
It is often argued that there is a lack of diversity in the legal field, primarily in relation to solicitors.

Discuss the extent to which the above statement is correct.

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Presented by:

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Jess (2408800)

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What will be discussed...



- During this presentation, the following topics will be covered:
- What is a solicitor, the role of a solicitor and the regulation authority regarding solicitors (by Georgie)
- Gender diversity statistics within the profession, past and present and progression (by Jess)
- Ethnicity statistics, development, present and past (by Lisa Marie)
- And finally, reform suggestions (by Denise)

What is a Solicitor?

- Definition of what a solicitor is and legislation

A solicitor is a type of lawyer who gives specific advice on legal support and representation from the beginning of the legal process. They will often deal with cases of family, property and commercial (contracts and sales) law, Cunnington's Solicitors (2025).

- How to become a solicitor

SQEs and other qualifications.



What is the role of a Solicitor?

- What is the role, what do they do

Britanica (2025) states that in England and Wales the role of the Solicitor is to communicate, give advice and to also conduct any negotiations with their clients.

Their advice can vary from selling houses to dealing with issues within relationships or businesses, The Law Society (2025).

Who and How are Solicitors regulated?

- The SRA

The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) (2022) claimed to regulate over 157,000 solicitors throughout England and Wales and over 9,900 law firms.



References/timeline

Timeline:

14th March I looked into what sort of content I wanted to use in my part of the power point.

20th March I started to write the bullet points and find some sources for my section.

7th of April I began to put my part of the power point together and discussed the power point with the other girls making sure we were all on the same sort of page

21st April I was finishing up my section of the power point, ensuring it was long enough to reach the five minutes, and I had all the needed information.

Reference list:

- BPP available at <https://www.bpp.com/courses/law/areas-of-law>
- Britanica (2025) available at <https://www.britannica.com/topic/solicitor>
- Cunnington's Solicitors (2025) available at <https://cunningtons.co.uk/difference-lawyer-solicitor/>
- GOV.UK available at <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/job-profiles/solicitor>
- Prospects (2025) available at <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/solicitor>
- Solicitors' regulation authority available at <https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/how-we-work/what-we-do/>
- The Solicitors regulation authority available at <https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/who-we-are/what-sra-about/>
- The Solicitors Regulation Authority available at <https://sqa.sra.org.uk/about-sqa/what-is-the-sqa>
- The college of legal practise (2023) available at <https://www.collegalpractice.com/access-to-law/life-as-a-solicitor>
- The law society (2025) available at <https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/career-advice/becoming-a-solicitor>
- The University of Law (2025) available at <https://www.law.ac.uk/employability/career-finder/solicitor/>

