

Trends in the Solicitors' Profession

Annual Statistical Report 2002

Prepared by Bill Cole, Strategic Research Unit



The Law Society

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Introduction

This is the nineteenth Annual Statistical Report of the Law Society. It contains the most recent statistics available on the solicitors' branch of the legal profession.

The Strategic Research Unit

This report was produced by Bill Cole of the Law Society's Strategic Research Unit. The Unit helps the Council of the Law Society to assess the changing nature of the profession, and to respond to those changes in an informed way. In doing so the unit designs, conducts and commissions research studies on a number of issues of relevance to the profession. It has published reports on the public perceptions of solicitors, the work and organisation of the solicitors' profession, entry to the profession, how solicitors manage their practices, research into legal markets, and comparisons with legal professions based in other jurisdictions. A full list of publications linked to a summary or the full text version can be viewed at www.research.lawsociety.org.uk. Further information on the work of the unit can be obtained from members of the Strategic Research Unit.

Sources of data

The main source used for this report was:

- The Law Society's REGIS database, which is maintained by the Society at its offices in Redditch. This contains records of all solicitors at all stages in their career, from their initial enrolment as a student through to their admission to the Roll on qualification and thereafter.

The report also draws on the clearing house admission systems (UCAS) used by universities to provide information on applications, acceptances and graduates in law; and data from the Higher Educational Statistical Agency for information on the number of law graduates and their achieved grades. Detailed references to all of the sources used are given throughout the report.

Summary

Key facts about the solicitors' profession

This report describes the size and composition of the solicitors' profession and describes trends in the entry of solicitors to the profession.

The size of the profession

- As at 31 July 2002, there were 113,372 solicitors on the Roll, an increase of 3.5% on the year before.
- At the same date, 89,045 solicitors held practising certificates, an increase of 2.8% on the previous year.
- These growth rates are the lowest that have been recorded for some time.
- Since 1972, the total number of solicitors holding practising certificates has grown by 238.2% at an average annual rate of 4.1%.
- 70,571, or 79.3%, of solicitors holding practising certificates work in private practice; the remainder work mainly in commerce and industry and the public sector.
- Since 1992, the proportion of practising certificate holders not employed in private practice has increased from 16.4% to 20.7%.
- Just over one-half, 54.6%, of current practising solicitors have been qualified for 10 years or less.
- In the year to 31 July 2002, admissions to the Roll, i.e. newly qualified solicitors and transfers from other legal professions, were 6,646, an increase of 6.9% on admissions in the year before.
- Of these new admissions 55.6% were women, and admissions from the ethnic minorities represented 16.4% of all admissions with known ethnicity.

A descriptive profile

- In 2001–02, solicitors from ethnic minorities accounted for 8.1% of solicitors on the Roll, 7.0% of solicitors with practising certificates, and 6.7% of solicitors in private practice.
- Women now account for 38.6% of solicitors with practising certificates. Whereas since 1992 the total number of solicitors holding practising certificates has grown by 49.5%, the number of women holding practising certificates more than doubled, having increased by 119.5%.
- 82.0% of men holding practising certificates work within private practice, compared to 74.9% of women.

- Of those solicitors with 10–19 years' experience in private practice, 82.3% of men were partners or sole practitioners compared with only 54.7% of women.
- In 2002, the average age of a female solicitor in private practice was 36.1 years compared with 43.0 years for men. The average age of a sole practitioner was 50.1 years compared with 45.1 years for partners and 40.5 years for all solicitors in private practice.
- Just over one-third of practising certificate holders in 2002 (36.5%) were employed by organisations based in London. These organisations were responsible for the employment of 52.4% of ethnic minority practising certificate holders.

Trends in private practice

- In 2002 there were 14,927 separate organisations employing solicitors of which 13,931 were based in England and Wales.
- In 2002, there were 9,231 solicitors' firms in England and Wales listed in the Society's database, a small decrease of 0.2% on 2001.
- The vast majority of law firms are relatively small with 84.3% of them having four or fewer partners.
- In 2002 41.5%, of private practice firms were located in London and the south east.
- Just over one-quarter of private practice firms, 26.0%, were located in London in 2002. These firms employed 42.0% of all private practitioners.
- In 2002, the 0.4% of firms with 81 or more partners employed 14.3% of all principals and just over one fifth (21.7%) of all solicitors in private practices. Sole practices accounted for 44.8% of firms, and employed 12.2% of all principals and 8.6% of all solicitors.
- On average, the largest firms, with 81 or more partners, had 1.6 assistant solicitors per partner compared with between 0.4 and 1.1 in the smaller and medium-sized firms.

Trends in post-graduate education

- In 2001 there were 20,094 applicants to study first degree courses in law in England and Wales, of whom 12,606 were accepted.
- Of the 9,248 graduates in the summer of 2001, over half (51.1%) achieved firsts or upper second classifications. More women graduated with firsts and upper seconds than men, 52.1% as opposed to 49.4%.

- In the year ending 31 July 2002, 8,513 students enrolled with the Law Society. Of these students 62.7% were women and 22.3% were drawn from the ethnic minorities.
- In July 2002, 7,141 LPC students were eligible to sit the examination. This represented an increase (4.9%) on the 6,805 who were eligible in 2001. Of those who took the examination in 2002, 79.3% passed, an increase on the 2001 pass rate of 75.7%.
- There were 7,486 full time and 1,632 part-time LPC places available in 2001-02. In 2002-03 there will be 7,695 full-time and 1,486 part-time places available.
- There were 5,385 new traineeships registered in the year 1 August 2001 to 31 July 2002. This is an increase of 4.3% on the level recorded last year.
- Of the new trainees registered, 60.0% were women and 18.0% of trainees with known ethnicity were drawn from the ethnic minorities.

Part I

Qualified solicitors

Chapters 1 and 2 of the report contain details of the numbers of solicitors on the Roll, and of those with practising certificates, analysed by gender, age, ethnicity, experience, employment sector and, where appropriate, position in private practice. Chapter 3 looks at the organisations that employ solicitors and chapter 4 examines the staffing of firms in private practice.

1. Solicitors on the Roll

- 1.1 Under the Solicitors Act 1974, the Law Society is required to maintain records of all qualified solicitors on the Roll. All practising solicitors are obliged to keep the Society informed of their whereabouts and any changes in the circumstances of their employment. The annual renewal of practising certificates produces up-to-date information about all practising solicitors. In addition, the Society now operates a scheme of annual enrolment for all solicitors on the Roll in order to be able to gain up-to-date information about those solicitors who do not hold practising certificates.
- 1.2 As at 31 July 2002, there were 113,372 solicitors on the Roll, an increase of 3.5% over the previous year. Of these, 68,595 (60.5%) were men and 44,777 (39.5%) were women. Last year 61.4% of solicitors on the Roll were men and 38.6% were women.
- 1.3 Table 1.3 shows that of those solicitors on the Roll at 31 July 2002, 89,045, or 78.5% of them, held a current practising certificate entitling them to act as a solicitor within the definition of the Solicitors Act 1974. The remaining 24,327 include solicitors working in jobs in which they are not required to hold a practising certificate, retired solicitors, and those no longer pursuing a career in the legal profession. Some of the employed solicitors without a practising certificate work in local government or commerce and industry and do not provide legal advice to those outside the organisation, or undertake litigation on behalf of their employer.

Table 1.3 Solicitors on the Roll with and without practising certificates by gender as at 31 July 2002

	No.	%
With practising certificates		
Men	54,679	61.4
Women	34,366	38.6
Sub-total	89,045	100.0
Without practising certificates		
Men	13,916	57.2
Women	10,411	42.8
Sub-total	24,327	100.0
Total solicitors on the Roll		
Men	68,595	60.5
Women	44,777	39.5
Total	113,372	100.0

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Ethnic groups

- 1.4 Ethnic minority solicitors make up 8.1% of solicitors on the Roll, of whom 27.3% are resident abroad. In England and Wales the greatest concentration of ethnic minority solicitors on the Roll is found in the Central and South Middlesex constituency, where over a quarter of solicitors are drawn from the ethnic minorities.
- 1.5 Table 1.5 shows that 67.9% of the 9,199 ethnic minority solicitors on the Roll hold practising certificates. This is a noticeably lower participation rate than for all solicitors where the rate was 78.5%. Chinese solicitors, the majority of whom work overseas, have the lowest ethnic minority participation rate. Only 28.3% of ethnic Chinese solicitors on the Roll hold practising certificates.

Table 1.5 Ethnic minority solicitors on the Roll and with practising certificates as at 31 July 2002

Ethnic origin	Ethnic minority solicitors		
	1	2	3
	On the Roll	With practising certificate	Participation rate (2 as a % of 1)
African-Caribbean	605	505	83.5%
Asian	4,166	3,479	83.5%
Chinese	2,473	700	28.3%
African	638	547	85.7%
Other ethnic origin	1,317	1,018	77.3%
All ethnic minority solicitors	9,199	6,249	67.9%
White European	87,703	70,143	80.0%
Unknown	16,471	12,653	76.8%
All solicitors	113,372	89,045	78.5%
Ethnic minority solicitors as a % of all solicitors	8.1%	7.0%	
Ethnic minority solicitors as a % of solicitors with known ethnicity	9.5%	8.2%	

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

2. Practising certificate holders

- 2.1

In order to act as a solicitor, the Solicitors Act 1974 requires that the solicitor’s name appears on the Roll and that a current practising certificate is held. Practising certificates are issued by the Law Society and are valid from 1 November to 31 October each year.
- 2.2

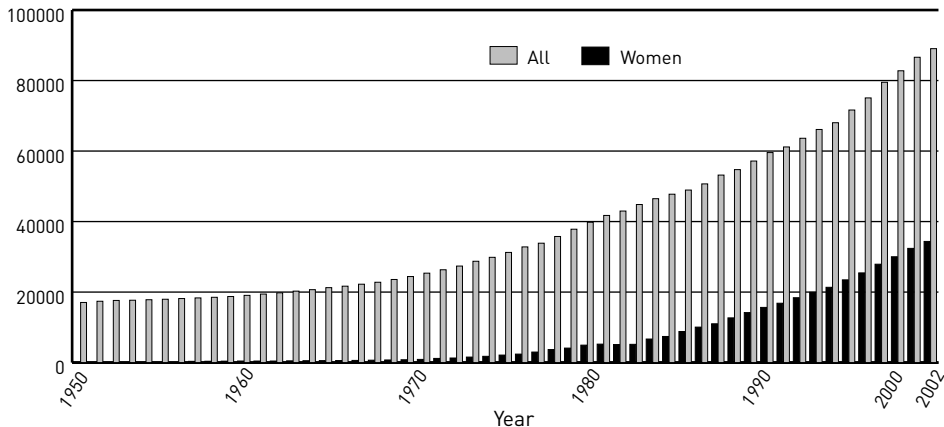
At 31 July 2002, there were 89,045 solicitors holding current practising certificates. This was an increase of 2.8% on the number for the previous year. This is the slowest growth rate recorded for some time and reflects the slower growth in the number of solicitors on the Roll and a small reduction in the male participation rate. The participation rate, which is the percentage of solicitors on the Roll holding practising certificates, remained at last years value for women solicitors, 76.7%, whilst the male rate fell slightly from 80.1% to 79.7%. Table 2.2 below shows how the total number of solicitors with practising certificates has grown over the past three decades, with the comparable figures for solicitors working within private practice. Since 1972, the total number of practising certificate holders has grown by 238.2% at an average annual rate of 4.1%. Comparable figures for those in private practice are a total growth over the period of 206.1% at an average rate of 3.8%. Last years growth was, therefore, well below the long running trend. It can also be seen from table 2.2 that the fastest growth in practising certificate and private practitioner numbers over this period occurred between 1972 and 1982 (58.5% and 55.5% respectively). Chart 1 shows the growth in the number of solicitors with practising certificates since 1950, and compares the growth rate for women holders with that of the profession as a whole.

Table 2.2 Solicitors holding practising certificates 1972 to 2002

Year	Practising solicitors	% change	Solicitors in private practice	% change
1972	26,327	-	23,057	-
1982	41,738	58.5	35,864	55.5
1992	59,563	42.7	49,785	38.8
2002	89,045	49.5	70,571	41.8

Source: Law Society’s REGIS database

Chart 1 Growth in the number of solicitors with practising certificates 1950–2002



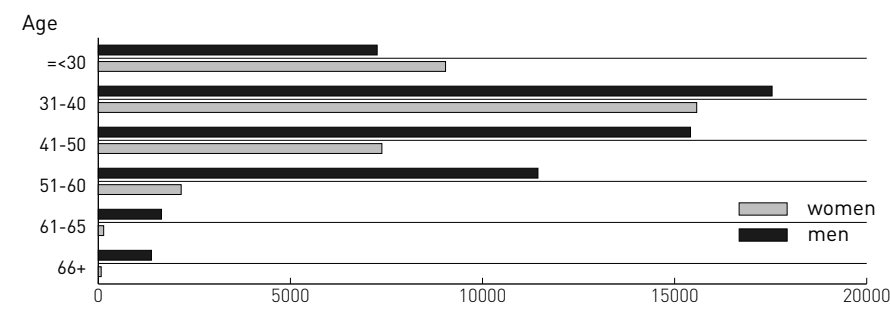
Source: Law Society’s REGIS database

- 2.3 Since 1992, the total number of solicitors with practising certificates has grown by 49.5%; however, over this period the number of women solicitors with practising certificates has increased by 119.5% whilst the number of men increased by only 24.5%. The proportion of solicitors holding practising certificates who are women was 38.6% at 31 July 2002, compared with 26.3% in 1992. For the past ten years, women have accounted for over one-half of new entrants to the profession, so this proportion is set to increase for the foreseeable future.
- 2.4 Table 2.4 shows the age distribution of solicitors in five-year groups and also participation rates by age. The comparison between the participation rates for men and women shows that participation rates are lower among female than male solicitors for all age groups including the very youngest aged 25 and under.
- 2.5 Table 2.4 and Chart 2 also show that there are more female than male practising certificate holders aged 30 or less, but that the majority of those in the older age groups are men. Over one-half, 55.5%, of solicitors with a practising certificate are aged 40 or less. The average age of a female solicitor with a practising certificate is 36.6 years compared with 43.0 for men. The median values show that one-half of women solicitors with practising certificates are aged 34 or less, whilst one half of men with practising certificates are aged 42 or less.

