

# Pupil and Teacher Handbook

This guide aims to provide useful advice to prospective law students and school teachers who support them. Information inside includes; the route to qualification as a solicitor in Scotland; advice for UCAS applications and alternative careers in law.



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# About this Handbook



The Law Society of Scotland is passionate about everyone having equal opportunities to become a solicitor in Scotland. Therefore we have designed this handbook for pupils and teachers interested in learning more about a career in law.

This handbook will outline the key pieces of information for those hoping to apply for law. It will highlight the route to qualification in Scotland and advice around university applications.

There is also useful information for teachers hoping to support pupils with this process.

# Why Consider Law?

The legal industry in Scotland covers a wide range and varied range of topics. From Environmental Law to Corporate Law to Sports Law, there really is something for everyone! Law is a competitive industry and this is seen from entry level within university applications. It is important you consider the route to qualification and your career options when in the early stages of your legal journey.

Law as an undergraduate degree can open some great opportunities across a range of industries not just being a lawyer. It is a degree which is respected across a range of professions covering a host of industries.

Although law covers a large area of different areas there are some common skills which you might need to be a solicitor. If any of these skills stand out to you, maybe law is something for you to consider!

## Skills a Solicitor has:

- Good communicator, both verbally and written.
- Excellent analytical skills.
- Collaboration and working within a team.
- High attention to detail.
- Ability to work to deadlines.
- Interpersonal and enjoys working with people.



## Route to Qualification

In order to become a fully qualified solicitor in Scotland there is a number of steps you must complete. The vast majority of people take the 'standard route' to qualification, which is most-suited to those attending university for the first time.



### **The LLB in Scots Law**

The LLB takes the form of a 4 year undergraduate course in Scots Law.



### **The Diploma in Professional Legal Practice**

The Diploma (PEAT 1) in professional legal practice, it takes 1 year to complete full time at university.



### **The Traineeship**

The Traineeship (PEAT 2) is a 2 year paid job under the supervision of a Scottish qualified solicitor.

Once completed the necessary steps you will then be a fully qualified solicitor to practice in Scotland. There is more information on the route(s) to qualification on our website. The standard route is most common both there are other options depending on your circumstance.

More information can be found online here:

<https://www.lawscot.org.uk/qualifying-and-education/qualifying-as-a-scottish-solicitor/>

## More About Each Stage



### The LLB in Scots Law

- This is where you learn the law. You take core modules which are essential to practise.
- The LLB can take 2,3 or 4 years (Most students do a single honours LLB degree, which takes 4 years)
- You can do a different degree first in any subject, then the 'accelerated LLB', which takes 2 years.
- You can apply for a joint degree, to study another subject at the same time, e.g. 'Law with French' or 'Law and Business'.
- You can also study a combination of English and Scots Law by undertaking the dual-qualifying LLB.



### The Diploma in Professional Legal Practice

- The Diploma takes 1 year (full-time) or 2 years (part-time).
- It's different to the LLB as it is much more practical. You will do lots of group work, engage with more seminars and are taught by experts in the legal profession.
- 50% of subjects are compulsory; you can choose the other 50%.
- The Diploma has a university fee which you should consider when applying. This ranges from £8,000 - £11,000.



### The Traineeship

- At this stage, you enter the workplace! It works like a job, in that: You are paid at this stage
- You must apply for a traineeship, which is just like applying for a lot of graduate jobs
- You can choose what sort of employer you want to apply for and what areas of law you want to focus on
- You will have to catch up with your supervising solicitor every few months to make sure you are achieving all the requirements to qualify as a solicitor.

## Where can I Study Law?

There are 10 universities that are accredited by the Law Society of Scotland to offer the LLB. Whilst all offer the full-time course, which is the most popular, there are several alternative options such as the online LLB, part-time courses and accelerated options for graduates.

The Diploma is offered by 6 of the LLB universities, so it is important to note that not all LLB providers offer the Diploma course.

