

Law

This page outlines opportunities for working in law, the skills you will need and how to maximise your chances of getting in.

What opportunities are there?

You could consider training as a solicitor or a barrister. This can be attractive to doctors, as a career in law can draw on the same high-level intellectual capabilities as medicine. However, entry to training is highly competitive and can be expensive, with limited options for funding. It may be possible to get sponsored by a law firm or by organisation connected to the Bar.

Other legal career opportunities you could consider include:

- Medical Defence Unions sometimes sponsor medico-legal employees through further degrees in law or medical ethics
- working for the Medico-Legal Society
- regulatory affairs positions in pharmaceutical companies
- risk management in the NHS
- The Civil Service
- academic law
- specialist areas of legal practice, such as personal injury and medical negligence
- a medical adviser role in a law firm or other organisation
- specialist legal careers, such as forensic pathology
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What skills and qualities do I need?

- ability to absorb and analyse large amounts of information
- critical evaluation skills
- ability to collate information from a variety of sources
- IT literacy
- logical thinking
- written and spoken communication skills
- commercial awareness

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Getting in

To practise as a solicitor or barrister in the UK, the training route for non-law graduates has three steps:

- a postgraduate conversion course, either the Common Professional Examination (CPE) or the Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL).
- Legal Practice Course (LPC) – to train as a solicitor or the Bar Vocational Course – to train as a barrister
- two years' paid training contract in a law firm – solicitors or paid pupillage – barristers

For other legal careers you would need to show an interest in medical legal issues, perhaps by studying a LLM (Master's degree in law) or a medico-legal or a medical law and ethics course. Bear in mind these courses do not qualify you to practice as a solicitor or barrister in the UK.

It is difficult to balance law and a clinical career and maintain expertise in both, so most people choose one or the other.

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Further information

- The Medical Defence Union (MDU) ^[1]
- Law Careers.net ^[2]
- The Bar Council ^[3]
- The Law Society ^[4]
- Medico-Legal Society ^[5]
- Medical Protection Society (MPS) ^[6]
- The University of Law ^[7]
- BMJ Careers ^[8]
- All About Law ^[9]

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/career-opportunities-doctors/alternative-roles-doctors/law>

Links

- [1] <http://www.themdu.com/> [2] <http://www.lawcareers.net/> [3] <http://www.barcouncil.org.uk/>
- [4] <http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/> [5] <http://www.medico-legalsociety.org.uk/>
- [6] <http://www.medicalprotection.org/uk/about-mps/careers-at-MPS> [7] <http://www.college-of-law.co.uk/>
- [8] <http://careers.bmj.com/careers/hospital-medical-healthcare-doctors-jobs.html>
- [9] <http://www.allaboutlaw.co.uk/>