Gender diversity and statistics in the solicitor profession



By Jessica Wedmore

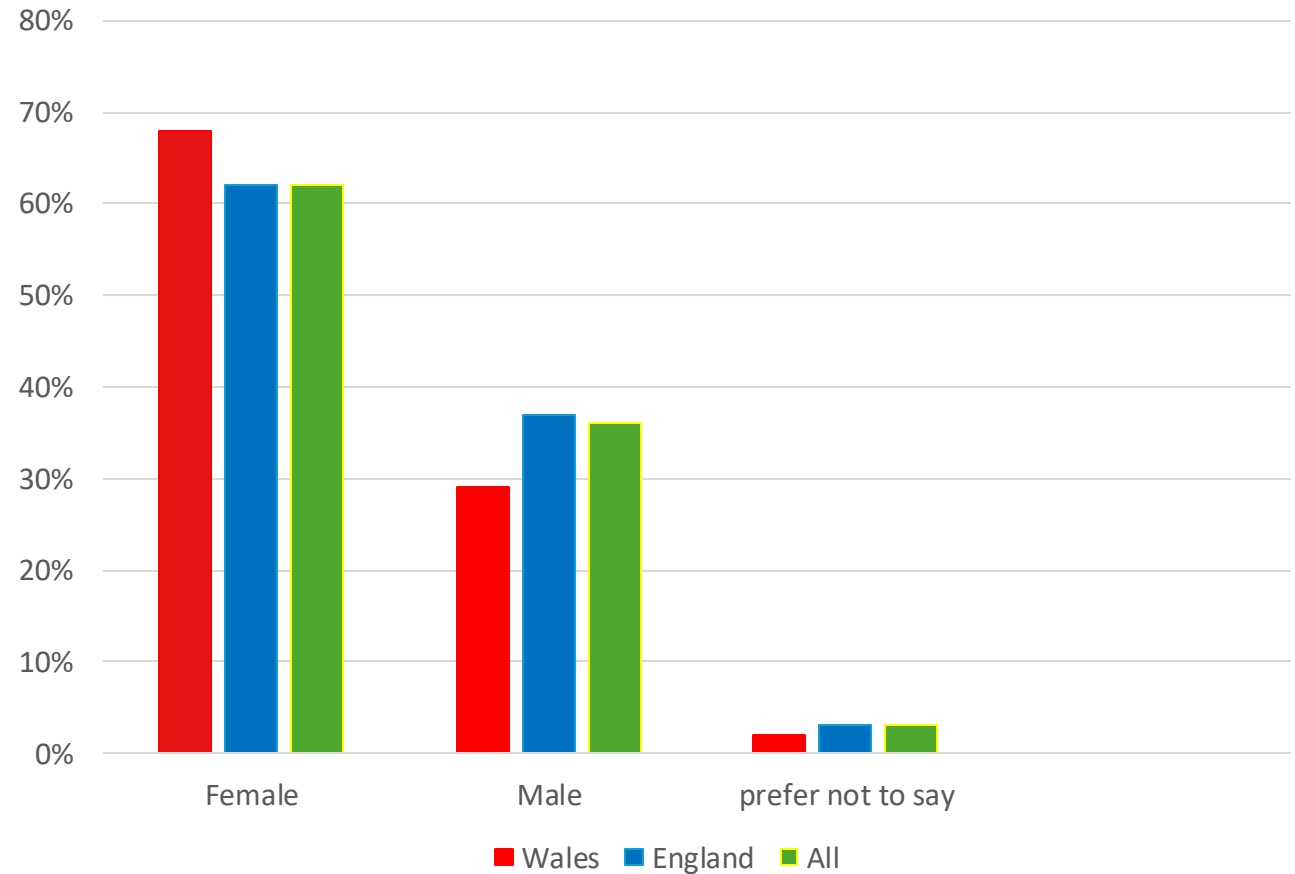


What we will be exploring?

- *Current statistics.*
- *Historical comparisons*
- *Argument and evidence*
- *Gender equality and why it matters.*

Current statistics (2023)

As of 2023, women have been dominating the field by making on average 62% of solicitors around the UK. While men make 36% and prefer not to say 2%.



Historical comparison

In 2019, there were 50.3% of women solicitors.

Male solicitors were 49.7%

Data collection on gender that is not the same as assigned at birth was limited and often didn't include specific categories. Although, progress showed in 2017 of 2.4%.



Pathway to progress.

Fair gender representation
for all.

Actively support gender
diversity.

Equality and accountability.



Gender representation and why it matters.