University	Full time LLB?	Part-time LLB*	Accelerated LLB*	Online LLB	Offers the Diploma
University of Aberdeen	✓		✓		✓
University of Abertay	✓				
University of Dundee	✓		✓		✓
University of Edinburgh	✓		✓		✓
Edinburgh Napier University	✓		✓		
University of Glasgow	✓		✓		✓
Glasgow Caledonian University	✓		✓		
Robert Gordon University	✓		✓	✓	✓
University of Stirling	✓	✓	✓		
University of Strathclyde	✓	✓	✓		✓

## Where's the best place to study law?

There is no right answer we can give to this question! Think about:

- Where you want to study and where you will feel happiest
- What sort of LLB you want to study (pure/combined/part-time)
- The options for electives (the courses you can choose)
- Your financial situation – how will you be funding your study

## Applying for Law

In order to apply for Law at university directly from school or college, you use the UCAS application portal. Your school should make you aware of UCAS applications in S5 or S6.

### Your **UCAS** Application

Within your UCAS application you have 5 choices. You might want to be strategic about these choices based on the university's entry requirements. Each of the 10 LLB unis have differing entry requirements and therefore, please check directly with the university before you apply. This can be found on all their websites or prospectus.

### Academic Requirements

- Some universities will require N5 English. Some universities will require N5 Maths or approved science.
- **Most Law courses require Higher English, so ensure this is included in your subject choice.**
- Advanced Highers are recommended, where possible as this prepares you for first year of uni.
- Minimum requirements range from AABB – AAAAA at Higher in a first sitting.

### General Advice

- We often get asked what subjects to study. We advise choosing a variety of subjects to show a breadth of study, and to keep options open.
- Take subjects you'll enjoy and do well in!
- Check each university's entrance requirements (e.g. Glasgow requires the LNAT).
- Offers: Typical offers across Scottish universities range from: AABB –AAAAA.



## Life as a Solicitor

### Once you're qualified you might;

- Stay at the firm where you undertook your traineeship after you qualify, if there's a job available.
- Move to a different employer and maybe work in a different area of law.
- Continue the career path as a solicitor, perhaps specialising or becoming a partner.
- Enter other careers such as becoming an advocate/judge.
- Consider the wide areas of law on offer such as; environmental law, family law, property law, public law.
- Join specialist groups within the Scottish legal industry such as a Law Society committee or bar association.

### Types of Law Firm in Scotland

#### Private Practice (Large Commercial)



Often specialising in international corporate Law and spanning across multiple countries. Clients usually include large businesses and public bodies.

#### Private Practice (Medium/Small)



Often covering a range of areas, including Family and Criminal Defense. These are firms usually any member of the public can access.

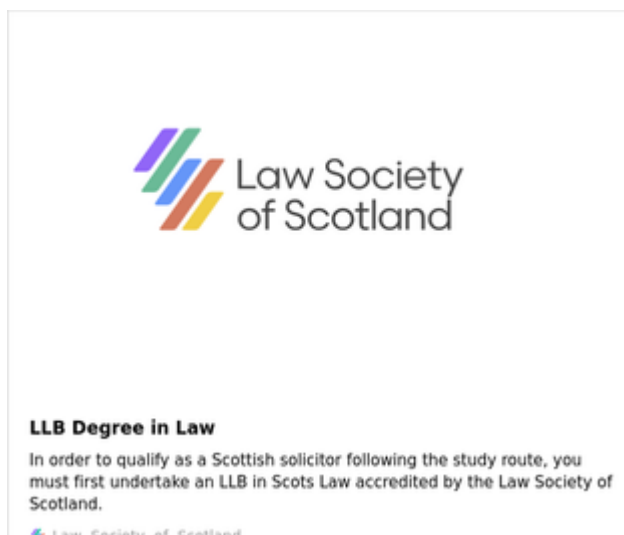
#### In House



This is usually a legal team based in a large organisation. You provide services for the organisation itself. Examples of such in Scotland include; RBS, Amazon & the Scottish Government.

