

Trends in the solicitors' profession

Annual statistical report 2005

Prepared by Bill Cole, Strategic Research Unit



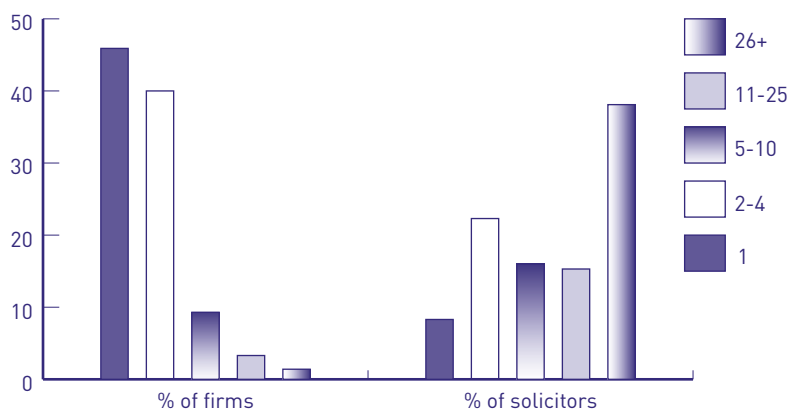
The Law Society

Key statistics

Solicitors' profession as at 31 July 2005

Solicitors on the Roll	126,142
Solicitors with practising certificates (pcs)	100,938
Private practice firms	9,081
Women solicitors with pcs	41,967
Women partners	6,095
Solicitors from minority ethnic groups with pcs	8,775
Solicitors working in private practice	78,092
Solicitors employed outside private practice	22,846
New solicitors admitted to the Roll 2004–05	7,356
Trainee solicitors commencing contracts 2004–05	5,732

Distribution of firms and solicitors 2004–05



Partners	% of firms	% of solicitors
1	45.9	8.3
2–4	40.0	22.3
5–10	9.3	16.0
11–25	3.3	15.3
26 or more	1.4	38.1

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The Law Society

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Contents

Introduction	5
Summary	6
Part I Qualified solicitors	9
1. Solicitors on the Roll	11
2. Practising certificate holders	13
3. Solicitors' offices and firms	23
4. Staffing	27
Part II The recruitment and training of solicitors	29
5. Routes to admission to the Roll	31
6. Undergraduates and graduates in law	33
7. Student enrolments with the Law Society	37
8. Post-graduate education and training	39
9. Admission to the Roll	47
Appendices	57
Map of Government Office Regions	58
List of tables	60
List of charts	61
www.research.lawsociety.org.uk	64

Introduction

This is the twenty-second 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 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 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 and acceptances for law degrees in England and Wales; 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 2005, there were 126,142 solicitors on the Roll, an increase of 4.1% on the year before.
- At the same date, 100,938 solicitors held practising certificates, an increase of 4.3% on the previous year.
- Since 1975, the total number of solicitors holding practising certificates has grown by 238.2% at an average annual rate of 4.1%.
- 78,092, or 77.4%, of solicitors holding practising certificates work in private practice; the remainder work mainly in commerce and industry and the public sector.
- Since 1995, the proportion of practising certificate holders not employed in private practice has increased from 18.7% to 22.6%.
- Just over one-half, 52.5%, of current practising solicitors have been qualified for 10 years or less.
- In the year to 31 July 2005, admissions to the Roll, *ie* newly qualified solicitors and transfers from other legal professions, were 7,356, an increase of 1.5% on admissions in the year before.
- Of these new admissions 60.3% were women, and admissions from minority ethnic groups represented 18.0% of all admissions with known ethnicity.

A descriptive profile

- In 2004–05, solicitors drawn from minority ethnic groups accounted for 9.4% of solicitors on the Roll, 8.7% of solicitors with practising certificates, and 8.3% of solicitors in private practice.
- Women now account for 41.6% of solicitors with practising certificates. Whereas since 1995 the total number of solicitors holding practising certificates has grown by 52.7%, the number of women holding practising certificates more than doubled, having increased by 110.5%.
- 80.3% of men holding practising certificates work within private practice, compared to 73.2% of women.

- Of those solicitors with 10–19 years' experience in private practice, 67.8% of men were partners or sole practitioners compared with only 45.4% of women.
- In 2005, the average age of a female solicitor in private practice was 36.6 years compared with 43.7 years for men. The average age of a sole practitioner was 50.8 years compared with 46.3 years for partners and 40.9 years for all solicitors in private practice.
- Just over one-third of practising certificate holders in 2005 (36.3%) were employed by organisations based in London. These organisations were responsible for the employment of 51.2% of ethnic minority practising certificate holders.

Trends in private practice

- In 2005 there were 14,879 separate organisations employing solicitors of which 13,792 were based in England and Wales.
- In 2005, there were 9,081 solicitors' firms in England and Wales listed in the Society's database, a small decrease of 1.8% on 2004.
- The vast majority of law firms are relatively small with 86.0% of them having four or fewer partners.
- In 2005 42.8%, of private practice firms were located in London and the South East.
- Just over one-quarter of private practice firms, 27.3%, were recorded as being located in London in 2005. These firms employed well over one-third (37.0%) of all private practitioners.
- In 2005, the 1.4% of firms with 26 or more partners employed over one-third (38.1%) of all solicitors in private practice. Sole practices accounted for 45.9% of firms, and employed 8.3% of all solicitors.
- On average, the very largest firms, with 81 or more partners, had 3.1 assistant/associate solicitors per partner compared with between 0.4 and 2.0 in the smaller and medium-sized firms.

Trends in post-graduate education

- In 2004 there were 21,858 applicants to study first degree courses in law in England and Wales, of whom 13,504 (61.7%) were accepted.
- Of the 11,139 graduates in the summer of 2004, over half (55.4%) achieved firsts or upper second classifications. More women graduated with firsts and upper seconds than men, 57.1% as opposed to 52.4%.

- In the year ending 31 July 2005, 9,665 students enrolled with the Law Society. Of these students 63.5% were women and 25.2% were drawn from the minority ethnic groups.
- In July 2005, 8,649 LPC students were eligible to sit the examination. This represented an increase (9.3%) on the 7,912 who were eligible in 2004. Of those who actually sat the examination in 2004, 86.5% passed, a small increase on the 2004 pass rate of 84.3%.
- There were 8,345 full time and 2,256 part-time LPC places available in 2004–05. In 2005–06 there will be 8,843 full-time and 2,498 part-time places available.
- There were 5,732 new traineeships registered in the year 1 August 2004 to 31 July 2005. This is almost unchanged at a 0.4% increase on the level recorded last year.
- Of the new trainees registered, 61.7% were women and 18.4% of trainees with known ethnicity were drawn from minority ethnic groups.

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 2005, there were 126,142 solicitors on the Roll, an increase of 4.1% over the previous year. Of these, 72,343 (57.4%) were men and 53,799 (42.6%) were women. Last year 58.4% of solicitors on the Roll were men and 41.6% were women.
- 1.3 Table 1.3 shows that of those solicitors on the Roll at 31 July 2005, 100,938, or 80.0% of them, held a current practising certificate entitling them to act as a solicitor within the definition of the Solicitors Act 1974. The remaining 25,204 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 2005

	No.	%
With practising certificates		
Male	58,971	58.4
Female	41,967	41.6
Sub-total	100,938	100.0
Without practising certificates		
Male	13,372	53.1
Female	11,832	46.9
Sub-total	25,204	100.0
Total solicitors on the Roll		
Male	72,343	57.4
Female	53,799	42.6
Total	126,142	100.0

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Ethnic groups

- 1.4 Minority ethnic group solicitors make up 9.4% of solicitors on the Roll, of whom around a quarter are resident abroad. In England and Wales the greatest concentration of minority ethnic group solicitors on the Roll is found in the Central and South Middlesex constituency, where over a quarter of solicitors are drawn from ethnic minorities.
- 1.5 Table 1.5 shows that 73.9% of the 11,874 minority ethnic group solicitors on the Roll hold practising certificates. This is a slight increase on last year but still a noticeably lower participation rate than for all solicitors where the rate was as we have seen 80.0%. Chinese solicitors, the majority of whom work overseas, have the lowest minority ethnic participation rate. Only just over one-third (33.5%) of ethnic Chinese solicitors on the Roll hold practising certificates.

Table 1.5 Minority ethnic group solicitors on the Roll and with practising certificates as at 31 July 2005

Ethnic origin	Minority ethnic group solicitors		
	1 On the Roll	2 With practising certificate	3 Participation rate [2 as a % of 1]
African-Caribbean	795	672	84.5
Asian	5,815	4,992	85.8
Chinese	2,525	846	33.5
African	975	837	85.8
Other ethnic origin	1,764	1,428	81.0
All minority ethnic group solicitors	11,874	8,775	73.9
White European	97,555	79,977	82.0
Unknown	16,712	12,186	72.9
Total	126,142	100,938	80.0
Minority ethnic group solicitors as a % of all solicitors	9.4	8.7	
Minority ethnic group solicitors as a % of solicitors with known ethnicity	10.9	9.9	

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.

