



Gardner
Leader

Opportunities for progression

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We are committed to encouraging the development of all staff. We understand the wish to feel challenged and supported, to know that you add value to the team and that aspirations and ambitions can be attained through many different routes.

Ensuring best practice is reached and exceeded in various areas, including legal expertise, compliance, business development, etc. we offer many training and development opportunities throughout your career.

To help you understand if a career at a legal firm is the right path for you, we offer work placements to students at all levels and across all of our offices. Many past students have returned to permanent employment with us.

For aspiring lawyers, we support all types of qualification and routes to becoming a lawyer. Alongside the traditional journey into law by initially obtaining a degree followed by the LPC (until 2032) you can now also choose to qualify under the SQE route. In addition to the LPC and SQE route other paths to obtaining a law qualification can be through The Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEx), CLC and apprenticeships.

However, there are many other paths for business support, legal support and lawyers to follow, to achieve further goals or manage a change in the direction they wish to pursue. GL have supported marketing, finance, technology, administration staff, and those working in a legal team to add to their formal qualifications or move to a different work area, that better suits their skills and aspirations.

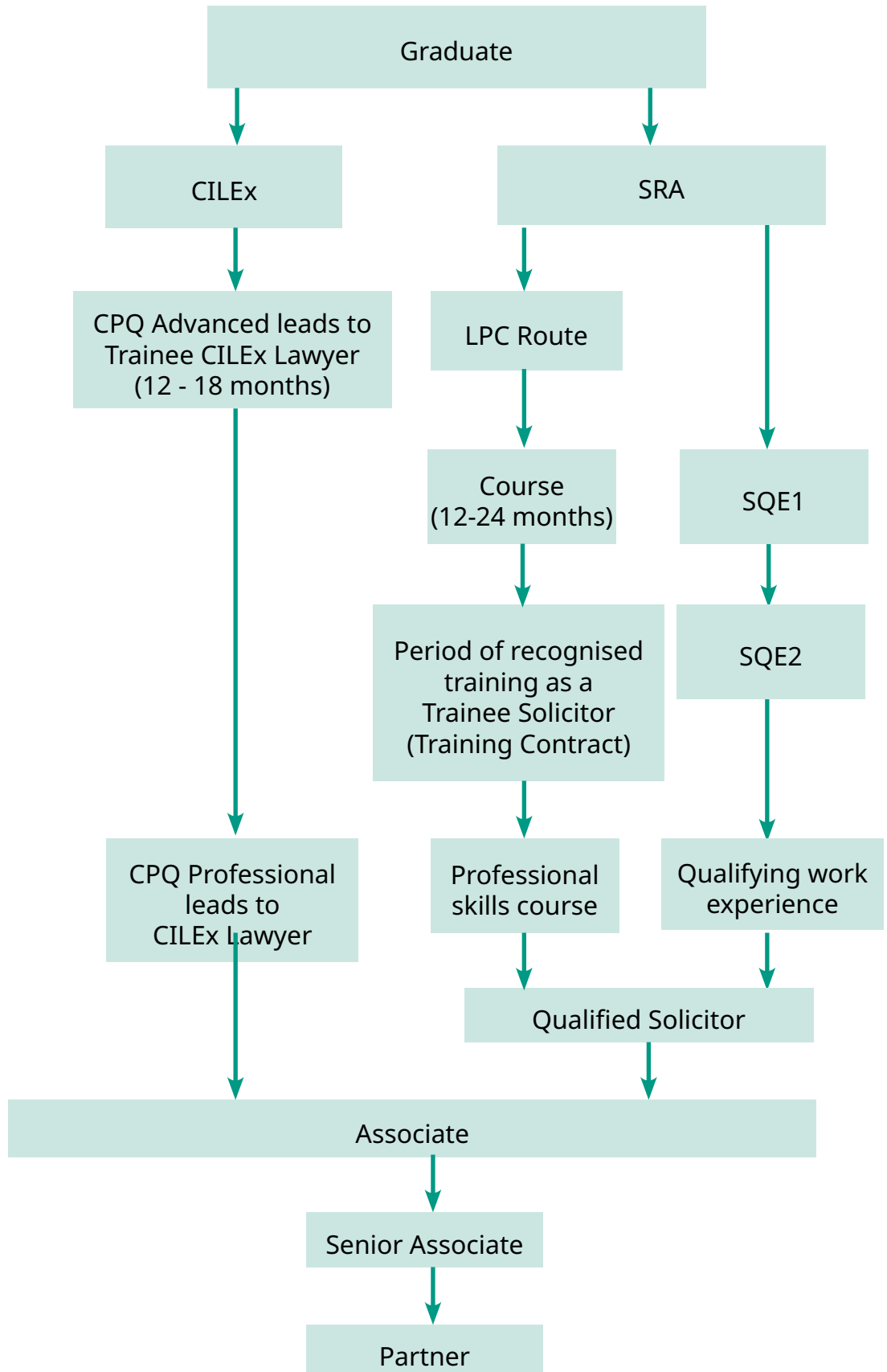
We provide full support to assist and develop individual goals: alongside several CILEx students amongst our colleagues, we are also currently supporting staff who have enrolled in a Solicitor Apprenticeship, ACCA and ILFM Finance qualification to add to their development. Should a different work area be of interest this is welcomed and we have recently had a case study of a staff member moving from Legal Support to take a CIPD qualification.

