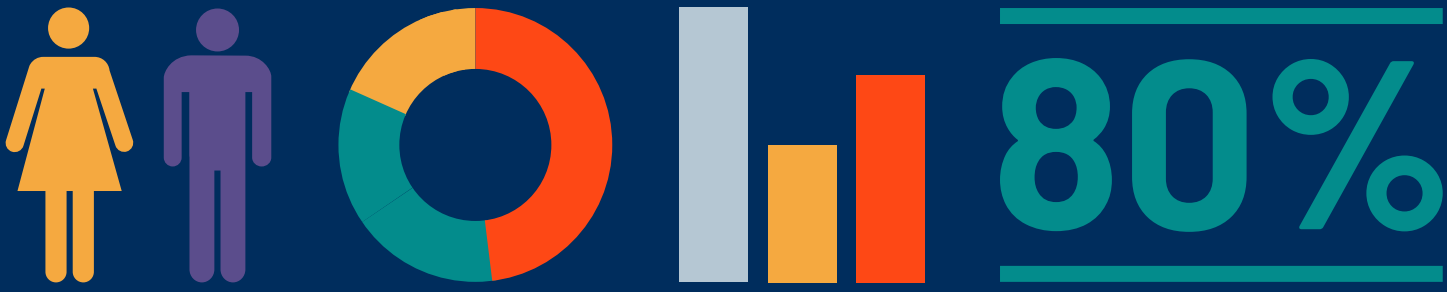




2025 Salary Survey

A snapshot of earnings and career progression
through the CILEX route



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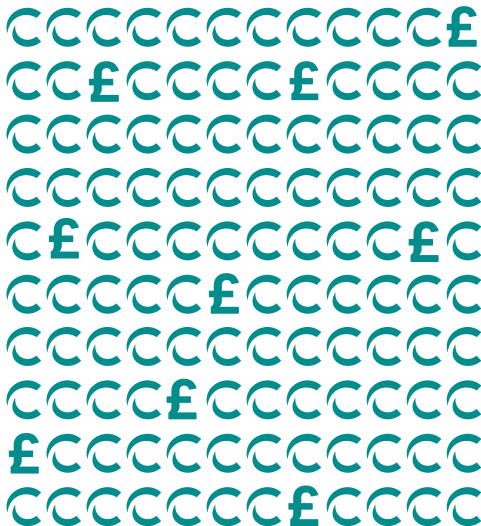
92%

of respondents are satisfied with their career advancement through CILEX.



25%

Is the percentage that men are out-earning women by in senior roles.



Introduction

Confidence is returning to the legal services market, with falling inflation and easing interest rates driving more vacancies and new roles.


However, there is a growing shortage of legal professionals with 2–10 years’ post-qualification experience, especially in corporate, commercial, employment, and real estate law (Robert Half, 2025).

This creates strong opportunities for CILEX members, and it is against this backdrop we publish our 2025 Salary Survey. The survey offers valuable insights into salary trends and shows how CILEX qualifications boost earnings and career progression. Over 80% of respondents would recommend the CILEX route, and 92% are satisfied with their career advancement.


The survey reveals clear links between CILEX membership grades and salary growth, with many progressing to senior roles, including Partner. Importantly, nearly 60% of respondents started their CILEX journey with A-levels or below, yet their earnings match degree-holders, highlighting the accessibility and value of the CILEX pathway.

While there is much to celebrate, the survey also highlights sector-wide challenges. The gender pay gap persists and widens at senior levels. Totally Legal’s 2025 report shows this gap has increased from 13% to 20% year-on-year, with men out-earning women in most roles. Pay disparities also exist by ethnicity, with Black, Asian, and Mixed ethnicity members earning less on average. CILEX remains committed to tackling these inequalities, working with stakeholders to ensure a more inclusive, equitable, and representative legal profession.

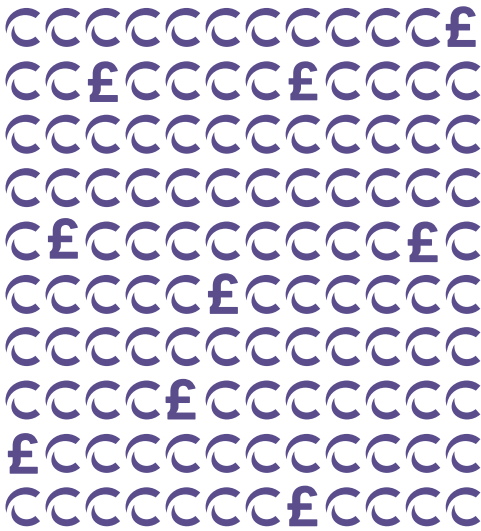
Robert Half 2025 Salary Guide
Totally Legal 2025 Salary Survey



60%
of respondents started their CILEX journey with A-Levels or below.