Table 2.4 The age distribution of solicitors and participation rates as at 31 July 2002

Age	Number of men with PCs	Part. rate [% on Roll holding PCs]	Number of women with PCs	Part. rate [% on Roll holding PCs]
25 and under	418	98.1	628	95.7
26–30	6,754	92.5	8,360	90.8
31–35	9,158	87.2	8,988	79.0
36–40	8,171	84.5	6,501	70.6
41–45	7,684	84.9	4,459	71.2
46–50	7,547	84.6	2,881	70.9
51–55	6,973	81.7	1,571	69.6
56–60	4,334	75.9	574	64.5
61–65	1,624	59.4	139	48.8
66–70	803	38.7	54	37.0
71 and over	564	21.2	21	20.4
Unknown	649	64.4	190	60.3
All ages known	54,030	79.9	34,176	76.9
% ages known	99.0		99.0	
Total	54,679	79.7	34,366	76.7
Average age	43.0		36.6	
Median age	42		34	

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Chart 2 The age of solicitors with practising certificates — 31 July 2002

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

2.6 Table 2.6 shows the numbers of solicitors holding practising certificates as at 31 July 2002, analysed by the number of years they have been qualified as solicitors. Over one-third, 38.2%, of male solicitors with current practising certificates in private practice have been qualified for less than 10 years, and 62.3% have been qualified for less than 20 years. This compares with 90.3% of women solicitors in private practice who have been qualified for less than 20 years. A similar distribution pattern to that found in private practice was found amongst those solicitors working in the employed and other sectors.

Table 2.6 Experience of solicitors with practising certificates, measured by number of years qualified, as at 31 July 2002

Years since admission	All solicitors		Men		Women	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Solicitors in private practice						
0–9 years	34,516	48.9	17,103	38.2	17,413	67.6
10–19 years	16,650	23.6	10,795	24.1	5,855	22.7
20–29 years	13,143	18.6	10,995	24.5	2,148	8.3
30–39 years	5,047	7.2	4,763	10.6	284	1.1
40–49 years	1,032	1.5	995	2.2	37	0.1
50+ years	183	0.3	178	0.4	5	0.0
All years	70,571	100.0	44,829	100.0	25,742	100.0
Solicitors in employed and other sectors						
0–9 years	11,114	60.2	5,394	55.3	5,720	66.3
10–19 years	4,235	22.9	2,080	20.0	2,154	25.0
20–29 years	2,476	13.4	1,782	18.9	694	8.0
30–39 years	5,93	3.2	538	5.1	55	0.6
40–49 years	50	0.3	49	0.6	1	0.0
50+ years	6	0.0	6	0.1	0	0.0
All years	18,474	100.0	9,850	100.0	8,624	100.0

* less than 0.05%

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

2.7 Table 2.7 provides a detailed breakdown of the employment of solicitors with practising certificates. It shows that the overwhelming majority of solicitors with practising certificates work in private practice: 79.3% as at 31 July 2002. The second largest category of employment is commerce and industry, 6.8%, followed by local government, which employs 3.5% of practising certificate holders. (It should also be pointed out that the number of solicitors working in the employed sector is likely to be greater than these figures suggest. This is because many, as a consequence of their employed status, will not be required to hold a practising certificate.) A further 6.3% are not attached to any organisation: the majority of these are in the youngest age group which suggests that they are predominantly the most recently qualified. The table also shows that women account for a higher proportion of solicitors in the employed and other sectors than in private practice. In private practice 36.5% of solicitors are women, compared with 46.7% in these other sectors.

Table 2.7 Practising certificate holders by category of employment as at 31 July 2002

Category of employment	All	% of PC holders	Men	Women	Women as % of total
Private practice	70,571	79.3	44,829	25,742	36.5
Commerce/industry	6,081	6.8	3,481	2,600	42.8
Accountancy practice	107	0.1	47	60	56.1
Nationalised industry	107	0.1	40	67	62.6
Trade union	48	0.1	25	23	47.9
Government department	90	0.1	55	35	38.9
Local government	3,097	3.5	1,417	1,680	54.2
Court	125	0.1	68	57	45.6
Government funded services	210	0.2	95	115	54.8
Crown Prosecution Service	1,697	1.9	850	847	49.9
Advice service	337	0.4	128	209	62.0
Educational establishment	178	0.2	66	112	62.9
Health service	53	0.1	16	37	69.8
Others ¹	759	0.9	493	266	35.0
Not attached to an organisation	5,585	6.3	3,069	2,516	45.0
All non-private practice	18,474	20.7	9,850	8,624	46.7
Total practising certificate holders	89,045	100.0	54,679	34,366	38.6

* less than 0.05%

¹ All other categories, including practising certificate holders in the Armed Forces, churches and other religious bodies and institutes

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

- 2.8 Overall, 82.0% of male solicitors with practising certificates are in private practice compared with only 74.9% of their female counterparts. This is shown in Table 2.8, which also shows the growing importance of the employed sector. In 2002, just over one-fifth (20.7%) of practising certificate holders worked in the employed sector, compared to only 16.4% 10 years ago.

Table 2.8 Distribution of practising certificate holders by category of employment as at 31 July 2002 compared with 1992

Category of employment	1992	Total %	2002	
	Total %		Men %	Women %
Private practice	83.6	79.3	82.0	74.9
Other PC holders	16.4	20.7	18.0	25.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Solicitors in private practice

- 2.9 For the 70,571 solicitors working in private practice, the Law Society records the position or status of the solicitor within the firm. Table 2.9 shows the status of those solicitors holding practising certificates and working in private practice as at 31 July 2002. It shows the number who are partners, sole practitioners, assistant solicitors, associates, consultants, and 'other private practice'. The category of 'other private practice' refers to solicitors with practising certificates, in private practice, but with positions in the firm other than those stated. For example, this category includes solicitors employed in training and managerial capacities. This year there has been a further slight decrease in the proportion of male and female private practitioners who are partners. Table 2.9 shows that 51.9% of men, compared with only 23.5% of women, were partners as at 31 July 2002.

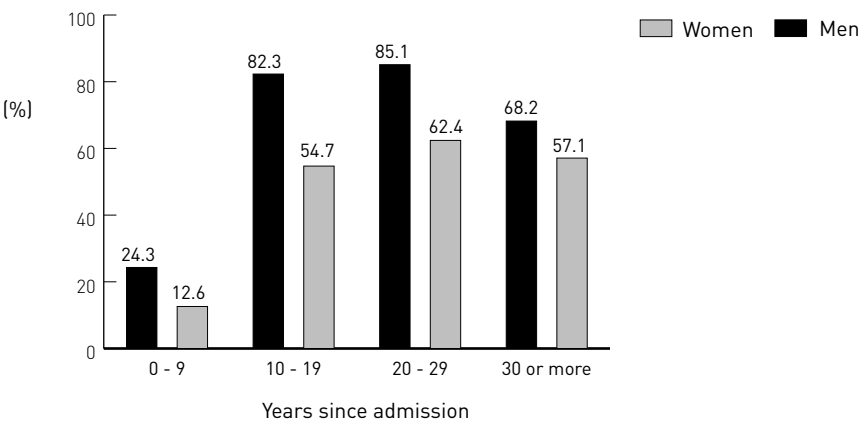
Table 2.9 Position of solicitors working in private practice and holding a practising certificate as at 31 July 2002

Position in firm	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Partners	23,265	51.9	6,043	23.5	29,308	41.5
Sole practitioners	3,181	7.1	878	3.4	4,059	5.8
Associate solicitors	3,044	6.8	2,790	10.8	5,834	8.3
Assistant solicitors	12,379	27.6	14,973	58.2	27,352	38.8
Consultants	2,460	5.5	432	1.7	2,892	4.1
Other private practice	500	1.1	626	2.4	1,126	1.6
All positions	44,829	100.0	25,742	100.0	70,571	100.0

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

2.10 Chart 3 below is an examination of status analysed by experience (as measured by the number of full years since qualifying as a solicitor) for both men and women. Chart 3 shows that, even after equalising the levels of experience, higher proportions of men achieve partnership status than women. In all of the experience bands a lower proportion of women than men are partners or sole practitioners. Of solicitors in private practice with 10–19 years' experience, the band within which most partners and sole practitioners fall, 82.3% of men are partners or sole practitioners compared with only 54.7% of women.

Chart 3 Percentages of men and women in private practice who were either partners or sole practitioners as at 31 July 2002 by years since admission



Source: Law Society's REGIS database

2.11 In addition to gender differences it is also interesting to compare the age distribution of partners and sole practitioners with those for all solicitors in private practice. Table 2.11 shows that the average age of a sole practitioner is 50.1 years, compared with 45.1 for partners and 40.5 for all solicitors in private practice. Reflecting their younger age profile, women solicitors, at all levels of private practice, are consistently younger on average than their male counterparts.

Table 2.11 The age distribution of sole practitioners and partners as at 31 July 2002

Age	All in private practice			Partners			Sole practitioners		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Total	44,829	25,742	70,571	23,265	6,043	29,308	3,181	8,78	4,059
Average age	43.0	36.1	40.5	46.0	41.4	45.1	51.2	46.2	50.1

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Ethnic groups

2.12 Table 2.12 records the number of solicitors with practising certificates who are known to belong to an ethnic minority. The provision of information on ethnicity is entirely optional, though at present it is known for 85.8% of practising certificate holders. Using this we estimate that ethnic minority solicitors accounted for 7.0% of solicitors with practising certificates in 2002, an increase on the 6.6% recorded in 2001.

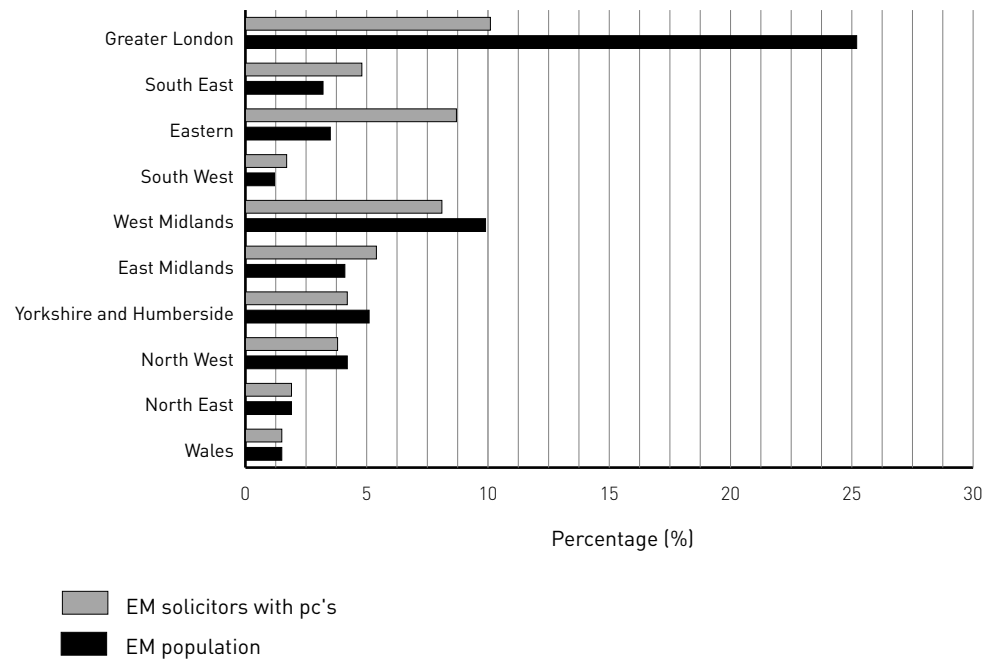
Table 2.12 Ethnic origin of practising certificate holders as at 31 July 2002

Ethnic origin	Men	Women	Total	%
White/European	43,462	26,681	70,143	78.8
African-Caribbean	165	340	505	0.6
Asian	1,736	1,743	3,479	3.9
Chinese	296	404	700	0.8
African	263	284	547	0.6
Other ethnic origin	501	517	1,018	1.1
All solicitors for whom ethnic origin is known	46,423	29,969	76,392	85.8
All ethnic minority practising certificate holders known to the Law Society	2,961	3,288	6,249	
% of all solicitors with PCs	5.4	9.6	7.0	
Unanswered/refused	3,204	698	3,902	4.4
Unknown	5,052	3,699	8,751	9.8
All practising certificate holders	54,679	34,366	89,045	100.0
% of all solicitors with PCs for whom ethnic origin is known	84.9	87.2	85.8	

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

2.13 Chart 4 shows, for each Government Office Region (see Map 1, Appendix 1), ethnic minority solicitors as a proportion of total solicitors with practising certificates, compared with the proportion of the total population who are drawn from ethnic minorities.

