



CAREERS AND QUALIFICATIONS GUIDE

*Earn As You Learn:
Your best route to a career as a lawyer*





ABOUT THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF LEGAL EXECUTIVES

Changes in legislation mean that Chartered Legal Executive lawyers are increasingly on a level playing field with solicitors or barristers, as they can now become judges, advocates and partners in law firms.

The role of a Chartered Legal Executive lawyer is so similar to that of a solicitor that the most clients are unlikely to be able to distinguish between them. In fact, many supervise solicitors. The difference is that a Chartered Legal Executive is a qualified lawyer who is trained to specialise as an expert in a particular area of law, whereas solicitors have a broader, general legal training.

Becoming a Chartered Legal Executive lawyer

There are two routes to becoming a Chartered Legal Executive lawyer, depending on whether you hold a qualifying law degree or not. If you don't have a qualifying law degree then you will need to take the full route, which is comprised of our level 3 qualification (set and assessed at A-level standard) and our level 6 qualification which is set and assessed at honours degree level. This full route costs up to around £4,500 - £7,650, depending on where you choose to study, and typically takes four years to complete part-time, although time scales can be flexible.

However, if you already have a qualifying law degree gained within the last seven years, we also offer a cost-effective alternative to the Legal Practice Course (LPC) or Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC) through our Graduate Fast-Track Diploma, which takes nine months to complete part-time and costs under £2,400.

And there's no need to secure a training contract or pupillage, whether you do our full route or the fast-track. Instead you will need to complete a five-year qualifying period of employment (working as a paralegal while studying can count towards this).

Qualifying

Qualifying as a Chartered Legal Executive provides access to an interesting, valued and prestigious career: as a Chartered Legal Executive lawyer you will have great opportunities to work in the legal profession, in corporate in-house legal departments, or in local or national government.

Most people combine studying their qualifications through academic institutions or via distance learning

whilst gaining valuable practical experience in their workplace. Around 75% of employers pay for their staff to study to be Chartered Legal Executive lawyers. As such, the route offers you a head start in your law career, and allows you to earn whilst you learn.

Salaries

Salaries will vary according to your location and chosen specialist area of law, but starting salaries are usually approximately £25,000 a year whilst you are qualifying. When you reach Graduate Member grade you can expect to earn up to £30,000. Fully qualified Chartered Legal Executive lawyers can then expect to earn around £35,000 on average. Latest surveys show annual salaries of over £100,000 for some Chartered Legal Executives.

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MEMBERSHIP GRADES

To study to become a Chartered Legal Executive lawyer you need to join the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEx). The grade you are allocated is based on your qualifications and/or legal experience. Whether you are new to the sector, a graduate or a senior lawyer, there is a grade that's right for you. Membership is a mark of credibility and accountability. It demonstrates to clients and employers your commitment to excellence, with the reassurance that all members are regulated by ILEX Professional Standards (IPS).

Use the criteria below to select the membership grade you should apply for:

Student member

Open to those wishing to enter the legal profession; those who have no relevant legal qualification; or those with less than three years' work experience of a predominantly legal nature.

Affiliate member

Open to those with at least one of our Level 3 qualification units; or who have completed a relevant legal qualification at Level 2; or gained at least three years' work of a predominantly legal nature.

Associate member

Open to those who have completed our Level 3 Professional Diploma in Law and Practice; or who are graduates with qualifying law degrees. Associate members will be entitled to use the designatory letters ACILEx after their name, and will be required to undertake 8 hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

Graduate member

Open to those who have completed both the Level 3 Professional Diploma in Law and Practice and the Level 6 Professional Higher Diploma in Law and Practice; our Graduate 'Fast-Track' Diploma; or who are Legal Practice Course (LPC) or Bar Professional Training Course (formerly the Bar Vocational Course or BVC) graduates. Graduate members will be entitled to use the designatory letters GCILEx after their name, and will be required to undertake 12 hours of CPD.