80%
of respondents would recommend the CILEX route.





Methodology

An online survey was distributed to all CILEX members in March 2025.

A total of 2,269 respondents currently employed in a legal role completed the survey, and their responses form the basis of this report.

Participants were asked to provide salary and bonus information based on a full-time role, allowing for consistent and accurate comparisons across grades, roles, and demographics. Information is accurate at time of publication, June 2025.

Respondent breakdown

Students (131): Currently studying CPQ Foundation stage.

Paralegals (320): Have completed CPQ Foundation stage, the previous CILEX Level 3 Professional Diploma in Law and Practice, or hold a qualifying law degree.

Advanced Paralegals (326): Have completed CPQ Advanced stage, the previous Level 6 Professional Diploma in Law and Practice, or hold an LPC/BPC.

Fellows (1,194 practising, 39 non practising): Fully qualified CILEX members who have successfully completed the academic stages of training and met the regulator’s requirements. Practising Fellows are authorised to undertake legal work, non-practising Fellows are qualified but not currently providing legal services at this level.

CILEX Lawyers (209): Fully qualified specialist lawyers who have completed the CILEX Professional Qualification (CPQ or legacy route), relevant work experience and are authorised in their area(s) of practice.

CILEX Affiliate (18): For those whose circumstances have changed for reasons including parental leave or period of non-working.

*32 respondents selected ‘Other’ membership grade.



2,269

was the number of respondents currently employed in a full-time role within the legal sector.



76%

had their CILEX studies or membership entirely, or in part, paid for by their employer.



SURVEY RESULTS

Average Basic Salary

SALARY BY MEMBERSHIP GRADE

56%

received a salary increase upon completing a level or qualification, and more than 1 in 4 saw their pay jump by over 20%.

“Climbing the CILEX ladder pays off”

As members progress through the CILEX qualification pathway and membership grades, the financial return becomes clear. With an average salary rising from £32,233 for Students to nearly £59,000 for practising Fellows and CILEX Lawyers, this data confirms the strong link between progression and income.



Membership grade	Average salary
Student	£32,233
Paralegal	£35,257
Advanced Paralegal	£37,745
Affiliate	£44,268
Fellow (non-practising)	£50,961
Fellow (practising)	£58,573
CILEX Lawyer	£58,844
All grades	£50,317

(Base: 2,237)

