



LawCab

CENTRAL
APPLICATIONS BOARD
LTD

ANNUAL REPORT 2019



Central Applications Board Limited

Company number 09156393

ANNUAL REPORT

2019

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LIST OF COMPANY DIRECTORS, OFFICERS AND ADVISERS

Directors

Robert Heslett	Chairman
David Amos	City University London
Joanna Ballard	University of Law
Andrew Callaghan	University of Sheffield
Andrew Chadwick	BPP University
Helen Chalk	Manchester Metropolitan University
Pete Edge	University of Law
Russell Hewitson	University of Northumbria
Helen Hudson	Nottingham Law School
Mumtaz Hussain	University of Wolverhampton
Viv Ivins	University of Central Lancashire
Byron Jones	Cardiff University
John Koo	London South Bank University

Company Secretary

Alison Hook	Hook Tangaza
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Representative for the Solicitors Regulation Authority

Julie Brannan

Auditors

CMB Partnership Ltd,

Legal Advisers

Clyde and Co LLP, The St Botolph Building, 138 Houndsditch, London, EC3A 7AR

Registered Address

The St Botolph Building, 138 Houndsditch, London, EC3A 7AR

MEMBERS AT DECEMBER 2019

Anglia Ruskin University
Birmingham City University
Bournemouth University
BPP University Limited
Cardiff University
City, University of London
De Montford University
Leeds Law School (Leeds Beckett)
Liverpool John Moores University
London Metropolitan University
London South Bank University
Manchester Metropolitan University
Nottingham Law School
Oxford Brookes University
Sheffield Hallam University
Staffordshire University
Swansea University
The University of Law Limited
The University of Westminster
University of Brighton
University of Central Lancashire
University of Derby (from July 2019)
University of East Anglia
University of Hertfordshire
University of Northumbria
University of Plymouth
University of Sheffield
University of South Wales
University of Sunderland
University of Sussex
University of West London
University of West of England
University of Wolverhampton

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I am pleased to share with you the CAB Ltd Annual Report for 2019, which covers the Company's activities over the academic year 2019-20. As previously, the report is divided into two sections. Part 1 contains statutory information about the Company's finances, board activities and membership, and part 2 provides members with more information about the market for the GDL and LPC and how it has evolved in recent years.

Members will note that we include in the Report extended data from previous years and we have carried out more analysis of applicants by equality and diversity indicators as well as by nationality.

Our intention in doing so is twofold. Firstly we want to help members to understand as much as possible about the wider pool of applicants for postgraduate law courses - as you adapt your offers to the post-SQE world, the information provided in this report may help you in considering the development of new courses. Secondly, we believe it will be useful to have a baseline understanding of equality and diversity statistics at this stage of the qualification process before the SQE is launched.

This Annual Report exemplifies the Board's intention that the Company should alongside its members embrace and adapt to the post SQE world. The Board believes that the Company is, and will be, uniquely placed to deal with both the ongoing applications processes through and beyond a period of immense change, and be able to help aspiring students understand the choices they face and what the implication of those choices will be. It is a privilege to sit with a board determined on securing the best outcomes for both members and students and in that we trust that we shall collectively have your support in the challenging times ahead.

R A Heslett CBE

Chairman

PART 1: THE COMPANY AND ITS ACTIVITIES

Report on Services

The Central Applications Board Ltd (CAB Ltd), operating as LawCab, provides a number of services to the postgraduate professional legal qualification market:

- It provides applications handling services to its members, who represent all providers of the currently mandatory courses required for qualification as a solicitor of England and Wales and maintains a bespoke online application system for this purpose.
- It provides members with weekly statistical updates on applications, both those in progress and those submitted.
- It provides applicants with guidance on making their applications.

More detail on each of these services is set out below.

(a) Applications Handling

LawCab handles applications for full-time places on both the Legal Practice Course (LPC) and the Graduate Diploma in Law/Common Professional Examination Course (GDL/CPE/GDL).

The total number of new applications¹ handled by CAB in 2019 rose by 4% on the previous year - from 12,555 in academic year 2018/19 to 13,060 in 2019/20. These applications resulted in 10,105 total enrolments for the GDL and LPC combined in 2019/20 compared to 9,529 in 2018/19.

Overall, there has been a steady recovery in new GDL/LPC applications and enrolment numbers over the last five years, however they still remain below historic highs. As a point of comparison, in 2007/8, immediately pre-financial crisis, total new applications for professional law courses stood at 16,286 and enrolments at 11,478. So, whilst enrolments are back at 88% of pre-crisis levels, applications are still only at 80%. At the time of writing, the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on applications and careers within the legal profession is unclear. An oral update will be given at the AGM.

Table 1: Applications for the Legal Practice Course (LPC), 2014-19

Year	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Total Applications (including deferrals)	7,402	7,731	7,980	8,405	8,576	8,921
New Applications	6,991	7,180	7,399	7,774	7,993	8,314
Enrolment	5,547	5,644	6,010	6,400	6,545	4,115
<i>Annual change in total applications</i>	<i>-0.5%</i>	<i>4.4%</i>	<i>3.2%</i>	<i>5.3%</i>	<i>2.0%</i>	<i>4.0%</i>
<i>Annual change in enrolment</i>	<i>5.0%</i>	<i>3.4%</i>	<i>6.5%</i>	<i>6.5%</i>	<i>2.3%</i>	<i>5.4%</i>

¹ New applications exclude deferred applications which are included in total application figures.

Table 2: Applications for the Graduate Diploma in Law/Common Professional Examination (GDL/CPE/GDL), 2014-19

<i>Year</i>	<i>2014/15</i>	<i>2015/16</i>	<i>2016/17</i>	<i>2017/18</i>	<i>2018/19</i>	<i>2019/20</i>
Total Applications (including deferrals)	4,744	5,151	5,308	5,214	4,998	5,156
New Applications	4,510	4,878	4,928	4,804	4,562	4,746
Enrolment	2,998	2,897	3,063	3,066	2,984	3,209
<i>Annual change in total applications</i>	<i>-1.9%</i>	<i>8.6%</i>	<i>3.0%</i>	<i>-1.8%</i>	<i>-4.1%</i>	<i>3.2%</i>
<i>Annual change in enrolment</i>	<i>2.9%</i>	<i>-3.4%</i>	<i>5.7%</i>	<i>0.1%</i>	<i>-2.7%</i>	<i>7.5%</i>

More detailed information and statistical analysis of the evolution of the market for CPE/GDL/LPC courses is provided in part 2 of this report.