Chart 4 Ethnic minority solicitors as a proportion of total solicitors with practising certificates compared with people from ethnic minorities as a proportion of the total population



2.14 Table 2.14 shows the proportion of ethnic minority solicitors with practising certificates in each Government Office Region and abroad. Greater London, Eastern and the West Midlands Government Office Regions have the highest proportion of ethnic minority solicitors, the majority of whom are Asian. Overall, 9.2% of ethnic minority solicitors with practising certificates are resident abroad. It can also be seen from Table 2.14 that over a third of solicitors with practising certificates, 36.5%, are located in London, with this proportion rising to 52.4% for ethnic minority solicitors.

Table 2.14 Proportion of ethnic minority solicitors with practising certificates in standard regions and abroad as at 31 July 2002

Region	Total no. of PC holders	Ethnic Group (%)							
		Asian	African- Carib.	Chinese	African	Other ethnic minority	Total ethnic minority	White Euro- pean	Unknown
City London ¹	16,170	2.9	0.4	0.8	0.5	1.5	6.1	76.9	17.0
Rest of London	16,374	7.5	1.4	0.8	2.0	2.2	13.9	69.7	16.4
Greater London	32,544	5.2	0.9	0.8	1.2	1.8	10.1	73.3	16.7
South East	9,822	2.9	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.7	4.8	82.3	12.9
Eastern	5,922	5.6	0.9	0.4	0.8	1.1	8.7	77.9	13.4
South West	6,394	0.7	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.5	1.7	86.6	11.7
West Midlands	6,358	6.2	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.8	8.1	80.0	12.0
East Midlands	3,736	4.2	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.5	5.4	82.3	12.3
Yorkshire & Humberside	5,858	3.3	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.4	4.2	85.6	10.2
North West	9,144	2.4	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.7	3.8	84.7	11.5
North East	2,403	1.2	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.4	1.9	87.6	10.5
Wales	3,023	0.6	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.5	1.5	87.3	11.2
Scotland/N. Ireland	246	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.8	65.2	34.0
Abroad	3,038	2.9	0.1	9.0	0.1	2.2	14.3	60.3	25.5
Unknown	558	3.8	0.5	1.1	0.7	1.4	7.5	73.2	19.3
Total	89,045	3.9	0.6	0.8	0.6	1.1	7.0	78.8	14.2

¹ Solicitors have been allocated to one of the Government Office Regions on the basis of the local Law Society constituency in which they work. The boundaries match reasonably well but some degree of approximation is required.

* Less than 0.05%.

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

- 2.15 Finally, tables 2.15 and 2.16 analyse the position held by solicitors in private practice, and the size of practice in which they work, by their ethnicity. Table 2.15 shows that, whereas 43.0% of white Europeans in private practice are at partnership level, the corresponding proportion from ethnic minority groups is much lower at 23.9%. This is partly a reflection of the fact that solicitors from the ethnic minorities have only recently been entering the profession in numbers. It is interesting to note though that 8.2% of ethnic minority solicitors are sole practitioners, compared with only 5.4% for all white European solicitors in private practice.

Table 2.15 Status of private practice solicitors by ethnicity

Ethnic group	All in private practice	Percentage who were:					Total
		Partners	Sole practs.	Associates	Assists.	Other private practice	
African-Caribbean	334	23.3	9.3	7.5	58.7	1.2	100.0
Asian	2,696	23.7	9.6	7.9	55.2	3.6	100.0
Chinese	507	21.7	4.1	14.0	56.1	3.9	100.0
African	387	27.1	9.6	7.8	52.5	3.1	100.0
Other ethnic origin	782	24.6	5.0	11.5	56.0	2.9	100.0
All ethnic minority	4,706	23.9	8.2	9.1	55.5	3.3	100.0
White European	56,215	43.0	5.4	8.2	37.7	5.8	100.0
Unknown	9,650	41.7	6.8	8.3	36.7	6.5	100.0
Total	70,571	41.5	5.8	8.3	38.8	5.7	100.0

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

- 2.16 Table 2.16 shows that, overall, ethnic minority solicitors in private practice are significantly over-represented in the smaller 'High Street' firms (4 partner or fewer) — just under a half of ethnic minority solicitors (45.8%) work in these firms compared to under a third (29.3%) of white European solicitors. It is interesting to note though, that in the largest firms with 26 or more partners, ethnic Chinese solicitors have the highest representation. Over half of ethnic Chinese solicitors work in these large firms compared with 37.3% of white European solicitors. The grouping with the lowest representation in these firms were African-Caribbeans, only a fifth (20.9%) of these solicitors worked in large firms.

Table 2.16 Ethnicity by size of firm as at 31 July 2002

Ethnic group	Sole Practice	2–4 Partners	5–10 Partners	11–25 Partners	26–80 Partners	81+ Partners	All Firms
African-Caribbean	67	111	52	34	28	41	334
Asian	451	904	360	328	223	430	2,696
Chinese	33	83	33	87	62	209	507
African	84	182	23	31	29	39	387
Other ethnic origin	87	155	98	117	110	215	782
All ethnic minority	721	1,435	565	597	453	935	4,706
White European	4,403	12,058	9,716	9,097	8,848	12,093	56,215
Unknown	956	2,159	1,512	1,396	1,377	2,250	9,650
Total	6,081	15,652	11,794	11,090	10,678	15,278	70,571

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

3. Solicitors' offices and firms

3.1 Information on organisations employing solicitors and especially on private practice solicitors firms is now only available from the Law Society records held on its REGIS database. It should be noted that at present the system cannot differentiate between 'active' and 'inactive' private practice firms. The Law Society records the type of business conducted by organisations employing solicitors. The main categories are shown in Table 3.1 together with the numbers of head offices and branch offices for each employer in England and Wales and in other jurisdictions.

Table 3.1 Organisations employing solicitors by type of business as at 31 July 2002

Type of business	Head offices		Branch offices		Total offices	
	England & Wales	Elsewhere	England & Wales	Elsewhere	England & Wales	Elsewhere
Private practice						
Partnerships in England and Wales	9,231	126	3,603	92	12,834	218
Incorporated firms	319	0	183	8	502	8
Multi-national practices	142	87	78	220	220	307
Locums services	347	0	1	0	348	0
Foreign law practices	9	608	12	218	21	826
Other private practice	60	25	20	6	80	31
Commerce and industry	2,350	258	329	56	2,679	314
Government						
Government department	51	31	54	11	105	42
Local government	476	2	42	0	518	2
Court	132	4	122	0	254	4
Government funded services	80	10	54	3	134	13
Crown Prosecution Service	45	0	55	0	100	0
Other						
Advice service	153	0	13	0	166	0
Educational establishment	141	9	4	0	145	9
Other	221	10	52	2	273	12
Total	13,757	1,170	4,622	616	18,379	1,786
		14,927				20,165

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

3.2 As can be seen from Table 3.1 as at 31 July 2002, there were 14,927 separate organisations employing solicitors, of which 13,931 were based in England and Wales and 1,170 elsewhere (ie Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, Eire and overseas countries). Each firm, company, local authority or other employer may be located in one or several offices. There were 20,165 separate places of work recorded for solicitors, of which 18,379 were in England

and Wales and 1,786 elsewhere. These figures represent a reduction on the numbers recorded for 2001. It can also be seen from this table that in 2002 there were 9,231 private practice partnerships, located in 12,834 separate offices in England and Wales, registered with the Society. Over the past year the number of these firms has fallen marginally by 0.2%, whilst the total number of offices has decreased slightly more by 1.0%. These changes are largely the result of the data cleaning exercises which have taken place on the Society's systems.

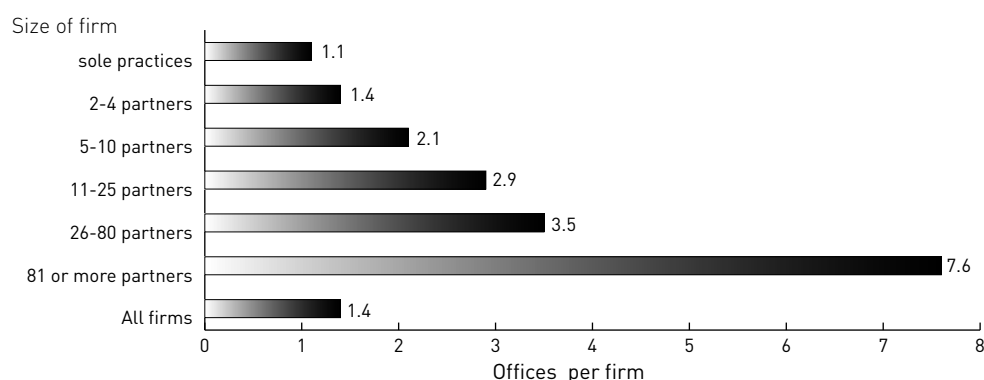
3.3 The trend in the numbers of private practice firms and offices over the five years since 1996-97 is shown in table 3.3. This shows that over the period the number of firms has decreased by 8.8% and the number of offices has decreased by 8.0%. These figures are reflected in the observed 1.1% increase in the ratio of offices to firms over the period. These changes should, though, be treated with caution (see paragraph 3.2 above).

Table 3.3 Trends in the number of private practice firms and offices

Year	Number of firms	Number of offices
1996-97	10,120	13,919
1997-98	10,120	13,903
1998-99	9,983	13,818
1999-00	9,770	13,561
2000-01	9,251	12,966
2001-02	9,231	12,834

3.4 The numbers of offices occupied by different sizes of firms are shown in Chart 5. This shows that the average number of offices per firm in 2002 was 1.4. As one would expect, the number of offices per firm increases with the size of firm: from 1.1 for sole practices through to 7.6 for the 81-or-more partner firms.

Chart 5 Number of offices by size of firm in 2002



3.5 Table 3.5 shows the geographical distribution of the population of England and Wales contrasted with that for private practice firms broken down into the standard regions. Just over one-quarter of solicitors' firms, 26.0%, were located in London in 2002 and just under one-half of all solicitors' firms (41.5%) are now based in the South East (including London). This value is distorted by the presence in London of a large number of firms serving predominantly commercial clients. Outside of the South East (including London) there is reasonable correspondence between the proportion of law firms and the population they serve.

Table 3.5 Location (standard regions) of population and private practice firms and practitioners in 2002

	Total =	Population ¹ 52,690 million	Firms 9,231
Region		%	%
City of London		*	6.6
Rest of London		13.5	19.4
Total London		13.5	26.0
Rest of South East		15.1	15.5
South West		9.3	8.7
Wales		5.6	5.3
West Midlands		10.2	7.8
East Midlands		8.0	4.8
Eastern		10.2	9.9
North West including Merseyside		13.3	11.8
Yorkshire and Humberside		9.7	6.6
North East		5.8	3.5
Total		100.0	100.0

* Less than 0.05%

Sources: ¹ Estimated using Office for National Statistics mid-1999 data;

3.6 Table 3.6 analyses the number of firms in 2002 by the Government Office Region of the head office and the size of firm measured by the partner count. The first thing to notice from this table is that the vast majority of private practices are quite small. Taken overall over five-sixths of law practices in England and Wales have four partners or fewer. At the other end of the spectrum only 1.7% of all firms have 26 or more partners. The second point to note is the concentration of firms in London (see para 3.5). This concentration is particularly noticeable when we look at the disposition of the larger firms where it can be seen that of the 155 firms with 26 or more partners almost a half (47.9%) were located in the London region.

Table 3.6 Number of firms in 2002, analysed by size and regional location of head office

Region	Number of firms					All firms
	Sole Practitioner	2-4 prttrs	5-10 prttrs	11-25 prttrs	26+ prttrs	
City of London	209	182	77	68	68	605
Rest of Greater London	960	714	90	25	6	1,795
South East	728	501	135	58	12	1,434
Eastern	426	357	88	34	7	912
South West	364	290	85	47	19	804
West Midlands	294	318	76	30	5	723
East Midlands	183	179	61	19	6	447
Yorkshire and the Humber	224	250	90	30	18	612
North West including Merseyside	422	471	146	38	10	1,087
North East	128	149	34	9	4	324
Wales	194	236	50	8	2	489
Total	4,131	3,646	931	367	155	9,231

Source: REGIS data

4. Staffing

4.1 This chapter relies entirely on data from the Society's REGIS system for private practice staffing information. The data held by the Society excludes information on non-admitted fee earners, as well as information on the number of administrative and support staff employed in private practice. (This is a serious deterioration in the quality of the data given that it was shown that in 2000 there were almost as many non-admitted fee earners as assistant solicitors in private practice, and slightly more administrative and support staff than fee earners). Table 4.1 breaks down the 70,571 solicitors at 31 July 2002 employed in private practice by their grade and the size of their firm measured by the partner count. It shows that within an overall growth in numbers over the past year of 3.1%, the proportion of partners including sole practitioners has fallen from 48.3% to 47.3%. The table also shows the high degree of solicitor concentration in the largest firms. Firms with 81 or more partners, around 0.4% of the total, employed 14.3% of principals and just over one fifth (21.7%) of all solicitors. At the other end of the spectrum sole practices, 44.8% of firms, employed 12.2% of all principals and 8.6% of all solicitors.