SURVEY RESULTS

Salaries & Earnings

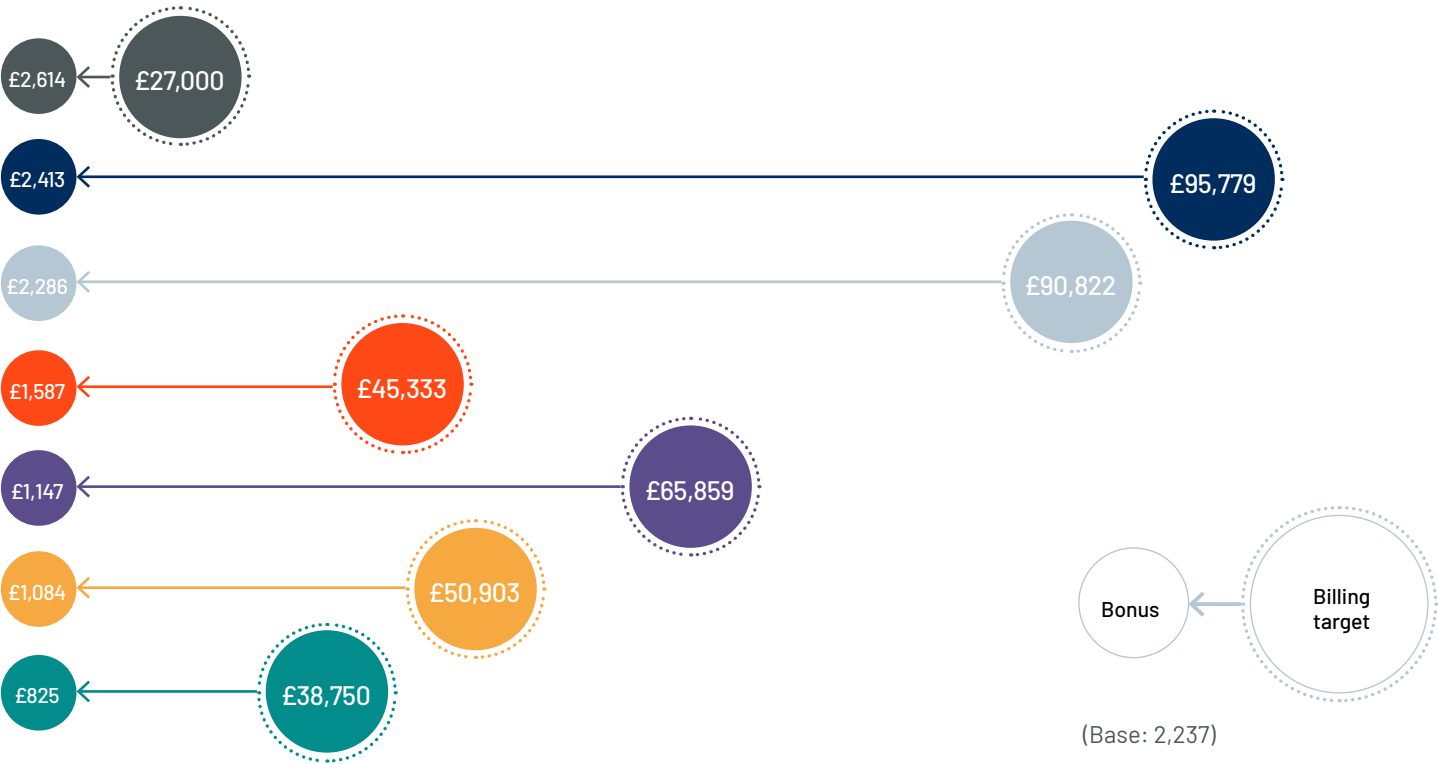
AVERAGE BONUS

15%

CILEX Fellows with practice rights earn, on average, 15% more than those without.

“Higher grades, higher bonuses”

Bonuses follow a similar upward trend. CILEX Lawyers and practising Fellows enjoy average bonuses close to £2,400, nearly triple the amount received at student levels. Bonus growth aligns closely with billing targets, underlining the increasing commercial responsibility as members move up in their career.