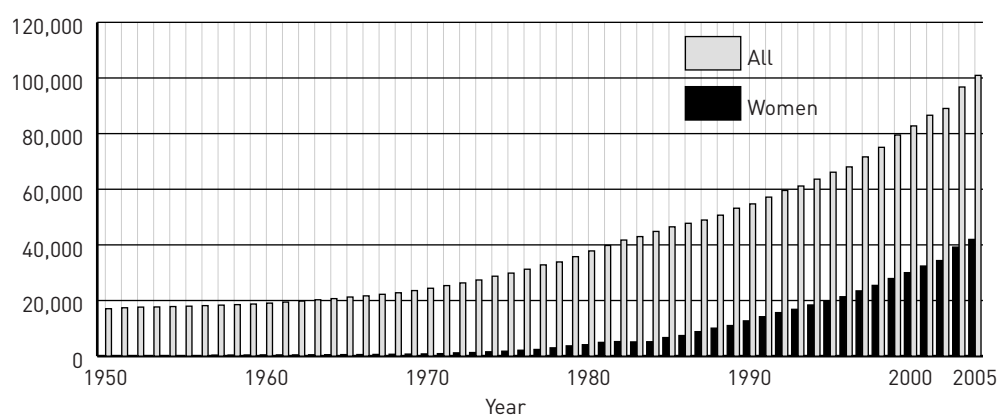
2.2 At 31 July 2005, there were 100,938 solicitors holding current practising certificates. This represents an increase of 4.3% on the number for the previous year. This growth rate is close to the long run rate of growth, and this year is slightly above the growth in the number of solicitors on the Roll. The participation rate, which is the percentage of solicitors on the Roll holding practising certificates, increased slightly from 77.8% to 78.0% for women solicitors, and increased slightly from 81.3% to 81.5% for male solicitors. 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 1975, 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 200.4% at an average rate of 3.7%. From table 2.2 it can be seen that the fastest growth in practising certificate and private practitioner numbers over this period occurred between 1975 and 1985 (55.7% and 54.8% 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 1975 to 2005

Year	Practising solicitors	% change	Solicitors in private practice	% change
1975	29,850		25,998	
1985	46,490	55.7	40,235	54.8
1995	66,123	42.2	53,731	33.5
2005	100,938	52.7	78,092	45.3

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Chart 1 Growth in the number of solicitors with practising certificates 1950–2005



Source: Law Society's REGIS database

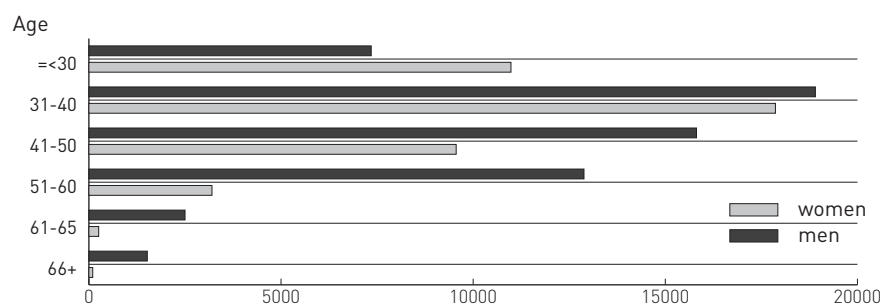
- 2.3 Since 1995, the total number of solicitors with practising certificates has grown by 52.7%; however, over this period the number of women solicitors with practising certificates has increased by 110.5% whilst the number of men increased by only 27.7%. The proportion of solicitors holding practising certificates who are women was 41.6% at 31 July 2005, compared with 30.1% in 1995. 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 at least 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 apart from 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 45 or less, but that the majority of those in the older age groups are men. Over one-half, 54.5%, of solicitors with a practising certificate are aged 40 or less. The average age of a female solicitor with a practising certificate is 37.2 years compared with 43.5 for men. The median values show that one-half of women solicitors with practising certificates are aged 35 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 2005

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	387	96.0	842	96.6
26-30	6,887	93.6	10,096	91.3
31-35	9,454	88.0	9,874	82.1
36-40	9,263	86.1	7,917	73.3
41-45	8,059	85.3	5,667	71.5
46-50	7,595	85.2	3,851	72.3
51-55	7,041	83.0	2,218	69.5
56-60	5,714	78.6	971	64.0
61-65	2,477	67.7	254	51.3
66-70	887	48.2	58	37.4
71 and over	618	23.7	42	29.2
Unknown	589	69.1	177	62.8
All ages known	58,382	81.7	41,790	78.1
% ages known	99		100	
Total	58,971	81.5	41,967	78.0
Average age	43.5		37.2	
Median age	42		35	

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Chart 2 The age of solicitors with practising certificates — 31 July 2005



Source: Law Society's REGIS database

2.6 Table 2.6 shows the numbers of solicitors holding practising certificates as at 31 July 2005, analysed by the number of years they have been qualified as solicitors. Over one-third, 38.3%, of male solicitors with current practising certificates in private practice have been qualified for less than 10 years, and 61.5% have been qualified for less than 20 years. This compares with 88.7% of women solicitors in private practice who have been qualified for less than 20 years. A similar age 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 2005

Years since admission	All solicitors		Men		Women	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Solicitors in private practice						
0-9 years	38,386	49.2	18,129	38.3	20,257	65.9
10-19 years	18,002	23.1	10,990	23.2	7,012	22.8
20-29 years	13,792	17.7	10,859	22.9	2,933	9.5
30-39 years	6,540	8.4	6,067	12.8	473	1.5
40-49 years	1,174	1.5	1,125	2.4	49	0.2
50 or more years	198	0.3	191	0.4	7	0.0
All years	78,092	100.0	47,361	100.0	30,731	100.0
Solicitors in employed and other sectors						
0-9 years	11,701	51.2	5,156	44.4	6,545	58.2
10-19 years	6,374	27.9	3,009	25.9	3,364	29.9
20-29 years	3,343	14.6	2,176	18.7	1,167	10.4
30-39 years	1,243	5.4	1,090	9.4	153	1.4
40-49 years	157	0.7	150	1.3	7	0.1
50 or more years	28	0.1	28	0.2	0	0.0
All years	22,846	100.0	11,610	100.0	11,236	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: 77.4% as at 31 July 2005. The second largest category of employment is commerce and industry, 8.0%, followed by local government, which employs 3.6% 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 6.7% 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 39.4% of solicitors are women, compared with 49.2% in these other sectors.

Table 2.7 Practising certificate holders by category of employment as at 31 July 2005

Category of employment	All	% of PC holders	Men	Women	Women as % of total
Private practice	78,092	77.4	47,361	30,731	39.4
Commerce and industry	8,066	8.0	4,415	3,651	45.3
Accountancy practice	99	0.1	41	58	58.6
Nationalised industries	101	0.1	30	71	70.3
Trade union	51	0.1	27	24	47.1
Government department	218	0.2	132	86	39.4
Local government	3,653	3.6	1,506	2,147	58.8
Court	89	0.1	48	41	46.1
Government funded services	251	0.2	102	149	59.4
Crown Prosecution Service	2,251	2.2	1,035	1,216	54.0
Advice service	395	0.4	133	262	66.3
Educational establishment	237	0.2	82	155	65.4
Health services	62	0.1	20	42	67.7
Others ¹	569	0.6	234	335	58.9
Not attached to an organisation	6,804	6.7	3,805	2,999	44.1
All non-private practice	22,846	22.6	11,610	11,236	49.2
Total practising certificate holders	100,938	100.0	58,971	41,967	41.6
Total practising certificate holders	96,757	100.0	57,558	39,199	40.5

* 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, 80.3% of male solicitors with practising certificates work in private practice compared to only 73.2% of their female counterparts. This is shown in Table 2.8, which also shows the growing importance of the employed sector. In 2005, just over one-fifth (22.6%) of practising certificate holders worked in the employed sector, compared to 18.7% 10 years ago.

Table 2.8 Distribution of practising certificate holders by category of employment as at 31 July 2005 compared with 1995

Category of employment	1995	Total %	2005	
	Total %		Men %	Women %
Private practice	81.3	77.4	80.3	73.2
Other PC holders	18.7	22.6	19.7	26.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Solicitors in private practice

- 2.9 For the 78,092 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 2005. 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 decrease in the proportion of male and female private practitioners who are partners. Table 2.9 shows that 44.0% of men, compared with only 19.8% of women, were partners as at 31 July 2005.

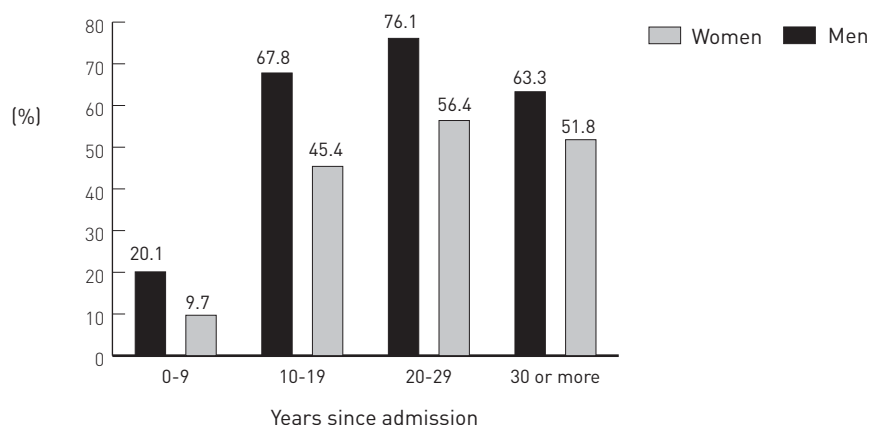
Table 2.9 Position of solicitors working in private practice and holding a practising certificate as at 31 July 2005

Position in firm	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Partners	20,851	44.0	6,095	19.8	26,946	34.5
Sole practitioners	3,188	6.7	984	3.2	4,172	5.3
Associate solicitors	4,997	10.6	4,865	15.8	9,862	12.6
Assistant solicitors	11,793	24.9	16,447	53.5	28,240	36.2
Consultants	2,656	5.6	594	1.9	3,250	4.2
Other private practice	3,876	8.2	1,746	5.7	5,622	7.2
All positions	47,361	100.0	30,731	100.0	78,092	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, 67.8% of men are partners or sole practitioners compared with only 45.4% of women.

Chart 3 Percentages of men and women in private practice who were either partners or sole practitioners as at 31 July 2005 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 50.8 years, compared with 46.3 for partners and 40.9 for all solicitors in private practice. Reflecting the recent growth in their admissions 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 2005

Age	All in private practice			Partners			Sole practitioners		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Total	47,361	30,731	78,092	20,851	6,095	26,946	3,188	984	4,172
Average age	43.7	36.6	40.9	47.3	42.8	46.3	52.0	46.8	50.8

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 a minority ethnic group. The provision of information on ethnicity is entirely optional, though at present it is known for 87.9% of practising certificate holders. Using this we estimate that solicitors from minority ethnic groups accounted for 8.7% of solicitors with practising certificates in 2005, an increase on the 8.3% recorded in 2004.

