

# Criminal Law Futures Survey

Showing 85 of 85 responses

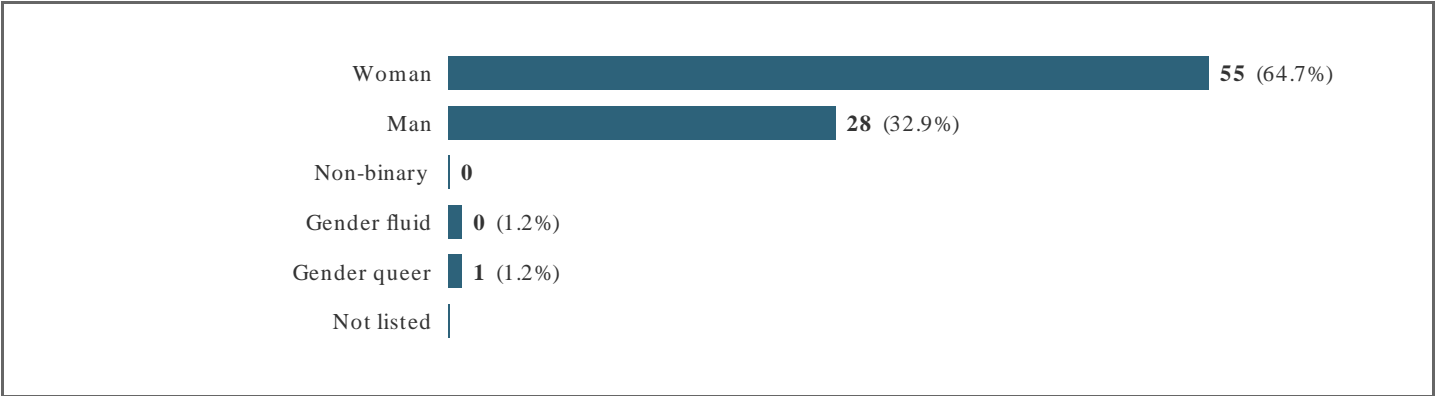
Showing **all** responses

Showing **all** questions