(b) System updates and improvements

The LawCab IT system was designed and managed by the University of Law (ULaw) from inception. However, it became clear a few years ago that the applications processing system was running on a technology that had become obsolete and which ULaw no longer had the in-house capability to support. In agreement with ULaw and with the help of third-party developers, the Company implemented a plan in the course of 2019/20 designed to safeguard the LawCab system for the future.

This involved:

- Re-platforming the current application system on a backend-first approach with a primary focus on data, security, and business logic.
- Ensuring that the new system is responsive to mobile technology.
- Making changes to the way in which referees interact with the system to remove GDPR vulnerabilities.
- Creating a technology stack on which new services can be built (e.g. it will now be possible for example to build an API which will allow member institutions to integrate LawCab applications more easily with their own application systems).
- Move server provision to AWS Cloud services rather than a single physical location. This gives the system IT industry standard data security, service robustness and flexibility to deal with changing levels of demand on the service.

The new system was developed over the second half of 2019 and launched in March 2020. This represented the first stage of development and the Board intends to keep investing in further improvements. The objective is to ensure that LawCab has a system which is robust enough to meet the challenges of the introduction of the SQE and to enable it to adapt and provide new services to members and applicants.

(c) Statistical updates

LawCab supplies member institutions with an annual 'Final Figures Report', which provides detailed data on applications, offers and enrolments by institution, as well as weekly statistical updates throughout the year. The latter give the latest position on applications and unique applicants, including applications in progress, those awaiting references and payments and those that have been submitted. The weekly statistical update also shows applications and number of applicants at each stage of the process, compared to the previous year.

(d) Guidance to Applicants

The LawCab secretariat continues to handle a large number of email queries from applicants, ranging from between 2,500 a month to as many as 5,000 a month in busy periods of the year. Whilst many of these are routine requests to change institution choices or referee details, a significant number, especially from overseas students, require more sophisticated guidance. Although the number of queries relating to the SQE has so far been negligible, LawCab is increasingly acting as an entry point and signpost to other sources of information about the solicitor qualification process.

Report on Board Activity and Company Management

Company management

The services provided by CAB Ltd are supplied by Hook Tangaza, a specialist legal sector consultancy, since August 2018 under a management contract. The key contacts for CAB members are Alison Hook, CAB Ltd Company Secretary and Rebecca Bramble-McDade, LawCab Operations Manager. The CAB Ltd Board provides active oversight of the company.

Board membership

The composition of the CAB Ltd Board was relatively stable throughout 2019. The Board recruited Joanna Ballard as the academic representative of the University of Law to replace Susan Drury who had retired from the Board in 2017. Joanna's appointment was confirmed by the members at the 2019 AGM along with the appointments of Helen Chalk of Manchester Metropolitan University and Mumtaz Hussain of the University of Wolverhampton.

Board Meetings

The CAB Ltd Board met on five occasions in 2019 – three times in person and twice by telephone conference. The Board also appointed a sub-group comprising: Robert Heslett, Andrew Callaghan, Byron Jones, Pete Edge, Andrew Chadwick and Helen Hudson, to oversee the IT system development project.

Priorities for the Board

In 2019, the CAB Ltd Board focused on two key issues:

- Ensuring that the LawCab applications system was fit for purpose in its ability to support applicants accessing the service through a range of internet browsers, as well as through mobile technology; and to ensure its continued robustness from a data security perspective;
- Preparing LawCab for the future to ensure it is best placed to support members and students as the SQE is rolled out.

The Board therefore commissioned a programme of work in 2019 which involved the following:

- Contracting an IT consultancy, Kinza Consulting, to review the CAB applications system hosted by the University of Law and to make recommendations on the need for changes or upgrades, including on how the site could be hosted elsewhere, given the declared wish of the University of Law to discontinue supporting the LawCab system in the near future.
- Following the recommendations of this review, the Board decided to opt for a re-platforming of the LawCab system. This was both a recognition of the potential data security risk involved in continuing to rely on a technology stack that would no longer be supported from mid-2020 onwards and a conscious decision to recreate the current LawCab system on a new platform that would have the flexibility to adapt to the new demands created by the introduction of the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE).

- The Board agreed to invest a significant proportion of the Company's reserves in developing the applications system. The IT design and development studio, Digital Detox provided LawCab with the required expertise to build the new site, work on which began in September 2019. The new site was launched on 17 March 2020 and the Company is continuing to invest in its development. Although some of CAB Ltd's reserves were spent on preparatory work in FY 2018/19, much of the financial impact of the new system development has fallen in FY 2019/20 and will be reflected in the Company's report next year.

Company Financial Position

Table 3 below shows the income/expenditure position of the Company for financial year 31 July 2018 to 31 July 2019.

Table 3: Company Financial Statement, 2018-19

	<i>Year to 31.7.2018</i>	<i>Year to 31.7.2019</i>
	£,000s	£,000s
<i>Income</i>	139.4	161.0
<i>Expenditure</i>	-153.5	-235.8
<i>Surplus/Deficit</i>	-14.1	-74.7
<i>Reserves</i>	266.7	192.0

As outlined above, the Company planned to run a deficit in FY 2018/19, in order to invest in the LawCab applications system and prepare it for the future. Given the level of investment in the applications system and website undertaken in 2019 and foreseen for 2020, the Board took the decision to raise the application fee back to £15 (including VAT) from March 2019 and then to raise it further to £20 (including VAT) from October 2019.

The deficit for financial year 2018/19 of £74.7k included £30k which was spent on pre-development work related to the upgrade of the IT system and around £45k of exceptional items relating to the handover in August 2018 of LawCab management from the Legal Education Foundation (LEF) to Hook Tangaza (e.g. redundancy payments, a final payment to the LEF and legal services relating to the new contracts).

The company financial statement and audited accounts for financial year 2018/19 will be presented to members at the 2020 Annual General Meeting.

PART 2: STATISTICAL REPORT

This section of the annual report covers statistical information for 2019/20 together with historical data from recent years to give more context. It covers: The evolution of the market for professional legal education courses, trends in applicant behaviour, applicant demographics and equality and diversity indicators, routes to university courses, funding and career intentions.

The Market for Professional Legal Education in 2019/20

The Supply of LPC Places

In 2019/20, 26 institutions made available 11,021 full-time places on the Legal Practice Course (LPC); an increase just over 1% in the number of places offered in 2018/19 by 25 institutions. Enrolments also increased slightly over the same period and the proportion of available places² filled by full-time students increased from 60% to 63%.

The extent to which individual institutions used their potential capacity to take LPC students varied widely. Utilisation rates fell to around 20% or less for a few universities, although around 10 universities filled at least 63% of their available places and 6 filled more than 80% of their places.