Table 4.1 Admitted staff in private practice firms in 2002 by size of firm

	Sole practices	2-4 ptnrs.	5-10 ptnrs.	11-25 ptnrs.	26-80 ptnrs.	81+ ptnrs.	All firms
Partners	0	9,009	6,096	5,187	4,251	4,764	29,308
Sole Practitioners	4,059	0	0	0	0	0	4,059
Associate solicitors	183	635	581	882	1,130	2,422	5,834
Assistant solicitors	1,432	4,792	4,315	4,495	4,863	7,455	27,352
Consultants	306	944	653	448	287	273	2,911
Other private practice	99	270	149	78	147	364	1,107
All positions	6,080	15,651	11,794	11,090	10,678	15,279	70,571

4.2 Staffing ratios for admitted staff within solicitors' firms are examined in Table 4.2. The ratios shown are the average numbers of associate, assistant, consultant and 'other' private practitioners per principal. There are a number of features to this table. It shows, for example, that associate solicitors and the 'other private practice solicitors' who mainly perform specialist roles within firms are most likely to be found in the larger firms with 11 or more partners, whilst consultants are found mainly in firms smaller than this. In terms of the staffing ratios these show that the ratio of assistant solicitors to principals increases from 0.35:1 in sole practices through to 1.56:1 in the 81 or more partner firms. In the intervening size bands the ratios are 0.53 assistants per principal in 2-4 partner firms, 0.71 per principal in 5-10 partner firms, 0.87 per principal in 11-25 partner firms and 1.14 in 26-80 partner firms.

Table 4.2 Number of admitted staff per principal in private practice firms in 2002 by size of firm

	Sole practices	2-4 ptnrs.	5-10 ptnrs.	11-25 ptnrs.	26-80 ptnrs.	81+ ptnrs.	All firms
Principals	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Associates/principals	0.0452	0.0705	0.0954	0.1700	0.2657	0.5085	0.1748
Assistant/principal	0.3529	0.5319	0.7078	0.8665	1.1438	1.5649	0.8197
Consultants/principal	0.0755	0.1048	0.1070	0.0864	0.0676	0.0574	0.0873
Other private practice/principal	0.0243	0.0300	0.0244	0.0150	0.0345	0.0764	0.0332
All per principal	1.4978	1.7372	1.9346	2.1379	2.5116	3.2072	2.1150

4.3 Table 4.3 provides a breakdown of the number of solicitors employed in private practice analysed by grade, and the Government Office Region (GOR) in which the firms' head office is located. This table shows that in 2002 42.0% of private practitioners were employed in firms located in London. Using the population data from Table 3.8 this can be recast as a ratio of one private practitioner in London per 240 head of population, compared to an average density in England and Wales of one practitioner per 750 head of population. Excluding the London GOR this figure increases to one practitioner per 1,140 head of population. Overall, this density is lowest in the North East GOR where there is one practitioner per 1,465 head of population.

Table 4.3 Admitted staff in private practice firms in 2002 by Government region

	Partners	Sole Practitioner	Associate solicitors	Assist. solicitors	Consultants	Other pr. practice	All solicitors
Greater Ldn.	10,774	1,130	3,175	12,818	1,124	619	29,641
South East	3,204	712	357	2,373	356	135	7,137
Eastern	2,117	422	133	1,642	193	54	4,560
South West	3,360	364	493	2,050	256	45	5,568
West. Midlands	2,093	290	562	1,509	199	33	4,685
East. Midlands	1,345	176	201	1,048	110	29	2,909
Yorks & Humberside	2,187	224	280	1,904	167	65	4,827
North West	3,284	417	382	2,679	300	67	7,130
North East	843	126	123	606	72	26	1,796
Wales	1,102	197	127	723	133	35	2,317
All regions	29,308	4,059	5,834	27,352	2,911	1,107	70,571

Part II

The recruitment and training of solicitors

This section of the report provides information on the recruitment and training of solicitors. Chapter 5 provides background information on the routes to admission. Chapter 6 presents statistics on the number of undergraduates and graduates in law from universities in England and Wales. Chapter 7 shows summary statistics related to enrolled students. Chapter 8 examines the numbers embarking on and passing the Legal Practice Course, before moving on to an examination of the personal characteristics and placement of trainees. Chapter 9 gives information on those admitted to the Roll in 2001–02.

5. Routes to admission to the Roll

5.1 There are seven routes to qualification as a solicitor:

- law graduate;
- non-law graduate;
- overseas lawyer (transfer);
- barrister (transfer);
- Scots/Northern Irish lawyers (transfer);
- Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives (FILEX);
- justices' clerk.

5.2 The most frequently used route to qualification as a solicitor is to take a first degree in law and then to spend a year taking the full-time Legal Practice Course (LPC), followed by a two-year traineeship. This route can be completed in six years. Non-law graduates have to undertake a one-year full-time conversion course, the Common Professional Exam (CPE), which is also the legal qualification needed by non-law graduates wishing to train for the Bar. They then proceed to qualification in the same way as a law graduate. This is the second most frequently used route. (Two-year part-time courses are also available for both the LPC and the CPE). Non-graduates enter the profession via transfer after first obtaining a qualification as a Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives (FILEX) and passing the LPC. Members of the Justices' Clerks Association may also enter the profession after passing the LPC, and demonstrating that they have had at least five years' continuous service in the 10 years prior to their application for admission. Other routes involve transfer after qualifying as a barrister, or as a lawyer in another jurisdiction, and meeting the necessary transfer conditions.

6. Undergraduates and graduates in law

- 6.1 This chapter records the numbers of applicants, acceptances and graduations recorded for undergraduate law courses in England and Wales. The statistics for applicants and acceptances to universities have been supplied by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), and statistics on the number and achieved grade of law degree graduates have been supplied by the Higher Educational Statistical Agency (HESA).
- 6.2 Table 6.2 shows the number of applicants and acceptances for undergraduate places at university full-time law degree courses for the academic years 2000 and 2001. The figures relate to individuals: applicants are counted only once irrespective of the number of applications made on the UCAS application form. The table shows that a total of 20,094 people applied to study law at undergraduate level in 2001, which is only 3.8% higher than in the previous year. Within this total male applications rose slightly faster than female applications, by 5.1% and 3.0% respectively. The total number of acceptances (an acceptance is defined as a formal acceptance of a university place offered through the UCAS scheme) made by universities increased much more rapidly than applications, by 9.9%, from 11,467 to 12,606. The pattern in acceptances reversed that for applications in that whilst female acceptances increased by 10.6%, male acceptances rose less quickly by 8.8%.

Table 6.2 Home and overseas applicants and acceptances for university first degree law courses in England and Wales 2000 and 2001

For entry in:	University applicants								
	UK			Overseas			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2000	5,933	10,595	16,528	1,223	1,615	2,838	7,156	12,210	19,366
2001	6,312	10,973	17,285	1,206	1,603	2,809	7,518	12,576	20,094
% change	6.4	3.6	4.6	-1.4	-0.7	-1.0	5.1	3.0	3.8

For entry in:	University acceptances								
	UK			Overseas			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2000	3,586	6,416	10,002	653	812	1,465	4,239	7,228	11,467
2001	3,979	7,096	11,075	634	897	1,531	4,613	7,993	12,606
% change	11.0	10.6	10.7	-2.9	10.5	4.5	8.8	10.6	9.9

Source: UCAS

- 6.3 Table 6.3 shows the number of female and overseas students as a proportion of the total acceptances to university law degree courses. In 2001, 63.4% of acceptances were from women, up slightly from the 63.0% recorded in 2000. The proportion of overseas acceptances, 12.1%, was slightly below the 12.8% recorded last year.

Table 6.3 Proportion of law students accepted in 2000 and 2001 who were female or from overseas

Year	Female students		Overseas students	
	No.	%	No.	%
2000	7,228	63.0	1,465	12.8
2001	7,993	63.4	1,531	12.1

Source: UCAS

- 6.4 Table 6.4 shows the number of ethnic minority students (excluding overseas students) who gained places on law degree courses for the academic year 2001. In total, ethnic minority law students accounted for 25.0% of students starting a first degree law course in 2001. This represents an increase on 2000, when the comparable proportion was 21.9%. Within this total, female acceptances were slightly more likely than males to be drawn from ethnic minorities: 26.4% of acceptances as opposed to 22.6%.

Table 6.4 Ethnic minority students from the UK accepted to first degree law courses at universities and colleges in 2001

Ethnic group	Acceptances of students from UK		
	Male	Female	Total
Black Caribbean	41	162	203
Black African	140	228	368
Black other	22	69	91
Indian	234	516	750
Pakistani	201	382	583
Bangladeshi	46	100	146
Chinese	22	75	97
Other Asian	76	93	169
Mixed race	82	174	256
All other ethnicities	35	75	110
All UK-based ethnic minority acceptances	899	1,874	2,773
All UK-based acceptances	3,979	7,096	11,075
% from ethnic minorities	22.6	26.4	25.0

Source: UCAS

- 6.5 Table 6.5 shows recent trends in the number of students graduating in law. It contrasts the number of graduates in 2001 with the position one and five years previously. The table shows that, in 2001, the total number of graduates was 9,248, a decrease of only 0.8% on the previous year. In the five years since 1996 the total number of graduates has fallen marginally by 0.2% from a base of 9,265. The table shows that within this relatively static total the number of male law graduates has fallen by 20.6% over the past 5 years, whereas the number of female law graduates has increased by 18.1% over the same period.

Table 6.5 Number of students graduating in law from universities in England and Wales 1996, 2000 and 2001¹

Year of graduation	University Graduates in Law		
	Male	Female	Total
1996	4,409	4,856	9,265
2000	3,807	5,517	9,324
2001	3,512	5,736	9,248
% change 2001/2000	-7.7	4.0	-0.8
% change 2001/1996	-20.3	18.1	-0.2

¹ Figures relate to single honours law degrees and do not include modular or joint honour degrees which may also allow graduates to proceed directly to study the Legal Practice Course (para. 7.6)

Sources of data: 1995 and onwards, Higher Educational Statistical Agency

- 6.6 The HESA statistics do not represent the total numbers of graduates with a qualifying law degree. These are degrees which have covered the General Council of the Bar and the Law Society's seven foundations of legal knowledge which form the academic stage of legal education, and which allow graduates to proceed directly to study the Legal Practice Course. Many institutions now offer modular or joint honours degrees that have a substantial element of law study: depending on the choice of subjects, such degrees may or may not lead to a qualifying degree. The Law Society's Legal Education Department believes it is possible that a further 3,500–4,000 law students with qualifying law degrees from joint honours or modular degrees graduate each year. However, a firm estimate of this figure cannot be made without collecting, on an individual and yearly basis, statistics from every institution offering such degrees.

6.7 Table 6.7 shows that, in 2001, of the 9,248 law graduates just over half, 51.1% achieved a first class or upper second class degree. This proportion represents an increase on the figure of 49.7% recorded for 2000. Overall, a higher proportion of women graduated with firsts or upper seconds than men: 52.1% and 49.4% of graduates respectively. There are no figures showing the classes of degree awarded to ethnic minority law students.