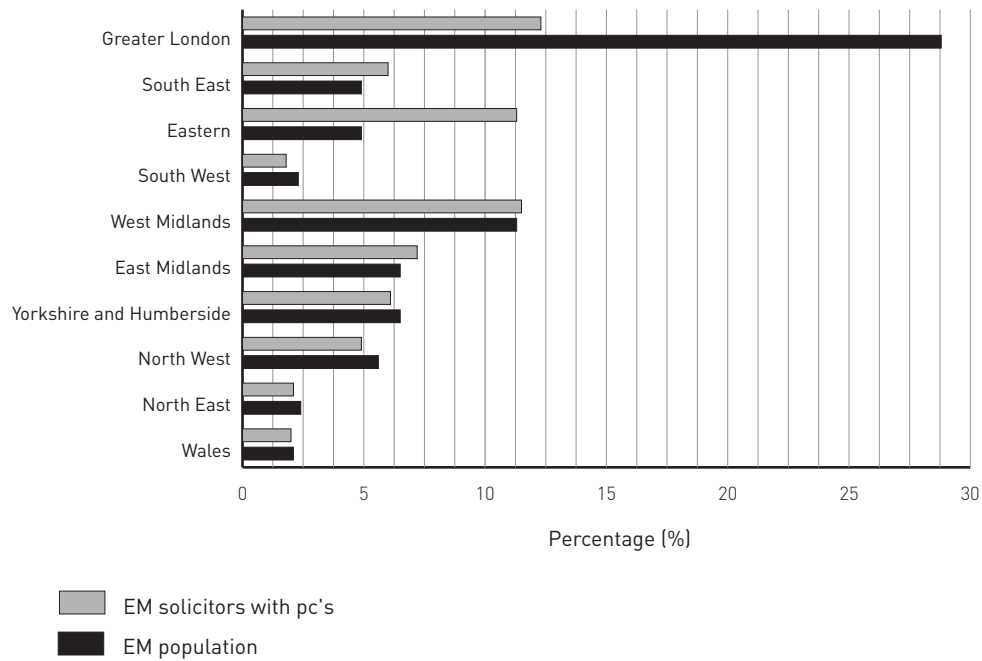
Table 2.12 Ethnic origin of practising certificate holders as at 31 July 2005

Ethnic origin	Men	Women	Total	%
White/European	47,428	32,549	79,977	79.2
African-Caribbean	218	454	672	0.7
Asian	2,385	2,607	4,992	4.9
Chinese	316	530	846	0.8
African	376	461	837	0.8
Other ethnic origin	672	756	1,428	1.4
All solicitors for whom ethnic origin is known	51,395	37,357	88,752	87.9
All practising certificate holders from minority ethnic groups known to the Law Society	3,967	4,808	8,775	
% of all solicitors with PCs	6.7	11.5	8.7	
Unanswered/refused	1,808	422	2,230	2.2
Unknown	5,768	4,188	9,956	9.9
All practising certificate holders	58,971	41,967	100,938	100.0
% of all solicitors with PCs for whom ethnic origin is known	87.2	89.0	87.9	

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

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

Chart 4 Minority ethnic group solicitors as a proportion of total solicitors with practising certificates compared with people from ethnic minorities as a proportion of the total population, 2005



Law Society data source: REGIS database

Office for National Statistics: Table KS06. Ethnic group: Census 2001, Key Statistics for Local Authorities:

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Expodata/Spreadsheets/D6589.xls>

2.14 Table 2.14 shows the proportion of minority ethnic group solicitors with practising certificates in each Government Office Region and abroad. Greater London (12.3%), West Midlands (11.5%) and the Eastern region (11.3%) Government Office Regions have the highest proportion of minority ethnic solicitors, the majority of whom are Asian. Overall, 5.6% of solicitors from minority ethnic groups with practising certificates are resident abroad. It can also be seen from Table 2.14 that over a third of solicitors with practising certificates, 36.3%, are located in London, with this proportion rising to 51.2% for minority ethnic group solicitors.

Table 2.14 Proportion of minority ethnic group solicitors with practising certificates in standard regions and abroad as at 31 July 2005

Region	Total no. of PC. holders	Ethnic Group (%)							
		Asian	African- Carib.	Chinese	African	Other minority ethnic group	Total minority ethnic groups	White Euro- pean	Unknown
City of London ¹	16,855	3.7	0.3	1.0	0.5	1.9	7.5	77.8	14.7
Rest of London	19,780	8.6	1.7	1.0	2.5	2.5	16.3	68.5	15.2
Greater London	36,635	6.4	1.0	1.0	1.6	2.3	12.3	72.8	15.0
South East	11,009	3.7	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.9	6.0	84.0	10.0
Eastern	6,637	7.0	1.0	0.5	1.3	1.6	11.3	77.4	11.2
South West	5,451	0.8	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.5	1.8	89.2	9.0
West Midlands	7,183	9.1	0.9	0.3	0.2	1.0	11.5	79.9	8.6
East Midlands	4,141	5.5	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.6	7.2	84.1	8.7
Yorkshire & Humberside	6,639	4.5	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.7	6.1	86.2	7.8
North West	10,642	3.2	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.9	4.9	86.2	8.8
North East	2,751	1.5	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.3	2.1	89.4	8.5
Wales	3,332	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.6	2.0	88.8	9.2
Outside of England and Wales	4,107	2.7	0.1	6.8	0.2	2.2	12.0	60.4	27.6
Unknown	2,410	1.7	0.7	0.3	0.5	0.8	4.1	85.3	10.7
Total	100,938	4.9	0.7	0.8	0.8	1.4	8.7	79.2	12.1

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 Table 2.15 analyses the position held by solicitors in private practice by their ethnicity. Table 2.15 shows that, whereas 36.0% of white Europeans in private practice are at partnership level, the corresponding proportion from minority ethnic groups is much lower at 22.2%. This partly reflects the fact that solicitors from the ethnic minorities have only recently been entering the profession in numbers. It is interesting to note though that 7.9% of solicitors from minority ethnic groups are sole practitioners, compared with only 5.1% for all white European solicitors in private practice.

Table 2.15 Status of private practice solicitors by ethnicity as at 31 July 2005

Ethnic group	All in private practice	Percentage who were:					Total
		Partners	Sole practs.	Associates	Assists.	Other private practice	
African-caribbean	431	22.7	9.0	9.7	52.9	5.6	100.0
Asian	3,827	22.4	8.4	11.3	50.9	7.0	100.0
Chinese	593	16.0	4.0	24.3	48.1	7.6	100.0
African	582	29.5	10.7	8.4	47.3	4.1	100.0
Other ethnic origin	1,070	21.0	5.9	17.2	48.1	7.8	100.0
All minority ethnic groups	6,505	22.2	7.9	13.1	50.0	6.8	100.0
White European	62,944	36.0	5.1	12.2	34.9	11.8	100.0
Unknown	8,643	32.8	5.5	15.3	35.1	11.3	100.0
Total	78,092	34.5	5.3	12.6	36.2	11.4	100.0

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

2.16 Finally, table 2.16 analyses the numbers of private practice practitioners by their ethnicity and size of firm in which they work. This table shows that nearly a half of minority ethnic group solicitors (47.1%) work in firms with 4 or fewer partners compared to only 28.7 of White Europeans.

Table 2.16 Distribution of pc holders in private practice by size of firm by ethnicity, as at the 31st July 2005

Ethnic group	All in private practice	Sole pract.	Size of firm					All firms
			2-4 prttrs.	5-10 prttrs	11-25 prttrs	26-80 prttrs	81+ prttrs	
African-Caribbean	431	17.3	35.1	17.6	12.9	7.6	9.5	100.0
Asian	3,827	15.5	34.6	13.2	12.5	9.8	14.3	100.0
Chinese	593	6.6	20.4	8.9	18.2	12.5	33.5	100.0
African	582	18.7	49.0	9.2	6.3	6.8	9.9	100.0
Other ethnic origin	1,070	10.1	24.0	12.0	13.4	14.3	26.3	100.0
All minority ethnic groups	6,505	14.2	32.9	12.6	12.6	10.4	17.3	100.0
White European	62,944	7.7	21.0	16.7	15.7	16.7	22.3	100.0
Unknown	8,643	8.8	23.5	14.0	14.3	14.5	24.9	100.0
Total	78,092	8.3	22.3	16.0	15.3	15.9	22.2	100.0

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 REGIS system cannot differentiate between 'active' and 'inactive' private practice firms but nonetheless it does record the type of business conducted by all organisations in England and Wales that employ solicitors. The main categories of employment 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 2005

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	9,081	40	2,665	30	11,746	70
Incorporated firms*	647	0	257	27	904	27
Multi-national partnerships	137	66	44	105	181	171
Locum services	216	0	0	0	216	0
Foreign law practices	2	548	6	91	8	639
Other private practice	6	22	2	2	8	24
Commerce and industry	2,555	361	271	44	2,826	405
Government						
Government department	44	11	26	8	70	19
Local government	466	1	28	0	494	1
Court	74	3	97	0	171	3
Government funded services	67	8	35	2	102	10
Crown Prosecution Services	50	0	66	0	116	0
Other						
Advice service	138	0	15	0	153	0
Educational establishment	112	10	6	0	118	10
Other	197	17	27	1	213	17
Total	13,792	1,087	3,545	310	17,337	1,397
	14,879				18,734	

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

*There has not been a dramatic increase in Incorporated firms since last year, as initial comparison may appear to indicate. In fact, the difference from last year is due to a data recoding exercise in which nearly all the 'Incorporated firms' were included in the 'Other private practice' category'. (Data as at 21 February 2005 indicated that there were 732 firms recorded with business type 'Incorporated Company Limited by Shares'; 57 'Incorporated Unlimited Company'; and 1 'Incorporated Practice').