Table 4: The Evolution of the Supply of LPC Places, 2014-2020

<i>Year</i>	<i>2014/15</i>	<i>2015/16</i>	<i>2016/17</i>	<i>2017/18</i>	<i>2018/19</i>	<i>2019/20</i>
<i>Places available</i>	11,261	11,031	10,871	10,901	10,901	10,901
<i>Number of offers made</i>	13,505	13,810	13,523	13,780	14,967	15,614
<i>Number of rejections</i>	660	748	707	727	1,009	2,248
<i>Enrolment</i>	5,457	5,644	6,010	6,400	6,545	6,896
<i>Unfilled Places</i>	5,714	5,387	4,861	4,501	4,438	4,115
<i>Av. Utilisation Rate</i>	49%	51%	55%	59%	60%	63%
<i>Rejections/Offer %</i>	4.9%	5.4%	5.2%	5.3%	6.7%	14.4%

The LPC market nonetheless remains highly competitive for institutions, with 15,614 offers made in response to 8,314 new applications for courses in 2019/20. However, admission policies appear to differ significantly: The number of rejections made by institutions as a proportion of their unfilled places varied in 2019 between 1% and over 100%, suggesting a wide variation in attitudes towards filling up places on courses.

² Although the concept of 'available places' is not the same as the formal regulatory requirement of 'validated places' and contains a degree of flexibility, it is nonetheless a useful indicator of capacity in the system.

The Supply of CPE/GDL Places

In 2019/20, 26 member institutions made available 5,624 full-time places on the Common Professional Examination Course (CPE/GDL). This compares to the 5,632 places made available in 2018/19 - a continuation in the downward trend in CPE/GDL places offered since the peak in 2009/10.

The rise in the number of rejections and the increase in the ratio of rejections to total number of offers made by member institutions in 2018/19 was marked. Overall, the pattern of rejections might suggest that the quality of candidates for the CPE/GDL may have declined in recent years. But the increase in enrolments as a proportion of applications could equally point in the opposite direction. What underlies this apparent contradiction seems to be the existence of a relatively small number of candidates (estimated at no more than 100), who made more than one round of applications, having been rejected by all of their initial choices. Most of these individuals are overseas applicants which suggests that there is more guidance that LawCab could give to international applicants to enable them to verify their eligibility before they make an application.

Table 5: The Evolution of the Supply of CPE/GDL Places, 2014-19

Year	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Places available	5,923	5,783	5,689	5,769	5,632	5,624
<i>Number of offers made</i>	7,560	9,407	9,646	9,202	8,810	8,944
<i>Number of rejections</i>	840	1,308	1,220	1,197	1,550	1,822
Enrolment	2,998	2,897	3,063	3,066	2,984	3,209
Unfilled Places	2,925	2,886	2,626	2,703	2,648	2,386
<i>Av. Utilisation Rate</i>	51%	50%	54%	53%	53%	57%
Rejections/Offers %	11%	13.9%	12.6%	13%	17.6%	20.4%

The Demand for CPE/GDL and LPC Places

Tables 6 and 7 show how the demand for LPC and CPE/GDL courses has evolved in recent years. Applications for the LPC continued their trend rise from post-financial crisis lows but CPE/GDL applications have bounced back after a couple of years of declining demand. At the time of writing this report (mid-April 2020), any impact of COVID-19 on applications for the 2020/21 academic year was not yet visible and indeed trend increases in both LPC and CPE/GDL/GDL applications were evident.

Table 6: The Evolution of the Demand for LPC Places, 2014-2020

Year	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Enrolment	5,547	5,644	6,010	6,400	6,545	6,896
New applications	6,991	7,180	7,399	7,774	7,993	8,314
Deferrals	411	551	581	631	583	582
Total Applications (including deferrals)	7,402	7,731	7,980	8,405	8,576	8,921
Enrolments as % of applications	75%	73%	75%	76%	76%	77%
Annual change in total applications	-0.5%	4.4%	3.2%	5.3%	2.0%	4.0%
Annual change in enrolment	5.0%	3.4%	6.5%	6.5%	2.3%	5.3%

Table 7: The Evolution of the Demand for CPE/GDL Places, 2014-20

Year	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Enrolment	2,998	2,897	3,063	3,066	2,984	3,209
New applications	4,510	4,878	4,928	4,804	4,562	4,746
Deferrals	234	273	380	410	436	441
Total Applications (including deferrals)	4,744	5,151	5,308	5,214	4,998	5,156
Enrolments as % of applications	63%	56%	58%	59%	60%	62%
Annual change in total applications	-1.9%	8.6%	3.0%	-1.8%	-4.1%	4.0%
Annual change in enrolment	2.9%	-3.4%	5.7%	0.1%	-2.7%	7.5%

Trends in Applicant Behaviour

The LawCab application statistics suggest some interesting trends in behaviour of aspiring entrants to the legal profession.

(a) Deferrals

Firstly, there has been a growing tendency over recent years for applicants for both LPC and CPE/GDL courses to defer their places. However, deferrals for LPC places as a percentage of enrolments appear to have peaked in 2018/19 at 9% of enrolments and have now fallen back slightly to 8.4%. Deferrals from the CPE/GDL have also fallen back slightly from 14.6% in 2018/19 to 13.7% in 2019/20. The implications of deferrals, especially from the CPE/GDL, as the introduction of

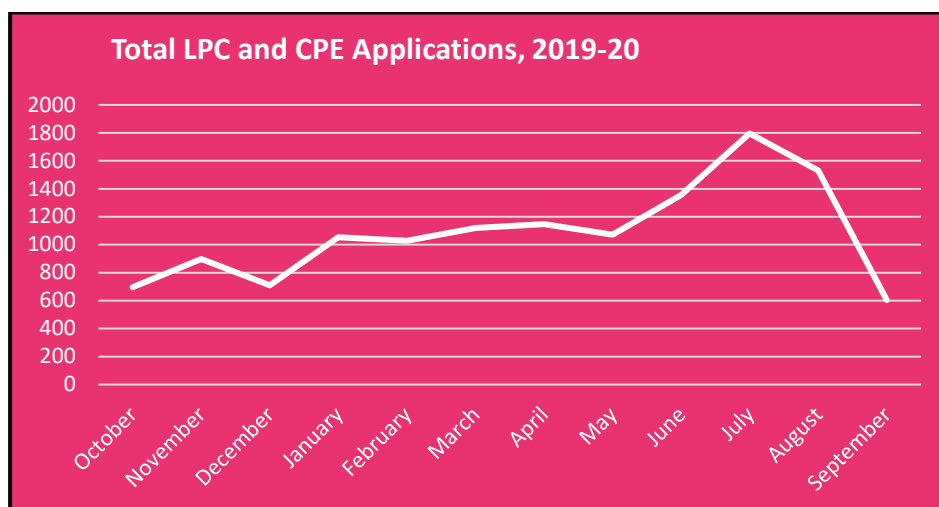
the SQE gets closer, is one that institutions need to consider, and which needs to be brought to applicants' attention.

