalf and attending criminal trials and other legal proceedings e.g. applications for non-molestation orders and other injunctions; representing the victim at Criminal Injuries Compensation hearings.

Examples of job roles include Serious & Violent Crime Caseworker, Domestic Violence Development Officer.

Again, volunteering is a good way to start, go to www.victimsupport-gm.co.uk for further information.

Mind- this mental health charity is based in London. (There are also over 200 local Mind groups which are unaffiliated to Mind nationally.) They represent and give advice to clients with mental health issues and their carers, as well as solicitors representing such clients. Most advice relates to the Mental Health Act (1983), and issues relating to mental incapacity and its legal definitions.

Mind's Legal Unit operates an advice service by telephone, e-mail & letter. They offer initial advice & information then refer on to a solicitor of the case needs to be progressed. The team is small and staffed with qualified solicitors but they do take on LPC students as volunteers. If interested in volunteering, please e-mail legal@mind.org.uk. Volunteering could possibly lead to a paid role within the Unit.

Shelter- as well as offering legal writing positions, as seen above, this housing charity has small teams of Legal Advisers based in housing aid centres, including a team based in the north-west, as well as in London.

Other charities that might offer legally-related advisory roles include:

Howard League for Penal Reform
Age Concern England
Mencap

The **Legal Action Group** represents a variety of charities and not-for-profit organisations involved in legal advice work relating to social issues. They produce a monthly magazine which contains details of vacancies.

Legal Action Group, 242 Pentonville Road, London N1 9UN.
Tel. 020 7833 2931

E-mail: lag@lag.org.uk

Some vacancies are posted on the Legal Aid Practitioner Group's website at www.lapg.co.uk

The website www.jobsincharities.co.uk may also carry details of legally-related vacancies.

The Legal Complaints Service recruit **Customer Complaint Executives** who deal with complains made by clients about solicitors. This involves helping to staff a helpline, taking calls from people, and also dealing with written complains, then progressing the case as is necessary, including writing reports for adjudicators.

Vacancies in the CCS are sometimes advertised via MMU School of Law. Please contact the LCS on 0845 608 6565 for further information about this role, which may change and develop as the organisation develops its services in line with the Legal Services Act recommendations.

Legal recruitment

Legal recruitment agencies specialise in recruiting solicitors and other fee-earners for firms. Although a background in law is by no means a requirement, a law degree and an interest in sales work & marketing will make a graduate attractive to many agencies: as will a proven ability to meet targets and thrive in a competitive environment. This may be evidenced by success in part-time work whilst a student. For example, gaining promotion or other success in a retail job. Some GDL students may have experienced considerable success in commercial, marketing or PR roles before studying law.

There are several legal specialists in the market; agencies based in Manchester include Michael Page Legal, G2 Legal, BCL Legal, Hudson Legal & Anakin Seal. A number of agencies are based in London, and many advertise in the back pages of the Law Society's Gazette, where full contact details are given. Some vacancies are advertised on the website www.totaljobs.com.

Licensed conveyancer

This profession started in May 1987 when the Administration of Justice Act (1985) allowed conveyancing services, which had previously been the sole preserve of solicitors, to be provided by licensed conveyancers. Licensed conveyancers are therefore specialist property lawyers who are qualified in, and solely provide, conveyancing services. They may be employed by companies who specialise in providing residential conveyancing services or by firms of solicitors as a conveyancing specialist.

The profession is regulated by the **Council for Licensed Conveyancers (CLC)**. In order to qualify, students must successfully complete both the **Foundation** and **Final** examinations. Candidates must also register with the CLC as a student and complete 2 years of full-time supervised work, known as **Practical Training**. (Part-time work counts Pro Rata.) This is generally expected to be assisting in the provision of conveyancing services with a solicitor or licensed conveyancer, or another organisation licensed to do conveyancing. A candidate may study for the CLC examinations part-time whilst simultaneously completing the Practical Training.

The CLC examinations comprise the following:

Foundation

Introduction to Conveyancing (assignments); Introduction to Law and Legal Method (assignments); Law of Contract (examination); Land Law (examination).

NB. LLB, GDL & LPC graduates may well receive exemptions from elements of the examination. The CLC will not discuss exemptions over the telephone and state that every application for exemption will be judged on an individual basis.

However, their website suggests the following exemptions may be applicable.

Qualifying law degree- exemption from all.

