



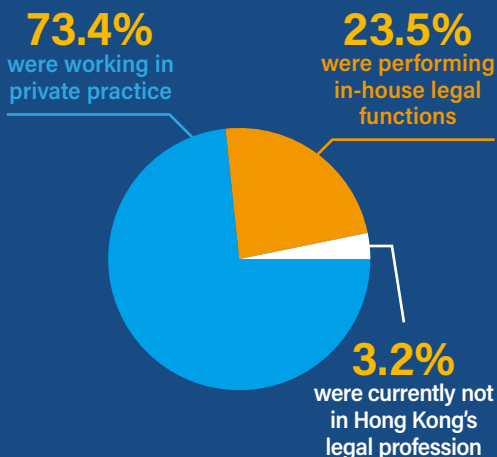
Membership Survey of The Law Society of Hong Kong 2019

The aim of the survey is to gather information on different aspects of the profession including career development, work patterns, demographics and experiences relating to equality and discrimination issues within the legal profession.

3,318 respondents

Response rate **27.4%**

Survey period
15 April to 10 May 2019



43.5% of the respondents had up to 10 years of legal work experience after admission as a Hong Kong solicitor

27.0% had more than 10 to 20 years of post-qualification experience (PQE)

20.5% had more than 20 to 30 years of PQE

8.6% had more than 30 years of PQE

Highlights of the survey responses

1. How attractive are we as a profession to new comers?



Job prospects

Timing of securing first job in the legal profession for those respondents who were newly admitted in the 12 months before April/May 2019 (n=178)

92.7% Before admission

7.3% After admission

73.2% of newly admitted Hong Kong solicitors had managed to secure first trainee solicitor contract before completion of PCLL examination.

Years since admission before becoming salaried partner (n=707)

48.1% 2-5 years

36.3% 5-10 years

15.6% More than 10 years

More than half of male respondents (52.8%) had become salaried partners within 5 years since admission, compared to two-fifths of female respondents (39.6%) having done so within the same period.



Career aspirations

Respondents currently working in the legal profession (n=3,019) have indicated at most three factors that attracted them to continue working in the legal profession. The top three factors were:

45.0% Help those in need to solve their problems

42.6% High salary

41.2% Intellectual challenges

2. Do we measure up in maintaining workplace well-being?



Working hours

Amount of weekly working hours (n=3,018)

- 9.8%** 30 hours or less
- 22.0%** More than 30 hours to 40 hours
- 17.6%** More than 40 hours to 45 hours
- 25.6%** More than 45 hours to 50 hours
- 7.8%** More than 50 hours to 55 hours
- 10.9%** More than 55 hours to 60 hours
- 6.2%** More than 60 hours

On average, legal practitioners had to work 46.4 hours per week.

50.5% Half of respondents had to work more than 45 hours per week.



Ideal work environment

Evaluation of work-life balance (n=3,019)

- 47.1%** Good
- 37.0%** So-so
- 15.9%** Poor

The top three important aspirations in daily work environment were (up to three choices):

- 53.9%** Ability to maintain work-life balance
- 43.7%** Collegial working environment
- 42.6%** Opportunity to gain relevant practice experience

Working arrangements that could help achieve a better work-life balance (choose all options that apply). The majority selections were:

- 75.9%** Flexible working hours
- 57.9%** Remote virtual office / Home office

An analysis was conducted on private practice and non-private practice experiences of Hong Kong solicitors. Respondents currently performing in-house legal functions (n=732) indicated that the most important reason why they decided not to engage in private practice was that they found it "Difficult to maintain a work-life balance in private practice".

Respondents not currently employed in the legal profession (n=99) indicated the reasons for leaving / not entering the legal profession in Hong Kong (choose all that apply). The top reasons included "Interference with family planning / family life" (28.2%), "Better prospects in other sectors" (22.5%) and "Too much pressure" (21.7%). Around one-third (34.7%) of the respondents first left after working in the legal profession for 5 years or below.



Annual leave

Ability to fully utilize annual leave entitlement in 2018 (n=3,019)

- 48.7%** Yes
- 37.7%** No
- 13.6%** Not applicable

Among the respondents who were unable to fully utilize their annual leave entitlement, the top reasons were:

- Too busy, too much work and commitment (59.3%)
- Lack of collegial support (5.5%)

3. How accommodating have we been for practitioners with disability and special ethnic, religious and family needs?



Disability

Of all respondents, a small portion of respondents (3.1%) considered themselves to have a disability.

Any difficulties encountered in securing a traineeship due to a disability (n=37)

93.5% No
6.5% Yes

Any difficulties encountered in securing a practising solicitor's job due to a disability (n=36)

95.3% No
4.7% Yes

Of those who had a disability when they applied for their traineeship or a practising solicitor's job, 93.5% and 95.3% indicated that they had not encountered any difficulty in securing a traineeship or a practising solicitor's job respectively due to their disability.



Family needs

Of the respondents who were employed in the legal profession, 33.0% indicated they were primary care-takers of their dependents.

Any difficulty in taking time off to take care of dependents (n=997)

33.4% Not difficult
47.1% Ordinary
19.4% Difficult

Out of those who had primary caring responsibilities (n=997), around 80.5% did not particularly find it difficult to take time off from work to take care of their dependents.



Religious needs

45.8% of the respondents indicated that they have a religious belief.

Any religion-related difficulties encountered in Hong Kong's legal profession in the past five years (n=1,412)

96.6% No
3.4% Yes

Out of those with religious affiliations, an overwhelming majority (96.6%) had not encountered any difficulties related to their religious needs.

4. Do we have a healthy work place environment?



Discrimination

Any discrimination experienced in Hong Kong's legal profession in the past five years (n=3,092)

82.4% No
17.6% Yes



Sexual harassment

Any sexual harassment experienced in Hong Kong's legal profession in the past five years (n=3,092)

97.1% No
2.9% Yes

Out of those who indicated that they had such experience, female respondents (4.6%) were more likely to experience sexual harassment than male respondents (1.2%).

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