(b) Timing of applications

The timing of applications for both the CPE/GDL and LPC have got progressively later in recent years. In 2011, 55% of CPE/GDL applications for courses starting in the next academic year were made before 1 March, but for course start dates in 2019/20 this had fallen to 34%. This trend was even more marked for the LPC – in 2011, 88% of LPC candidates applied before 1 March but by 2019 this had fallen to 35%.

The distribution of applications across the year, as shown in figure 1, has shown a consistent pattern in the last couple of years with a peak application period in May-August. This has implications for SQE transitional arrangements for the CPE/GDL in particular, as it suggests that there are candidates from non-law backgrounds looking for course options as early as October, for entry on GDL courses starting in the following January/February or even for GDL entry in the following September.

Figure 1: The Timing of Applications, 2019-20



Applicant Demographics and Equality and Diversity Indicators

Gender

Tables 9 and 10 below, illustrate that female applicants continue to dominate entry to the legal profession at both GDL and LPC levels. Female candidates make up just under 60% of GDL applications and enrolments and around 63% of LPC applications and enrolments. Although female applicants are not only more numerous but also more successful than male applicants in gaining entry to the GDL, this difference is eliminated at the LPC level, with both male and female applicants having around a 78% chance of enrolling in an LPC course.

Table 9: CPE/GDL Applicants by Gender, 2018-20

	2018-19			2019-20		
	as % total applicants	as % total enrolments	Enrolments as % Applicants	as % total applicants	as % total enrolments	Enrolments as % Applicants
Male	42.1%	40.8%	59.8%	41.6%	41.0%	63.1%
Female	57.9%	59.2%	63.2%	58.4%	59.0%	64.7%
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	61.8%	100.0%	100.0%	64.0%

Table 10: LPC Applicants by Gender, 2018-20

Gender	2018-19			2019-20		
	as % total applicants	as % total enrolments	Enrolments as % Applicants	as % total applicants	as % total enrolments	Enrolments as % Applicants
Male	36.1%	36.1%	78.2%	35.2%	35.5%	78.1%
Female	63.9%	63.9%	78.4%	64.8%	64.5%	77.3%
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	78.3%	100.0%	100.0%	77.6%

Although LawCab introduced the option of an Mx-Other category into the registration system in 2018, no candidates have yet opted to use this designation. We will review this categorisation as the application form is reviewed over the coming year and endeavour to bring definitions in line with HESA and SRA statistical demands.

Age

In terms of age, the majority of applicants and enrolments for both the CPE/GDL and LPC are under the age of 25. Although there was a noticeable increase in 2019/20 in the proportion of applicants and enrolments on both courses from the 26-35 age group.

Table 11a: CPE/GDL Applicants by Age Range

Age group	2018/19		2019/20	
	Applications	As % Total applications	Applications	% Total Applications
16-25	2,901	63.7%	2,725	57.4%
26-35	1,066	23.4%	1,444	30.4%
36-45	384	8.4%	399	8.4%
45 +	201	4.4%	178	3.8%
TOTAL	4,552	100.0%	4,746	100.0%

Table 11b: CPE/GDL Enrolments by Age Range

<i>Age group</i>	<i>2018/19</i>		<i>2019/20</i>	
	Enrolments	As % Total applications	Enrolments	% Total Enrolments
16-25	2,086	74.2%	1,999	65.8%
26-35	508	18.1%	784	25.8%
36-45	150	5.3%	180	5.9%
45 +	68	2.4%	76	2.5%
TOTAL	2,812	100.0%	3,039	100.0%

(N.B. Enrolment totals do not match those shown in tables 5 and 7 because of partial information received from institutions on the demography of their enrolments)

Over-35s slightly increased their representation in total CPE/GDL enrolments in 2019/20 (8.4% compared to 7.7% in 2018/19), despite representing a slightly smaller proportion of overall applications (12.2% in 2019/20 compared to 12.8% in 2018/19). Nonetheless, the probability that a CPE/GDL applicant over the age of 35 would enrol in a course remained significantly lower (44%) than that for an under 25-year old (73%).

Table 12a: LPC applicants by Age Range

<i>Age group</i>	<i>2018/19</i>		<i>2019/20</i>	
	Applications	As % Total applications	Applications	% Total applications
16-25	6,219	77.9%	5,835	70.2%
26-35	1,239	15.5%	1,944	23.4%
36-45	329	4.1%	314	3.8%
45 +	196	2.5%	221	2.6%
TOTAL	7,983	100.0%	8,314	100.00%

Table 12b: LPC Enrolments by Age Range

<i>Age group</i>	<i>2018/19</i>		<i>2019/20</i>	
	Enrolments	As % Total applications	Enrolments	% Total Enrolments
16-25	5,072	81.1%	4,684	72.6%
26-35	891	14.3%	1,468	22.8%
36-45	179	2.9%	186	2.9%
45 +	109	1.7%	112	1.7%
TOTAL	6,251	100.0%	6,450	100.0%

Under-35s continue to account for around 93% of applications and 95% of LPC enrolments, with much of the difference between these figures probably being accounted for by the length of the application cycle and the fact that candidates will have birthdays in the period between applying and enrolling.

As in the case of the CPE/GDL, the probability of applicants eventually enrolling in an LPC course was significantly lower for the over-35 age group (56%) compared to the under-25s (80%).

Ethnicity

The makeup of all CPE/GDL and LPC applicants and enrolments by ethnicity is shown in tables 13 and 14

Table 13a: LPC Applicants by Ethnicity, 2019/2020

	Total applicants	% of Total	UK nationality applicants	% of UK nationality applicants
<i>White</i>	4,495	54.1%	3,798	61.8%
<i>Unknown</i>	204	2.5%	110	1.8%
<i>Black African</i>	765	9.2%	375	6.1%
<i>Asian Pakistani</i>	601	7.2%	490	8.0%
<i>Asian Indian</i>	537	6.5%	389	6.3%
<i>Asian Chinese</i>	296	3.6%	97	1.6%
<i>Asian Other</i>	300	3.6%	150	2.4%
<i>Other ethnic background</i>	310	3.7%	154	2.5%
<i>Black Caribbean</i>	179	2.2%	105	1.7%
<i>Asian Bangladeshi</i>	163	2.0%	132	2.1%
<i>Mixed - Other mixed background</i>	150	1.8%	88	1.4%
<i>Mixed - White and Asian</i>	164	2.0%	138	2.2%
<i>Mixed - White and Black Caribbean</i>	72	0.9%	67	1.1%
<i>Black Other</i>	27	0.3%	16	0.3%
<i>Mixed - White and Black African</i>	51	0.6%	37	0.6%
TOTAL	8314	100.0%	6,146	100.0%

For the first time we have looked separately at ethnicity for the entire cohort of applicants and for those who have designated themselves UK nationals.