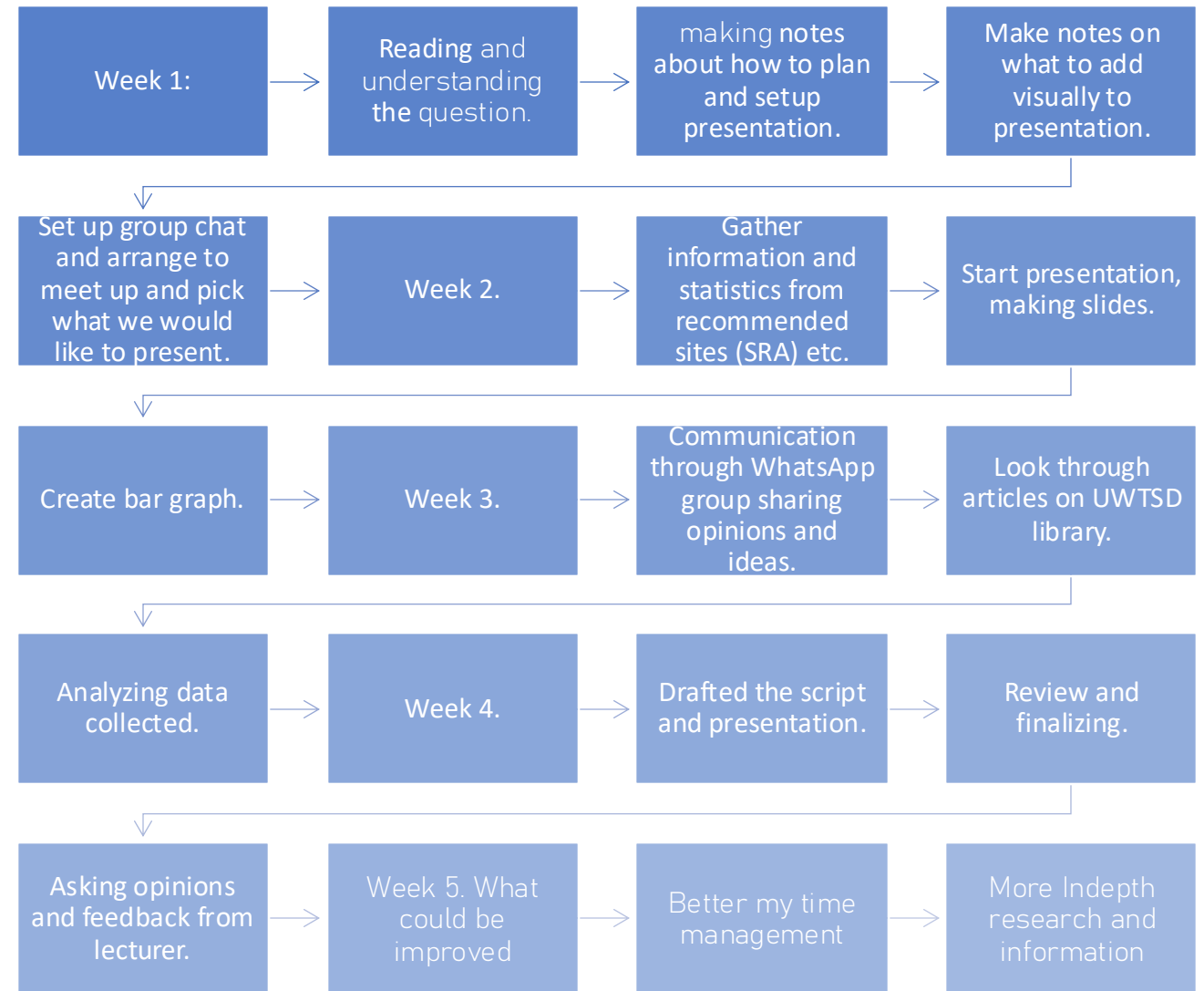
Supportive and inclusive working environment

Promoting awareness and unconscious bias

Achieving gender balance

Fostering equality

Research Timeline



References

- SRA | Diversity in law firms' workforce | Solicitors Regulation Authority. (2025).
- SRA | Law firm diversity data tool | Solicitors Regulation Authority. (2024)
- Annual Statistics Report 2019 | The Law Society.
- SRA | Inclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals within the legal profession | Solicitors Regulation Authority. (2024).
- SRA | Gender Pay Gap Report 2024 | Solicitors Regulation Authority.
- <https://www.lawgazette.co.uk/practice/-pay-gap-tracker-highlights-gender-divide-in-legal-profession/5059120.article>. Fouzder, M. (2016, December 9)
- Christina Blacklaws: 'It's deplorable there aren't more top women in law' | Law | The Guardian. Blacklaws, C. (2019, April 16)

Ethnics

LISA THOMAS

Introduction

- Ethnicity is often referred to as a person's identity or identified by others. These are based on ancestry, language, religion, culture, physical appearance and tradition. They all define a person who belong to a population group of people who share a cultural background. Under the Equality Act 2010, ethnicity includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. While the Legal professions in the UK are increasing slowly with the (BAME) Lawyers, white lawyers still remain the dominant group within the legal sector.

Steady Increase.

There has been a steady increase in the proportion of 'the black ethnic group' Asian, and minority groups (BAME) from 14% in 2015 to 19% in 2023.

12% Asian

3% Black

3% Mixed/Multiple

1% Other.

The higher proportion of solicitors from 'the black group' Asian, and Minority ethnics backgrounds that works in one-partner law firms is 39% than all other firm sizes. This percentage will be lower as the firm size expands.