3.2 As can be seen from Table 3.1 as at 31 July 2005, there were 14,879 separate organisations employing solicitors, of which 13,792 were based in England and Wales and 1,087 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 more offices. Allowing for this there were 18,734 separate places of work recorded for solicitors, of which 17,737 were in England and Wales and 1,397 elsewhere. It can also be seen from this table that in 2005 there were 9,081 private practice partnerships, located in 11,746 separate offices in England and Wales, registered with the Society. Over the past year the number of these firms has fallen marginally by 1.8%, whilst the total number of offices has decreased by 9.4% though in part this reflects data cleansing exercises

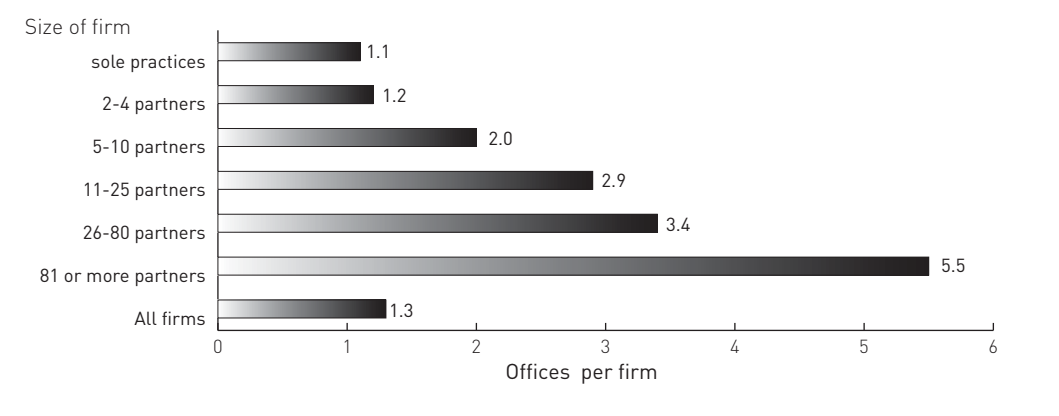
3.3 The trend in the numbers of private practice firms and offices over the five years since 2000-01 is shown in table 3.3. This shows that over the period the number of firms has decreased by 1.8% and the number of offices has decreased by 9.4% (but see para 3.2 above). These figures are reflected in the observed 7.7% decrease in the ratio of offices to firms over the period.

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

Year	Number of firms	Number of offices
2000-01	9,251	12,966
2001-02	9,231	12,834
2002-03	9,198	12,708
2003-04	9,211	12,579
2004-05	9,081	11,746

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 2005 fell slightly to 1.3. As one would expect, the number of offices per firm increases with the size of firm: from 1.1 for sole practices through to 5.5 for the 81-or-more partner firms.

Chart 5 Number of offices by size of firm in 2005



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 Government Office Regions. Just over one-quarter of solicitors' firms, 27.3%, were located in London in 2005 and over all 42.8% of firms 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, in the Eastern, South West, North West and Wales regions. The areas of greatest de-provision were the East Midlands, Yorkshire and Humberside and North East regions.

Table 3.5 Location (standard regions) of population and private practice firms and practitioners in 2005

Region	Total =	Population ¹ 52,994 million	Firms 9,211
		%	%
City of London		*	6.7
Rest of London		14.0	20.7
South East		15.3	15.4
South West		9.5	7.0
Wales		5.5	5.2
West Midlands		10.1	8.0
East Midlands		8.1	4.8
Eastern		10.4	10.4
North West including Merseyside		12.9	11.9
Yorkshire and Humberside		9.5	6.7
North East		4.8	3.3
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 private practice firms in 2005 by the Government Office Region in which the head office is located 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 (86.0%) of law practices in England and Wales have four partners or fewer. At the other end of the spectrum only 1.4% 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 129 firms with 26 or more partners 58.8% were located in the London region.

Table 3.6 Number of firms in 2005, 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	26-80 prttrs	81+ prttrs	
City of London	215	187	77	62	47	23	611
Rest of Greater London	981	771	96	30	5	1	1,883
South East	767	468	105	47	7	0	1,395
Eastern	452	375	79	31	4	0	941
South West	312	216	70	26	9	0	632
West Midlands	301	320	75	24	3	0	722
East Midlands	187	183	42	17	3	0	433
Yorkshire and the Humber	236	259	78	27	8	3	610
North West (including Merseyside)	413	493	133	32	9	3	1,082
North East	124	131	35	6	2	0	298
Wales	185	234	50	4	2	0	475
Total	4,172	3,637	841	303	99	30	9,081
%	45.9	40.0	9.3	3.3	1.1	0.3	100.0

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 78,092 solicitors at 31 July 2005 employed in private practice by their grade and the size of the firm in which they worked measured by the partner count. It shows that within an overall growth in numbers over the past year of 4.0%, the proportion of partners including sole practitioners has fallen again this year from 43.0% to 39.8%. The table also shows the high degree of solicitor concentration in the largest firms. Firms with 81 or more partners, around 0.3% of the total, employed 11.7% of principals and just over one-fifth (22.2%) of all solicitors. At the other end of the spectrum sole practices, 45.9% of firms, employed 13.4% of all principals and only 8.3% of all solicitors.

Table 4.1 Admitted staff in private practice firms in 2005 by size of firm

	Sole practices	2-4 ptnrs.	5-10 ptnrs.	11-25 ptnrs.	26-80 ptnrs.	81+ ptnrs.	All firms
Partners	0	9,047	5,715	4,815	3,730	3,638	26,946
Sole practitioners	4,172	0	0	0	0	0	4,172
Associate solicitors	194	894	840	1,347	1,990	4,597	9,862
Assistant solicitors	1,497	5,332	4,838	4,668	5,331	6,575	28,240
Consultants	300	1,077	663	508	340	361	3,250
Other private practice	320	1,032	456	631	1,036	2,148	5,622
All positions	6,483	17,381	12,512	11,970	12,427	17,319	78,092

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 are most likely to be found in the larger firms with 11 or more partners, whilst the other private practice solicitors' who mainly perform specialist roles within firms are found almost exclusively in firms with 26 or more partners. In contrast to this consultants are found mainly in smaller firms. In terms of the staffing ratios these show that the ratio of assistant/associate solicitors to principals increases from 0.4:1 in sole practices through to 3.1:1 in the 81 or more partner firms. In the intervening size bands the corresponding ratios are 0.7 assistants/associates per principal in 2-4 partner firms, 1.0 per principal in 5-10 partner firms, 1.2 per principal in 11-25 partner firms and 2.0 in 26-80 partner firms.

Table 4.2 Number of admitted staff per principal in private practice firms in 2005 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/principal	0.0465	0.0988	0.1469	0.2798	0.5335	1.2634	0.3169
Assistant/principal	0.3587	0.5894	0.8465	0.9694	1.4291	1.8071	0.9075
Consultants/principal	0.0720	0.1190	0.1161	0.1056	0.0912	0.0993	0.1044
Other private practice/principal	0.0766	0.1141	0.0798	0.1311	0.2777	0.5903	0.1807
All per principal	1.5538	1.9213	2.1892	2.4858	3.3315	4.7601	2.5095

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 2005 39.0% 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 239 head of population, compared to an average density in England and Wales of one practitioner per 675 head of population. Excluding the London GOR this figure increases to one practitioner per 953 head of population. Overall, this density is lowest in the North East GOR where there is one practitioner per 1,371 head of population.

Table 4.3 Admitted staff in private practice firms in 2005 by Government region

	Partners	Sole Practitioner	Associate solicitors	Assist. solicitors	Consultants	Other pr. practice	All solicitors
Greater London	8,999	1,185	5,480	10,838	1,263	2,678	30,443
South East	3,144	763	692	2,991	405	546	8,541
Eastern	2,214	452	284	1,948	200	226	5,324
South West	1,844	315	385	1,547	257	211	4,559
West Midlands	2,071	305	791	2,030	249	406	5,852
East Midlands	1,228	188	316	1,265	134	300	3,431
Yorkshire and Humberside	2,133	237	632	2,247	185	303	5,737
North West	3,406	417	805	3,663	332	583	9,206
North East	813	124	254	796	94	161	2,241
Wales	1,095	187	223	915	132	207	2,758
All regions	26,946	4,172	9,862	28,240	3,250	5,622	78,092

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 2004–05.

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 2003 and 2004. 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 21,858 people applied to study law at undergraduate level in 2004, which is an increase of 6.0% on the total recorded last year. Within this total male applications rose faster than female applications, by 9.3% and 3.9% 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 slightly less than applications, by 3.9%, from 12,993 to 13,504. The pattern in acceptances was consistent with applications in that male acceptances increased more (up by 4.5%) than female acceptances which rose less quickly (3.6%). Overall 61.7% of applications were accepted.

Table 6.2 Home and overseas applicants and acceptances for university first degree law courses in England and Wales 2003 and 2004

For entry in:	University applicants								
	UK			Overseas			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2003	6,472	10,791	17,263	1,462	1,902	3,364	7,934	12,693	20,627
2004	6,872	10,957	17,829	1,802	2,227	4,029	8,674	13,184	21,858
% change	6.2	1.5	3.3	23.3	17.1	19.8	9.3	3.9	6.0

For entry in:	University acceptances								
	UK			Overseas			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2003	4,083	6,988	11,071	870	1,052	1,922	4,953	8,040	12,993
2004	4,321	7,185	11,506	857	1,141	1,998	5,178	8,326	13,504
% change	5.8	2.8	3.9	-1.5	8.5	4.0	4.5	3.6	3.9

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 2004, 61.7% of acceptances were from women, marginally down from the 61.9% recorded in 2003. The proportion of overseas acceptances, 14.8%, was the same as that recorded last year.

