

## Shifting paradigms within lawyering

**Supervisors:** [Dr Caroline Derry](#) and [Dr Emma Jones](#), [The Open University Law School](#) and the [Centre for Knowledge in Organisations and Professions](#).

In the UK, the role of the legal profession has evolved considerably within recent years. The enactment of the Legal Services Act 2007, the resultant growth in competition within the legal services market, a rise in client consumerism, new applications of technology, and wider economic challenges have all contributed to these developments. Even the term “legal profession” itself can be queried in light of the increasingly fragmented and diffuse nature of legal practice.

As part of this evolution, a number of new lawyering paradigms have developed, or are beginning to emerge. This includes a significant focus on legal practice as a form of profit-driven, commercial business model and the creation and/or growth in importance of a variety of legal roles (such as para-legal). However, it also includes the development of a form of legal counter-culture, embodied within movements such as the comprehensive law movement and integrative law movement, both of which offer new paradigms for legal practice.

This doctorate will allow the successful candidate to develop their own, original research focus within this overall topic area (sited within the field of socio-legal studies). Potential areas of research could include (but are not limited to):

- The historical evolution of the legal profession (for example, the admission to and changing roles within the profession of women and ethnic minority lawyers).
- Changing notions of “professionalism” in legal practice.
- The influence of commercialisation upon the legal profession.
- The emergence and influence of new paradigms, including therapeutic jurisprudence, comprehensive law and integrative law.

The successful candidate may choose to use either a desk-based or empirical approach, or a combination of both.

### About the supervisors:

Caroline’s research interests centre around gender and the law. Her current research on the legal profession focuses upon early women barristers, and upon the intersections of gender, criminal law and professional regulation in the 1920s. Emma’s research interests centre around the role of emotion and wellbeing in legal education and the legal profession.

### Further reading

Daicoff, S. (2006) “Law as a Healing Profession: The Comprehensive Law Movement”, *Pepperdine Dispute Resolution Law Journal*, 6(1), 1.

- Jones, E. (2017) "Making practice more affective: Emotional intelligence as a legal meta-competency", *European Journal of Current Legal Issues*, 24, Article 2(1)  
<http://webicli.org/article/view/565>
- Sommerlad, H., Harris-Short, S., Vaughan, S. and Young, R. (eds) *The Futures of Legal Education and the Legal Profession*, Oxford and Portland, Hart Publishing.
- Susskind, R. (2013) *Tomorrow's Lawyers: An Introduction to your Future* (Oxford, Oxford University Press).
- Webb, J. (2008) The Dynamics of Professionalism: The Moral Economy of English Legal Practice - and Some Lessons for New Zealand, *Waikato Law Review*, 16, pp. 21-45.
- Wright, J. K. (2016) *Lawyers as Changemakers, the Global Integrative Law Movement* (Chicago, ABA Book Publishing).