Graduate Diploma in Law- exemption from Law of Contract and Land Law.

LPC- exemption from all.

Final

Bookkeeping (assignments) & Accounts (examination); Conveyancing Law & Practice (examination); Landlord & Tenant (examination).

The CLC website suggests that a qualifying law degree or GDL gives no exemptions from the above elements, but that successful completion of the LPC gives exemption from the Conveyancing Law & Practice + Landlord & Tenant elements. LPC graduates may complete the Bookkeeping & Accounts

element by completing the CLC Distance Learning assignments in these subjects with a pass mark of 50% (thus avoiding the Accounts examination.)

In addition to the £125 student registration fee, the CLC qualification costs £85 per subject. Candidates must pass all the exams (both Foundation & Final) within 7 years of registration. Exams are held in January & June each year and candidates are allowed 3 sittings of an exam before they must re-sit the entire level. For example, a candidate who fails Conveyancing Practice & Procedure 3 times must re-sit the entire Foundation level.

The CLC can provide a list of colleges in England & Wales which run the course. The CLC itself is the sole provider of the Distance Learning course. To request further information, contact: The Director of Education & Training, Council for Licensed Conveyancers, 16 Glebe Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1QG.
Tel: 01245 349599

www.conveyancer.org.uk

Accident Claims Management

In recent years, personal injury work has been a fast-growing area of law. This can be evidenced by the no. of solicitors' firms in Manchester who specialise in this area. This growth has also seen the development of companies who specialise in "claims management." Most work tends to relate to road traffic accidents. This essentially means liaising between an individual who has either been the victim of an accident, or has caused an accident, and the Third Party & his/her solicitors in order to expedite the claims process and minimise or maximise the claim.

The work can involve taking calls from individuals who have just been involved in an accident, reassuring the client that the claim will be dealt with whilst obtaining relevant information relating to liability & quantum.

Third Party work involves contacting the Third Party involved in the accident, if it is considered he/she is innocent, in order to attempt to negotiate with him/her before they contact their own insurers and solicitor. The idea is to "capture" the claim and reach a successful settlement quickly, having hopefully minimised the cost of the claim.

Some companies involved in this work also advertise vacancies on websites such as www.prospects.ac.uk (Graduate Prospects, general graduate careers website) and www.lawcareers.net. Insurance companies are likely to increasingly employ personnel in claims roles, or may develop units aiming to combat claims capture companies!

Example of a vacancy advertised on Prospects:

Accidents Direct- Claims Executive

Barrister's clerk

Although a degree in law is by no means required to become a barrister's clerk, this is a possible option for law graduates who wish to remain closely involved with law. The role requires strong managerial, organisational, administrative & negotiation skills and the word "clerk" probably makes the job sound more junior than it is.

Barrister's clerks are full-time, salaried employees of barristers' chambers. They essentially allocate barristers to cases having received requests from solicitors. This involves discussing the case & client requirements with the client's solicitor and selecting the barrister most suitable for the case in terms of ability, experience and specialisation. The role also requires negotiating the barrister's fees with the client's solicitor, planning the conduct of the case in terms of time allocation and arranging conferences between the solicitor, client and barrister.

For a fuller description, see the occupational profile on the Graduate Prospects website (www.prospects.ac.uk). (Go to the "Jobs & Work" portal, "Explore Types of Job", then "Barrister's Clerk".)

Job vacancies are advertised on the website of the **Institute of Barristers' Clerks**.

The Institute of Barristers' Clerks (IBC), 289-293 High Holborn, London WC1 7HZ.

Tel. 020-7831-7144

www.ibc.org.uk

Legal costs services

Legal costs firms apply case law rules and regulations in legal costs negotiations with claimant solicitors and draft Bills of Costs at the conclusion of cases. Legal fees are often the most expensive item in legal litigation and sometimes dwarf the sum for damages that the litigants have been fighting over!

Hence many cases require costs hearings separate from the main trial, with a judge determining which side should bear the legal fees for which segments of the case.

A variety of firms are involved in this work, many advertise in the back pages of the **Law Society's Gazette** and in the **Varsity Directory of Legal Services**. Some firms of solicitors employ their own in-house costs personnel.