Response rate: 85%

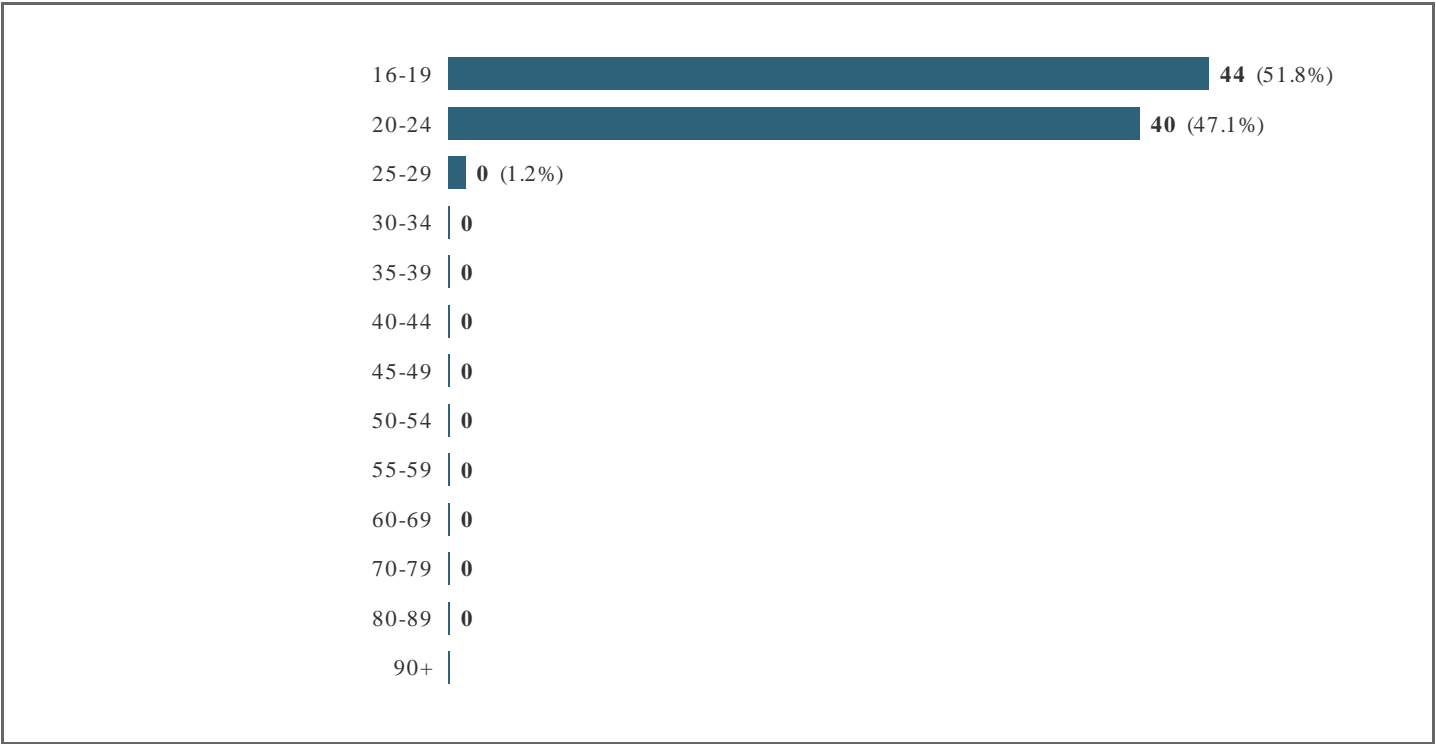
1

How would you describe your gender?



2

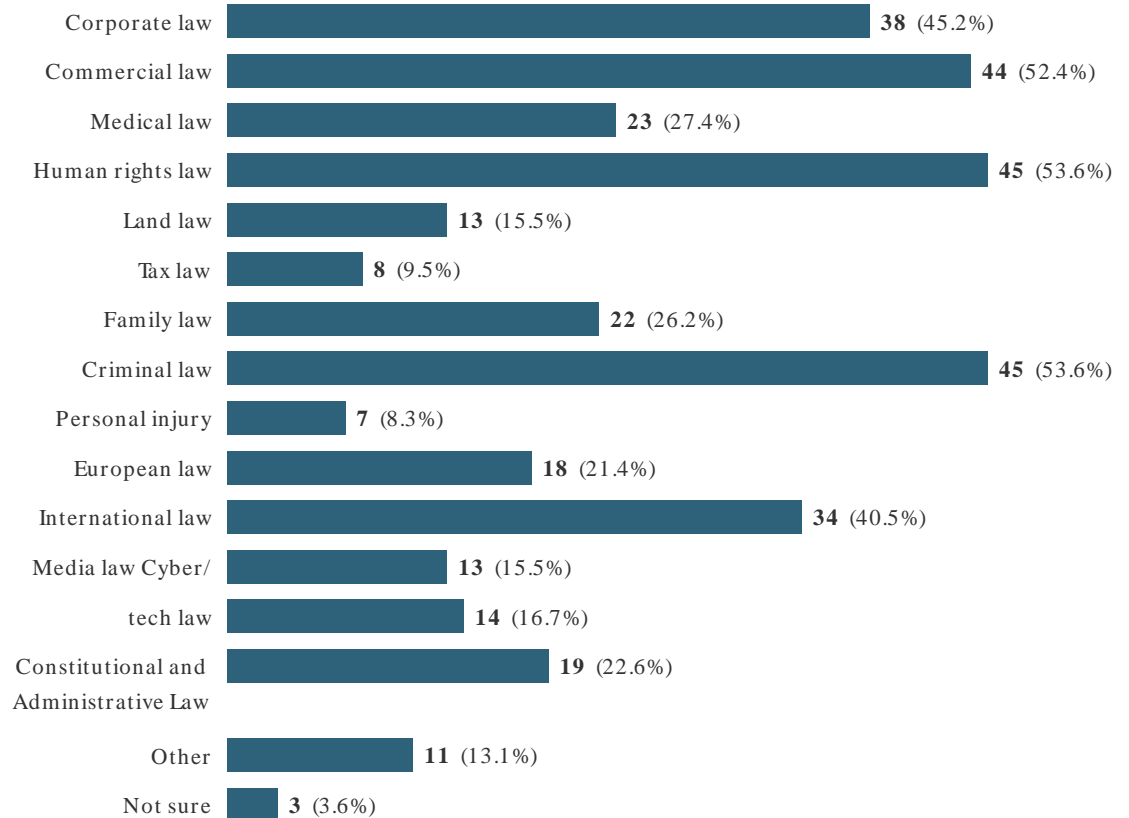
How old are you?