Fellows

When you have successfully completed a period of qualifying employment, you can become a Fellow, a qualified lawyer, and be eligible to use the term Chartered Legal Executive and the designatory letters FCILEx. You will be invited to attend our Graduation ceremony. Chartered Legal Executive lawyers are required to take 16 hours of CPD.

To be admitted as a Chartered Legal Executive lawyer/Fellow you also need to complete a minimum of five years' employment experience in legal work, including at least two consecutive years' experience which falls after completion of your studies.

Please note that, for entry into any grade of membership, you must have satisfied the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives' Council of your fitness for admission. The application criteria stated above is at the discretion of the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives and applicants will be admitted into a grade accordingly.

We also offer a separate membership grade for Associate Prosecutors working for the Crown Prosecution Service, although they may also join one of the grades above.

The details shown above relate to the academic year 2012/13. Visit our website for the latest details.





Being a Chartered Legal Executive lawyer is an excellent career choice. Professional responsibilities increase with experience and Chartered Legal Executive lawyers are one of the main points of contact for clients seeking professional advice on legal matters.

The Level 3 Professional Diploma in Law and Practice

The Level 3 Professional Diploma in Law and Practice is the first stage of the academic qualification needed to become a Chartered Legal Executive lawyer. The qualification offers you a broad and yet flexible introduction to law and legal practice, helping you to develop a range of professional skills necessary for effective working in the practical legal environment. You will need to take 10 units from the subject list left to complete the Diploma.

You need to study five mandatory law units (Units 1-5) and two mandatory professional skills units (Units 16 and 17). The remaining three units can either be two practice units (Units 9-15) and one law unit (Units 6-8), or three practice units*. If you have completed the Level 3 Certificate, you will have passed five units already.

Certification

You will receive certificates for the Level 3 Certificate in Law and Practice and the Level 3 Professional Diploma in Law and Practice once you have achieved the required combination of units. You will also receive a certificate for each unit that you pass, so the units are also ideal if you wish to enhance your skills as a Paralegal.

Benefits for your employer

If you work in a law firm, when you have completed your Level 3 Professional Diploma in Law and Practice course, your employer can charge out your fee-earning time on the level D litigation assistant fee scale.



WHAT ARE THE SUBJECTS AVAILABLE?

The following table shows the range of our level 6 qualification units:

Unit	Title	Type of unit
Unit 1	Company and Partnership Law	Law
Unit 2	Contract Law	Law
Unit 3	Criminal Law	Law
Unit 4	Employment Law	Law
Unit 5	Equity and Trusts	Law
Unit 6	European Union Law	Law
Unit 7	Family Law	Law
Unit 8	Immigration Law	Law
Unit 9	Land Law	Law
Unit 10	Landlord and Tenant Law	Law
Unit 11	Planning Law	Law
Unit 12	Public Law	Law
Unit 13	Law of Tort	Law
Unit 14	Law of Wills and Succession	Law
Unit 15	Civil Litigation	Practice
Unit 16	The Practice of Company & Partnership Law	Practice
Unit 17	Conveyancing	Practice
Unit 18	Criminal Litigation	Practice
Unit 19	The Practice of Employment Law	Practice
Unit 20	The Practice of Family Law	Practice
Unit 21	Probate Practice	Practice
Unit 22	Client Care Skills	Professional Skills
Unit 23	Legal Research Skills	Professional Skills

Entry requirements

As the academic standard is equivalent to honours degree, we advise that you should have substantial experience in the area of law relating to your chosen subject and/or have studied at 'A' level, 'AS' level, level 3 or equivalent. You must undertake a course of studies to enter the exam. An exam and registration fee will be payable.



EXEMPTIONS

There are a range of exemptions for those holding Qualifying Law Degrees, 'A' level Law; and ITC's Certificate in Criminal Prosecution and Certificate in Criminal Justice Administration. Those with a City & Guilds/ ILEX Level 2 Certificate in Legal Studies will be exempt from the Level 3 Unit 1 'Introduction to Law and Practice'. Full details of the exemptions offered can be obtained by visiting www.cilexcareers.org.uk.