A speculative approach with a CV and covering letter may be a worthwhile approach for law students considering entering this work. Some vacancies may be advertised on Lawcareers.Net, the Law Society's Gazette and on the Graduate Prospects website (www.prospects.ac.uk)

Here are examples of vacancies:

Irwin Mitchell Solicitors, Sheffield- Trainee Law Costs Draftsperson
Legal Costs Associates Ltd, Manchester- Trainee Legal Costs
Consultant/Draftsperson

The latter position included the opportunity to draft pleadings and attend court hearings, alongside the more routine negotiation with solicitors and drafting of Bills of Costs.

The Legal Services Commission

This organisation is responsible for awarding contracts to firms of solicitors for Legal Aid work and then auditing and monitoring the work that these firms do under the terms of the contract. Given the mooted introduction of Competitive Tendering for areas of Legal Aid work, and its role in the development of the Community Legal Service, its influence is only likely to grow in the coming years. As we have seen with some other career options above, having studied law is not an essential requirement to work with the LSC, but is likely to prove a useful background.

LSC offices employ the following staff.

Caseworkers- responsible for assessing whether a client's case should be awarded Legal Aid, conducting means tests of clients, processing financial transactions and negotiation with solicitors.

Auditor- auditing the LSC's contract with firms of solicitors.

Supply & management - high level management of contracts with solicitors.

The LSC has a variety of regional bases in the UK. The north-west region is covered by offices in Liverpool, Manchester & Chester. For further information, see the national website at www.legalservices.gov.uk. This includes a vacancy section listing current vacancies. Some offices advertise locally (Manchester Evening News, Metro) and sometimes use recruitment agencies such as Hays Legal or Adecco to recruit for caseworker positions.

LSC office in Manchester

Legal Services Commission
North West Regional Office
2nd Floor
Lee House
90 Great Bridgewater Street
Manchester
M1 5JW

Tel: 0845 602 1400

Criminal Cases Review Commission

The CCRC is the independent body set up to review possible miscarriages of justice in England, Wales & Northern Ireland. They assess whether or not convictions or sentences should be referred to the Court of Appeal.

They employ a variety of staff, but the most likely entry point for a recent law graduate is Case Review Manager. This role involves considering representations from applicants or their representatives and deciding, on the basis of objective evidence, whether their allegation or complaint merits an investigation. Case Review Managers manage a portfolio of cases where they gather and assess information, manage the investigation process and present their findings to Commissioners.

Criminal Cases Review Commission, Alpha Tower, Suffolk Street
Queensway, Birmingham B1 1TT.

Tel: 0121 633 1800

www.ccr.gov.uk

Miscellaneous

I have attempted in this section to present alternative career ideas which are substantially legally-related. Not all these types of jobs fit into neat categories, there are a range of “miscellaneous jobs” which often require or would suit a background in legal study. Here are a few examples of advertised vacancies which I have come across.

Lawspeed Limited (legal consultancy, based in Brighton) - Legal Consultant
UK Film Council- Legal Assistant (Business Affairs)
Citizenship Foundation- Magistrates’ Court Mock Trial Project Officer

2. Other careers

In this second section, we are looking at careers which are not substantially legally-related, but which involve elements of law, and where a background in law and legal skills will be helpful. Again, it is impossible to provide an exhaustive list of options as law graduates end up in a huge variety of jobs, I am aiming to simply provide some ideas.

Police work

Police forces offer a variety of career paths in both uniformed & non-uniformed roles. The Police Recruitment website gives a list of possible roles, first visit their website at www.policecouldyou.co.uk to find out more.

Individual Police forces conduct their own recruitment according to operational needs. There is no longer an accelerated promotion scheme for university graduates, but graduates who are recruited as Police Officers may be eligible for the **High Potential Development (HPD) Scheme** once they have completed their training.

After making an initial written application, applicants are selected for an assessment centre. This consists of interactive exercises, written exercises and numerical & verbal reasoning tests. If you make it further through the selection process, there is an interview, then there is a fitness test and health checks. Applicants are appointed subject to references and security checks.

Training to be a Police Offer takes 2 years, during which time you are known as a Student Officer.

www.gmp-recruitment.co.uk (Greater Manchester Police Force Recruitment web-site). This website has a useful FAQs section.