Table 13b: LPC Enrolments by Ethnicity, 2019/20

	Total enrolments	% of Total	UK nationality enrolments	% of UK nationality enrolments
<i>White</i>	3,740	58.0%	3,206	63.6%
<i>Unknown</i>	151	2.3%	88	1.7%
<i>Black African</i>	469	7.3%	279	5.5%
<i>Asian Pakistani</i>	424	6.6%	372	7.4%
<i>Asian Indian</i>	422	6.5%	322	6.4%
<i>Asian Chinese</i>	217	3.4%	80	1.6%
<i>Asian Other</i>	221	3.4%	120	2.4%
<i>Other ethnic background</i>	229	3.6%	119	2.4%
<i>Black Caribbean</i>	123	1.9%	84	1.7%
<i>Asian Bangladeshi</i>	103	1.6%	92	1.8%
<i>Mixed - Other mixed background</i>	112	1.7%	72	1.4%
<i>Mixed - White and Asian</i>	134	2.1%	115	2.3%
<i>Mixed - White and Black Caribbean</i>	50	0.8%	48	1.0%
<i>Black Other</i>	20	0.3%	14	0.3%
<i>Mixed - White and Black African</i>	35	0.5%	26	0.5%
TOTAL	6,450	100.0%	5,037	100.0%

Table 13c below, illustrates how likely applicants of different ethnic backgrounds are likely to turn into enrolments and how the success rate of applicants with UK nationality compares to all applicants.

This shows that UK nationals are statistically more likely than non-UK nationals to make successful applications to LPC courses, and that in virtually all cases white UK applicants have a higher chance of enrolment than any other ethnic group (with the exception of UK applicants citing a ‘black-other’ ethnicity – for whom numbers are very small). Nonetheless amongst UK applicants there is still a significant disparity in the likelihood of an applicant with a non-white ethnicity being successful, this is less pronounced once international applicants are removed.

Table 13c also shows, the variance from the UK average in the success rate of applications by ethnic group. It also shows how BAME composition differs between the LPC and CPE/GDL, illustrating that UK applicants for the LPC who cite Black African, Asian Pakistani or Asian Bangladeshi ethnicity are less likely than candidates of other ethnicities to progress from the CPE/GDL to LPC.

Table 13c: Enrolments as a % of Applications: Breakdown by Ethnicity and UK Nationality, LPC 2019/20

	Total enrolments/ applicants, %	UK enrolments/ applicants %	UK enrolment success – discrepancy by ethnicity³	Difference in representation in LPC and CPE/GDL enrolments
<i>White</i>	83.2%	84.4%	+2.2%	+1.5
<i>Unknown</i>	74.0%	80.0%	-2.0%	-0.1
<i>Black African</i>	61.3%	74.4%	-7.6%	-0.6
<i>Asian Pakistani</i>	70.5%	75.9%	-6.1%	-0.6
<i>Asian Indian</i>	78.6%	82.8%	+0.8%	+0.1
<i>Asian Chinese</i>	73.3%	82.5%	+0.5%	-
<i>Asian Other</i>	73.7%	80.0%	-2.0%	-
<i>Other ethnic background</i>	73.9%	77.3%	-4.7%	-0.1
<i>Black Caribbean</i>	68.7%	80.0%	-2.0%	-
<i>Asian Bangladeshi</i>	63.2%	69.7%	-12.3%	-0.3
<i>Other mixed background</i>	74.7%	81.8%	-0.2%	-
<i>Mixed - White and Asian</i>	81.7%	83.3%	+1.1%	+0.1
<i>Mixed - White and Black Caribbean</i>	69.4%	71.6%	-10.2%	-0.1
<i>Black Other</i>	74.1%	87.5%	+5.5%	-
<i>Mixed - White and Black African</i>	68.6%	70.3%	-11.7%	-0.1
TOTAL	77.6%	82.0%	-2.40%	

Tables 14 a and b, below, show the picture by ethnicity for applications and enrolments for the CPE/GDL, comparing UK nationality applicants against all applicants.

Table 14c illustrates that White and mixed White/Asian applicants are disproportionately more likely to end up actually enrolling in CPE/GDL courses compared to applicants from other ethnic backgrounds.

Comparing the figures in tables 13 and 14, suggests that although UK candidates of certain declared ethnicities (notably Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black African and mixed White/Black African) are significantly less likely than White candidates to enrol in either a CPE/GDL or LPC, the discrepancy is slightly reduced at the LPC stage. This suggests that diversity access issues may be more pronounced for those coming into legal education via the CPE/GDL route rather than the QLD route.

³ Percentage point difference in successful applications compared to mean for all applicants

Table 14a: CPE/GDL Applicants by Ethnicity, 2018/19

	Total applicants	% of Total	UK nationality applicants	% of UK nationality applicants
<i>White</i>	2,661	56.1%	2,194	70.2%
<i>Unknown</i>	177	3.7%	79	2.5%
<i>Black African</i>	369	7.8%	134	4.3%
<i>Asian Pakistani</i>	265	5.6%	134	4.3%
<i>Asian Indian</i>	256	5.4%	123	3.9%
<i>Asian Chinese</i>	239	5.0%	47	1.5%
<i>Asian Other</i>	169	3.6%	50	1.6%
<i>Other ethnic background</i>	146	3.1%	69	2.2%
<i>Black Caribbean</i>	69	1.5%	43	1.4%
<i>Asian Bangladeshi</i>	79	1.7%	35	1.1%
<i>Mixed - Other mixed background</i>	111	2.3%	60	1.9%
<i>Mixed - White and Asian</i>	111	2.3%	93	3.0%
<i>Mixed - White and Black Caribbean</i>	32	0.7%	24	0.8%
<i>Black Other</i>	29	0.6%	17	0.5%
<i>Mixed - White and Black African</i>	33	0.7%	23	0.7%
TOTAL	4,746	100.0%	3,125	100.0%