Table 6.7 Class of degrees in law awarded in England and Wales in summer 2001

Class of degree	All law graduates					
	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
First	162	4.6	213	3.7	375	4.1
Upper second	1,574	44.8	2,773	48.3	4,347	47.0
Lower second	1,460	41.6	2,398	41.8	3,858	41.7
Third/pass	288	8.2	323	5.6	611	6.6
Unclassified	28	0.8	29	0.5	57	0.6
Total	3,512	100.0	5,736	100.0	9,248	100.0
Total: first and upper second	1,736		2,986		4,722	
Percentage with first or upper second		49.4		52.1		51.1

Source: Higher Educational Statistical Agency

7. Student enrolments with the Law Society

- 7.1 All students who wish to embark on the Legal Practice Course (LPC), or enter into a training contract, must enrol with the Society as student members. The Society then maintains records of these students at each stage of their training. This includes performance on the LPC, the registration of traineeships, and the admission to the Roll of those who have successfully completed their training. Up until 1992, when an annual enrolment process was introduced, a certificate of enrolment was valid for five years. Annual enrolment allows better monitoring of students who maintain an interest in a career as a solicitor.
- 7.2 Primarily this monitoring consists of examining the proportions of women and ethnic minority students showing an interest in becoming a solicitor. Information on the proportion of enrolled students who were female, or from an ethnic minority, enables the Society to examine the scope for further recruitment to the profession of members of these groups. Neither the number of students enrolling with the Society each year, nor the total number enrolled, can be used to predict the numbers who will subsequently enter the profession. This is because no consistent relationship has ever been identified between enrolments and subsequent admissions.
- 7.3 Details on the ethnic origin of students, as well as other biographic data, are sought at the time of their enrolment. Students are not obliged to complete the question on their ethnicity, but historically a high proportion of students have been prepared to do so. The ethnicity of 92.6% of students enrolling with the Society in 2001–02 was recorded. Table 7.4 shows the fuller breakdown of enrolments by gender and ethnicity. Table 7.5 shows the comparative data for one and ten years ago, that is for 1991–92 and 2000–01.
- 7.4 In the year up to 31 July 2002, 8,513 students enrolled with the Law Society, an increase of 12.1% on the previous year. Of these 5,334, or 62.7%, of the total were women. This represents a slight increase in the proportion of women students recorded in 2000–01 (62.3%), and a more marked increase in the proportion for 1991–92, when it was 45.7%. The proportion of women amongst ethnic minority students was, at 66.3%, slightly higher than the proportion found amongst all who had enrolled. African-Caribbeans were the ethnic grouping with the highest proportion of women students. For this group of enrolled students, 82.6% were women.
- 7.5 Of those students enrolling with the Society last year, 1,895, or 22.3% of the total, were drawn from ethnic minority groups. This can be compared with the 13.6% from ethnic minority students recorded in 1991–91, and the 21.2% recorded in 2000–01. When one compares 2001–02 with 1991–92, it can be seen that almost the whole of the increase in ethnic minority numbers is accounted for by increases in the number of Asian students and students of 'other' ethnic origin.

Table 7.4 The ethnic origin and gender of students enrolling with the Law Society in 2001–02

Ethnic origin	Male		Female		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.
African-Caribbean	24	17.4	114	82.6	138
Asian	314	33.0	638	67.0	952
Chinese	62	40.5	91	59.5	153
African	118	38.3	190	61.7	308
Other ethnic origin	116	33.7	228	66.3	344
All ethnic minority	634	33.5	1,261	66.5	1,895
White European	2,288	38.2	3,696	61.8	5,984
Unknown	257	40.5	377	59.5	634
Total	3,179	37.3	5,334	62.7	8,513

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Table 7.5 Trends in the ethnic origin of students enrolling with the Law Society

	1991–92		2000–01		2001–02	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Ethnic origin						
African-Caribbean	67	1.0	89	1.2	138	1.6
Asian	465	7.0	803	10.6	952	11.2
Chinese	198	3.0	141	1.9	153	1.8
African	145	2.2	247	3.3	308	3.6
Other ethnic origin	30	0.5	332	4.4	344	4.0
All ethnic minority	905	13.6	1,612	21.2	1,895	22.3
White European	5,278	79.5	5,602	73.8	5,984	70.3
Unknown	452	6.8	3,81	5.0	634	7.4
Total	6,635	100.0	7,595	100.0	8,513	100.0
Gender						
Male	3,600	54.3	2,864	37.7	3,179	37.3
Female	3,035	45.7	4,731	62.3	5,334	62.7
Total	6,635	100.0	7,595	100.0	8,513	100.0

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

8. Post-graduate education and training

The Legal Practice Course

- 8.1 The LPC is the next stage towards qualification as a solicitor for graduates with a first degree in law, and for graduates in other disciplines who have completed the one-year full-time conversion course, the Common Professional Exam (CPE).
- 8.2 In 2002, of the 7,141 students who enrolled on the LPC, 6,890, or 96.5%, sat the July examinations. This latter figure is the total number of enrolments less those who were deferred or absent from the examinations. Compared with 2001, total enrolments increased by 4.9%; this increase was reflected in the number taking the examination, where numbers rose by 4.5%. Taken overall, the pass rate was 76.6%, an increase on the proportion who passed last year (73.3%). Of those actually taking the examination, the pass rate was 79.3%, which represents an increase on the 2001 figure of 75.7%. Table 8.2 below shows the full set of results. Candidates who pass with distinction now account for almost one-fifth (18.3%) of total passes.

Table 8.2 Legal Practice Course results of summer examinations — July 2002

Results	No. of students	2002 % of those sitting exam	% of all students
Diploma with distinction	1,305	18.9	18.3
Diploma with commendation	2,793	40.5	39.1
Diploma	1,369	19.9	19.2
Total passes	5,467	79.3	76.6
Referred	1,134	16.5	15.9
Resit	2,89	4.2	4.0
Failed	0	0.0	0.0
Total failed	1,423	20.7	19.9
Total sitting the examination	6,890	100.0	96.5
Deferred	234		3.3
Absent	17		0.2
Total not sitting the examination	251		3.5
Total students enrolled on the LPC	7,141		100.0

Source: Law Society database

Table 8.3 Places on the Legal Practice Course for 2000–01, 2001–02 and 2002–03

College of Law/universities	Full-time			Part-time		
	'00–01	01–02	'02–03	'00–01	'01–02	'02–03
The College of Law:						
Store Street	1,248	1,248	1,248	192	192	192
Chester	864	600	600	48	56	56
Guildford	744	720	720	40	80	100
York	696	532	696	48	40	40
Birmingham		336	336	-	40	60
Inns of Court School of Law	100	100	100	-	-	-
University of Central England	120	120	120	30	30	30
Cardiff Law School	144	160	160	-	-	-
University of the West of England	256	256	342	44	44	58
University of Glamorgan	108	108	108	32	32	32
London Metropolitan University	110	110	110	54	54	54
Huddersfield University	80	80	80	36	36	36
Leeds Metropolitan University	150	105	105	45	45	45
Manchester Metropolitan University	168	168	168	48	48	48
De Montfort University						
at De Montfort	130	130	130	100	100	100
at Birmingham University	120	120	-	100	100	-
at Bristol University	100	100	-	100	100	-
Nottingham Trent University						
at Nottingham Law School	600	648	648	90	90	90
at Bournemouth University	96	96	96	-	-	-
at Liverpool John Moores	-	-	-	72	72	72
at BPP Law School	288	432	540	64	72	72
University of Northumbria						
at University of Northumbria	160	160	160	50	50	50
at University of Northumbria ELD	110	110	110	-	-	-
University of Hertfordshire	-	-	-	50	50	50
Staffordshire University	100	125	125	25	25	25
Thames Valley University	80	50	50	32	32	32
University of Central Lancashire	48	48	48	60	60	60
Wolverhampton University	100	100	100	30	30	30
University of Westminster	120	120	120	50	64	64
Anglia Polytechnic University	100	70	70	-	30	30
Exeter University	120	120	120	-	-	-
Oxford Institute of Legal Practice	196	294	345	-	-	-
Sheffield University	120	120	140	-	-	-
North London/South Bank University	-	-	-	60	60	60
Total	7,376	7,486	7,695	1,500	1,632	1,486

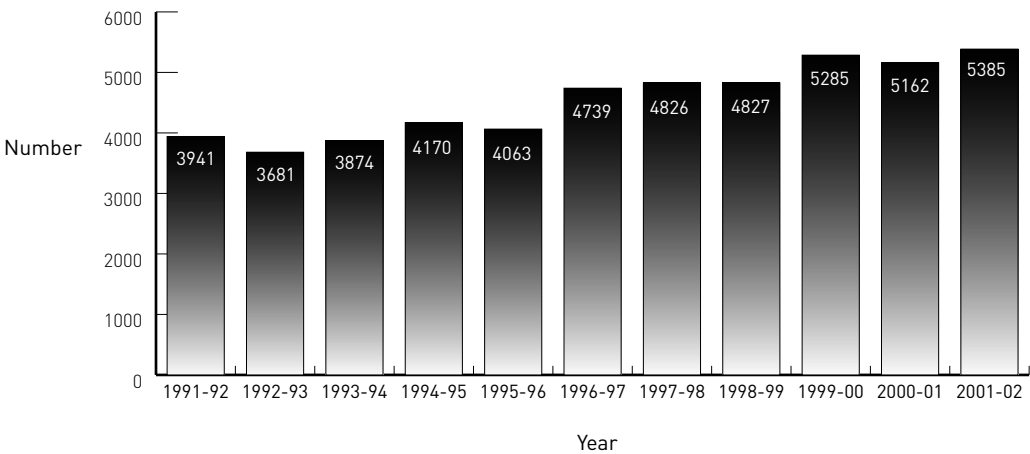
Source: Law Society database

- 8.3
- Table 8.3 shows the number of places available at institutions which have been validated to run the LPC. The number of full-time places available in 2002–2003 will be 7,695. This is a slight increase of 2.8% on the number of places which were available in 2001–02. In addition, there will also be 1,486 places available on part-time LPC courses in 2002–03 — a significant decrease (8.9%) on the number of part-time places that were available in 2001–02.
- 8.4
- Included in the above are 110 places on law degree courses offered by the University of Northumbria, which carry an exemption from the LPC.

Traineeships

- 8.5
- In addition to obtaining pre-vocational qualifications, those embarking on a career as a solicitor also have to undergo a period of training, in most cases for two years, before gaining admission to the Roll. The trainee is assigned to a training establishment, and a training contract is drawn up. Forms covering the registration of trainees are lodged with the Law Society.
- 8.6
- Chart 6 below shows the registrations of traineeships from 1991–92 to the present. In the year that ended 31 July 2002 there were 5,385 new traineeships registered with the Society. This represents an increase (4.3%) on the level recorded last year, when trainee registrations stood at 5,162. Trainee registrations are now running at the highest levels recorded to date.

Chart 6 Annual registration of trainees 1991–92 to 2001–02



Source: Law Society’s REGIS database

- 8.7
- Table 8.7 shows the data on the total number of trainees registered in 1991–92 and 2001–02 with the total analysed by trainee gender. Overall, the number of traineeships has increased by just over a third (36.6%) over the period. Within this total growth, that for women trainees was markedly higher than that for males (49.8% and 20.7% respectively). In fact, for each of the years since 1991–92 for which we have data, the majority of new trainees have been

female. In this latest year, 60.0% of trainees registered were women, and although this is the highest proportion yet recorded, it is only up slightly on the proportion recorded last year (58.8%).

Table 8.7 Number of traineeships registered in 1991–92 and 2001–02 analysed by gender of trainee

Year	Male		Female		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.
1991–92	1,783	45.2	2,158	54.8	3,941
2001–02	2,152	40.0	3,233	60.0	5,385
% change 2001–02 over 1991–92		20.7		49.8	36.6

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

8.8 Five years ago in 1997 we were able to examine, for the first time, the ethnic origin of new trainees. This year the ethnicity and gender of new trainees is shown in Table 8.8. The trainees' ethnic origin was validly recorded for 4,980 trainees, or 92.5% of the 5,385 new traineeships registered. This shows some slight improvement in the quality of this data from last year, when the ethnicity of 89.0% of new trainees was known. In 2001–02, ethnic minority trainees represented 18.0% of trainees of known ethnicity, up from the 16.8% recorded last year. The ethnic grouping most highly represented was 'Asian', which accounted for 58.0% of ethnic minority trainees. Overall, the proportion of women was slightly higher amongst ethnic minority trainees than for the group of trainees as a whole. Whereas, as we have seen, 60.0% of trainees overall were women, this proportion rose to 63.3% amongst those from ethnic minorities. The ethnic Chinese group had the highest proportion of women trainees at 75.7%.

Table 8.8 Trainee registrations by ethnic origin and gender 2001–02

Ethnic origin	Male	Female	Total	trainees with known ethnicity
	No.	No.	No.	%
African-Caribbean	20	45	65	1.3
Asian	205	316	521	10.5
Chinese	18	56	74	1.5
African	30	54	84	1.7
Other ethnic origin	57	97	154	3.1
Total known ethnic minority	330	568	898	18.0
Ethnic minority trainees as % of those with known ethnicity	16.6%	19.0%	18.0%	-
White European	1,653	2,429	4,082	82.0

Contd.

Table 8.8 Continued:

Ethnic origin	Male	Female	Total	trainees with known ethnicity
	No.	No.	No.	%
Total with known ethnicity	1,983	2,997	4,980	100.0
% of trainees with known ethnicity	92.1%	92.7%	92.5%	
Trainees with unknown ethnicity	169	236	405	
% of trainees with unknown ethnicity	7.9%	7.3%	7.5%	
All trainees	2,152	3,233	5,385	
All trainees %	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%	

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

8.9 Table 8.9 shows the numbers of new male and female traineeships registered in each Government Office Region (modified to maintain the important division between the City and the Rest of London) in 2001–02. Of the 5,385 trainees registered, 1,687 (31.3%) were located in the City of London. A further 985, or 18.3%, were located in the rest of London. Taken overall, just over one-half (49.6%) of first-year trainees were located in London in 2001–02. This compares with the 50.8% of London registrations recorded last year. Male trainees were slightly more likely than female trainees to be located in London. Whereas just over one-half (53.0%) of male trainees were located in London, the corresponding proportion for female trainees was only 47.4%. The region with the highest proportion of female trainees was the East Midlands with 67.3%, and the region with the lowest proportion was the City of London with 54.0%.