Table 6.3 Proportion of law students accepted in 2003 and 2004 who were female or from overseas

Year	Female students		Overseas students	
	No.	%	No.	%
2003	8,040	61.9	1,922	14.8
2004	8,326	61.7	1,998	14.8

Source: UCAS

- 6.4 Table 6.4 shows the number of minority ethnic students (excluding overseas students) who gained places on law degree courses for the academic year 2004. In total, minority ethnic law students accounted for 29.0% of students starting a first degree law course in 2004. This represents a slight increase on 2003, when the comparable proportion was 26.5%. Within this total, female acceptances were more likely than males to be drawn from minority ethnic groups: 29.8% of acceptances as opposed to 27.9%.

Table 6.4 Minority ethnic students from the UK accepted to first degree law courses at universities and colleges in 2004

Ethnic group		Acceptances of students from UK		
		Male	Female	Total
White	White British	2387	3971	6358
Black	Black Caribbean	43	152	195
	Black African	205	341	546
	Black Other	13	40	53
Asian	Indian	286	600	886
	Pakistani	274	399	673
	Bangladeshi	84	129	213
	Chinese	34	65	99
	Other Asian	83	104	187
Mixed	White and Black Caribbean	29	44	73
	White and Black African	11	23	34
	White and Asian	50	62	112
	Other mixed	40	66	106
Other	Other	52	113	165
Unknown	Unknown	730	1076	1806
All minority ethnic acceptances		1,204	2,138	3,342
All acceptances		4321	7185	11506
% from minority ethnic groups		27.9	29.8	29.0

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 2004 with the position one and five years previously. The table shows that, in 2004, the total number of graduates was 11,139, an increase of 11.3% on the previous year. In the five years since 1999 the total number of graduates has increased by 22.5% from a base of 9,090. The table also shows that within this increased total the number of male law graduates has increased by 9.0% over the past 5 years, whereas the number of female law graduates has increased greatly by 32.1% over the same period.

Table 6.5 Number of students graduating in law from universities in England and Wales 1999, 2003 and 2004¹

Year of graduation	University Graduates in Law		
	Male	Female	Total
1999	3,760	5,330	9,090
2003	3,664	6,343	10,007
2004	4,097	7,042	11,139
% change 2004/2003	11.8	11.0	11.3
% change 2004/1999	9.0	32.1	22.5

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 there are a further substantial number of law students (*ie* higher than 4000) 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 2004, of the 11,139 law graduates over half, 55.4%, achieved a first class or upper second class degree. This proportion represents a marginal decrease on the figure of 55.7% recorded for 2003. Overall, a higher proportion of women graduated with firsts or upper seconds than men: 57.1% and 52.4% of graduates respectively. There are no figures showing the classes of degree awarded to minority ethnic group law students.

Table 6.7 Class of degrees in law awarded in England and Wales in summer 2004

Class of degree	All law graduates					
	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
First	189	4.6	366	5.2	555	5.0
Upper second	1,959	47.8	3,657	51.9	5,616	50.4
Lower second	1,621	39.6	2,629	37.3	4,250	38.2
Third/pass	284	6.9	328	4.7	611	5.5
Unclassified	45	1.1	63	0.9	108	1.0
Total	4,097	100.0	7,042	100.0	11,139	100.0
Total: first and upper second	2,148		4,023		6,170	
Percentage with first or upper second		52.4		57.1		55.4

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 minority ethnic group students showing an interest in becoming a solicitor. Information on the proportion of enrolled students who were female, or from a minority ethnic group, 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 93.5% of students enrolling with the Society in 2004–05 was recorded. Table 7.4 shows the fuller breakdown of enrolments by gender and ethnicity, whilst table 7.5 shows the comparative data for one and ten years ago, that is for 1994–95 and 2003–04.
- 7.4 In the year up to 31 July 2005, 9,665 students enrolled with the Law Society, a decrease of 1.7% on the previous year. Of these 6,138, or 63.5%, of the total were women. This represents a very slight increase in the proportion of women students from that recorded in 2003–04 (62.8%) but it is markedly up on the proportion for 1994–95, when it was 54.0%. The proportion of women amongst minority ethnic students was, at 65.0%, 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, 74.4% were women, a decrease from the proportion last year (81.1%).
- 7.5 Of those students enrolling with the Society last year, 2,440, or 25.2% of the total, were drawn from minority ethnic groups. This can be compared with the 17.2% from minority ethnic group students recorded in 1994–95, and the 23.9% recorded in 2003–04. When one compares 2004–05 with 1994–95, it can be seen that almost the whole of the increase in minority ethnic numbers is accounted for by increases in the number of Asian students (59.1%) and students of African ethnic origin (21.1%).

Table 7.4 The ethnic origin and gender of students enrolling with the Law Society in 2004–05

Ethnic origin	Male		Female		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.
African-Caribbean	41	25.6	119	74.4	160
Asian	462	35.1	856	64.9	1,318
Chinese	66	30.1	153	69.9	219
African	159	41.0	229	59.0	388
Other ethnic origin	125	35.2	230	64.8	355
All minority ethnic groups	853	35.0	1,587	65.0	2,440
White European	2,445	37.1	4,153	62.9	6,598
Unknown	229	36.5	398	63.5	627
Total	3,527	36.5	6,138	63.5	9,665

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

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

	1994–95		2003–04		2004–05	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Ethnic origin						
African-Caribbean	106	1.5	132	1.3	160	1.7
Asian	578	8.4	1,224	12.5	1,318	13.6
Chinese	145	2.1	229	2.3	219	2.3
African	124	1.8	380	3.9	388	4.0
Other ethnic origin	235	3.4	389	4.0	355	3.7
All minority ethnic groups	1,188	17.2	2,354	23.9	2,440	25.2
White European	5,079	73.7	7,064	71.9	6,598	68.3
Unknown	624	9.1	413	4.2	627	6.5
Total	6,891	100.0	9,831	100.0	9,665	100.0
Gender						
Male	3,172	46.0	3,654	37.2	3,527	36.5
Female	3,719	54.0	6,177	62.8	6,138	63.5
Total	6,891	100.0	9,831	100.0	9,665	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). It is also a pre-requisite for those individuals who transfer having been Legal Executives or Justices' Clerks.
- 8.2 In 2005, of the 8,649 students who enrolled on the LPC, 7,585, or 87.7%, 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 2004, total enrolments increased by 9.3%; this increase was to a lesser degree reflected in the number taking the examination, where numbers rose by 2.1%. Taken overall, the pass rate was 75.8%, a slight decrease on the proportion who passed last year (79.1%). Of those actually taking the examination, the pass rate was 86.5%, which represents an increase on the 2004 figure of 84.3%. Table 8.2 below shows the full set of results. Candidates who pass with distinction now account for just under one-third (31.4%) of total passes.

Table 8.2 Legal Practice Course results of summer examinations — July 2005

Results	No. of students	2005 % of those sitting exam	% of all students
Diploma with distinction	2,057	27.1	23.8
Diploma with commendation	2,609	34.4	30.2
Diploma	1,892	24.9	21.9
Total passes	6,558	86.5	75.8
Referred	777	10.2	9.0
Resit	220	2.9	2.5
Failed	30	0.4	0.3
Total failed	1,027	13.5	11.9
Total sitting the examination	7,585	100.0	87.7
Deferred	195		2.3
Absent	19		0.2
Total not sitting the examination	1,064		12.3
Total students enrolled on the LPC	8,649		100.0

Source: Law Society database

Table 8.3 Places on the Legal Practice Course for 2003–04, 2004–05 and 2005–06

College of Law/universities	Full-time			Part-time		
	'03–04	'04–05	'05–06	'03–04	'04–05	'05–06
Anglia Ruskin University	70	70	70	30	30	30
BPP London Law School	756	936	1,080	144	198	216
BPP Leeds Law School	-	180	360	-	-	72
BPP Manchester Law School	-	-	180	-	-	72
Bournemouth University	96	96	96	-	-	-
Cardiff Law School	160	180	180	-	-	-
The College of Law:						
All branches						1,000*
Store Street	1,200	1,200	1,260	192	360	200**
Chester	600	600	580	80	160	*
Guildford	720	720	700	140	280	*
York	504	504	484	80	160	*
Birmingham	528	528	528	80	160	*
De Montfort University	100	100	100	130	130	130
Inns of Court School of Law	176	176	176	-	-	-
Leeds Metropolitan University	105	105	105	45	45	45
Liverpool John Moores University	-	40	40	72	72	72
London Metropolitan University	110	110	110	54	54	54
Manchester Metropolitan University	168	168	168	48	48	48
Nottingham Law School	648	648	648	90	90	90
Oxford Institute of Legal Practice	353	353	353	-	-	-
Staffordshire University	125	125	125	25	25	25
Swansea University	-	70	100	-	-	-
Thames Valley University	50	50	50	32	32	32
University of Central England	120	120	120	30	30	30
University of Central Lancashire	60	60	60	48	48	48
University of Exeter	120	120	120	-	-	-
University of Glamorgan	108	108	108	32	32	32
University of Hertfordshire	-	-	-	50	64	64
University of Huddersfield	80	80	80	36	36	36
Northumbria University:						
at University of Northumbria	160	160	160	50	50	50
Exempting Law Degree	110	-	-	-	-	-
London Metropolitan University and						
South Bank University	-	-	-	60	-	-
University of Sheffield	180	216	180	-	-	-
University of the West of England	342	342	342	58	58	58
University of Westminster	120	120	120	64	64	64
University of Wolverhampton	100	60	60	30	30	30
Total	7,859	8,345	8,843	1,700	2,256	2,498

Source: Law Society database

*Part-time block LPC

**Part-time evening

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 2005–06 will be 8,843. This is an increase of 6.0% on the number of places that were available in the previous year.