Table 14b: CPE/GDL Enrolments by Ethnicity, 2019/20

	Total enrolment	% of Total	UK nationality enrolment	% of UK nationality enrolment
<i>White</i>	1,922	63.2%	1,639	72.8%
<i>Unknown</i>	111	3.7%	57	2.5%
<i>Black African</i>	141	4.6%	75	3.3%
<i>Asian Pakistani</i>	126	4.1%	80	3.6%
<i>Asian Indian</i>	142	4.7%	89	4.0%
<i>Asian Chinese</i>	160	5.3%	35	1.6%
<i>Asian Other</i>	88	2.9%	30	1.3%
<i>Other ethnic background</i>	85	2.8%	48	2.1%
<i>Black Caribbean</i>	34	1.1%	30	1.3%
<i>Asian Bangladeshi</i>	31	1.0%	20	0.9%
<i>Mixed - Other mixed background</i>	70	2.3%	40	1.8%
<i>Mixed - White and Asian</i>	79	2.6%	70	3.1%
<i>Mixed - White and Black Caribbean</i>	21	0.7%	17	0.8%
<i>Black Other</i>	14	0.5%	10	0.4%
<i>Mixed - White and Black African</i>	15	0.5%	10	0.4%
TOTAL	3,039	100.0%	2,250	100.0%

Table 14c: Enrolments as a % of Applications: Breakdown by Ethnicity and UK Nationality, CPE/GDL, 2019/20

	<i>Total enrolments/ applicants, %</i>	<i>UK enrolments/ applicants %</i>	<i>UK enrolment success – discrepancy by ethnicity⁴</i>
<i>White</i>	72.2%	74.7%	+2.7%
<i>Unknown</i>	62.7%	72.2%	+0.2%
<i>Black African</i>	38.2%	56.0%	-16.0%
<i>Asian Pakistani</i>	47.5%	59.7%	-12.3%
<i>Asian Indian</i>	55.5%	72.4%	+0.4%
<i>Asian Chinese</i>	66.9%	74.5%	+2.5%
<i>Asian Other</i>	52.1%	60.0%	-12.0%
<i>Other ethnic background</i>	58.2%	69.6%	-2.4%
<i>Black Caribbean</i>	49.3%	69.8%	-2.2%
<i>Asian Bangladeshi</i>	39.2%	57.1%	-14.9
<i>Other mixed background</i>	63.1%	66.7%	-5.3%
<i>Mixed - White and Asian</i>	71.2%	75.3%	+3.3%
<i>Mixed - White and Black Caribbean</i>	65.6%	70.8%	-1.2%
<i>Black Other</i>	48.3%	58.8%	-13.2%
<i>Mixed - White and Black African</i>	45.5%	43.5%	-28.5%
TOTAL	64.0%	72.0%	-2.40%

Disability

Table 15 provides statistics on the number of candidates enrolling in courses in 2019/20 with certain identified disabilities.

Table 15: Enrolments of UK nationals by disability, 2019/20

<i>Form of Disability</i>	<i>LPC</i>	<i>CPE/GDL</i>
Autism	4	6
Blind/partially sighted	5	1
Deaf/partial hearing	2	0
Dyslexia	135	69
Mental Health issues	19	6
Multiple disabilities	6	6
Unseen disability	16	5
Wheelchair user	9	4
Not listed	0	23
Personal care support	0	1
Total UK enrolments citing disability	196	121
% of Total UK enrolments	3.9%	5.4%

⁴ Percentage point difference in successful applications compared to mean for all applicants

Dyslexia is by the far the most frequently cited disability (69% of LPC enrolments with a disability and 57% of GDL/CPE enrolments). This may be because applicants see this as relevant to requests they may make for examination adjustments. There may be applicants with disabilities who do not wish to reference them in their applications.

Routes to Qualification and Funding

As suggested above, there are a number of other factors that are relevant to diversity in the legal profession, for candidates of all ethnicities. Most notable amongst these are academic background and access to funding.

In terms of academic background, the statistics from the LawCab system allow us to look at the route which candidates choose to take to the LPC and the grade of degree they have been awarded

The proportion of those applying and enrolling into the LPC from different academic routes has remained fairly constant over the past few years, with around a quarter of applicants and enrolments into the LPC coming via the CPE/GDL. As in previous years, the ratio of enrolments to applications was higher amongst those applying from the CPE/GDL route, since applicants coming to the LPC via the CPE have already made a significant financial commitment to qualification, whilst law graduates may be weighing various career options alongside entry into the legal profession at the time of making their application.

Table 16a: Route to the LPC, Applications 2018/19-2019/20

<i>Route</i>	<i>Applications 2018/19</i>	<i>As % Total applications 2018/19</i>	<i>Applications 2019/20</i>	<i>As % Total Applications 2019/20</i>
CPE/GDL	1,879	23.5%	1,888	22.7%
QLD/LLB	6,087	76.2%	6,417	77.2%
FILEX	11	0.1%	6	0.07%
UNKNOWN	6	0.1%	3	0.03%
TOTAL	7,983	100.0%	8,314	100%

Table 16b: Route to the LPC, Enrolments 2018/19-2019/20

<i>Route</i>	<i>Enrolments 2018/19</i>	<i>% Total Enrolments 2018/19</i>	<i>Enrolments 2019/20</i>	<i>% Total Enrolments 2019/20</i>
CPE/GDL	1,606	25.7%	1,615	25.0%
QLD/LLB	4,639	74.2%	4,834	74.9%
FILEX	6	0.1%	1	0.1%
UNKNOWN	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	6,251	100.0%	6,450	100%

The grade of degree awarded or anticipated by those enrolling in the LPC was slightly lower in 2019 than in 2018 but not significantly so.

Table 17: Class of Degree Awarded to LPC Enrolments

<i>Degree Class</i>	<i>2017/18</i>	<i>2018/19</i>	<i>2019/20</i>
<i>2.1 or higher</i>	56%	60%	57%
<i>2.2</i>	15%	12.5%	18%
<i>3rd, GDL pass or ordinary degree</i>	28%	21%	24%

Who Funds Participation in the Courses?

Tables 18 and 19 illustrate how applicants fund participation in CPE/GDL and LPC courses. The proportion of self-funders for the CPE/GDL is, not surprisingly, significantly higher than the proportion for the LPC. The tables also illustrate that the drop-out rate of self-funders between application and enrolment is around 40% for the CPE/GDL but only 22% for the LPC.