Table 8.9 Trainee placements in 2001–02 analysed by Government Office Region

Region	Male			Female			Total	
	No.	%	% by region	No.	%	% by region	Total	% by region
City of London	776	46.0	36.1	911	54.0	28.2	1,687	31.3
Rest of London	364	37.0	16.9	621	63.0	19.2	985	18.3
South East	142	34.7	6.6	266	65.3	8.2	408	7.6
Eastern	113	33.5	5.2	223	66.5	6.9	336	6.2
South West	111	39.1	5.1	172	60.9	5.3	283	5.3
West Midlands	137	39.7	6.3	207	60.3	6.4	344	6.4
East Midlands	63	32.7	2.9	130	67.3	4.0	194	3.6
Yorkshire and Humberside	131	38.1	6.1	212	61.9	6.6	343	6.4
North West	220	40.4	10.2	325	59.6	10.0	545	10.1
North East	48	37.6	2.2	80	62.4	2.5	128	2.4
Wales	48	36.4	2.2	84	63.6	2.6	132	2.5
Total	2,152	40.0	100.0	3,233	50.0	100.0	5,385	100.0

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

- 8.10 In addition to looking at the regional distribution of traineeships, we are also able to look at the types of organisation in which these male and female trainees are placed. This data, which is shown in Table 8.10, shows overwhelmingly that trainees are placed in private practice firms. Of the traineeships registered in 2001–02, 5,135 (95.4%) were in private practice firms. Male trainees were marginally more likely to be placed in private practice firms, and female trainees were marginally more likely to be placed in local government, commerce and industry, and other sectors.

Table 8.10 Trainee placements in 2001–02 analysed by category of employment of training institution

Category of employment	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Private practice	2,079	96.6	3,056	94.5	5,135	95.4
Commerce and industry	33	1.5	46	1.4	79	1.5
Government department	6	0.3	10	0.3	16	0.3
Local government	16	0.7	70	2.2	86	1.6
Court	5	0.2	17	0.5	22	0.4
Crown prosecution service	7	0.3	9	0.3	16	0.3
Advice service	1	0.0	8	0.2	9	0.2
Other	5	0.2	17	0.5	22	0.4
Total	2,152	100.0	3,233	100.0	5,385	100.0

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

- 8.11 Given the importance of private practice firms to the training process, it is interesting to look at the characteristics of those firms which provide training placements. Of particular importance is the distribution of trainees by the size of firm in which they were placed. Data on the number of male and female trainees analysed by size of firm (measured by the total number of partners) is shown in Table 8.11. Of the 5,135 traineeships registered with private practice firms in 2001–02, just under one-third, 31.7%, were located in the small number of very large firms with 81 or more partners. At the other end of the spectrum only 5.1% of trainees were placed for training within sole practices. Male trainees were much more likely than female trainees to be placed in the very largest 81 or more partner firms. The proportions here were 36.8% and 28.2% respectively. In contrast to this, female trainees were more likely than male trainees to be placed in the smaller and medium-sized firms with between two and 80 partners although some of the differences here were not substantial. In sole practices there were no differences in the proportion of male and female trainees.

Table 8.11 Trainee placements in 2001–02 analysed by the size of private practice firm in which trainees were located

Size of firm	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sole practice	107	5.1	155	5.1	262	5.1
2–4 partners	349	16.8	553	18.1	902	17.6
5–10 partners	254	12.2	500	16.4	754	14.7
11–25 partners	274	13.2	461	15.1	735	14.3
26–80 partners	330	15.9	523	17.1	853	16.6
81+	765	36.8	863	28.2	1,628	31.7
Total	2,079	100.0	3,056	100.0	5,135	100.0

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

- 8.12 Since August 1987, in an attempt to try to ensure that the solicitors' profession is open to all regardless of their background, the Council of the Law Society has recommended minimum starting salaries for trainee solicitors. The rates set by the Council are shown below in Table 8.12. In 1993, after considerable debate, the Council agreed to maintain the principle of minimum salaries. However, the salary rates were frozen at their 1992 levels, and the outer London rate was abolished. From then through to 1999, the recommended salary levels were frozen at their 1993 levels. In February 2000, the recommended minimum was raised to £13,600 in London and £12,000 elsewhere. (Another change made at that time was that now only on special application may firms offer training contracts at salaries below the Council minimum recommendation). A further revision took place in August 2002 when the minimum in Central London was raised to £14,600, and elsewhere to £13,000.

Table 8.12 Council recommended minimum starting salaries for trainee solicitors

Effective date	Central London ¹	Outer London	Rest of England and Wales
From 1/9/87	£6,600	£6,100	£5,200
From 1/8/88	£7,200	£6,900	£6,000
From 1/8/89	£8,500	£8,200	£7,300
From 1/8/90	£9,900	£9,600	£8,700
From 1/8/91	£11,300	£11,000	£10,100
From 1/8/92	£12,150	£11,850	£10,850
From 1/8/93*	£12,150	£10,850	£10,850
From 1/8/2000	£13,600	£12,000	£12,000
From 1/8/2002	£14,600	£13,000	£13,000

* Outer London category abolished in 1993

¹ Central London is the City of London, Holborn and Westminster.

- 8.13 Analyses of trainees' actual starting salaries by gender and region are shown below in Table 9.13. This shows that, in 2001–02, average starting salaries were highest in Central London (the City, Holborn and Westminster) at £26,047, and lowest in Wales at £13,341. Taken over all trainees, the average starting salary was £19,277. This represents an increase of 5.3% on the average salary paid last year, which was £18,300. Within this total rise male trainee salaries increased by 6.7% on average, whilst the increase for female trainees was only 4.5%. This indicates a further widening of the pay gap.

Table 8.13 Trainees' starting salaries by Government Office Region and gender

Region	Male average (£)	Female average (£)	All trainees average (£)	% male average salary over female	Average salary as % of minimum	% trainees paid at or below the minimum
Central Ldn	26,285	25,851	26,047	1.7	178	4.0
Rest of Greater Ldn	17,625	16,217	16,708	8.7	129	25.5
South East	15,037	15,054	15,048	-0.1	116	35.5
Eastern	13,827	14,084	13,996	-1.8	108	50.5
South West	15,452	15,233	15,323	1.4	118	32.0
West Midlands	15,467	15,369	15,408	0.6	119	46.8
East Midlands	13,627	14,197	14,010	-4.0	108	50.0
Yorks and Humberside	16,136	14,830	15,330	8.8	118	49.2
North West	14,812	14,448	14,593	2.5	112	50.8
North East	15,090	14,197	14,537	6.3	112	54.8
Wales	13,131	13,466	13,341	-2.5	103	62.8
Total	20,068	18,749	19,277	7.0	n/a	20.1

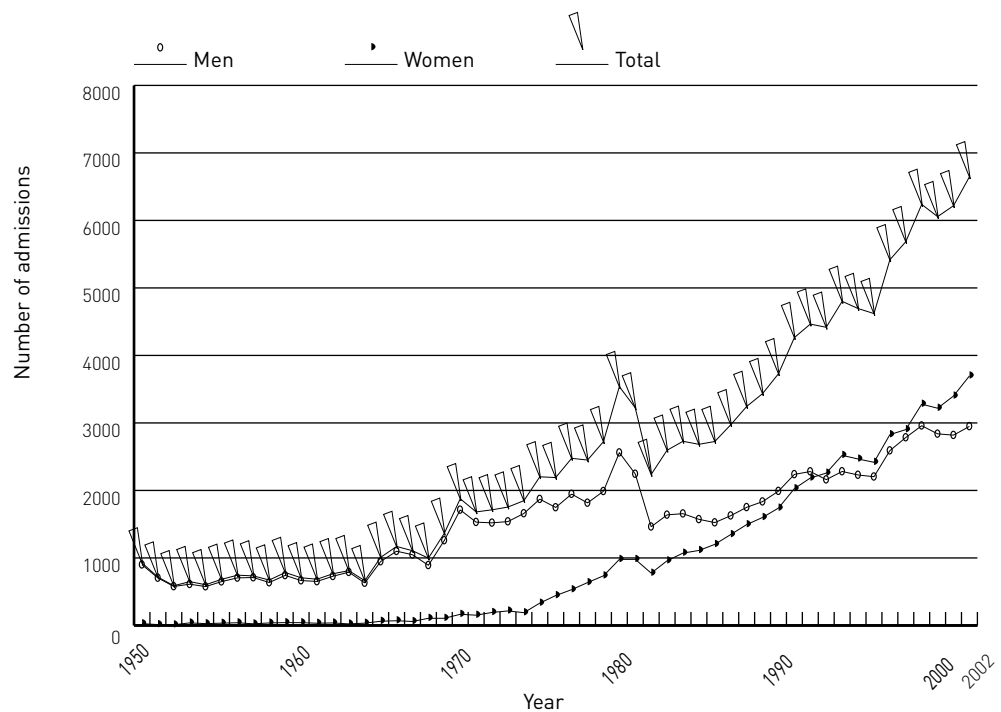
Source: Law Society's REGIS database

- 8.14 Table 8.13 also breaks the data down by trainee gender. On average, male trainees were offered starting salaries which were 7.0% above the average level for females. The average salary levels for male and female trainees being £20,068 and £18,749 respectively. Although, on average, male trainees had much higher starting salaries than female trainees, in four of the regions, female trainee starting salaries were higher than that for males. Female trainee salaries were 4.0% higher than male trainee salaries in the East Midlands, 2.5% higher in Wales, 1.8% higher in the Eastern region and 0.1% higher in the South East.

9. Admission to the Roll

- 9.1 There are two distinct routes to admission to the Roll: a direct route, followed by completing the required educational and vocational training outlined in Chapter 5, and the transfer route, which includes transfers from other legal professions within England and Wales, such as barristers, legal executives and magistrates and justices' clerks, as well as lawyers who qualified in other jurisdictions. This latter group includes a number of Scottish and Northern Irish lawyers.
- 9.2 The total number of individuals admitted to the Roll in the year that ended 31 July 2002 was 6,646. This represents an increase of 6.9% on the 6,218 individuals who were admitted in 2000–01. Chart 7 shows the growth in admissions of men and women separately for the period 1950 to 2002. Over this period, total annual admissions rose by 617.7% at an average annual increase of 4.1% per year. Over the same period, female admissions have grown at an average annual rate of 10.6%, which equates to a doubling of the number of female admissions approximately every seven years. The average growth rate for male admissions, 2.5%, has been less than one-quarter that for women over the period.

Chart 7 Growth in solicitors' admissions to the Roll 1950–2002



Source: Law Society's REGIS database

9.3 Table 9.3 shows the trend over the past 10 years in the number of men and women admitted to the profession. Between 1992 and 2002, total admissions grew by 48.9% from a base of 4,464. Over this period, male admissions rose by 29.3%, whilst female admissions grew much more rapidly, by 69.3%. Women have accounted for the majority of new admissions in each year since 1992–93 and, in 2001–02, 55.6% of those admitted were female. This proportion, which is showing some increase over time and is the highest recorded to date, contrasts with the position 10 years ago when, in 1992, 48.9% of new entrants to the profession were women.

Table 9.3 Men and women admitted to the Roll 1991–92 to 2001–02

	Men		Women		Total	Annual change
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1991–92	2,280	51.1	2,184	48.9	4,464	4.7
1992–93	2,160	48.9	2,257	51.1	4,417	-1.1
1993–94	2,281	47.5	2,520	52.5	4,801	8.7
1994–95	2,229	47.5	2,466	52.5	4,695	-2.2
1995–96	2,203	47.7	2,417	52.3	4,620	-1.6
1996–97	2,590	47.8	2,827	52.2	5,417	17.3
1997–98	2,784	49.0	2,901	51.0	5,685	4.9
1998–99	2,959	47.4	3,278	52.6	6,237	9.7
1999–2000	2,838	46.9	3,218	53.1	6,056	-2.9
2000–01	2,819	45.3	3,399	54.7	6,218	2.7
2001–02	2,949	44.4	3,697	55.6	6,646	6.9
% change						
2002–1992		29.3		69.3		48.9

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

9.4 The age distribution of those admitted in 2001–02 is shown in Table 9.4. The table shows there was little substantive difference in the age distribution of male and female admissions. Taken overall, the average age of those admitted was 29.6 years. The average age for males was marginally higher than that for females, the average ages being 30.1 and 29.4 years respectively. Almost one-half of new admissions were aged 27 years or less, and just under two-thirds were aged 29 or less.