SURVEY RESULTS

Demographics & Diversity

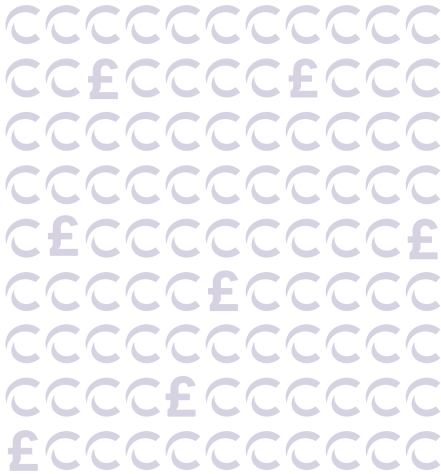
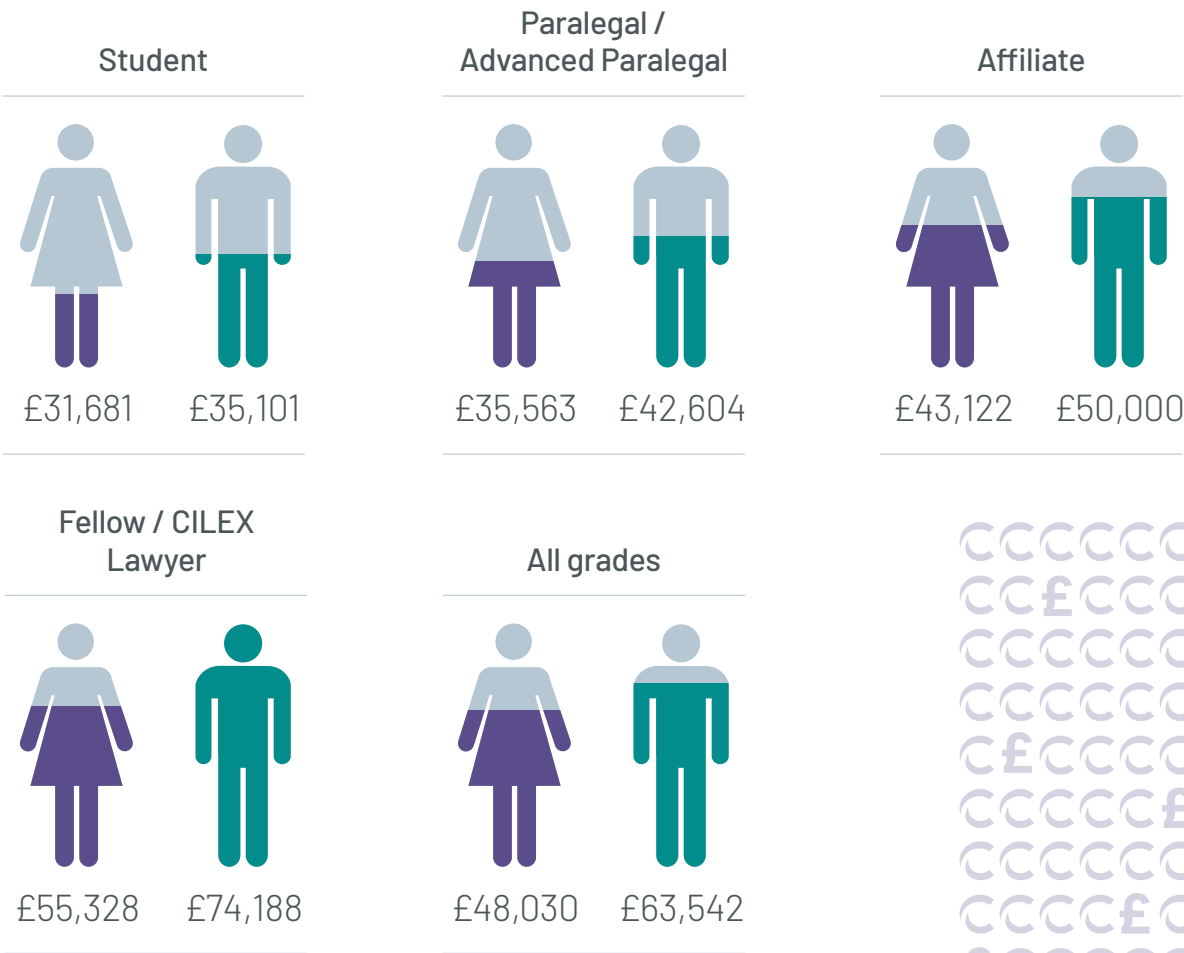
SALARY BY GENDER

25%

Gender pay gap tops 25% at senior level, with paralegals still facing a 17% disparity.

“The gender pay gap persists”

Across every membership grade, male respondents report higher average salaries than their female counterparts – a trend seen most acutely among Fellows and CILEX Lawyers.



(Base: 2,227 - 1,881 female, 346 male)