Table 18a: How the CPE/GDL is funded, applications 2018/19-2019/20

<i>Course Fee Payer</i>	<i>Applicants 2018/19</i>	<i>% of Total Applicants</i>	<i>Applicants 2019/20</i>	<i>% of Total Applicants</i>
<i>Self-funded/ Parent/ Guardian</i>	4,099	90%	4,257	89.7%
<i>Training provider/ Employer</i>	453	10%	489	10.3%
<i>TOTAL</i>	4,552	100%	4,746	100%

Table 18b: How the CPE/GDL is funded, enrolments 2018/19-2019/20

<i>Course Fee Payer</i>	<i>Enrolments 2018/19</i>	<i>% of Total Applicants</i>	<i>Enrolments 2019/20</i>	<i>% of Total Applicants</i>	<i>Enrolments/ Applicants</i>
<i>Self-funded/ Parent/ Guardian</i>	2,407	85.4%	2,577	84.8%	60.5%
<i>Training provider/ Employer</i>	405	14.4%	462	15.2%	94.5%
<i>TOTAL</i>	2,812	100%	3,039	100.0%	61.8%

Table 19a: How the LPC is Funded, applications 2018/19-2019/20

<i>Course Fee Payer</i>	<i>Applicants 2018/19</i>	<i>% of Total Applicants</i>	<i>Applicants 2019/20</i>	<i>% of Total Applicants</i>
<i>Self-funded/ Parent/ Guardian</i>	6,047	75.7%	6,312	75.9%
<i>Training provider/ Employer</i>	1,936	24.3%	2,002	24.1%
TOTAL	7,983	100%	8,314	100.0%

Table 19b: How the LPC is Funded, enrolments 2018/19-2019/20

<i>Course Fee Payer</i>	<i>Enrolments 2018/19</i>	<i>% of Total Applicants</i>	<i>Enrolments 2019/20</i>	<i>% of Total Applicants</i>	<i>Enrolments/ Applicants</i>
<i>Self-funded/ Parent/ Guardian</i>	6,047	75.7%	4,560	70.7%	72.2%
<i>Training provider/ Employer</i>	1,936	24.3%	1,890	29.3%	94.4%
TOTAL	7,983	100%	6,450	100.0%	77.8%

It is interesting to break down funding by training providers and employers further to see what lies beneath these tables. Not surprisingly the majority of funded places on the LPC are taken by UK nationals (88%), reflecting a slightly larger share of UK nationals in the number of funded LPC places than in overall enrolment. Table 19c gives a breakdown of the share of training contracts by ethnicity and route to the LPC. This shows that the chances of obtaining a training contract vary significantly by ethnic background.

If, for example, you were a UK national with a Pakistani ethnicity enrolling in the LPC in 2019, then the chance that you were funded through a training contract was 7%, in contrast to 40% for a white UK national in the same position. If you did obtain a training contract, you were 20% more likely to have gone to a Russell Group university than your white counterpart. In fact, a degree from a Russell Group university is a significant factor in indicating the likelihood of BAME candidates having funding for their LPC from a training provider.

Table 19c: Funding for the LPC, 2019/20 by ethnicity and training route, 2019/20

<i>Ethnicity of UK Nationals</i>	<i>UK enrolment</i>	<i>Funded by Training provider or employer</i>	<i>% of UK enrolment funded</i>	<i>% of funded applicants via GDL</i>	<i>% of funded enrolments via QLDs from Russell Group</i>
<i>White</i>	3,206	1,289	40.2%	50.8%	43.5%
<i>Unknown/Blanks</i>	88	27	30.7%	100.0%	N/A
<i>Black African</i>	279	54	19.4%	22.2%	70.4%
<i>Asian Pakistani</i>	372	26	7.0%	15.4%	61.5%
<i>Asian Indian</i>	322	75	23.3%	32.0%	60.0%
<i>Asian Chinese</i>	80	32	40.0%	50.0%	46.9%
<i>Asian Other</i>	120	19	15.8%	26.3%	68.4%
<i>Other ethnic background</i>	119	22	18.5%	22.7%	63.6%
<i>Black Caribbean</i>	84	14	16.7%	14.3%	64.3%
<i>Asian Bangladeshi</i>	92	8	8.7%	37.5%	50.0%
<i>Mixed - Other mixed background</i>	72	18	25.0%	61.1%	33.3%
<i>Mixed - White and Asian</i>	115	48	41.7%	60.4%	33.3%
<i>Mixed - White and Black Caribbean</i>	48	23	47.9%	47.8%	43.5%
<i>Black Other</i>	14	2	14.3%	100.0%	N/A
<i>Mixed - White and Black African</i>	26	8	30.8%	62.5%	N/A
TOTAL	5,037	1,665	33.1%	47.6%	

International Applicants

(a) Nationality

Not surprisingly, the majority of both CPE/GDL and LPC candidates are of UK nationality. However, in 2019/20, 34% of all applications for the CPE/GDL and 26% of LPC applications came from non-UK nationals.

As figures 1 and 2 show, applications both from the EEA (plus Switzerland)⁵ and the wider world have remained fairly constant as a percentage of overall applications. EEA+ applications for both the CPE/GDL and LPC have recovered from the immediate post-Brexit referendum dent, but the full impact of Brexit on fees for EU students have yet to be felt.

⁵ EEA (European Economic Area) + Switzerland = EU + Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland

Figure 1: The Geographic Origin of CPE/GDL Applicants, 2016-19

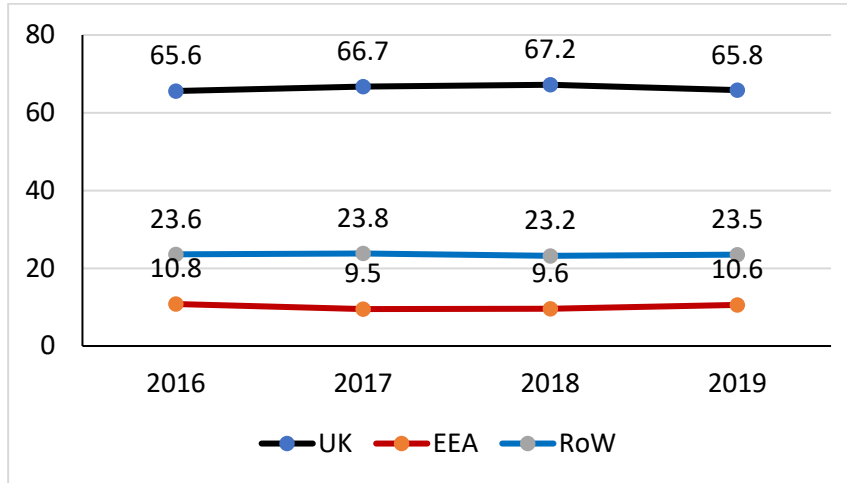
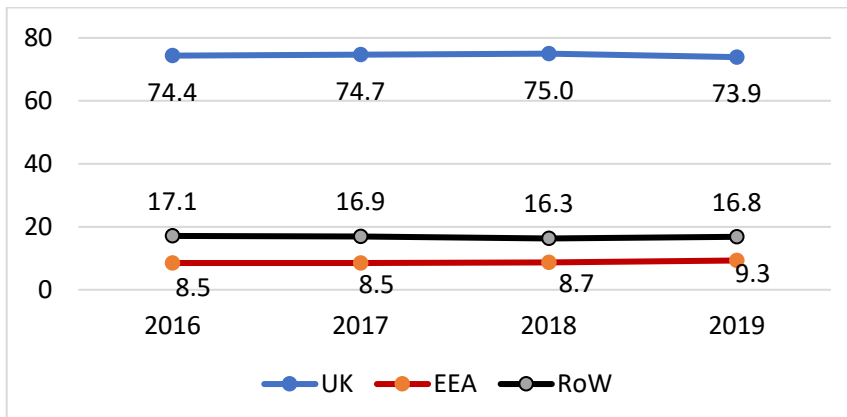