Table 9.4 The age distribution of solicitors admitted to the Roll in 2001–02

Age	Male		Female		All admissions.		Cumulative
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
23	2	0.1	3	0.1	5	0.1	0.1
24	34	1.2	74	2.0	108	1.6	1.7
25	352	11.9	514	13.9	866	13.0	14.7
26	485	16.4	710	19.2	1,195	18.0	32.7
27	426	14.4	580	15.7	1,006	15.1	47.8
28	281	9.5	373	10.1	654	9.8	57.7
29	216	7.3	251	6.8	467	7.0	64.7
30–34	645	21.9	676	18.3	1,321	19.9	84.6
35–39	287	9.7	278	7.5	565	8.5	93.1
40–44	117	4.0	154	4.2	271	4.1	97.2
45–49	56	1.9	55	1.5	111	1.7	98.8
50–54	24	0.8	21	0.6	45	0.7	99.5
55 and over	18	0.6	6	0.2	24	0.4	99.9
Total known	2,943	99.8	3,695	99.9	6,638	99.9	
Unknown	6	0.2	2	0.1	8	0.1	100.0
Grand total	2,949	100.0	3,697	100.0	6,646	100.0	
Average age		30.1		29.4		29.6	

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

9.5 Table 9.5 shows the proportion of men and women who were admitted in the year 2001–02 by each of the different routes. For 5.4% of admissions these data were not recorded. Just under three-quarters of admissions, 72.7%, were through the direct qualification route and, of these, just under three-quarters were law graduates and the remainder were non-law graduates who had passed the CPE. Women were more likely than men to qualify by this direct route, 76.1% of admissions as against 68.5%, and, within this total, were slightly more likely than men to have qualifying law degrees. In contrast, men were slightly more likely than women to qualify via a transfer in; the relevant proportions here being 25.6% and 19.0% respectively. Men were more likely than women to have been barristers or to be transferring in from another jurisdiction, 23.7% as opposed to 16.1%, but women were slightly more likely than men to have qualified initially as either a legal executive or as a magistrates' or justices' clerk, 2.9% as opposed to 1.9%.

Table 9.5 The routes to admission to the Roll in 2001–02

Entry routes	Male		Female		All admissions	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Direct entry:						
Law degree	1,422	48.2	2,042	55.2	3,464	52.1
Non-law degree	599	20.3	770	20.8	1,369	20.6
Total direct entry	2,021	68.5	2,812	76.1	4,833	72.7
Entry by transfer:						
Overseas lawyer	549	18.6	493	13.3	1,042	15.7
Barrister	150	5.1	102	2.8	252	3.8
FILEX	41	1.4	89	2.4	130	2.0
Justices' clerk	15	0.5	18	0.5	33	0.5
Total transfers	755	25.6	702	19.0	1,457	21.9
Route unknown	173	5.9	183	4.9	356	5.4
All admissions	2,949	100.0	3,697	100.0	6,646	100.0
%	44.4		55.6		100.0	

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

9.6 Over one-fifth of admissions (21.9%) in 2001–02 were, as we have seen, transfers in from other professions and jurisdictions. Table 9.6 analyses transfers in by whether they were from other professions within England or Wales, or from other jurisdictions, and shows the country of origin of those transferring from other jurisdictions. Of the 1,457 transfers, over one-quarter, 28.5%, were from other professions based within England and Wales, most of whom were individuals who had previously qualified as either barristers or legal executives. The remaining 71.5% were transfers in from other jurisdictions. Most notable here were Australian and New Zealand lawyers, who alone accounted for almost a third (30.9%) of all transfers in. In addition to these, transfers from the USA and Canada accounted for a further 7.3%, those from Hong Kong 7.0%, and those from other parts of the UK a further 4.8% of all transfers.

Table 9.6 Analysis of transfers into the profession 2001–02

	Male		Female		All transfers	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
From other professions:						
Legal executives	41	5.4	89	12.7	130	8.9
Barristers	150	19.9	102	14.5	252	17.3
Justices' clerks	15	2.0	18	2.6	33	2.3
Sub-total	206	27.3	209	29.8	415	28.5
From other jurisdictions:						
Hong Kong	48	6.4	54	7.7	102	7.0
Australia/New Zealand	238	31.5	213	30.3	451	30.9
USA/Canada	62	8.2	44	6.2	106	7.3
Scotland/N. Ireland/Isle of Man	31	4.0	40	5.7	71	4.8
Eire	14	1.8	10	1.4	24	1.6
Other EU countries	35	4.6	32	4.6	67	4.6
Non-EU countries	31	4.0	14	2.0	45	3.1
Singapore/Malaysia	42	5.6	48	6.8	90	6.2
India/Pakistan/Sri Lanka	18	2.4	12	1.8	30	2.1
Nigeria	25	3.3	18	2.6	43	3.0
All other jurisdictions	5	0.7	8	1.1	13	0.9
Sub-total	549	72.7	493	70.2	1,042	71.5
Grand total	755	100.0	702	100.0	1,457	100.0

Source: Law Society database

9.7 The main factor affecting age on admission is the route taken to qualification. Table 9.7 shows the average age on qualification for men and women for each of the separate routes. These reflect the average times taken to qualify by each route and show that the group with the lowest average age, 28.3 years, were direct entrants with qualifying law degrees. Those admitted by the CPE route were aged 30.2 years on average. Taken over all direct admissions, the average age was 28.8 years. Those transferring in were, on average, just under four years older than direct admissions, at 32.5 years. There was little difference between the average ages of men and women qualifying by the same route, though male transfers in from other jurisdictions were around two years older than their female counterparts, and FILEX just under two years older.

Table 9.7 Average age on admission to the Roll by route to admission and gender 2001–02

Entry routes	Male		Female		All admissions	
	No.	Average age	No.	Average age	No.	Average age
Direct entry:						
Law degree	1,422	28.4	2,042	28.2	3,464	28.3
Non-law degree	599	30.5	770	30.1	1,369	30.2
Total direct entry	2,021	29.0	2,812	28.7	4,833	28.8
Entry by transfer:						
Overseas lawyer	549	33.0	493	31.0	1,042	32.1
Barrister	150	32.0	102	32.1	252	32.1
FILEX	41	36.9	89	35.3	130	35.8
Justices' clerk	15	38.3	18	37.7	33	38.0
Total transfers	755	33.1	702	31.9	1,457	32.5
Route unknown	173	29.8	183	29.9	356	29.8
All admissions	2,949	100.0	3,697	100.0	6,646	100.0
%	44.4	30.1	55.6	29.4	100.0	29.6

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

9.8 Table 9.8 shows the numbers and percentages qualifying via each route in 2001–02 contrasted with the position one year and 10 years ago. In order to make the comparison, the 5.4% of admissions for whom the route was unknown in 2001–02 have been allocated pro rata to the other known categories. The table shows that the proportion of direct admissions has been quite stable, increasing only from 75.3% of all admissions in 1991–92 to 76.9% in 2001–02. However, within this total, non-law graduates have assumed greater importance. Whereas only 10.1% of all admissions in 1991–92 were non-law graduates, this proportion had exceeded a fifth, 21.8%, by 2001–02. Another route which has been relatively stable is transfers in. These have only decreased from 24.7% of all admissions in 1991–92 to 23.2% now.

Table 9.8 Trends in the main routes to admission to the Roll 1991–1992, to 2001–02

Routes to admission	1991–92	2000–01	2001–02
Law degree	2,910	3,599	3,660
Non-law degree	451	1,303	1,446
Transfers	1,103	1,317	1,539
Total	4,464	6,218	6,646
Routes to admission	%	%	%
Law degree	65.2	57.9	55.1
Non-law degree	10.1	21.0	21.8
Transfers	24.7	21.2	23.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

9.9 We are also able to examine trends in the number of admissions drawn from the ethnic minorities. Table 9.9 shows the comparison between 1996–97, 2000–01 and 2001–02. The table shows that, as a proportion of those admissions for whom the ethnicity was known, ethnic minority admissions represented just under one-sixth, 16.4% of the total in 2001–02 compared with 14.9% five years ago. Fluctuations in the intervening years mean that although there is no great consistency it appears that this proportion is increasing over time. Most of the observed increase over the past five years has been fuelled by increases in ‘Asian’ and ‘African’ admissions. Asian admissions have increased by almost a half over the past five years, and African admissions have increased by 166%. It can also be seen that this data is degrading over time: ethnicity is now known for only 77.8% of admissions, compared with 86.4% in 1996–97.

Table 9.9 Trends in ethnic minority admissions to the Roll 1996–97, 2000–01 and 2001–02

Ethnicity	% change				
	1996–97	2000–01	2001–02	2002 over 2001	2002 over 1997
African-Caribbean	48	51	62	21.6	29.2
Asian	306	437	451	3.3	47.5
Chinese	262	105	88	-16.1	-66.4
African	38	85	101	18.9	166.0
Other	45	131	147	12.3	226.8
Total from ethnic minorities	699	809	849	5.0	21.5
Number of admissions where ethnicity is known	4,679	4,753	5,168	8.7	10.5
Ethnic minorities as a % of those with known ethnicity	14.9	17.0	16.4	-3.4	10.0
Total admissions	5,417	6,218	6,646	6.9	22.7
% of admissions with known ethnicity	86.4	76.4	77.8	1.7	-10.0
Male admissions	2,590	2,819	2,949	4.6	13.9
Males as % of total	47.8	45.3	44.4	-	-
Female admissions	2,827	3,399	3,697	8.8	30.8
Females as % of total	52.2	54.7	55.6	-	-
Total admissions	5,417	6,218	6,646	6.9	22.7

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

- 9.10 In 2001–02 there were 849 admissions from the ethnic minorities out of a total of 6,646. Comparable figures for last year were 809 admissions out of a total of 6,218. The slight decrease in the representation of ethnic minorities over the past year is accounted for by the decrease in the number of Chinese admissions. These fell by 16.1% over the year to 88. In contrast to this fall, Asian admissions were relatively static rising by only 3.0%, whilst African-Caribbeans and African admissions increased by around a fifth.
- 9.11 A fuller breakdown of ethnic minority admissions in 2001–02 is shown in Table 9.11. This table analyses admissions by both gender and ethnicity and shows that last year 57.9% of those admitted from the ethnic minorities were female. This is a higher value than that for admissions as a whole (55.6%). Within the ethnic minorities, the proportion of female admissions was highest amongst African-Caribbeans, 75.8%, and lowest amongst Africans, 48.5%.

Table 9.11 Ethnic minority admissions in 2001–02 by gender

Ethnic group	Male		Female		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.
African-Caribbean	15	24.2	47	75.8	62
Asian	197	43.7	254	56.3	451
Chinese	41	46.6	47	53.4	88
African	52	51.5	49	48.5	101
Other	52	35.4	95	64.6	147
Total admissions from ethnic minorities	357	42.1	492	57.9	849
Number of admissions where ethnicity is known	2,228	43.1	2,940	56.9	5,168
Ethnic minorities as a % of those with known ethnicity	16.0		16.7		16.4
Number of admissions where ethnicity is unknown	721	48.8	757	51.2	1,478
Total admissions	2,949	44.4	3,697	55.6	6,646
% of admissions with known ethnicity	75.6		79.5		77.8