SURVEY RESULTS

Demographics & Diversity

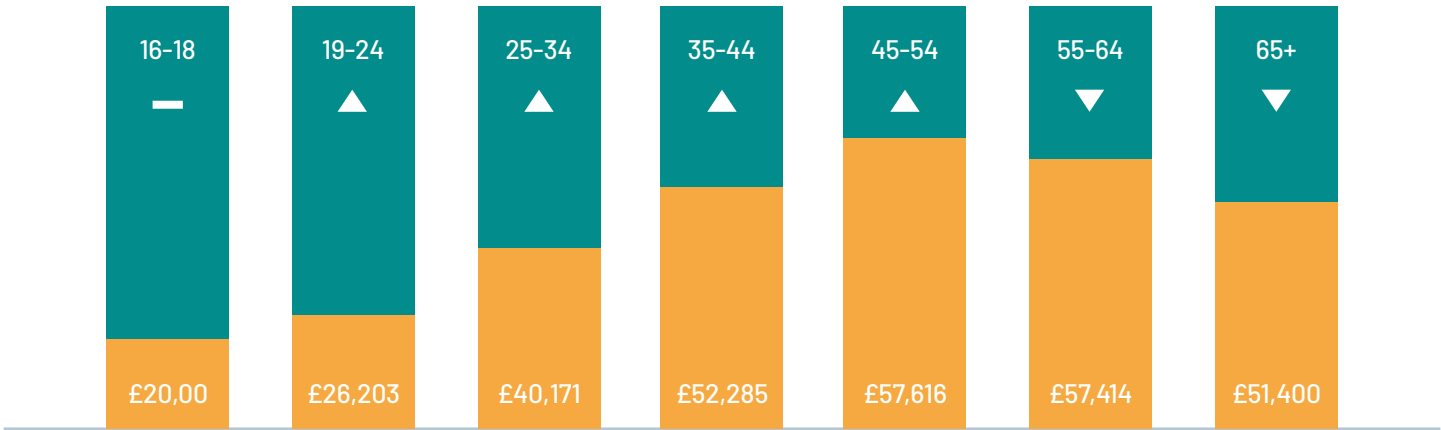
SALARY BY AGE

25-34

CILEX salaries climb steeply around the ages of 25-34.

“Earnings peak between 45 and 64”

Salaries increase consistently with age and experience, peaking around the mid-50s. Encouragingly, those entering the profession at a younger age via CILEX start with earnings that grow steeply over time.



● Age ● Average Salary (Base: 2,269)



SURVEY RESULTS

Demographics & Diversity

SALARY BY ETHNICITY

£5,000

Asian and Mixed ethnicity members earn up to £5,000 less at key career stages.

“Ethnicity still influences earnings”

Although CILEX offers a more inclusive route into law, disparities remain within the profession. Average salaries for Asian and Mixed ethnicity respondents fall below that of White counterparts, particularly at Student and Fellow grades.

Student



Paralegal/Advanced Paralegal



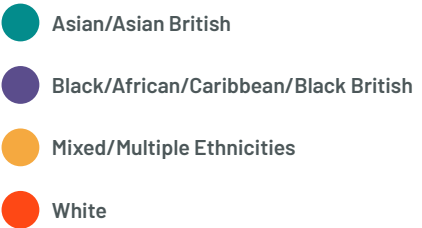
Affiliate



Fellow/CILEX Lawyer



All Grades



(Base: 2,202)

SURVEY RESULTS

Demographics & Diversity

SALARY BY REGION

£60,000

Senior CILEX salaries top £60,000 in multiple regions outside London.

“London leads – but not always by much”

As to be expected, legal professionals in London receive the highest average salaries. However, regions such as the South West and East of England also report strong figures for senior roles, suggesting broader geographic opportunity through the CILEX route.

Region	Student	Paralegal/Advanced Paralegal	Affiliate	Fellow/CILEX Lawyer	All grades
East Midlands	£25,788	£32,057	£38,286	£50,870	£44,159
East of England	£29,458	£39,168	N/A	£64,433	£53,579
London	£49,602	£43,523	£42,000	£75,169	£64,442
North East	£22,915	£29,998	N/A	£51,754	£41,808
North West	£31,357	£42,232	£67,500	£52,913	£49,396
South East	£30,650	£36,600	£43,679	£59,720	£50,965
South West	£28,914	£33,826	£35,900	£60,193	£50,418
Wales	£39,564	£33,149	N/A	£52,337	£44,814
West Midlands	£29,928	£39,592	£23,000	£52,091	£46,686
Yorkshire & The Humber	£29,457	£32,602	£55,500	£57,478	£49,285

(Base: 2,269. Northern Ireland and Scotland data too low to include)

SURVEY RESULTS

Company & Job Role

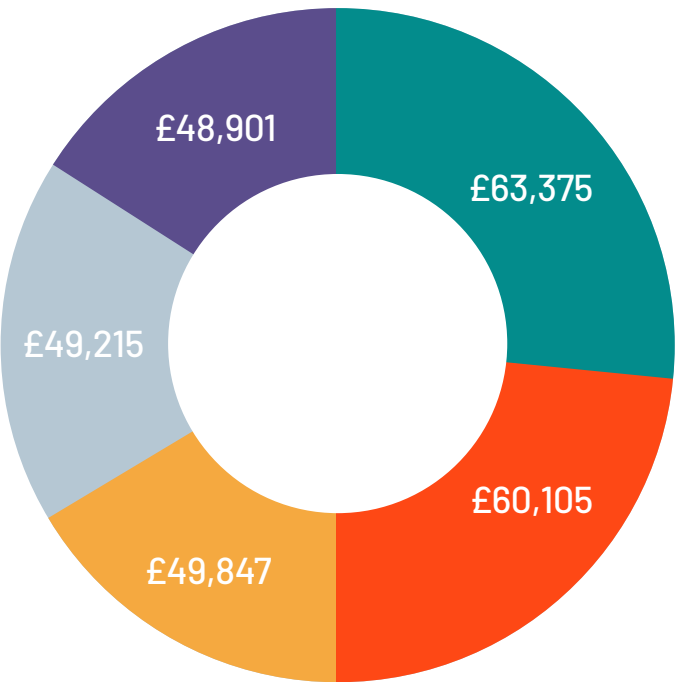
SALARY BY TYPE OF BUSINESS

10x

Private sector bonuses are more than 10 times higher than those in the public or charity sector, but billing targets rise with them.