**3** Are you hoping to have a career in law?

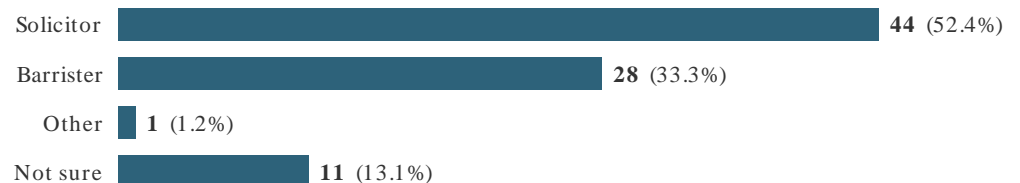


**4** If you are considering a career in law, which areas of practice currently appeal?



Multi answer: Percentage of respondents who selected each answer option (e.g. 100% would represent that all this question's respondents chose that option)

**5** If you are interested in a career in practice, which route would you like to go down?



**6** If you are not interested in a career in criminal law practice, what are the main reasons for this?

Showing all 35 responses	
I've been told that it is usually a lot less well paid than commercial and corporate Law. Apparently training contracts are also even harder to get due to legal aid cuts. Not sure if they always fund the LPC like a lot of commercial jobs do.	410017-410008-40828671
On the one hand, in my very limited experience, criminal law seems complicated and somewhat strangely regulated in the UK and I find it hard to understand it at times, perhaps because I am an international student. On the other hand, I am simply more interested in EU law and IP/IT law.	410017-410008-40829216
Relatively poorly paid, significant cuts to this area	410017-410008-40829269
moral issues; dealing with crime and horrible circumstances does not really appeal.	410017-410008-40829470
Pay is notoriously low for the amount of work you are doing. Reliance on legal aid work means work is generally not that good.	410017-410008-40842756
I do not think that I would be suited to it-I find reading the cases very troubling	410017-410008-40886597
Haven't had as much exposure so not really sure. Kind of just want to work in a firm.	410017-410008-40949872
I've heard most criminal lawyers get paid very little in comparison to how much they have to work	410017-410008-40950864
Low income; gender gap	410017-410008-40949797
After work experience at a criminal law firm, and after having visited court and witnessed criminal trials, I found it difficult to be objective and professional while dealing with people's vulnerabilities or when they are at their weakest.	410017-410008-40951174
I wouldn't like to be forced to defend a murderer for instance if I knew he was guilty. There is also greater earnings in other areas of practice.	410017-410008-40951382
I would like a career with a more international outlook, specializing in criminal law would restrict me on just the English legal system.	410017-410008-40951495
Likely a very intense workload in terms of the subject matter. Most cases have direct impacts on one person, which is a factor I don't personally enjoy.	410017-410008-40951789
Pay is not on par with other sectors like commercial or IP The work looks like it could be emotionally and mentally draining e.g looking at domestic violence and rape cases everyday	410017-410008-40952452
Legal aid cuts and inflexible and unpredictable hours	410017-410008-40952792
It deals with events that are too difficult to emotionally process	410017-410008-40954939