Figure 2: The Geographic Origin of LPC Applicants, 2016-19



In 2019, 19% of CPE/GDL applicants needed a visa (17% in 2018) and 24% did not have English as a first language (23% in 2018). This compares to 13% of LPC applicants who needed a visa (12% in 2018) and 17% who did not have English as a first language (16.5% in 2018). This illustrates the role that the CPE/GDL plays as an entry point into the UK legal education system.

The nationalities applying for both the CPE/GDL and LPC remained as varied as ever. In 2019/20, 1,621 candidates of 131 different non-UK nationalities, from Afghan to Zimbabwean applied for the CPE/GDL and 2,168 candidates from 131 different non-UK nationalities applied for the LPC. Tables 19-22 show the top 10 EU/EEA and Rest of the World nationalities applying and enrolling in both the CPE/GDL and LPC in 2019/20.

Tables 19 and 20 show a fairly consistent picture in terms of the nationality of applicants, although Turkey replaced Kazakhstan as the 10th largest provider of CPE applicants. Both tables also illustrate that the success rate of foreign applicants varies widely by nationality, ranging from high figures amongst Singaporean, Malaysian and Hong Kong applicants for the CPE/GDL and LPC to very low success rates for Ghanaian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi applicants.

Table 19: Top 10 Rest of the World Nationalities applying for CPE/GDL, 2016-19

<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Applications</i>				<i>Enrolments</i>	<i>Enrolment/ applications</i>
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2019/20	2019/20
<i>Pakistani</i>	145	134	140	124	45	36%
<i>Ghanaian</i>	40	80	82	112	25	22%
<i>Indian</i>	65	72	79	109	45	41%
<i>Chinese</i>	89	74	72	99	59	60%
<i>US Citizen</i>	97	101	88	93	42	45%
<i>Hong Kong</i>	56	61	41	58	43	74%
<i>Canadian</i>	49	47	39	53	31	58%
<i>Nigerian</i>	50	64	50	44	13	30%
<i>Bangladeshi</i>	98	55	41	40	10	25%
<i>Turkish</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	32	16	50%
All Rest of World	N/A	N/A	N/A	1205	528	43.8%

Table 20: Top 10 Rest of the World Nationalities Applying for the LPC, 2016-19

<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Applications</i>				<i>Enrolments</i>	<i>Enrolment/ applications</i>
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2019/20	2019/20
<i>Nigerian</i>	97	112	103	155	78	50.0%
<i>Trinidadian</i>	180	192	146	124	77	62.0%
<i>Indian</i>	52	59	74	101	63	62.0%
<i>Pakistani</i>	63	80	86	99	43	43.0%
<i>Ghanaian</i>	44	59	59	83	30	36.0%
<i>Canadian</i>	88	68	82	74	55	74.0%
<i>US citizen</i>	40	48	50	55	37	67.0%
<i>Malaysian</i>	53	78	65	53	37	70.0%
<i>Singaporean</i>	57	62	50	51	45	89.0%
<i>Chinese</i>	33	45	47	45	29	64.0%
All Rest of World	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,388	514	37.0%

[NB: UK nationality mean enrolments/applicants = 82%; mean LPC all candidates = 77%]

Tables 21 and 22 illustrate that applications from European nationals are significantly more likely to lead to actual enrolments than applications from candidates from other parts of the world.

Table 21: Top 10 EU/EEA Nationalities Applying for the CPE/GDL, 2016-19

<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Applications</i>				<i>Enrolment</i>	<i>Enrolment/ applications</i>
	<i>2016/17</i>	<i>2017/18</i>	<i>2018/19</i>	<i>2019/20</i>	<i>2019/20</i>	<i>2019/20</i>
<i>Italian</i>	75	59	64	67	40	59.7%
<i>French</i>	87	69	45	65	50	76.9%
<i>Irish</i>	72	55	52	45	30	66.7%
<i>Polish</i>	33	23	27	22	16	72.7%
<i>German</i>	N/A	N/A	35	21	13	61.9%
<i>Romanian</i>	36	19	34	21	15	71.4%
<i>Spanish</i>	15	19	19	20	15	75.0%
<i>Dutch</i>	14	25	13	20	9	45.0%
<i>Portuguese</i>	19	14	17	17	8	47.0%
<i>Belgian</i>	N/A	N/A	13	16	8	50.0%
<i>Greek</i>	19	26	21	14	5	35.7%
All EU/EEA	N/A	N/A	N/A	416	261	62.7%

Table 22: Top 10 EU/EEA Nationalities Applying for the LPC, 2016-19

<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Applications</i>				<i>Enrolment</i>	<i>Enrolment/ applications</i>
	<i>2016/17</i>	<i>2017/18</i>	<i>2018/19</i>	<i>2019/20</i>	<i>2019/20</i>	<i>2019/20</i>
<i>Irish</i>	84	79	75	84	59	70.2%
<i>Italian</i>	63	69	70	83	67	80.7%
<i>German</i>	54	46	62	57	42	73.7%
<i>Cypriot</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	63	57	90.5%
<i>French</i>	63	55	61	61	47	77.0%
<i>Polish</i>	41	43	55	75	54	72.0%
<i>Romanian</i>	25	41	35	50	37	74.0%
<i>Greek</i>	38	45	34	47	38	80.1%
<i>Portuguese</i>	N/A	N/A	29	31	22	70.9%
<i>Spanish</i>	N/A	N/A	26	28	21	75.0%
All EU/EEA	N/A	N/A	N/A	776	595	76.7%

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