2-5 partners 23%

6-9 partners 16%

10-50 partners 15%

50+ partners 15%

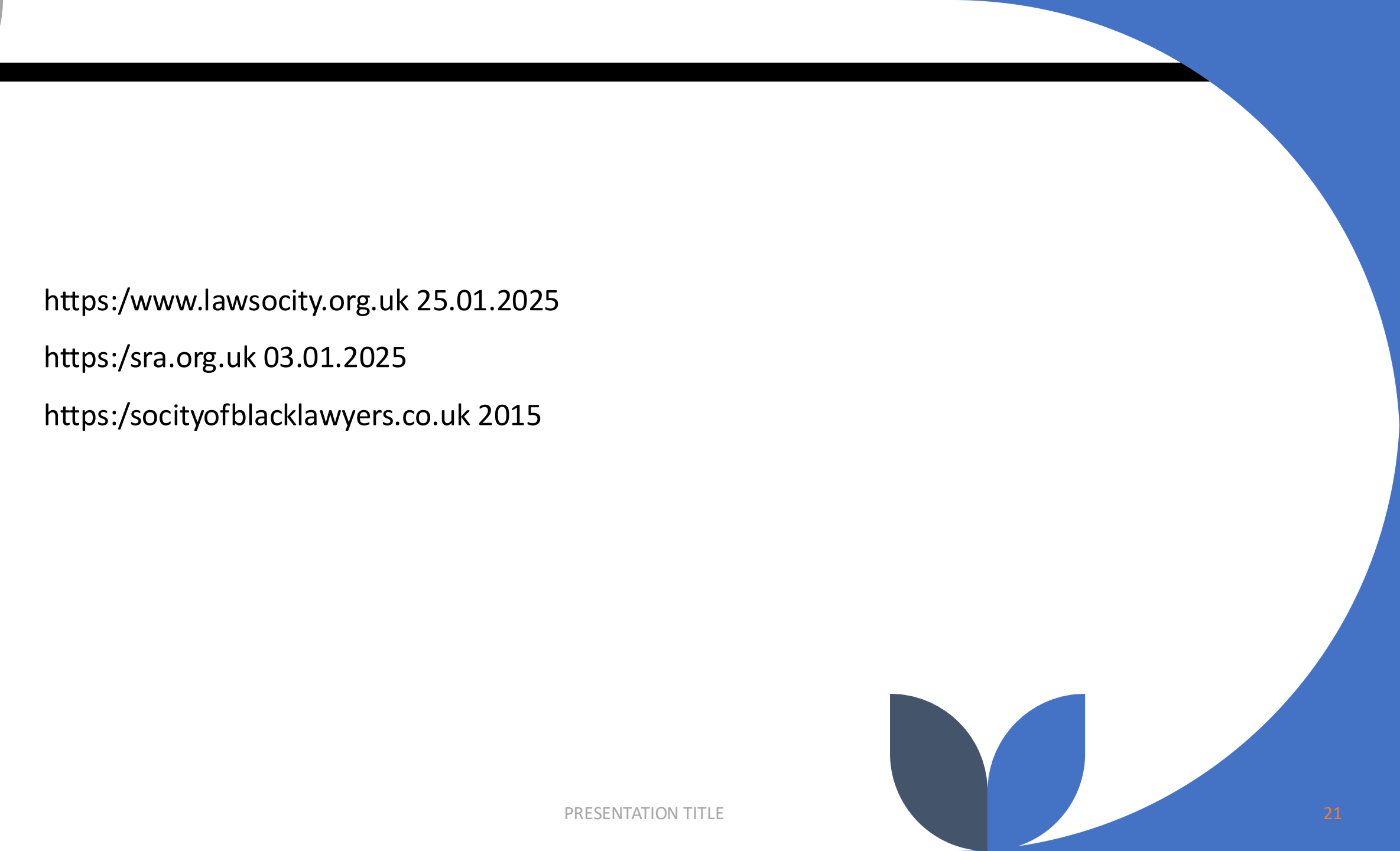
Language and Terminology

- Language as we know it is consistently progressing so it's important we use the correct terms when addressing people of an ethnic background due to personal preferences. Each person's identity is personal to themselves. Remembering while talking about race or ethnicity there are words, phrases and acronyms which can change depending on the conversation at that present moment in time. Remembering to always be educated and keeping up to date with the correct preferences use by each ethnic background.
- BAME- this acronyms refers to non-white ethnic groups, this categories don't tend to include 'the white minority but do include people that identify as mixed ethnicity.

Even though the UK Government has stopped using this term BAME for alternative ones that now include BME- Black and minority Ethnic, POC- people of colour and BIPOC-Black, Indigenous, and People of color. Due to it being criticised for failing to notice the differences between individuals and their experience.