National Probation Service

Probation Officers work directly with offenders, and this can include some of society's most difficult, dangerous & damaged people. The work basically involves the following:

- assessing the risk that an offender poses to the community and how that risk should be contained
- ensuring the proper punishment of offenders and supervising court sentences
- motivating the offender to change his/her behaviour and thus ensure rehabilitation for that individual back into the community

The **National Probation Service** is now one of the agencies that makes up the **National Offender Management Service**. For the purposes of recruitment & training in England & Wales, probation services are organised into 9 regional consortia. **The North West Consortium** conducts recruitment for the north-west region.

Their annual recruitment campaign usually begins in March each year; the closing date is usually the first Friday in April. If you would like to work in another area, check the web-site of the relevant training consortia to find out if & when they are recruiting. **However, the training of probation officers is under review and the present training programme has been suspended until final decisions are made about the shape of the new arrangements.**

National Probation Service - www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk

(Click “Join Us” on homepage for a list of training consortia in England & Wales)

North West Consortium recruitment - www.probation-northwest.co.uk

Investigative work

Private investigative work can take a variety of forms, for example surveillance work associated with divorce or employee vetting. Firms vary considerably in size; more information should be available from the **Institute of Professional Investigators**, the professional trade body for private investigators. The industry has been regulated by the **Security Industry Association (SIA)** since 2002.

Example of a vacancy which appeared on the Graduate Prospects website.

Morris Chase International- Trainee Investigator

The Institute of Professional Investigators, Runnymede Malthouse, off Hummer Road, Egham, Surrey TW20 9BD.

Tel: 0870 330 8622

www.ipi.org.uk

The national security service **MI5** sometimes employs graduates as Intelligence Officers; vacancies have appeared on the Graduate Prospects website (www.prospects.ac.uk) and will also be advertised on the agency's own website.

www.mi5.gov.uk

Forensic Accounting

This is essentially investigative auditing work and is more like Scene of Crime investigation and detective work than traditional accountancy. It involves tracking down financial information that may be used to support or disprove a charge of fraud. Alongside investigation of fraud, the work can involve supporting companies involved in arbitration or litigation; electronic data analysis; investigating disputes involving mergers, acquisitions and other financial deals; ensuring financial compliance reviews and advising on issues such as money laundering.

Major accountancy companies recruit graduates into this area.

Alongside job training, you would be given tuition and time off for study for professional accountancy exams, such as those offered by The Institute of Chartered Accountants (ICAEW).

Examples of companies who recruit into this area:

BDO Stoy Hayward, London Graduate Recruitment, 8 Baker Street, London W1U 3LL.

www.bdo.co.uk

Price Waterhouse Coopers- go to UK Careers homepage at www.pwc.com/uk/eng/careers/main/index.html

Then click on “Student Careers”.

Civil Service Careers

A background in law is an excellent preparation for a career in the Civil Service, either in the UK or EU.

Civil Service Fast Stream

This is the Civil Service’s accelerated development programme. To apply, you must possess or be expecting a degree in any discipline of at least class 2:2 and generally you must be a UK national. Technical schemes such as Science & Engineering will obviously require a degree subject in these areas. The scheme offers the following options and you can list an order preference when you apply.

Central Departments
Diplomatic Service
EU Fast Stream
Science & Engineering
Houses of Parliament
Fast Stream for Statisticians
Fast Stream for Economists
Technology in Business Fast Stream
HR Fast Stream

GCHQ (Government Communications Headquarters) & the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS- usually known as MI6) now recruit directly & separately from the Civil Service Fast Stream. Further information is available at www.gchq.gov.uk and www.sis.gov.uk respectively.

When appointed to the Fast Stream, you will be given a series of job placements designed to prepare you for senior management roles. Fast Streamers move regularly between projects and sections within their departments and are often seconded to the EU, international partners such as the USA and the world of business, as well as other Civil Service & government departments or agencies.

Careers are developed within 3 broad groupings;

Corporate services delivery- providing key services to departments, such as human resources, finance, estate management, IT & communications.

Operational delivery- focusing on the delivery of quality services direct to the public.

Policy delivery- involves the research, analysis & delivery of government policy.

Application

You must register on the recruitment website with a password and complete a personal details section & eligibility check. You must also complete On-Line Self-Assessment tests to check whether the Fast Stream is for you.

- (1) You must then pass On-Line Tests (verbal reasoning, numerical reasoning and a competency questionnaire.) On-line practice tests are available.

NB. Candidates with a disability may elect to dispense with the On-Line Test and go straight to the E-Tray Exercise.