I don't want to be a barrister and I feel it is mainly a practice area for barristers. I also do not feel that my personality type would suit towards criminal law practice.	410017-410008-40955185
I have greater interests in other areas of law	410017-410008-40955477
No money	410017-410008-40957520
Typically low starting salaries for criminal solicitors with similar work, dealing often with the same people as you try to build experience. Generally depressing work. Limited opportunities for progression.	410017-410008-40957652
<p>Criminal law as a practice scales disproportionately. Either you are on the low end of the spectrum or you are dealing with the top criminal cases. Based off my understanding, the general view of Criminal Law is that it is not as profitable than other law areas.</p> <p>Additionally, cuts to legal aid has resulted in fewer law firms considering Criminal Law as a viable option. Legal aid often means that the government covers the cost to a certain amount for defending your defendant. If it is no longer profitable, it is not a path you would want to go down.</p> <p>If you are driven by feelings of justice and defending the weak (to which I would fully agree with), there are simply more optimal options such as civil rights/ human rights lawyers which on average earn 30k more than criminal lawyers based on the median amount.</p> <p>Simply said, even if you are interested, there must be practicality in that route.</p>	410017-410008-40958080
I have heard that there is a distinct lower income in criminal law compared to other areas	410017-410008-40959183
Criminals are unappetising and there is no money in it	410017-410008-40968198
N/A	410017-410008-41096147
It never appealed to me.	410017-410008-41096338
The fact that the salaries for Junior Barristers are often under the living wage. The state of the criminal law system currently e.g. cuts to legal aid, miscarriages of justice, prison systems in chaos etc.	410017-410008-41096515
Typically, prosecutors & public defenders are overworked with huge case loads and low pay. Criminal law is a topic that I'm not too interested in, and the way the criminal justice system is structured at the moment is certainly a deterrent	410017-410008-41095677
Having to pay and study for an extra x amount of years to get to the bar/LPC etc. when other routes are 'easier'/more direct to the main goal.	410017-410008-41099372
As an international student, getting into the system of a law career in any path is difficult but especially so when it comes to criminal law in practice as a solicitor. The opportunities are not as open as that of the solicitor route. This is one of the major reasons why a career in this field does not attract me.	410017-410008-41100633
Not sure, just prefer other areas, more interesting to me	410017-410008-41103332

N/A	410017-410008-41103376
I am interested in working for the government - this could perhaps entail some work with criminal cases? Not sure. My interest is in public law predominantly and that is the area of law I would like to have a career in.	410017-410008-41105072
Studying criminal law and seeing how confused the criminal justice system is and not wanting to become a barrister	410017-410008-41108877
I find the I do not meet the requirements to be a great criminal lawyer. My interest in the subject is not that high	410017-410008-41112850
Heavy work load and relatively little pay	410017-410008-41180978

**7** If you are interested in a career in criminal law, do you have any concerns about this area of practice?

Showing all 40 responses	
N/A	410017-410008-40828801
N/A	410017-410008-40829269
Money and disorganisation. The Criminal Bar is by far the most honourable sector of the legal profession, and allows for exciting, semi-dramatic advocacy, but these benefits can only ever be so appealing when legal aid budgets are so low and systemic issues within the criminal justice system act to retard the efficaciousness of advocates.	410017-410008-40830396
accessibility and pay	410017-410008-40830643
Yes, quite concerned which slightly puts me off going into the field. If it wasn't for the problems in the field at the moment e.g. funding then I would probably solely focus on a career in criminal law.	410017-410008-40837014
I find the actual content of criminal law really interesting. I am also very passionate about certain aspects within the criminal justice system, such as for example, the way sexual abuse victims are allowed to be questioned in the witness box. My main issue is that the pay in this field is simply not comparative to other areas of law. The work is no less taxing, particularly for CPS lawyers, who I've seen firsthand under some pretty immense strain, but the pay would literally be less than half of what I could earn in for example, Corporate. As much as I would likely enjoy a career in criminal, it strikes me as very difficult to get into. You see commercial sets and firms everywhere, even family to an extent is easier to access, but I have no idea how one goes about becoming a criminal lawyer- people aren't throwing that information at students in the same way they do for other sectors.	410017-410008-40840760
Not sure where to start	410017-410008-40853780
the pressure, the late and irregular hours, the lower wage	410017-410008-40860051
- Do solicitors practice in criminal law	410017-410008-40886160
Human Rights=> There are not many Human Rights firms in the North which s where I would prefer to practice.	410017-410008-40890849