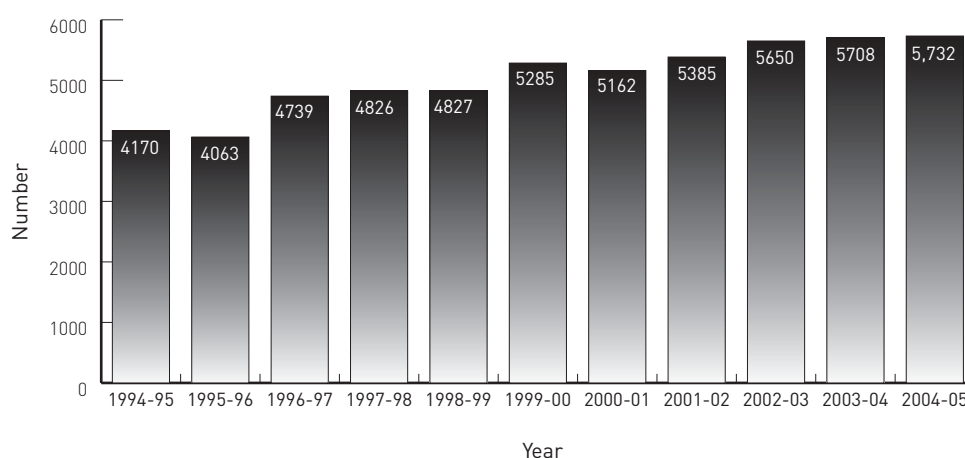
8.4 In addition, there will also be 2,498 places available on part-time LPC courses next year — an increase (10.7%) on the number of part-time places that were available in 2004–05.

Traineeships

8.5 In addition to obtaining pre-vocational qualifications, those embarking on a career as a solicitor who are not transferring in from another profession or jurisdiction 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 first year registrations of traineeships from 1994–95 to the present. In the year that ended 31 July 2005 there were 5,732 new traineeships registered with the Society. This represents a slight increase (0.4%) on the level recorded last year, when trainee registrations stood at 5,708. Trainee registrations are now running at the highest levels recorded to date having exceeded 5,000 per annum in each of the past 6 years.

Chart 6 Annual registration of trainees 1994–95 to 2004–05



Source: Law Society's REGIS database

8.7 Table 8.7 shows the data on the number of trainees registered in 1994–95, 1999–2000 and 2004–05 with the total analysed by trainee gender. Overall, the number of traineeships has increased by well over one-third (37.5%) over the period since 1994–95; and by 8.5% over the period since 1999–2000. Within this total growth, that for women trainees was 17.6%, in contrast to -3.6% for male trainees. In fact, for each of the years since 1994–95 for which we

have data, the majority of new trainee registrations have been female. In this latest year, 61.7% of trainees registered were women. This is a marginal increase on the proportion recorded last year.

Table 8.7 Number of traineeships registered in 1994–95, 1999–2000 and 2004–05 analysed by gender of trainee

Year	Male		Female		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.
1994–95	Gender not available				4,170
1999–2000	2,277	43.1	3,008	56.9	5,285
2004–2005	2,196	38.3	3,536	61.7	5,732
% change 2004–05 over 1999–2000		-3.6		17.6	8.5

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

8.8 Eight 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 5,338 trainees, or 93.1% of the 5,732 new traineeships registered. This shows a slight improvement in the quality of this data from last year, when the ethnicity of 92.6% of new trainees was known. In 2004–05, minority ethnic trainees represented 18.4% of trainees of known ethnicity, a slight decrease on the value (19.1%) recorded last year. The ethnic grouping most highly represented was 'Asian', which accounted for 54.9% of minority ethnic trainees. Overall, the proportion of women was slightly higher amongst minority ethnic trainees than for the group of trainees as a whole. Whereas, as we have seen, 61.7% of trainees overall were women, this proportion rose to 63.7% amongst those from minority ethnic groups. The African-Caribbean group had the highest proportion of women trainees at 82.8%.

Table 8.8 Trainee registrations by ethnic origin and gender 2004–05

Ethnic origin	Male	Female	Total	trainees with known ethnicity
	No.	No.	No.	%
African-Caribbean	10	48	58	1.1
Asian	217	323	540	10.1
Chinese	26	51	77	1.4
African	41	74	115	2.2
Other ethnic origin	63	130	193	3.6
Total known minority ethnic groups	357	626	983	18.4
Minority ethnic trainees as % of those with known ethnicity	17.5%	19.0%	18.4%	
White European	1,684	2,671	4,355	81.6

Contd.

Table 8.8 Continued:

Ethnic origin	Male	Female	Total	trainees with known ethnicity
	No.	No.	No.	%
Total with known ethnicity	2,041	3,297	5,338	100.0
% of trainees with known ethnicity	92.9%	93.2%	93.1%	
Trainees with unknown ethnicity	155	239	394	
% of trainees with unknown ethnicity	7.1%	6.8%	6.9%	
All trainees	2,196	3,536	5,732	
All trainees %	38.3%	61.7%	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 2004–05. Of the 5,732 trainees registered, 1,551 (27.1%) were located in the City of London. A further 1,111, or 19.4%, were located in the rest of London. Taken overall, just under one-half (46.5%) of first-year trainees were located in London in 2004–05. This is a marginal decrease from the 47.0% of London registrations recorded last year. Male trainees were slightly more likely than female trainees to be located in the City of London. Whereas just over one-half (50.2%) of male trainees were located in London, the corresponding proportion for female trainees was only 44.1%. The region with the highest proportion of female trainees was Wales with 67.6%, and the region with the lowest proportion was the City of London with 55.2%.

Table 8.9 Trainee placements in 2004–05 analysed by Government Office Region

Region	Male			Female			Total	
	No.	%	% by region	No.	%	% by region	Total	% by region
City of London	696	44.8	31.7	856	55.2	24.2	1,551	27.1
Rest of London	408	36.7	18.6	704	63.3	19.9	1,111	19.4
South East	154	34.7	7.0	290	65.3	8.2	445	7.8
Eastern	133	36.1	6.1	236	63.9	6.7	369	6.4
South West	70	34.2	3.2	134	65.8	3.8	204	3.6
West Midlands	135	32.6	6.1	278	67.4	7.9	412	7.2
East Midlands	74	36.3	3.4	130	63.7	3.7	204	3.6
Yorkshire and Humberside	147	35.1	6.7	272	64.9	7.7	419	7.3
North West	255	37.6	11.6	424	62.4	12.0	679	11.8
North East	70	41.2	3.2	100	58.8	2.8	169	3.0
Wales	54	32.4	2.5	113	67.6	3.2	167	2.9
Total	2,196	38.3	100.0	3,536	61.7	100.0	5,732	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 this year, 5,397 (94.2%) were for placements in private practice firms. Male trainees were slightly more likely to be placed in private practice firms, and female trainees were marginally more likely to be placed in all other employment categories apart from 'Government department'.

Table 8.10 Trainee placements in 2004–05 analysed by category of employment of training institution

Category of employment	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Private practice	2,104	95.8	3,293	93.1	5,397	94.2
Commerce and industry	35	1.6	70	2.0	105	1.8
Government department	7	0.3	11	0.3	18	0.3
Local government	30	1.4	84	2.4	114	2.0
Court	7	0.3	35	1.0	42	0.7
Crown Prosecution Service	2	0.1	8	0.2	10	0.2
Advice service	8	0.4	17	0.5	25	0.4
Other	3	0.1	18	0.5	21	0.4
Total	2,196	100.0	3,536	100.0	5,732	100.0

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

8.11 Given the importance of private practice firms in 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 5,397 traineeships registered with private practice firms in 2004–05, just under one-third, 30.9%, were located in the small number of very large firms with 81 or more partners. At the other end of the spectrum only 5.5% 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 35.1% 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 25 partners although some of the differences here were not substantial. In sole practices there was only a slight difference in the proportion of male and female trainees (5.1% and 5.8% respectively).

Table 8.11 Trainee placements in 2004–05 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	191	5.8	299	5.5
2–4 partner firms	358	17.0	650	19.8	1,008	18.7
5–10 partner firms	282	13.4	530	16.1	812	15.0
11–25 partner firms	298	14.1	502	15.2	800	14.8
26–80 partner firms	322	15.3	490	14.9	812	15.0
81 or more part firms	738	35.1	929	28.2	1,667	30.9
Total	2,104	100.0	3,293	100.0	5,397	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). Since August 2002 further revision has occurred annually, as shown in table 8.12, and, also, in August 2003 the 'Council recommended' salary level was introduced.

Table 8.12 Starting salaries for trainee solicitors

Effective date	Central London ¹	Outer London	Rest of England and Wales
Council recommended minimum			
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
From 1/8/2003	£15,300	£13,600	£13,600
From 1/8/2004	£15,900	£14,200	£14,200
From 1/8/2005	£16,450	£14,720	£14,720
Council recommended			
From 1/8/2003	£16,200	£14,450	£14,450
From 1/8/2004	£16,680	£14,870	£14,870
From 1/8/2005	£17,050	£15,180	£15,180

* 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 8.13. This shows that, in 2004–05, average starting salaries were highest in Central London (the City, Holborn and Westminster) at £27,094, and lowest in Wales at £15,454. Taken over all trainees, the average starting salary was £20,796. This represents an increase of 3.9% on the average salary paid last year, which was £20,013. Within this total rise male trainee salaries increased by 4.2% on average, whilst the increase for female trainees was less than this at 3.7%.