- (2) If successful in the On-Line Test, you are invited to complete an E-Application Form.
- (3) If successful, you are invited to take a Supervised E-Tray Exercise at a regional centre.
- (4) If successful, you are invited to an Assessment Centre in London.
- (5) If successful, you are invited to attend a Final Selection Board interview.

NB. This applies to the Diplomatic Service & Houses of Parliament. For other options, the selection process ends at stage (4).

- (6) Successful applicants are appointed to the Fast Stream, subject to pre-appointment checks.

For further information, including the application timetable for 2009-10, please visit the Fast Stream website at www.faststream.gov.uk.

It must be stressed that the Fast Stream is not the only way to access a career in the Civil Service. Other jobs are available and more information is available at www.civilservice.gov.uk/jobs/index.aspx.

Opportunities within the EU

As seen above, it is possible to work as a UK civil servant and be placed into an EU institution, by selecting the EU Fast Stream option. It is also possible

for graduates to apply directly for positions within the EU as Administrators. EU recruitment is currently being revised and new procedures will be in place from 2010, including annual competitions for the most common jobs. Further information is available at

http://europa.eu/epso/discover/selection_proced/selection/index_en.htm

For EU Internships, see Placements With International Institutions above.

HM Revenue & Customs

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) was formed on the 18 April 2005, following the merger of Inland Revenue and HM Customs and Excise Departments. Broadly-speaking, the organisation is responsible for the collection of direct & indirect taxes & excise duties. It is possible to enter a career in HM Revenue & Customs via the Civil Service Fast Stream (see above), by selecting the Central Departments option.

Alongside this route, HM Revenue & Customs runs its own **Graduate Development Programme**. There are 3 streams:

- Tax Professional Development Programme
- Management Fast Track
- Accountancy

The Tax Professional Development Programme usually takes about four years to complete and prepares employees for a technical/ investigative role or in a customer relationship management leader role that requires a broad range of knowledge and skills. You could be dealing with international issues, large companies, fraud, policy development, or you could be managing people and cases. This programme requires a 2:1 degree.

Managers lead and supervise teams of staff, ensuring the delivery of government policy and operational targets. This programme requires a 2:2 degree.

Accountancy- this involves undertaking four or five placements, each lasting between 9 and 12 months and qualification as an accountant with ICAEW, CIMA or ACCA. This programme requires a 2:2 degree.

Discussions are taking place on the funding position regarding programmes to begin in September 2010. This is as part of the 2010 planning round.

A final decision is not expected until early January 2010. As a result, no applications for the Graduate Development Programme will be sought before this time.

Further information is available at <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/graduate/index.htm>

NB. HMRC also run an 8 week summer Internship Scheme. The application process is the same as that for the Graduate Development Programme.

Trading Standards Officers

Trading standards officers ensure that goods and services are sold, bought or hired in compliance with relevant legislation, including the Trade Descriptions Act, the Consumer Protection Act and other statutes and regulations. They may become involved in detecting and prosecuting offences in areas such as commercial fraud, counterfeiting, sales of restricted substances such as alcohol to under-age customers and the commercial use of animals and agriculture. TSOs protect consumer rights and ensure that companies comply with the law.

If you have obtained a degree at 2:2 or better, it is possible to do the **Postgraduate Diploma in Trading Standards** and qualify to work as a TSO. This is currently offered by Manchester Metropolitan University at the Department of Food and Tourism Management. The course is available 1 year full-time or 2 years' part-time (2 days per week.) After completing the course, it is necessary to successfully complete a period working as a trainee TSO in local government. Some TSOs eventually move into industry and commerce, for example providing advisory or consultancy services to manufacturers and retailers.

For further information, contact the Trading Standards Institute, First Floor, 1 Sylvan Court, Sylvan Way, Southfields Business Park, Basildon, SS15 6TH.

Tel: 0845 608 9400

www.tradingstandards.gov.uk

To apply for the Postgrad Dip TS, contact The Department of Food and Tourism Management at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Email: courses@mmu.ac.uk

Tel: (0161) 247 6969

Trade Mark Attorney

Trade Mark Attorneys advise businesses on the legal aspects of marketing new goods or services and application for the name of a product or service to be registered as a trademark. This can involve the following:

- ensuring that the product meets the criteria laid down by the relevant trademark authority, which in the UK is the Trade Marks Registry of the Patent Office
- searching the relevant registers to ensure that the trade mark is free to use

- dealing with the registry to ensure that the trade mark is successfully registered, including representing the client if necessary at a hearing if the application is to be examined
- defending the client against any opposition infringement of trade mark actions or representing a client who wishes to mount an action for trade mark infringement or passing off
- advising businesses on the correct use of trade marks in advertising and product literature
- advising businesses on the transfer of ownership & licensing of the trade mark

This career is strongly related to law and involves the knowledge and application of legal concepts. Trade mark attorneys work alongside the client's solicitors and barristers when bringing or defending infringement or passing off actions.