which s where I would prefer to practice.	
Wage, accessibility and the impact this career option may have on my mental health	410017-410008-40924672
low pay	410017-410008-40934377
I don't know if I would be able to achieve the standard that seems to be expected. work-life balance?	410017-410008-40950257
N/A	410017-410008-40951174
N/a	410017-410008-40951789
N/A	410017-410008-40955584
Low wages, little job security, highly competitive, highly repetitive types of cases	410017-410008-40955600
My main concern if the workload - when speaking to barristers and hearing them at events in Durham they all say that the workload is very large compared to other areas of practice.	410017-410008-40954802
It seems much more depressing and desensitising than other areas of law. The idea of defending someone who's guilty is also a concern.	410017-410008-40957697
Working hours, the efficiency of the criminal justice system and moral quandaries.	410017-410008-40957933
lack of employability in the area, cuts to legal aid, cuts to magistrates courts, pay given to barristers in relation to the strain of cases and time taken to complete a case	410017-410008-40960789
Training contracts in commercial law firms are more accessible.	410017-410008-40960754
No concerns	410017-410008-40963745
How hard it is to get into a law career, in particular, for students from poorer backgrounds.	410017-410008-40966454
Difficulty in becoming established in the field	410017-410008-40971071
not sure how to get into it	410017-410008-41026771
I am concerned about the availability of jobs in this sector. I am also concerned about the route required to be taken enter this sector. We are hammered with information about entering a corporate law/major circle/city, and the application process required for that, but there is more uncertainty about how to actually access the criminal bar, for example.	410017-410008-41095922
Unsure about how working for the CPS and working privately works. Do you have to do both?	410017-410008-41096147
The intensity and the emotional detachment (or lack thereof) required	410017-410008-41095673
Rumours around lack of pay because of cuts to legal aid	410017-410008-41097271
Its competitive nature	410017-410008-41097311
N/A	410017-410008-41095677

N/A	410017-410008-41095677
Whether it can provide a stable source of income	410017-410008-41098119
The lack of money behind it. Money isn't the primary reason but I've heard there is almost no money in criminal law and you work just as hard as any other lawyer.	410017-410008-41099372
work hours, the nature of the work - i.e. how graphic cases may be and the mental impact this may have. Also the level of support given to lawyers when working on particular sensitive and graphic cases.	410017-410008-41100832
I am particularly interested in criminal defence of cases involving capital punishment. I am worried about the emotional toll of handling such cases.	410017-410008-41101365
From what I have seen there doesn't seem to be much opportunity for progression, and there is a lack of large criminal law firms.	410017-410008-41103376
-over-supply of criminal counsels	410017-410008-41096882
Financial	410017-410008-41105138
It's been hard to find out how to get a training contract or vacation schemes in criminal law, also very little information compared to other sectors within law. In other words it seems hard to start out and practicing in criminal law after graduation. My main concern is that they don't take in as many "fresh" graduates and that you have to have more experience within law before being able to try it out.	410017-410008-41109200

- 8 Have you had any advice or support in relation to a career in criminal law (e.g. has anyone influenced your view/decision about this area of practice or given you advice/information about a career in this field?)