We hold regular career conversations each year, and you are encouraged to discuss your hopes and aspirations at these meetings and enquire as to ways that you may achieve them.



Career pathways with Gardner Leader

We offer clear pathways for those wanting to pursue a legal career, whether you are going through university or not.





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Case studies

Hana Krilovska - Chartered Legal Executive of CILEx

I joined GL in the Residential Property Team as a Post-exchange Assistant dealing with transactions from the exchange until post-completion. After a year, I was offered a position of a Pre-exchange Assistant working for two newly qualified Solicitors assisting them on matters such as purchases, sales or re-mortgages and transfers of equity. I was then moved to a more independent position as Paralegal/Trainee Legal Executive dealing with transfers of equities, re-mortgages, lease extensions or similar until I qualified as a Chartered Legal Executive. After my qualification I was promoted to a fee earner position and am currently dealing with a variety of matters such as purchases, sales, re-mortgages, and transfers of equity or staircasing or lease extension transactions on my own.

During my employment at GL I completed the Graduate Fast Track Diploma following my law degree with the Open University and have also completed the necessary qualifying employment and portfolio to become a Chartered Legal Executive. I am very grateful for the various opportunities at GL as I have gained great experience and knowledge in regards to the conveyancing process as a whole.

Lauren Gale - Solicitor

As a year 11 student I had the opportunity to do work experience at GL. I spent time in different teams and got a feel for what a career in law might be like, which ultimately led me to decide to do a law degree at Bournemouth University. As part of my degree, I needed to complete a placement in my third year before returning to university to complete my final year. I was able to secure a nine-month placement at GL.

During my placement year I worked in the Residential Property team. I really enjoyed my time with GL and felt that I had learnt a lot in a relatively short period of time, so much so that I stayed on for another three months until I had to go back to university to finish my degree. Towards the end of my final year, I was lucky enough to be offered a job back at GL in the same team.

On returning to GL I worked across two offices undertaking a variety of work. Throughout this time I completed the Legal Practice Course (LPC) at the University of Law in Reading part-time around my working hours. GL were very accommodating and allowed me to cut down my hours slightly to factor in my studies. On completing the LPC (and having been back at the firm over a year) I applied for a training contract.

As a Trainee Solicitor, I worked in the Inheritance Protection Team (now Wills, Probate and Estate Planning), the Contested Probate Team and the Corporate Team. Having only worked in Residential Property before my training seats, I had not given much thought to what other areas of law I might enjoy; however my seats offered me the opportunity to explore my career options and figure out what lay ahead. Ultimately I decided that Contested Probate was where I could see myself in future and I was able to qualify into the team in 2023.

Looking back on time at GL, I have been offered so many opportunities from my initial work experience which sparked my interest in a career in law, to now as a fully qualified solicitor, the impact that GL has had on my progression is immense and I now look forward to a (hopefully!) long and successful career.



Greg Humphreys - Partner

I joined in November 2000 as a Qualified Lawyer from South Africa. GL took a chance on my capabilities as they really didn't know how a SA Lawyer would fare. I started out as a Paralegal. My first few weeks were in Litigation doing bundles so I had to move on quickly from there!

I undertook the conversion course (QLTT) and then qualified as a Solicitor in 2002. GL provided amazing support throughout this process. After being promoted to an Associate, I then became a Salaried Partner in 2006 and an Equity Partner in 2009.

Andrew Shipp - Partner

I started work at GL in the summer of 1999 straight out of university. This was supposed to be a temporary role while I looked for a permanent job elsewhere. My initial role was to assist with archives. However, after 6 months, I was asked to also help out on reception.

Towards the end of 2000, I was still here. The Senior Partner offered me the opportunity to train as a Legal Executive. I jumped at the chance and qualified as a Legal Executive in 2005. In 2008, I decided to take the further exams necessary to qualify as a solicitor. I finished them in 2012. Following completion of the LPC and training contract, I qualified in November 2014. I was promoted to Associate in July 2016, then to Senior Associate in July 2018. I subsequently became a Salaried Partner in July 2020.

Lesley Popplewell

I started at Gardner Leader 7 years ago as a Junior Legal Cashier. Over the 7 years the firm has grown considerably, which in turn has developed my skills and knowledge. I started my journey at GL as a junior but with support from the firm I have progressed in the team to be one of the more senior members of Finance. One of my roles now is to train all the new starters, this gives me great sense of achievement and I feel like I have come full circle. I am also GL's Credit Controller.

I have been lucky enough to have the support from GL to gain my AAT level 2 qualification and become a qualified AAT bookkeeper. I know in the future if I want to gain any other qualifications or progress further in my team I will have the support from GL to do so.

There has always been a big social side within GL. Which I enjoy and try to get involved as much as I can. It has given me the opportunity to become part of the CSR committee, a captain for our GLX cross firm collaboration team. As well as taking part in two of the Evolve cycles. I have also been lucky enough to be involved in activities such as the LawNet walking challenge, rounders and quiz nights. All of these have helped me to gain confidence, grow as a person and network internally, helping me build relationships around our different offices. This has allowed me a better understanding how the different departments work and how they all come together to form Gardner Leader.



Further information

Legal Qualifications

[Chartered Institute of Legal Executives](#)

[Law Society Careers](#)

[CLC – The Specialist Property Law Regulator \(clc-uk.org\)](#)

Marketing

[Chartered Institute of Marketing](#)

Finance

[Institute of Legal Finance & Management](#)

HR

[Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development](#)