

### **What is intellectual property law?**

Intellectual Property (IP) law relates to the establishment and protection of intellectual creations such as inventions, designs, brands, artwork and music.

These rights are established, protected, enforced and promoted through means such as patents (usually for such things as technical inventions), trademarks (for goods and services), copyright (music, art and literature) and designs (products and logos).

### **What does an intellectual property lawyer do?**

Lawyers tend to specialise in either contentious or non-contentious IP. Non-contentious work involves checking and registering client's rights through, for example, patents and trademarks, as well as drafting commercial agreements to issue licences that allow others to use those rights.

Contentious work is required when a client's rights have been infringed or abused in any way, for example, when counterfeit products are being sold or music is used illegally.

### **How to get into intellectual property law?**

Having a degree in a STEM subject is preferable but not essential for a career in intellectual property law. Work experience in the area is important so gaining as much IP experience as possible will help. This doesn't need to be legal based. Many people come from the entertainment industry, engineering and technology industries to become an IP lawyer. You will also need to follow all the steps to becoming a qualified solicitor.

### **What skills do you need to be an intellectual property lawyer?**

Clients can range from unknown individuals with a brilliant idea to patent, through to pharmaceutical giants and famous artists. IP lawyers need to build a rapport with a wide range of different people, and be able to think commercially and from a client's point of view.

Lawyers in this practice area need to understand the complex and technical language – many IP lawyers have previous relevant experience in other fields like science, technology and medicine. Attention to detail is vital as is the ability to manage huge volumes of paperwork alongside some tight deadlines.

IP work is likely to involve commercial law and litigation so it's a good idea to look at the skills required for those areas too.

### **Why study intellectual property law?**

Studying intellectual property law will not only allow you to progress into an exciting and ever-evolving area of law, but will also teach you attention to

detail, technical and scientific knowledge and broader awareness of areas like commercial law, creative commons and litigation. It is an area that has seen a rise in interest over recent years and will continue to become an important part of law.

### **Average salary in intellectual property law**

A newly qualified solicitor in a firm outside of the city or smaller criminal practice may expect to earn around £30,000 to £50,000. An average IP solicitor salary in London is anything from £40,000 to £80,000 based on five years' experience according to IPCareers.com. For those with over ten years' experience, earnings can range from £60,000 to £140,000. Those based in London and bigger cities will often earn more too.