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 London	27,705	26,622	27,094	4.1	170	4.6
Rest of Greater Ldn.	21,019	19,629	20,131	7.1	142	9.5
South East	16,325	16,615	16,513	-1.7	116	13.7
Eastern	15,856	16,545	16,311	-4.2	115	20.1
South West	15,731	15,723	15,726	0.1	111	16.9
West Midlands	18,455	17,639	17,909	4.6	126	20.3
East Midlands	16,833	15,832	16,179	6.3	114	22.6
Yorks and Humberside	17,640	16,725	17,050	5.5	120	19.7
North West	16,894	16,516	16,656	2.3	117	23.9
North East	16,448	15,899	16,119	3.5	114	22.4
Wales	15,174	15,593	15,454	-2.7	109	34.8
Total	21,717	20,223	20,796	7.4	n/a	n/a

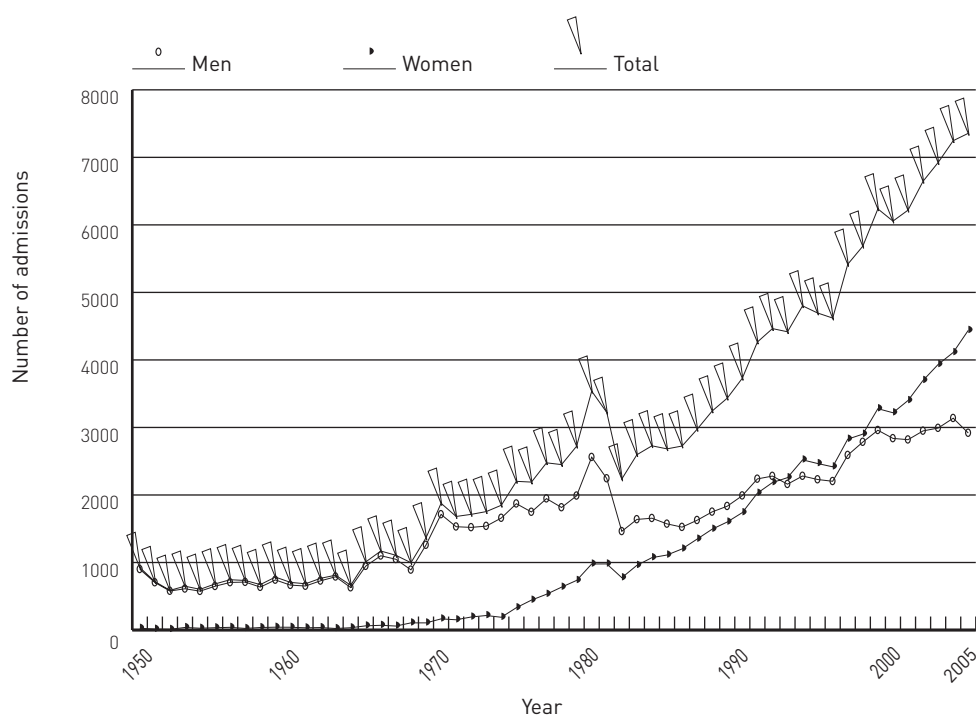
Source: Law Society's REGIS database

8.14 Table 8.13 also breaks the data down by trainee gender. On average, male trainees were offered starting salaries which were 7.4% above the average level for females, up from a 6.8% gender gap last year. The average salary levels for male and female trainees being £21,717 and £20,223 respectively. Although, on average, male trainees had much higher starting salaries than female trainees, in three of the regions, female trainee starting salaries were higher than that for males. Female trainee salaries were 4.2% higher than male trainee salaries in the Eastern region; 2.7% higher in Wales; and 1.7% 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 2005 was 7,356. This represents an increase of 1.5% on the 7,247 individuals who were admitted in 2003–04. Chart 7 shows the growth in admissions of men and women separately for the period 1950 to 2005. Over this period, total annual admissions rose by 794.4% at an average annual increase of 3.8% per year. Over the same period, female admissions have grown at an average annual rate of 9.8%, which nearly equates to a doubling of the number of female admissions approximately every seven years. The average growth rate for male admissions, 2.2%, has been less than one-quarter that for women over the period.

Chart 7 Growth in solicitors' admissions to the Roll 1950–2005



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 1995 and 2005, total admissions grew by 56.7% from a base of 4,695. Over this period, male admissions rose by 30.9%, whilst female admissions grew much more rapidly, by 80.0%. Women have accounted for the majority of new admissions in each year since 1994–95 and, in 2004–05, 60.3% of those admitted were female. This proportion, which is showing some increase over time, has risen on that recorded last year and contrasts with the position 10 years ago when, in 1995, 52.5% of new entrants to the profession were women.

Table 9.3 Men and women admitted to the Roll 1994–95 to 2004–05

	Men		Women		Total	Annual change
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
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
2002–03	2,991	43.2	3,933	56.8	6,924	4.2
2003–04	3,137	43.3	4,110	56.7	7,247	4.7
2004–05	2,918	39.7	4,438	60.3	7,356	1.5
% change						
2004–05 over 1994–95		30.9		80.0		56.7

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

9.4 The age distribution of those admitted in 2004–05 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 30.3 and 29.1 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 2004–05

Age	Male		Female		All admissions.		Cumulative
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
23	0	0.0	2	0.0	2	0.0	0.0
24	28	1.0	80	1.8	108	1.5	1.5
25	338	11.6	720	16.2	1,058	14.4	15.9
26	503	17.2	871	19.6	1,374	18.7	34.6
27	409	14.0	720	16.2	1,129	15.3	49.9
28	303	10.4	463	10.4	766	10.4	60.3
29	200	6.9	285	6.4	485	6.6	66.9
30–34	589	20.2	735	16.6	1,324	18.0	84.9
35–39	292	10.0	293	6.6	585	8.0	92.9
40–44	139	4.8	163	3.7	302	4.1	97.0
45–49	61	2.1	77	1.7	138	1.9	98.8
50–54	33	1.1	18	0.4	51	0.7	99.5
55 and over	20	0.7	8	0.2	28	0.4	99.9
Total known	2,915	99.9	4,435	99.9	7,350	99.9	
Unknown	3	0.1	3	0.1	6	0.1	100.0
Grand total	2,918	100.0	4,438	100.0	7,356	100.0	
Average age	30.3		29.1		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 2004–05 by each of the different routes. For 8.3% of admissions these data were not recorded. Just over two-thirds of admissions, 69.2%, were through the direct qualification route and, of these, just over 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, 72.4% of admissions as against 64.4%, and, within this total, were slightly more likely than men to have qualifying law degrees. In contrast, men were more likely than women to qualify via a transfer in; the relevant proportions here being 26.8% and 19.6% respectively. Men were more likely than women to have been barristers or to be transferring in from another jurisdiction, 24.9% as opposed to 16.5%, but women were slightly more likely than men to have qualified initially as either a legal executive or as a magistrates' or justices' clerk, 3.1% as opposed to 1.9%.

Table 9.5 The routes to admission to the Roll in 2004–05

Entry routes	Male		Female		All admissions	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Direct entry:						
Law degree	1,418	48.6	2,489	56.1	3,907	53.1
Non-law degree	461	15.8	724	16.3	1,185	16.1
Total direct entry	1,879	64.4	3,213	72.4	5,092	69.2
Entry by transfer:						
Overseas lawyer	624	21.4	615	13.9	1,239	16.8
Barristers	103	3.5	117	2.6	220	3.0
FILEX	44	1.5	119	2.7	163	2.2
Justices clerks	10	0.3	19	0.4	29	0.4
Total transfers	781	26.8	870	19.6	1,651	22.4
Route unknown	258	8.8	355	8.0	613	8.3
All admissions	2,918	100.0	4,438	100.0	7,356	100.0
%	39.7		60.3		100.0	

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

9.6 Just under one-quarter of admissions (22.4%) in 2004–05 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 1,651 transfers, one-quarter, 25.0%, 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 75.0% were transfers in from other jurisdictions. Most notable here were Australian and New Zealand lawyers, who alone accounted for well over one-quarter (29.1%) of all transfers in. In addition to these, transfers from the USA and Canada accounted for a further 10.1%, those from Singapore/Malaysia 7.3%, those from Hong Kong 6.6%, and those from other parts of the UK a further 5.0% of all transfers.

Table 9.6 Analysis of transfers into the profession 2004–05

	Male		Female		All transfers	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
From other professions:						
Legal executives	44	5.6	119	13.7	163	9.9
Barristers	103	13.2	117	13.4	220	13.3
Justices' clerks	10	1.3	19	2.2	29	1.8
Sub-total	157	20.1	255	29.3	412	25.0
From other jurisdictions						
Hong Kong	44	5.6	69	7.9	112	6.8
Australia/New Zealand	245	31.4	236	27.1	481	29.1
USA/ Canada	88	11.3	78	9.0	166	10.1
Scotland/N.Ireland/Isle of Man	42	5.4	40	4.6	82	5.0
Eire	17	2.2	13	1.5	31	1.9
Other EU countries	30	3.9	49	5.7	80	4.8
Non-EU European countries	20	2.5	12	1.4	32	1.9
Singapore/Malaysia	60	7.7	61	7.1	121	7.3
India/Pakistan/Sri Lanka	41	5.3	24	2.8	65	4.0
Nigeria	32	4.0	24	2.8	56	3.4
All other jurisdictions	4	0.6	8	1.0	13	0.8
Sub-total	624	79.9	615	70.7	1,239	75.0
Grand total	781	100.0	870	100.0	1,651	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, 27.8 years, were direct entrants with qualifying law degrees. Those admitted by the CPE route were aged 30.4 years on average. Taken over all direct admissions, the average age recorded was 28.4 years. Those transferring in were, on average, around five years older than direct admissions, at 33.3 years. There was little difference between the average ages of men and women qualifying by the same route, though male transfers in from the barristers' profession and other jurisdictions were older (by around four and two years respectively), than their female counterparts.