“Private sector delivers higher returns – at a cost”

While private sector roles tend to offer the most generous bonuses and salaries, especially in in-house settings, they come with significantly higher billing expectations than the charity and public sectors.



Type of business	Average salary
Charity/Not-for-profit	£49,847
Private sector: In-house	£60,105
Private sector: Law firm	£49,215
Public Sector	£48,901
Self-employed	£63,375

(Base: 2,269)



SURVEY RESULTS

Company & Job Role

SALARY BY COMPANY SIZE

**CILEX professionals
earn well across
firms of all sizes.**

**“Big firms pay best –
but not by much”**

Larger firms edge ahead in salary averages, but mid-sized and even micro firms still offer competitive packages, showcasing the value of the CILEX route across organisations of all sizes.

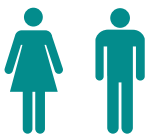
Size of business

Average salary



Micro (1 to 10 employees)

£49,745



Small (11 to 50 employees)

£46,256



Medium (51 to 250 employees)

£50,805



Large (Over 250 employees)

£52,012

(Base: 2,269)

SURVEY RESULTS

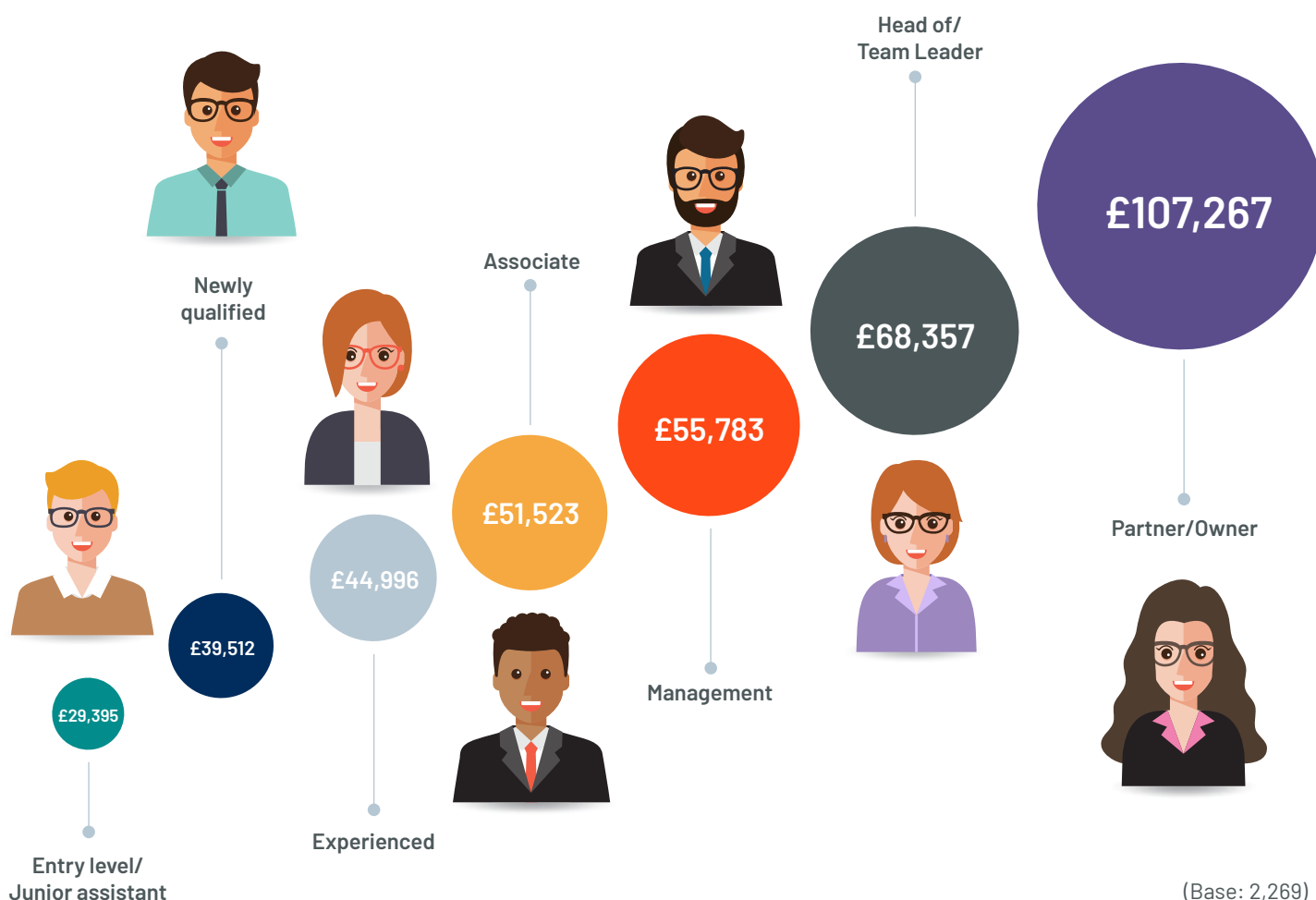
Company & Job Role

SALARY BY SENIORITY

300%
Top roles earn
over three times
entry-level.

"Progression pays"

From junior assistants earning under £30,000 to partners and firm owners earning upwards of £100,000, the financial rewards of career progression are clear – each step up in responsibility brings a meaningful uplift in salary.