In order to enter this profession, it is necessary to find a job as a trainee trade mark attorney, either with a firm of trade mark agents or in the specialised trade mark dept. of a firm of patent agents. In addition, some firms of solicitors and other companies have developed in-house trade mark depts. Jobs are advertised in the local & national press and on the website of the **Institute of Trade Mark Attorneys (ITMA)**. The ITMA web-site also contains a searchable list of trade mark attorneys and sending a speculative CV/covering letter is a worthwhile approach. The graduate careers web-site www.prospects.ac.uk may also carry some vacancies and some vacancies have been advertised on the website www.insidecareers.co.uk.

The ITMA is introducing a new qualification system from 2010. This involves an initial law course provided by Queen Mary College, University of London and a practice course at Nottingham Law School, combined with the professional training requirement. Further information is available from the Institute direct or at http://www.itma.org.uk/careers/becoming_a_tma.

For further information, contact The Institute of Trade Mark Attorneys, Canterbury House, 2-6 Sydenham Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 9XE.

Tel: 020-8686-2052

www.itma.org.uk

Patent Agents

Patent Attorneys are carrying out similar work to Trade Mark Agents but are working with inventions, usually of a scientific or technological nature. For this

reason, this career generally requires a degree in science or a technological subject and is of less relevance to law graduates, although it may be an option for a student who has undertaken the GDL having previously graduated in a subject of this nature.

For further information, contact The Chartered Institute of Patent Agents, 95 Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1DT.

Tel: 020-7405-9450

www.cipa.org.uk

Jobs in charities & the not-for-profit sector

A variety of roles exist working for charities and other not-for-profit organisations. The role of advocate may suit law graduates, as well as people who have undertaken advocacy skills on the LPC & BVC. This is different from courtroom advocacy, however, as it does not involve standing up and presenting a case. It means advocating on behalf of a client who may possess certain needs, for example a client with mental health issues. The “advocate” will act as a broker on behalf of that client, trying to negotiate rights and services on his/her behalf, such as benefits, access to social housing and education or training courses. This will involve negotiation and liaison with a range of other agencies, such as the Jobcentre, housing office and colleges or training providers, for example.

There are other roles which involve face-to-face interviewing & advisory work with clients and where knowledge of law will be extremely useful.

Vacancies in charities are advertised in a variety of places, including the local & national press, although the website www.jobsincharities.co.uk is a useful starting point. Volunteering during and/or after studying can be a useful way in to many organisations. See the MMU Careers & Employability Service hand-outs “Law Students and Voluntary Advice” & “Opportunities in the Public & Not for Profit Sectors” for further information. **Volunteering MMU**, an organisation based in MMU Students’ Union, helps MMU students to gain volunteering experience.

www.mmu.ac.uk/volunteering

The Legal Aid Practitioners’ Group website www.lapq.co.uk sometimes carries non-legal advisory vacancies which may interest law graduates, as does the web-site www.lawcareers.net.

Here are some examples of vacancies advertised in the past:

Shelter- Housing Advice Caseworker
National Debt Line- Training Officer (Money Advice)
Salford Citizen Advocacy- Citizen's Advocate
Salford Welfare Rights & Debt Advice- Welfare Rights & Money Adviser
Brighton Housing Trust Legal Services- Debt Adviser
Brighton Housing Trust Legal Services- Prison Housing Adviser
Anti-Social Behaviour Operations- Caseworker
African and Caribbean Mental Health Services- Caseworker

Thanks to the following:

Jan Moore, of MMU Careers & Employability Service, for her hand-out
"Legally Related Employment" on which some of the information in this hand-
out is based

Rachael Breed, careers adviser at UEA, for information on legal publishing

Sarah Ryan, careers adviser at Trinity College, Dublin for information on
internships

Nick Touati, MMU School of Law Careers Adviser- December 2009