## Advice for Teachers

When a pupil approaches you asking for advice on studying law at university it may be an unfamiliar area to you. Therefore, we advise teachers, careers advisors and parents to utilise this handbook and the Law Society of Scotland's website. There is a host of useful information on there to support pupils.



### When to advise a pupil to consider law?

- Law is a highly competitive and intensive profession. Pupils should be aware of the stages to qualify ahead of applying.
- It is an ideal profession for individuals who are interpersonal, have a close attention to detail and who are proficient in written and verbal communication skills.
- Universities advise that grades are their primary focus when selecting applicants however a good personal statement can make the difference between people with equal entry requirements.
- Most universities websites advise on what grades an offer would be given to which can be useful for setting expectations with pupils.

## Alternative Routes to Law

Some pupils look to embark in a career in law but don't meet the competitive entry requirements for the LLB. The Legal Services HND/C at college could be a good option if you are not yet ready for university. The programme allows students to understand the workings of the legal industry and give them hands on knowledge to practical legal administration and organisation.

### Colleges which provide the Legal Services HND:

- Glasgow City College
- North Lanarkshire College
- Edinburgh College
- Fife College
- North East Scotland College



**Please note that the Legal Services degree does not guarantee entry onto the LLB.** Check with LLB providers regarding requirements from college. Colleges often provide additional Higher to meet entry requirements.

## What other jobs are there in law?

The following roles are generally entry level roles which do not require a solicitor qualification. Paralegal roles may require a HND/C.

### Legal Researcher

Reporting on legislation and developments within the law.

### Law Firm Receptionist

Leading on front of house and client service at a law firm.

### Court Administrator

Helping the administration and running of the sheriff and high courts across Scotland.

### Paralegal

Paralegals help solicitors with case work and develop their own specialist area within the law.

### Police Scotland

There are a range of roles within this organisation not only police officers.

### PA to a Solicitor

Personal assistance help solicitors with their admin and organisation.

## The Lawscot Foundation

The Lawscot Foundation aims to support academically talented students from less-advantaged backgrounds in Scotland through their legal education journey. Through a bursary system the foundation aims to allocate financial support to successful candidates whilst studying law at university.

Applications for the Lawscot Foundation open annually in March and close in June. We highly encourage pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds to apply for the foundation. More information can be found on the website.



## Our Outreach Projects

The Law Society of Scotland put on a range of outreach projects throughout the year to school pupils. More information on each of these can be found below on our website.



[Donald Dewar Debate Tournament](#)



[Street Law](#)



[Virtual Summer School](#)




## Keep in Touch

### How can we help you?

- Information about qualifying as a solicitor can all be found on our website.
- Specific careers questions can be directed to our dedicated legal careers inbox: [careers@lawscot.org.uk](mailto:careers@lawscot.org.uk)
- Resources to support students throughout their LLB and Diploma.
- Traineeship support and confidential advice.
- Opportunities to get involved with the legal profession such as Street Law and our Summer School.

## Other Useful Links



**Corporate**  
The Skills Development Scotland Corporate site.  
Skills Development Scotland

**HE Information, Advice and Guidance**  
Information about higher education including applications and admissions processes, personal statements, finance and the wider costs and benefits of higher education. A number of ways of providing this information hav...



**Choose your future**  
At the heart of connecting people to higher education



**Employers**



**LEAPS**  
Promoting access to higher education since 1996



**FOCUS West**  
WIDENING ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE WEST OF SCOTLAND



**Home**  
FOCUS West is a schools programme that aims to widen access to Higher Education. Based...  
FocusWest

### DYW Scotland - Home

Developing the Young Workforce connects employers with education that young people develop the skills needed for the world of work.

DYW DYW