SURVEY RESULTS

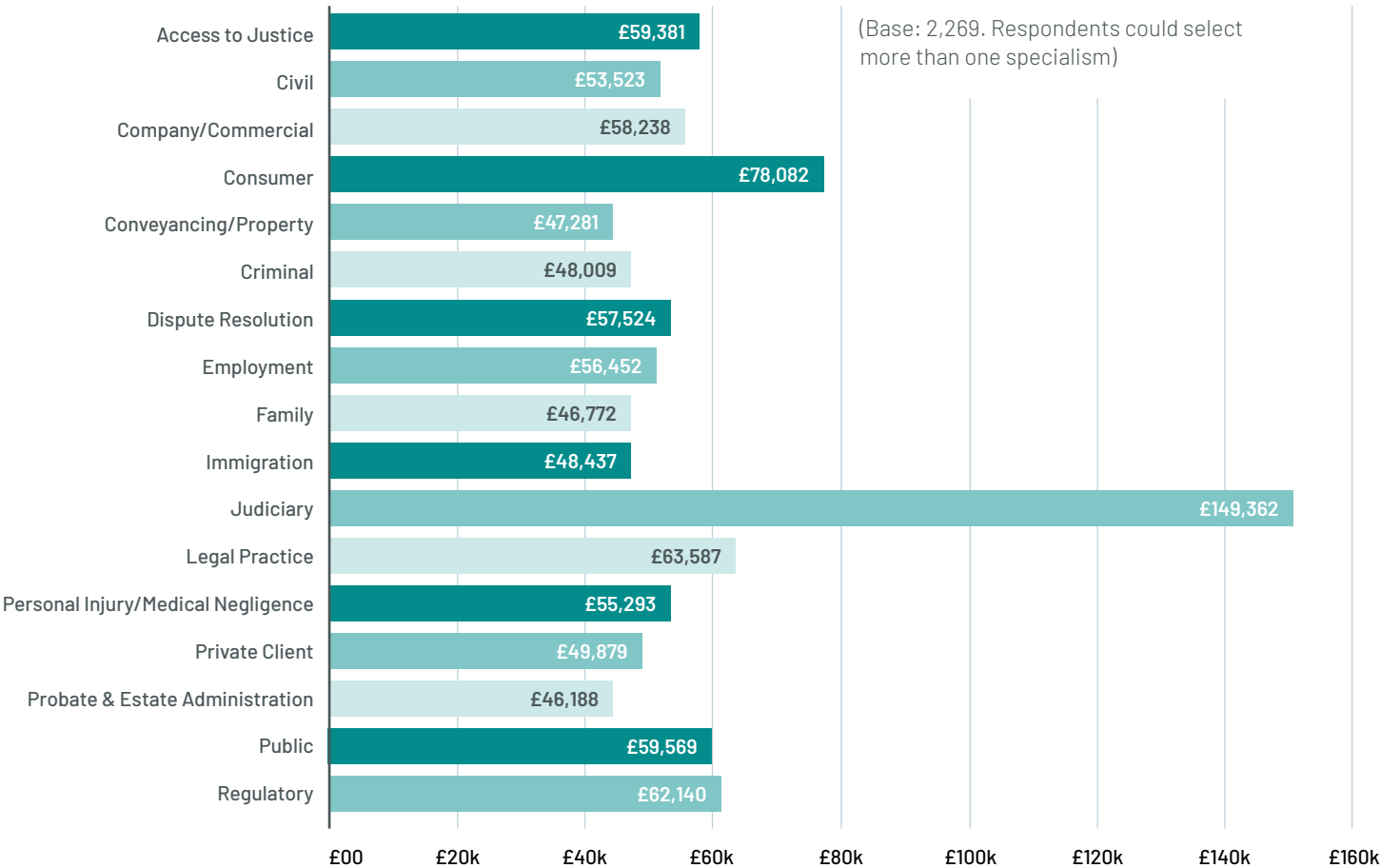
Company & Job Role

SALARY BY SPECIALISM

Judiciary and consumer law top the salary charts for CILEX members.

“Specialisms matter”

While all practice areas offer solid earnings potential, those in consumer and legal practice, alongside judicial roles, come out top.



SURVEY RESULTS

Education & Funding

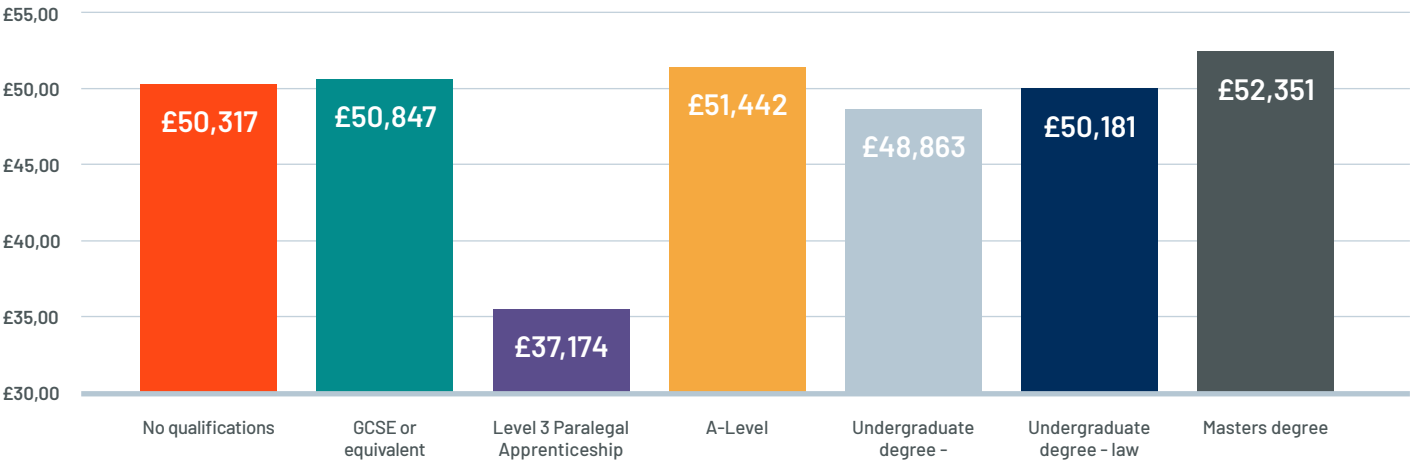
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION BEFORE JOINING CILEX

60%

Almost 60% held A-Levels or below prior to studying CILEX - 19% had a law degree.

“A degree or traditional background is not required”

All qualification routes into CILEX show similar average salaries, reinforcing our role in widening access to legal careers. Nearly 60% started studying CILEX with A-Levels or below.



(Base: 2,090)



SURVEY RESULTS

Career Progression & Satisfaction

92%

are satisfied with their career progression through the CILEX route.

“CILEX delivers – financially, professionally and personally”

Over 80% of respondents would recommend the CILEX pathway, and an amazing 92% are satisfied with their career progression. This data shows that CILEX not only opens doors, but keeps them open – offering long-term value and satisfaction.

Build your career with CILEX





Any questions?

If you'd like to find out more about career progression opportunities with CILEX, get in touch with us at **cilex.org.uk/contact-us**



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