Qualifying law degrees

If you already hold a qualifying law degree awarded within the last seven years, we have developed our Graduate 'Fast-Track' Diploma. This just requires you to complete two of our level 6 practice units (one of which must relate to subject areas you studied as part of your law degree), and our level 6 Client Care Skills unit to complete your academic studies (see page 12 for more details).

General degree exemptions

Non-qualifying law degrees or degrees that have sufficient legal content will be assessed on a subject by subject basis. A full syllabus transcript must be provided with the application so that the contents of the qualification can be mapped against the appropriate unit. Exemptions may be granted for other appropriate qualifications. Entitlement to exemptions is entirely at our discretion. Any application for exemption must be made in writing to our Awards department.

Other exemptions

Full exemption from our academic qualifications is available for those who have obtained the Legal Practice Course (LPC) or the Bar Professional Training Course (formerly the Bar Vocational Course or BVC). These applicants do not have to take the level 3 and level 6 academic qualifications, but can apply immediately to become a Graduate Member and use designatory letters. Once you have a minimum of five years' employment experience in legal work (including at least two consecutive years' experience after your studies) you can apply to be a qualified Chartered Legal Executive lawyer.



EMPLOYER BENEFITS

Our qualifications are highly valued by employers, as trainee Chartered Legal Executive lawyers can be valuable fee earners for their firms once they have gained their Level 3 qualification. As such, a recent survey found that over 77% of our students have their membership fees paid by their employers, and 60% of our students have all their course and exam fees paid for by their employers.

If you work in a law firm, when you have completed your Level 3 Professional Diploma in Law and Practice course, your employer can charge out your fee-earning time on the level D litigation assistant fee scale. When you have passed your Level 6 Professional Higher Diploma in Law and Practice course, your employer can charge out your fee-earning time on the level C litigation assistant fee scale. This means that if your employer pays for your study and membership fees these costs can be quickly recouped in a few weeks.



FURTHER TRAINING OPTIONS

Train to be an Advocate

We offer a further qualification that can bring you the status of Chartered Legal Executive Advocate. Rights of audience allow you to offer a more comprehensive service to clients – from initial advice, through to case preparation and presentation before the courts. Such rights of audience for Legal Executive Advocates are available in:

- Civil Proceedings
- Family Proceedings
- Coroner's Court Proceedings
- Criminal Proceedings

The courses are open to Graduate Members and Fellows who seek rights in the area in which they practise, although Graduate Members will not be able to exercise advocacy rights until they qualify as Fellows.

You will need to complete an application to enrol onto the advocacy qualification scheme. The application will require details of your existing knowledge and experience in the area in which you are seeking rights, and will include the completion of a portfolio of experience. If the application to enrol is approved, you will be able to take a 6-day course focusing on advocacy skills training. The final day of the advocacy skills course involves an assessment of your advocacy skills and knowledge of the law of evidence.

Train to become a Solicitor

A career as a Chartered Legal Executive lawyer is a rewarding and fulfilling career in its own right, but your Chartered Legal Executive qualifications can be used if you wish to dual qualify as a Solicitor.

If you are a Fellow before you complete your Legal Practice Course (LPC) you may be exempt from the two-year training contract specified by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA).

Note: This exemption is at the discretion of the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA), and may depend on the qualifying employment experience you have completed. This should normally have been in a Solicitor's office or department. All trainee Solicitors must also complete the Professional Skills Course following the LPC.

As this route is governed by SRA rules, it is important that you contact their training and education department direct on 0870 606 2555 or visit www.sra.org.uk to get full details of their training route, as well as information on eligibility and time limits for completing your studies.



JOIN US NOW

Call 01234 845777 or email membership@cilex.org.uk