Table 9.7 Average age on admission to the Roll by route to admission and gender 2004–05

Entry routes	Male		Female		All admissions	
	No.	Average age	No.	Average age	No.	Average age
Direct entry						
Law degree	1,418	28.3	2,489	27.5	3,907	27.8
Non-law degree	461	30.5	724	30.3	1,185	30.4
Total direct entry	1,879	28.9	3,213	28.1	5,092	28.4
Entry by transfer						
Overseas lawyer	624	34.0	615	31.9	1,239	33.0
Barristers	103	34.9	117	30.9	220	32.8
FILEX	44	35.3	119	36.0	163	35.8
Justices' clerk	10	40.4	19	39.4	29	39.8
Total transfers	781	34.3	870	32.5	1,651	33.3
Route unknown	258	29.1	355	29.2	613	29.2
All admissions	2,918	100.0	4,438	100.0	7,356	100.0
%	39.7	30.3	60.3	29.1	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 2004–05 contrasted with the position one year and five years ago. In order to make the comparison, the 8.3% of admissions for whom the route was unknown in 2004–05 have been allocated pro rata to the other known categories. The table shows that the proportion of direct admissions has decreased from 78.2% of all admissions in 1999–2000 to 55.5% in 2004–05. The proportion of non-law graduates has decreased over the period, moving from 23.2% in 1999–2000 to 17.6% in 2004–05. The decrease in direct admission has been balanced by the increase in transfers in. These have increased from 21.8% of all admissions five years ago to 24.5% now.

Table 9.8 Trends in the main routes to admission to the Roll 1999–2000 to 2004–05

Routes to admission	1999–2000	2003–04	2004–05
Law degree	3,329	4,028	4,262
Non-law degree	1,405	1,416	1,293
Transfers	1,321	1,803	1,801
Total	6,056	7,247	7,356
Routes to admission	%	%	%
Law degree	55.0	55.6	57.9
Non-law degree	23.2	19.5	17.6
Transfers	21.8	24.9	24.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

9.9 We are also able to examine trends in the number of admissions drawn from minority ethnic groups. Table 9.9 shows the comparison between 1999–2000, 2003–04 and 2004–05. The table shows that, as a proportion of those admissions for whom the ethnicity was known, minority ethnic admissions represented 18.0% of the total in 2004–05 compared with 19.0% five years ago. Although the proportion was higher five years ago, in contrast, the trend in the intervening years, since 2001, has been for this proportion to consistently slightly increase. Most of the observed increase in numbers over the past five years has been fuelled by increases in Asian admissions. Over the past five years ‘Other’ admissions have increased by just over half and Asian admissions by just under one-quarter. The admissions from African-Caribbean and African minority groups have almost remained static. Chinese admissions have fallen over the period, down by 42.7%. It can also be seen that this data is degrading over time: ethnicity is now known for only 75.7% of admissions, compared with 76.4% in 1999–2000.

Table 9.9 Trends in admissions from minority ethnic groups to the Roll 1999–2000, 2003–04 and 2004–05

Ethnicity	1999–2000	2003–04	2004–05	% change	
				2005 over 2004	2005 over 2000
African-Caribbean	55	72	55	-23.6	0.0
Asian	449	558	558	0.0	24.3
Chinese	124	76	71	-6.6	-42.7
African	120	95	119	25.3	-0.8
Other	131	162	197	21.6	50.4
Total from minority ethnic groups	880	963	1,000	3.8	13.6
Number of admissions where ethnicity is known	4,624	5,417	5,569	2.8	20.4
Minority ethnic groups as a % of those with known ethnicity	19.0	17.8	18.0	1.0	-5.6
Total admissions	6,056	7,247	7,356	1.5	21.5
% of admissions with known ethnicity	76.4	74.7	75.7	1.3	-0.8
Male admissions	2,838	3,137	2,918	-7.0	2.8
Males as % of total	46.9	43.3	39.7		
Female admissions	3,218	4,110	4,438	8.0	37.9
Females as % of total	53.1	56.7	60.3		
Total admissions	6,056	7,247	7,356	1.5	21.5

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

- 9.10 In 2004–05 there were 1,000 admissions from minority ethnic groups out of a total of 7,356. Comparable figures for last year were 963 admissions out of a total of 7,247. The slight increase in the representation of ethnic minorities over the past year is largely accounted for by the increase in the number of African and ‘other’ minority ethnic admissions. Respectively these rose by 25.3% to 119 and by 21.6% to 197. In contrast to this, African-Caribbean and Chinese admissions fell by 23.6% and 6.6% respectively. Asian admissions remained static with the number of admissions this year matching exactly last years figure (558).
- 9.11 A fuller breakdown of admissions from minority ethnic groups in 2004–05 is shown in Table 9.11. This table analyses admissions by both gender and ethnicity and shows that last year 63.5% of those admitted from minority ethnic groups were female. This is a higher value than that for admissions as a whole (60.3%). Within minority ethnic groups, the proportion of female admissions was highest amongst the African-Caribbean group, 81.8%, and lowest amongst the ‘other’ minority ethnic group, 63.5%.

Table 9.11 Minority ethnic group admissions in 2004–05 by gender

Ethnic group	Male		Female		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.
African-Caribbean	10	18.2	45	81.8	55
Asian	195	34.9	363	65.1	558
Chinese	18	25.4	53	74.6	71
African	42	35.3	77	64.7	119
Other	72	36.5	125	63.5	197
Total admissions from minority ethnic groups	337	33.7	663	66.3	1,000
Number of admissions where ethnicity is known	2,054	36.9	3,515	63.1	5,569
Minority ethnic groups as a % of those with known ethnicity		16.4		18.9	18.0
Number of admissions where ethnicity is unknown	864	48.3	923	51.7	1,787
Total admissions	2,918	39.7	4,438	60.3	7,356
% of admissions with known ethnicity	70.4		79.2		75.7

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Appendices

Map of 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



List of tables

Table 1.3	Solicitors on the Roll with and without practising certificates by gender as at 31 July 2005	11
Table 1.5	Minority ethnic group solicitors on the Roll and with practising certificates as at 31 July 2005	12
Table 2.2	Solicitors holding practising certificates 1975 to 2005	13
Table 2.4	The age distribution of solicitors and participation rates as at 31 July 2005	14
Table 2.6	Experience of solicitors with practising certificates, measured by number of years qualified, as at 31 July 2005	15
Table 2.7	Practising certificate holders by category of employment as at 31 July 2005	16
Table 2.8	Distribution of practising certificate holders by category of employment as at 31 July 2005 compared with 1995	17
Table 2.9	Position of solicitors working in private practice and holding a practising certificate as at 31 July 2005	17
Table 2.11	The age distribution of sole practitioners and partners as at 31 July 2005	18
Table 2.12	Ethnic origin of practising certificate holders as at 31 July 2005	19
Table 2.14	Proportion of minority ethnic group solicitors with practising certificates in standard regions and abroad as at 31 July 2005	21
Table 2.15	Status of private practice solicitors by ethnicity as at 31 July 2005	22
Table 2.16	Distribution of pc holders in private practice by size of firm by ethnicity, as at the 31st July 2005	22
Table 3.1	Organisations employing solicitors by type of business as at 31 July 2005	23
Table 3.3	Trends in the number of private practice firms and offices	24
Table 3.5	Location (standard regions) of population and private practice firms and practitioners in 2005 . . .	25
Table 3.6	Number of firms in 2005, analysed by size and regional location of head office	26
Table 4.1	Admitted staff in private practice firms in 2005 by size of firm	27
Table 4.2	Number of admitted staff per principal in private practice firms in 2005 by size of firm	28
Table 4.3	Admitted staff in private practice firms in 2005 by Government region	28
Table 6.2	Home and overseas applicants and acceptances for university first degree law courses in England and Wales 2003 and 2004	33
Table 6.3	Proportion of law students accepted in 2003 and 2004 who were female or from overseas	34
Table 6.4	Minority ethnic students from the UK accepted to first degree law courses at universities and colleges in 2004	34
Table 6.5	Number of students graduating in law from universities in England and Wales 1999, 2003 and 2004	35
Table 6.7	Class of degrees in law awarded in England and Wales in summer 2004	36
Table 7.4	The ethnic origin and gender of students enrolling with the Law Society in 2004–05	38
Table 7.5	Trends in the ethnic origin of students enrolling with the Law Society	38
Table 8.2	Legal Practice Course results of summer examinations — July 2005	39
Table 8.3	Places on the Legal Practice Course for 2003–04, 2004–05 and 2005–06	40

Table 8.7	Number of traineeships registered in 1994–95, 1999–2000 and 2004–05 analysed by gender of trainee	.42
Table 8.8	Trainee registrations by ethnic origin and gender 2004–05	.42
Table 8.9	Trainee placements in 2004–05 analysed by Government Office Region	.43
Table 8.10	Trainee placements in 2004–05 analysed by category of employment of training institution	.44
Table 8.11	Trainee placements in 2004–05 analysed by the size of private practice firm in which trainees were located	.45
Table 8.12	Starting salaries for trainee solicitors	.45
Table 8.13	Trainees’ starting salaries by Government Office Region and gender	.46
Table 9.3	Men and women admitted to the Roll 1994–95 to 2004–05	.48
Table 9.4	The age distribution of solicitors admitted to the Roll in 2004–05	.49
Table 9.5	The routes to admission to the Roll in 2004–05	.50
Table 9.6	Analysis of transfers into the profession 2004–05	.51
Table 9.7	Average age on admission to the Roll by route to admission and gender 2004–05	.52
Table 9.8	Trends in the main routes to admission to the Roll 1999–2000 to 2004–05	.53
Table 9.9	Trends in admissions from minority ethnic groups to the Roll 1999–2000, 2003–04 and 2004–05	.54
Table 9.11	Minority ethnic group admissions in 2004–05 by gender	.55

List of charts

Chart 1	Growth in the number of solicitors with practising certificates 1950–2005	.13
Chart 2	The age of solicitors with practising certificates — 31 July 2005	.15
Chart 3	Percentages of men and women in private practice who were either partners or sole practitioners as at 31 July 2005 by years since admission	.18
Chart 4	Minority ethnic group solicitors as a proportion of total solicitors with practising certificates compared with people from ethnic minorities as a proportion of the total population, 2005	.20
Chart 5	Number of offices by size of firm in 2005	.24
Chart 6	Annual registration of trainees 1994–95 to 2004–05	.41
Chart 7	Growth in solicitors’ admissions to the Roll 1950–2005	.47

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