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

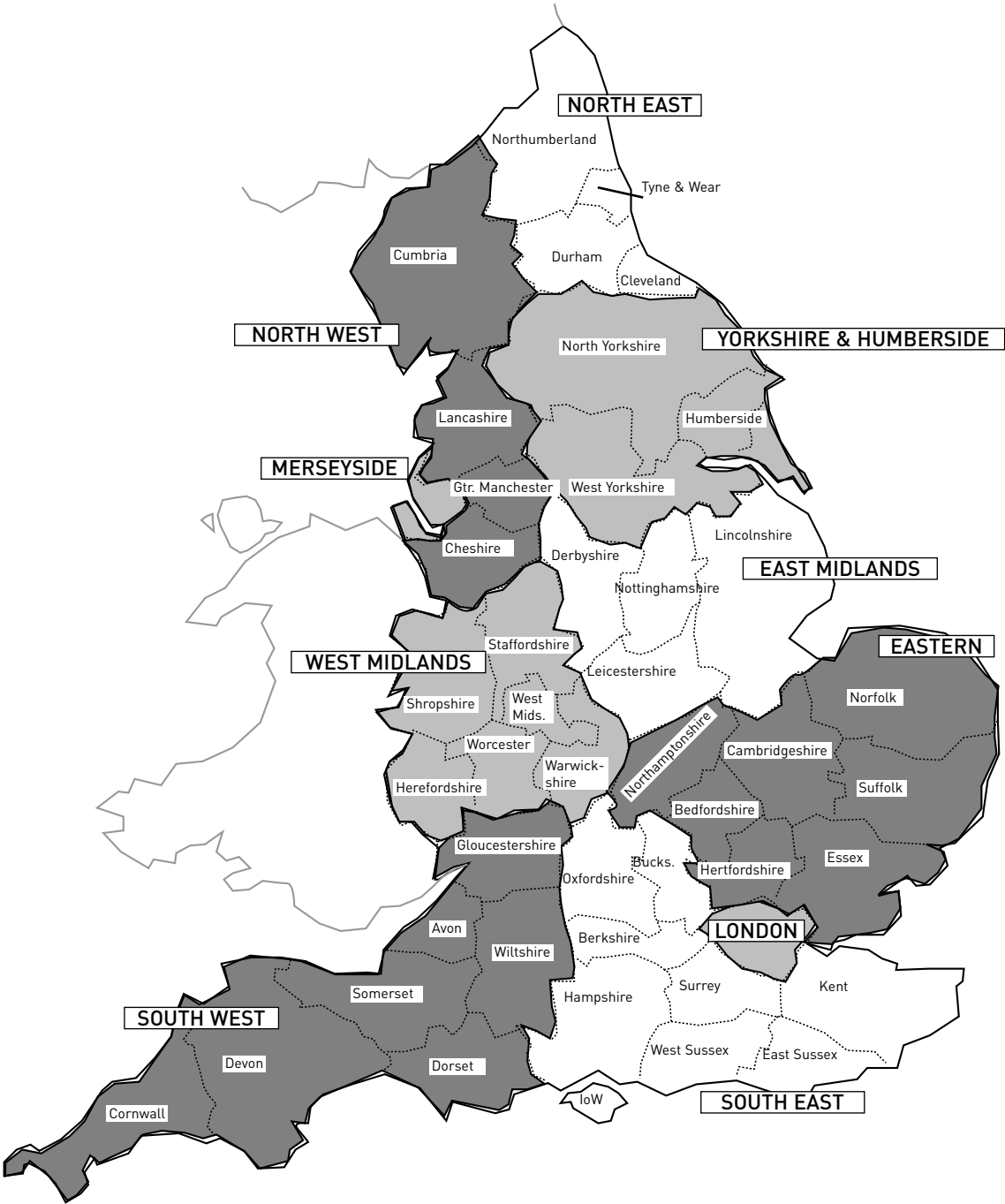
Appendices

Map 1 Government Office Regions

Standard Statistical Region	County*	Government Office Region
North	Cleveland* Durham Northumberland Tyne and Wear	North East
	Cumbria	
North West	Cheshire Greater Manchester Lancashire Merseyside**	North West
Yorkshire and Humberside	Humberside* North Yorkshire South Yorkshire West Yorkshire	Yorkshire and the Humber
East Midlands	Derbyshire Leicestershire Lincolnshire Northamptonshire Nottinghamshire	East Midlands
West Midlands	Hereford and Worcester* Shropshire Staffordshire Warwickshire West Midlands	West Midlands
South West	Avon* Cornwall Devon Dorset Gloucestershire	South West
East Anglia	Cambridgeshire Norfolk Suffolk	East of England
South East	Bedfordshire Essex Hertfordshire	
	Greater London	London
	Berkshire* Buckinghamshire East Sussex Hampshire Isle of Wight* Kent Oxfordshire Surrey West Sussex	South East

* Counties prior to local government reorganisation

** North West region includes Merseyside from 1 August 1998



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Glossary of terms relating to the solicitors' profession

Admitted staff Staff that are solicitors on the roll but may or may not currently hold a practising certificate.

Associate See 'Position in firm'.

Barrister See 'Professional legal roles'.

Common Professional Exam (CPE) See 'Legal qualifications'.

Equity partner See 'Position in firm'.

Establishment Directive Establishment of Lawyers Directive 98/5/EC.

Ethnicity Where used in the Annual Statistical Report this refers to cultural groups of various kinds. The general ethnic classifications used are those that employers and others collecting information for the purpose of Equal Opportunities polices use. These classifications do not refer to the international or national citizenship status of individuals. For further information anti-racist language refer to the British Sociological Association online guidelines at www.britisoc.co.uk.

European corporate practice A lawyers' corporate practice incorporated in an EU state other than the UK, which does not practise from an office in England and Wales, and is wholly owned and directed by RELs and/or non-registered European lawyers, with or without solicitors, RFLs and/or English barristers.

Fee-earner A member of staff who earns fees *eg* a solicitor, legal executive, licensed conveyancer. 'Non-fee earning' refers to a member of staff who does not earn fees (secretaries, administrative staff etc).

Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives (FILEX) See 'Legal qualifications'.

Government Office Region Refer to the map in the Appendix.

Incorporated practice See 'Practice type'.

Justices' clerk See 'Professional legal roles'.

Lawyer A lawyer is often used loosely as term for a member of the legal profession who will have obtained legal qualifications relating to one or more jurisdiction. A person describing themselves as a lawyer may or may not also be a solicitor and likewise may or may not be a registered European lawyer (see Registered European lawyers below). (Also see the term 'Non-registered European Lawyer' below).

The 'Setting up in practice – updated January 2002' section from the Guide online includes the following. (For more information contact the Professional Ethics department).

Registered European lawyers (RELs): An EU lawyer who is an EU national and is not a solicitor, barrister or advocate of any part of the UK, and who wishes to practise on a permanent basis in the UK, must register with one of the UK Bars or Law Societies. This is required by the Establishment of Lawyers Directive 98/5/EC. A REL is an EU lawyer who is registered with the Law Society under the Directive. Once registered, the REL becomes subject to the same rules as solicitors. An information pack on RELs is available from Professional Ethics (0870 606 2577).

Registered foreign lawyers (RFLs): An RFL is a foreign lawyer registered with the Law Society under section 89 of the Courts and Legal Solicitors Act 1990 in order to be permitted to enter into partnership (or an incorporated practice) with solicitors or RELs.

Non-registered European lawyer: A lawyer of a legal profession covered by the Establishment Directive who is based in the EU but outside England and Wales, and is not: a solicitor, a REL or an RFL, or an advocate or barrister of the UK or the Irish Republic. Note that this definition is not the same as that in the Solicitors' Practice Rules 1990.

Legal executive See 'Professional legal roles'.

Legal practice course (LPC) Refer to chapter 8 for post-graduate education and training.

Legal qualifications Refer to chapter 5 for routes to qualifications as a solicitor.

Limited liability partnership (LLP) See 'Practice type'.

Locums services These are businesses that act as agencies supplying on a contract or temporary basis admitted staff or paralegals.

Magistrate See 'Professional legal roles'.

Multi-national legal practice A MNP, or a recognised body (see 'Recognised body') with one or more RFL members, shareowners or directors.

Multi-national partnership (MNP) An unincorporated partnership whose members consist of one or more RFLs and one or more other lawyers, including at least one solicitor or REL, as permitted by rule 7(6) of the Solicitors' Practice Rules 1990. For further information refer to *The Guide Online* which includes an 'Information pack on MNPs and other Multi-national legal practices'.

Non-registered European lawyer See 'Lawyer'.

Overseas Lawyer See 'Professional legal roles'.

Paralegal A paralegal is not a lawyer and is a legal assistant who: is qualified through education in legal studies, training and/or work experience in a law environment; is employed or retained by a solicitor in private practice, law office, corporate or in-house solicitor, government agency or other entity; works under the ultimate direction and supervision of a solicitor; and performs substantive legal work (this is work requiring sufficient legal knowledge that, without the assistance of a paralegal, it would be performed by a solicitor).

Participation rate The participation rate is the percentage of solicitors on the Roll holding practising certificates.

Partner See 'Position in firm'.

Permitted partnerships See 'Practice type'.

Position in firm

Principal: A Principal may either be a partner or sole practitioner.

Sole practitioner: A sole practitioner works in a practice as the sole principal.

Partner: A partner is member in a partnership recognised in law. Partnership is controlled by the Partnership Act 1890, an essential condition of which is that a partnership is assumed to exist whenever the members of a business share profit whether or not the sharing of profit is on an equal basis. A partnership is regulated by an agreement which sets out the duties and responsibilities of the partners during the subsistence of the partnership and also upon its dissolution.

Equity partner: An equity partner receives their contractually agreed share of the profits but also has a residual claim on profits from the firm's interests such as property.

Salaried partner: A salaried partner receives a salary and through a contractual agreement a share of profits.

Associate: A term used in some firms to denote solicitors who are not at partnership level but are more senior than an assistant solicitor.

The 'Setting up in practice – updated January 2002' section from *The Guide Online* includes information on 'Supervising and managing your practice' and 'Salaried partners' (for more information contact the Professional Ethics department).

Practice type

Private practice: This term distinguishes the private sector law practice organisations from other sectors which employ in-house solicitors. There are various categories of the private practice business type and these are of separate legal entities, for instance partnerships, incorporated firms, multi-national practices, locums services, foreign law practices, other private practice.

Other type of business categories for organisations employing in-house solicitors include: commerce and industry; government (government department, local government, court, government funded services and crown prosecution service); and other (advice service, educational establishment and other).

For further information on companies visit www.companieshouse.gov.uk

In *The Guide Online* there is information — in the 'Setting up in practice – updated January 2002' section — on 'Permitted partnerships'; and an 'Information Pack on Incorporated Practice (Limited Liability Partnerships LLPs)'. For more information contact the Professional Ethics department.

Permitted partnerships: Types of partnership that are permitted by rule 7(6) of the Solicitors' Practice Rules 1990.

Incorporated practice: A practice or part of a practice incorporated as a company. By law and under professional rules, a company can only provide the service of solicitors to the public if it is a 'recognised body' under the Administration of Justice Act 1985 (AJA). Under professional rules, a company can only provide the services of registered European lawyers (REs) to the public if it is a 'recognised body'. Solicitors and REs can also practise through a limited liability partnership (LLP), which is another type of body corporate, and which must also be a 'recognised body'. The 'Solicitors' Incorporated Practice Rules 2001 (SIPR)' contain the requirements for recognition, and the application procedure.

Limited Liability Partnership: Despite the name 'limited liability partnership': an LLP is not a partnership; an LLP has members, not partners; and partnership law does not apply to an LLP. An LLP is a corporate body. It is incorporated by registration with the Registrar of Companies in England and Wales under the Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2000. Although it is a body corporate, an LLP is not a company.

Practising certificate holders In order to act as a solicitor, the Solicitors Act 1974 requires that the solicitor's name appears on the roll and that a current practising certificate is held. For further information on requirements to have a practising certificate contact the Law Society's Professional Ethics department.

Principal See 'Position in firm'.

Private practice See 'Practice type'.

Professional legal roles

Barrister: A barrister is a member of the bar: the branch of the legal profession which has rights of audience before all Courts. Barristers are trained for, and specialise in, courtroom advocacy. Since 1994 solicitors have been allowed to apply for rights of audience (see below). For information on Barristers refer to www.barcouncil.org.uk

Legal executive: Legal executives are qualified lawyers who specialise in a particular area of law and work alongside solicitors or barristers. For further information refer to http://www.ilex.org.uk/professional_issues/default.asp

Justices' clerk: A qualified principal legal adviser to a magistrate. For more information visit <http://www.jc-society.co.uk/>

Magistrate: There are two forms of recognised magistrates: Justices of the Peace (JPs) and District Judges (Stipendiary magistrates). Stipendiary magistrates are legally qualified and salaried. A JP is a lay magistrate — person appointed to administer judicial business in a Magistrates Court. A JP also sits in the Crown Court with a judge or recorder to hear appeals and committals for sentence.

Overseas Lawyer: This term refers to a lawyer who works overseas from the jurisdiction that their legal qualifications relate to. For instance, the term refers to a lawyer who has qualified overseas from England and Wales and may be or may not have the requirements to become registered as a 'Registered Foreign Lawyer' (RFL) or 'Registered European Lawyer' (REL) (see 'Lawyer'). The term 'Non-registered European Lawyer' in some cases may describe an overseas lawyer (see 'Lawyer'). For related information refer to the Information pack produced by the Law Society's Professional Ethics department titled 'MNPs and other multi-national practices – revised April 2002' and contained in *The Guide Online* [www.guide-on-line.lawsociety.org.uk].

Qualified Lawyer Transfer Test (QLTT) Refer to chapter 9 for admissions to the Roll by transfer. Overseas lawyers are required to pass the QLTT to be admitted to the Roll.

Recognised body A body corporate recognised by the Law Society under section 9 of the Administration of Justice Act 1985 as suitable to undertake the provision of professional services such as are provided by individuals practising as solicitors or lawyers of other jurisdictions. Contained in *The Guide Online* [www.guide-on-line.lawsociety.org.uk] are information packs on recognised bodies – one for companies and one for LLPs.

Registered European lawyer See 'Lawyer'. An individual registered with the Law Society under the Establishment Directive. There is an information pack on RELs in *The Guide Online* [www.guide-on-line.lawsociety.org.uk]. Note that this definition of a REL is not the same as that in the European Communities (Lawyer's Practice) Regulations 2000.

Registered foreign lawyer (RFL) See 'Lawyer'. An individual registered with the Law Society under section 89 of the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990.

Salaried partner See 'Position in firm'.

Sole practitioner See 'Position in firm'.

Solicitors on the roll To become a solicitor one must have obtained the required legal qualifications to be admitted to the Roll. There are two distinct routes to admission to the Roll: a direct route, followed by completing the required educational and vocational training (see Chapter 5), and the transfer route, which includes transfers from other legal professions (see Chapter 9).

Under the Solicitors Act 1974, the Law Society is required to maintain records of all qualified solicitors on the roll.

There are reasons why statistics for solicitors on the roll are higher than numbers of solicitors with practising certificates. For instance, included are: solicitors who are 'non-practising' and who choose not to renew their practising certificate; retired solicitors who have chosen not to remove their name from the roll; and solicitors who are employed by organisations where they are not practising as a solicitor eg in an academic role like that of a lecturer.

Traineeship In addition to obtaining pre-vocational qualifications, those embarking on a career as a solicitor also have to undergo a period of training, in most cases two years before gaining admission to the Roll. The trainee is assigned to a training establishment, and a training contract is drawn up. Forms covering the registration of trainees are lodged with the Law Society.

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- Trends in the solicitors' profession: the annual statistical reports

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