

GREAT

Legal Services

GREAT
BRITAIN & NORTHERN IRELAND

Legal services and English and Welsh law are among the UK's greatest exports. They have been supporting trade and commerce around the world for generations.

Our legal system lies at the centre of the UK's economic prosperity and is a magnet for international businesses drawn to a fair, effective and transparent legal jurisdiction.

It is underpinned by a legal and judicial profession who are recognised across the globe for their exceptional quality and wide-ranging expertise.

From contracts and corporate governance to mergers and acquisitions, disputes, technology, IP, climate law and more. The UK has the knowledge, talent, and infrastructure to support you – wherever you are in the world.

For high-quality, internationally recognised legal services, choose the UK.





The UK is a
global legal
powerhouse...

- World-leading legal services underpin the UK's status as a key global financial centre.
- The UK is the second largest legal services market in the world, employing 364,000 people – including more than 7,000 foreign lawyers – and generating £38bn for the UK economy.
- Seven of the world's top 20 law firms are headquartered in the UK and all the world's top 50 firms have offices in London. More than 200 foreign law firms from around 40 jurisdictions operate here.
- UK law firms and chambers are truly global with international networks that can help you navigate complex cross-border work. The largest international law firms in London have 42% of their lawyers abroad.
- The UK's legal education and training facilities continue to attract the best global talent. 4,345 overseas students were accepted on to courses to study law at undergraduate level in England and Wales in 2022 and 1,070 overseas lawyers were admitted to the roll.

English and Welsh law is the global standard for business...

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- At the core of the UK's international leadership and reputation is English and Welsh law. It is the basis of 27% of the world's 320 legal jurisdictions.
- It is seen by many as the world's preferred choice for use in commercial cross-border contracts, known for fairness, transparency and for providing predictable outcomes. English law judgments are widely accepted around the world, which improves enforcement and makes it the industry standard in many sectors, including maritime, insurance and financial services.
- In 2019, English law was estimated to have governed around £250bn of global mergers and acquisitions and 40% of global corporate arbitrations. It deals with £80bn worth of insurance contracts annually and trillions of pounds in over-the-counter derivatives transactions and metals trading.



The UK is trusted
for legal excellence
and the rule of law...

- UK legal services are founded on our core ideals: honesty, fairness, and integrity. Our unwavering commitment to the rule of law creates an environment in which businesses can flourish, lawyers and judges can operate without fear of penalty, and legal matters are dealt with fairly.
- The UK is world-renowned for its independent judiciary and the high calibre of its legal expertise. Judges are respected for their intellect, experience and strong commercial acumen. Backed by advanced legal institutions and a world-leading legal profession, they uphold the rule of law and provide the trust and predictability that makes the UK a safe destination for business.



We have world-class
courts and dispute
resolution facilities...

The
Royal
Courts
of
Justice

- Alongside an impartial judiciary and world-class legal expertise, London is also a world leader for commercial litigation and international arbitration, particularly in the maritime sector.
- In the UK, Alternative Dispute Resolution services continue to be provided across a range of activities and sectors at a domestic and international level. In 2023, the total number of commercial and civil disputes raised through arbitration, mediation and adjudication totalled more than 28,601. The London Maritime Arbitrators Association continues to lead the caseload statistics with 1,845 new cases.
- The publication by LawtechUK of the 2021 Digital Dispute Resolution Rules placed us far ahead of any other jurisdiction in our pursuit of innovation and use of technology in dispute resolution.



An innovative
and adaptable
legal system...

- The UK is continually modernising laws to adapt to the challenges of an ever-changing global environment.
- The passage of the 2025 Arbitration Act enhances the clarity, efficiency, and accessibility of arbitration in the UK. It simplifies procedures to reduce costs, protecting arbitrators from unreasonable lawsuits, and strengthens the courts' powers to support emergency arbitration so time-sensitive decisions can be made more easily.
- The 2025 Property (Digital Assets) Act clarifies that certain digital assets can be classed as personal property and further cements English and Welsh law, and the UK, as the forward looking, international law of choice.



We lead on legal
technology and AI...

- The UK has created conditions for tech innovation to flourish and backed start-ups through LawtechUK, a government-funded initiative.
- The UK is now home to 365 legal tech companies, 44% of all legal tech start-ups in Europe. Many of these companies are industry-leading. They attracted more than £5.5bn of investment in 2023.
- The UK legal sector has responded to opportunities presented by Generative AI. In 2024, a LexisNexis survey found that the number of lawyers in the UK using Generative AI for work purposes had almost quadrupled in a little over a year, and 82% of lawyers now use or plan to use AI for work.

The background is a dynamic, abstract composition. A central, bright red column of light streaks extends from the bottom to the top. On either side of this column, there are blue and white light streaks that appear to be moving away from the center, creating a sense of depth and motion. The overall effect is reminiscent of a high-speed tunnel or a futuristic corridor.

**With deep expertise
across other
crucial sectors...**

- UK lawyers have been at the forefront of advising on renewable energy projects, offshore wind, hydrogen, carbon capture and storage, and climate-related regulation.
- The UK is home to the Technology and Construction Court (TCC), a world-leading specialist court for construction and engineering disputes. English law is commonly used for Engineering, Procurement and Construction contracts, Public-Private Partnerships and major project finance arrangements worldwide.
- The UK has one of the strongest life sciences sectors globally, and UK legal expertise covers pharmaceuticals, medical devices, healthcare regulation and research and development collaboration.
- The UK is recognised for its strong leadership in intellectual property law, with several firms and institutions at the forefront of IP law. The Intellectual Property Office (IPO), an official UK government body, collaborates across the world to enhance intellectual property rights.

The UK's GREAT Legal Services campaign

The GREAT Legal Services campaign, run by the Ministry of Justice, is the UK Government's primary vehicle to promote the strength and breadth of the UK's legal services sector and expertise overseas. It also promotes the use of English and Welsh law, our independent judiciary, and the UK as a legal centre and tech and innovation trailblazer. It forms part of the wider GREAT campaign, the UK's award-winning international marketing programme.

The UK's Department for Business and Trade

The UK's Department for Business and Trade (DBT) helps businesses export, drives inward and outward investment, negotiates market access and trade deals, and champions free trade. It is responsible for:

- supporting and encouraging UK businesses to drive sustainable international growth
- ensuring the UK remains a leading destination for international investment
- opening markets, building a trade framework with new and existing partners which is free and fair.



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