Showing all 58 responses	
No	410017-410008-40828671
N/A	410017-410008-40828801
No	410017-410008-40829216
Not that I can think of, my only exposure to it has been through the news and lectures / tutorials	410017-410008-40829269
no	410017-410008-40829470
My godfather, a retired criminal QC, told me not to touch it with a stick.	410017-410008-40830396
No	410017-410008-40830643
I have spoken to various solicitors and barristers who asked me what field I wanted to go into and when I said potentially criminal they describe the struggles in the field. Specifically barristers have said it is a dying field with no funding. Barristers will work crazy long hours but earn nothing compared to barristers in other fields of law.	410017-410008-40837014
No one has ever spoken to me about how to get into criminal law. The process is not common knowledge the way it is for city law.	410017-410008-40840760

Every time I have spoken to a barrister they have advised against practising in Criminal Law.	410017-410008-40842756
No	410017-410008-40853780
have not received any influence or advice for criminal law; Durham seems to care substantially more about commercial law	410017-410008-40860051
No	410017-410008-40886597
I haven't yet	410017-410008-40890849
No	410017-410008-40924672
A very senior judge in the family division told me not work in criminal law as you work very hard for little pay	410017-410008-40934377
Not really	410017-410008-40950257
No	410017-410008-40949872
No, only from searching online	410017-410008-40950864
Yes, I have had work experience, and spoken to criminal lawyers and barristers.	410017-410008-40951174
No	410017-410008-40951382
N/a	410017-410008-40951789
Not typically At Law Fairs and the like, no criminal law employers are visible	410017-410008-40952452
No, rather advice against going into the field.	410017-410008-40952792
I have always been very interested in the human aspect of criminal law. For me, I understand cases better when I can sympathise with the parties.	410017-410008-40955584
I carried out a mini pupillage with Richard Atkins QC	410017-410008-40955600
No	410017-410008-40954802
Many barristers advise how there can be no income, one I spoke to said how she came out with £10 after a full day's work	410017-410008-40957520
No, it doesn't appear to be a well broadcast practice area for solicitors.	410017-410008-40957652
No	410017-410008-40957697
Nothing, it's all about commercial.	410017-410008-409579
33 general consensus -- 'there's no money in criminal law'. The Secret Barrister gave an insightful and informative look into the negatives of criminal law	410017-410008-40960789
No	410017-410008-40960754
No	410017-410008-40963745
Teachers talking about how difficult it is to get into law, probably as a motivating factor to work hard but I found it discouraging rather than motivating.	410017-410008-40966454





motivating.	
My mother is a barrister specialising in criminal law (also includes white collar crime)	410017-410008-40968198
No	410017-410008-40971071
no	410017-410008-41026771
My lecturer and seminar leader has made the module exceptionally interesting and this has inspired me to look into a career in criminal law.	410017-410008-41095922
No	410017-410008-41096338
I have been told that being a criminal barrister is incredibly hard work that is often not as rewarding as wanted.	410017-410008-41096515
Yes, I've interned at a law firm under the litigation department, and my supervisor provided much experience and advice regarding this area.	410017-410008-41095673
Not yet, think Durham has had a lack of this compared to commercial law	410017-410008-41097271
Not particularly	410017-410008-41097311
Yes, I took a criminal justice class in high school which covered criminal law and interviewed a defense attorney as a class project. He told me a bit about working in the criminal justice system	410017-410008-41095677
No	410017-410008-41098119
Yes several other lawyers.	410017-410008-41099372
There has been little advice given from the law school/ law societies as a whole to do with criminal law. The focus is usually on going into commercial law.	410017-410008-41100832
Yes. I am greatly influenced by human rights lawyers from my country of origin - Singapore.  I am also greatly influenced by my mentor at the Criminal Legal Aid Scheme in Singapore - which is the public defender's office in Singapore. It has opened my eyes up to the world of criminal defence and the need for criminal defenders to ensure that accused's rights are protected and that justice may also serve its course.	410017-410008-41101365
No	410017-410008-41103332
I studied criminal law at A Level, this peaked my interest in the area. I also completed work experience in my local magistrates court, during the time I spent there I was able to watch a number of low-level criminal hearings.	410017-410008-41103376
-previous mini-pupillage experiences at two sets of criminal chambers	410017-410008-41096882
Yes	410017-410008-41105138
I've only been told by some people that work in criminal law is not well paid in relation to other areas of law.	410017-410008-41105072
No	410017-410008-41108877
We have briefly talked about it in lectures but I would like more	410017-410008-41109200