History and Race

BHM-Black History Month gives people a time to remember and reflect on the achievements of all past ethnic minorities lawyers dating back to 1884 where John Thorpe of an African heritage was the first Barrister to be called to the Bar, followed by Monmohon Ghosh in 1864 a person from an Indian descent and John Mensah Sarban 1887 of Ghanaian. These all played a major part of paving the way for the formation of The Pan African Congress established in London in 1990.



<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk> 25.01.2025

<https://sra.org.uk> 03.01.2025

<https://societyofblacklawyers.co.uk> 2015



Reform suggestions

Inclusive Hiring practices

- Implementing blind Hiring Practices.
- Using diverse hiring panels
- Employing interviewers with a range of backgrounds.

(Social Mobility Foundation 2021)

Anti-bias training

- Regular courses
including :-cultural awareness
As the Equality Human Rights Commission (2020) reported, fair decision-making should be encouraged.

Mandatory diversity reports
Annual reports to be published.
Encouraging transparency and accountability.
Faster progress in improvements

(Solicitors Regulation Authority, 2023)

Mentorship and sponsorships

- Mentoring system set up.

Working with Senior professional, The Bar Council (2021)

Possibility to do remote work

Flexible working hours, the Law Society (2021).

To support parents and caregivers.

Improved accessibility access and workplace adjustments for the disabled, as a report from the Social Mobility Foundation (2023) informs that only 6 % of solicitors disclosed a disability.

Financial support and scholarships

The Law Society's (2022) research shows that the cost of becoming a qualified solicitor is around £70.000

Paid internships.

Scholarships for aspiring solicitors from low-income backgrounds.

Conclusion

- In conclusion, this presentation has examined what a solicitor is, how they are regulated, gender diversity, and the ethnicity of solicitors.

Although there has been progress within the legal system, the suggested reforms can help create a more inclusive legal system that can solve existing problems, such as the current statistics on diversity in the United Kingdom's legal system. This would benefit everyone, including future staff, clients, firms, institutions, and legal professionals, to help create milestone achievements.

For justice to be truly fair, the legal profession must reflect the society it serves.

(Legal Services Board, 2022)

References

- Legal Services Board** (2022) *Diversity in the Legal Workforce*. Available at: <https://www.legalservicesboard.org.uk> (Accessed: 18 March 2025).
- Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) (2022) *Disability in the legal profession*. Available at: <https://www.sra.org.uk> (Accessed: 19 March 2025).
- Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) (2023) *Annual diversity report*. Available at: <https://www.sra.org.uk> (Accessed: 18 March 2025).
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (2020) *Reducing Unconscious Bias in the Workplace*. Available at: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com> (Accessed: 18 March 2025).
 - Law Society (2021) *Flexible Working and Diversity in Law Firms*. Available at: <https://www.lawsociety.org.uk> (Accessed: 18 March 2025).
 - Law Society (2022) *Diversity in the Legal Profession: 2022 Report*. Available at: <https://www.lawsociety.org.uk> (Accessed: 19 March 2025).
 - Legal Services Board (2022) *Diversity in the Legal Workforce*. Available at: <https://www.legalservicesboard.org.uk> (Accessed: 18 March 2025).
 - Social Mobility Foundation (2021) *Impact of Socio-Economic Background on Legal Careers*. Available at: <https://www.socialmobility.org.uk> (Accessed: 18 March 2025).
 - Solicitors Regulation Authority (2023) *Diversity and Inclusion in the Legal Profession*. Available at: <https://www.sra.org.uk> (Accessed: 20 March 2025).
 - The Bar Council (2021) *The Impact of Mentoring on Career Progression in Law*. Available at: <https://www.barcouncil.org.uk> (Accessed: 12 March 2025).

- My timeline: Denise Jones. 2405845.

- **Week one:**

- Meet and greet in class.
- Discussion of sections, in which each person will do their presentation on.
- Set up a group chat on WhatsApp.

- **Week two:**

- Start of research.
- Looked at the social mobility foundation website and information on hiring practices, legal services board, and equality human rights commission, and took pieces for information on anti-bias training, mentorships, and sponsorships.

- **Week three:**

- WhatsApp chats with the group.
- Planned outline for PowerPoint slides.
- Looked up financial support and the law society

Notes

- Denise Jones
- 2405845
- Notes for presentation.

