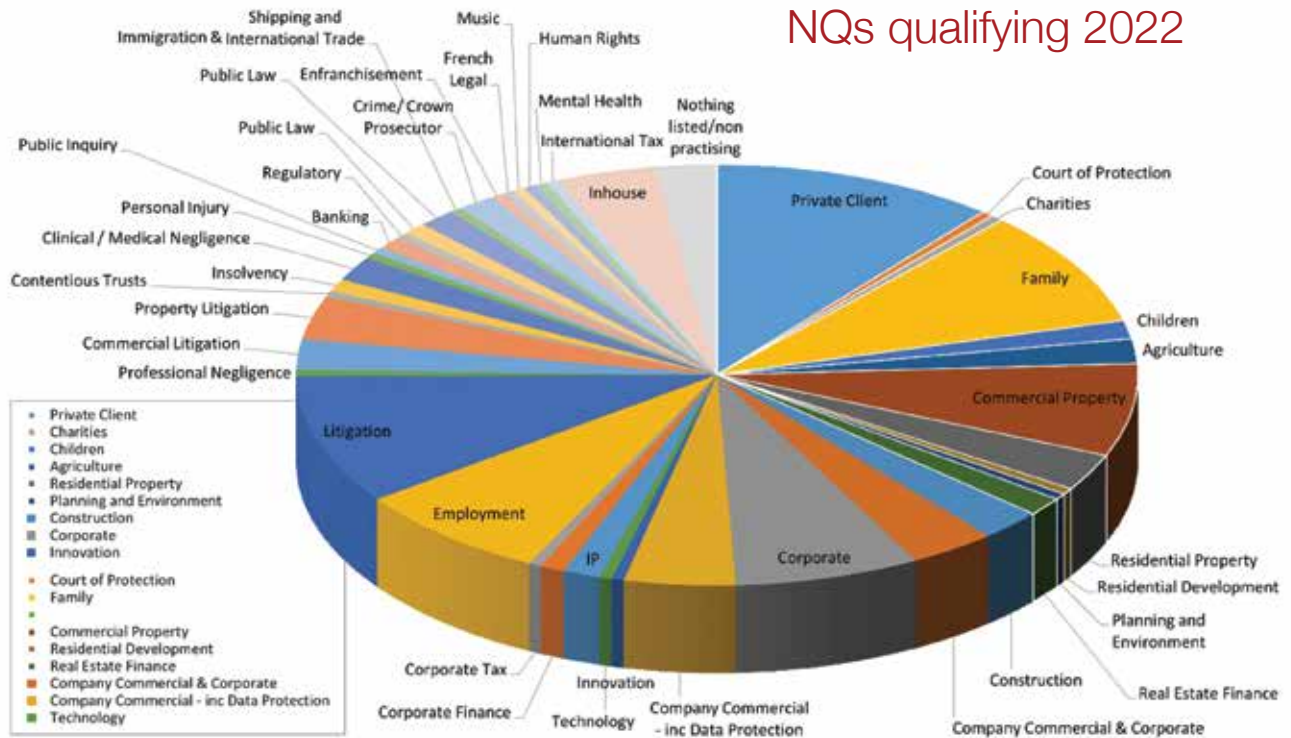


Market Overview: What did solicitors qualify into in 2022?

Is 2023 the year that you qualify as a solicitor? Do you know someone who is qualifying or are you just interested to know where firms are focusing their NQ hiring efforts? As part of our market insight, we are able to give you information on what the market has been doing these last 12 months, we have analysed those who became solicitors in 2022 and broken down the areas of law that they qualified into.

This is not an exact market overview, it is weighted to the east of the country and NQs that we know across East Anglia, Essex, East Midlands and some London based. We have looked at just over 200 NQs.



Notable large areas of qualification are private client (11%, 12% if you include Court of Protection and Charities), family (9%, 10% if you include children), litigation (10% but 19%-20% if you include specialisms) and employment law (8%). However, a mention definitely needs to go to corporate/ commercial as if you were to add all those specialisms together the market share would be 18-20%.

Another notable area is property; commercial (7%) and residential (3%) are at lower levels than we have seen for many years. For context in 2020 commercial property stood at 10% and residential at 5%, in 2019 the figures were commercial property 11% and residential 8%. So, a significant and ongoing downwards shift.

Again, for context in 2019 we saw family qualifiers were just 2% of the market so this is an area that is growing. Litigation and corporate/ commercial have maintained a fairly steady rate in recent years and private client has seen a very small drop over the years but again has been very steady.

Employment law has been a steady area for some years showing this to be an ongoing area of real need and appeal in the market.

This year, like last year, the most notable change has been the increase in specialism from early qualification. Areas like IP, technology, innovation, music, mental health, French legal, enfranchisement are all areas where 5 years ago they would not necessarily have been expressed as a specialist role, rather just fallen into the closest broad classification. Firms, it seems, are definitely looking for solicitors to specialise early. Inhouse has remained quite consistent too (2% in 2019, 5% in 2020, 2% in 2021 and now 5% in 2022).

With so many choices out there it can be a minefield to know what direction to take. Some trainees have a very clear idea of direction, others like all their seats equally and find it hard to decide. Trainees can take seats in areas they

have no interest in and find themselves qualified without the experience they were hoping for.

Key questions to ask yourself if you are qualifying are:

1. Do I like the work in this area of law or just the team?
2. Can I see myself challenged by this area of law for the long term?
3. Will I be interested in, and passionate about this area of law for my whole career?
4. Do I have any long term career plans (working overseas, in-house) that are better suited to a specific legal area?

Whatever your situation we are very happy to talk to you about the market, your career plans and the direction you want to take. I'm very happy to connect on LinkedIn, talk online or arrange a phone call to discuss your plans throughout 2023, whatever stage you are at in your career.



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