We have briefly talked about it in lectures but I would like more information. I haven't been able to find any recruitment events regarding criminal law.	410017-410008-41109200
No	410017-410008-41109504
Not really	410017-410008-41112850

- 9 We are interested in the reasons why students may or may not consider a career in criminal law, if you have any other comments or thoughts please let us know here

Showing all 23 responses	
Problems with criminal law at the moment - extremely long hour weeks, very poor wage compared to other fields and really challenging and emotional work for very little reward.	410017-410008-40837014
my main motivation for going into this field would be to represent people who have suffered some harm and are in a vulnerable moment in their lives	410017-410008-40860051
Reasons to not pursue a career in Criminal Law=> Many people say that there is no money in criminal or that it is hard to get into the CPS meaning by default you have to work in criminal defence.	410017-410008-40890849
To be a voice for the vulnerable and those subject to injustice. I have had experience in this sector as a member of the County Durham Youth Offending Team.	410017-410008-40924672
I like the idea of helping people, but I get the impression that some people don't want you to help them, or don't necessarily appreciate your help	410017-410008-40934377
I think students at Durham may not have considered a career in criminal law because there isn't much exposure to that field as opposed to for example commercial law. There are not a lot of opportunities presented or made aware to the students until second year where they are introduced to the module.	410017-410008-40951174
N/a	410017-410008-40951789
I wish there was a society that helped those who are interested in criminal law further their interest in this field. I personally find criminal law to be the most fascinating out of all my modules.	410017-410008-40955584
A career in criminal law would be a more emotionally challenging career	410017-410008-40955933
In addition, the public sector pay in criminal law doesn't seem good in comparison to how much you can earn in other areas of law with the same degree	410017-410008-40957697
The general perception seems to be that a career in criminal law would involve working long hours for relatively low pay. However I believe that this area of work would be far more rewarding and engaging than many other areas of law.	410017-410008-40957933
When firms come to Durham to persuade you to join them or apply to them - where are the solicitors and barristers who specialise in criminal	410017-410008-40960754

law? It feels like there are fewer opportunities to (or at least less awareness of) get onto a criminal law career path.	
Moral reasoning behind being wary of criminal law. Have to take money into account and decide whether the work is worth the pay.	<a href="#">410017-410008-40971071</a>
Not enough guidance and familiarity with the route required. There seems to be a very clear path for becoming a corporate solicitor and this isn't as clear for criminal law.  Also, people want to be rich and corporate solicitors make a lot of money very quickly!	<a href="#">410017-410008-41095922</a>
The secret barrister opened my eyes to the state of the criminal legal system in the UK. Part of my reasoning is an unwillingness to participate in this.	<a href="#">410017-410008-41096515</a>
Some might prefer a more straightforward legal career, perhaps being able to work mainly from a desk, but the perception of criminal law is the requirement to be heavily involved in the courts and with the clients, in a more 'on the ground' fashion.	<a href="#">410017-410008-41095673</a>
N/A	<a href="#">410017-410008-41095677</a>
N/A	<a href="#">410017-410008-41098119</a>
I think that a career as a solicitor seems more lucrative than practice as a barrister.	<a href="#">410017-410008-41100633</a>
I am drawn to criminal law as it has a very real and tangible effect on people's lives. I am also very interested in its links to human rights law.	<a href="#">410017-410008-41101365</a>
I think that there is a lack of advertisement and events aimed towards careers in criminal law.	<a href="#">410017-410008-41103376</a>
I think the possibility to start out in criminal law after graduation is not as visible as other sectors, like for example commercial law. By visible I mean the access to information, for example through events and societies.	<a href="#">410017-410008-41109200</a>
I feel it is very specific and you need to be certain this is the field you want to work in. If you are unsure, then it probably is not for you	<a href="#">410017-410008-41112850</a>