

BRIEF HISTORY OF NALP



NALP was established in 1987. Its mission - to re-enforce its position as the leading professional organisation catering for the 'Professional Paralegal' not only within the legal profession but also within commerce, industry and the private and public sectors. Also, to strive to ensure the proper recognition of its Members as an integral 4th Arm of the Legal Profession by the quality of its qualifications, professional development and the standards of behaviour and regulatory powers laid down for its Members. Its aim is to encourage, promote and develop the role and practice of the Paralegal and represent the best interests of its Members.

NALP's main benchmark qualification was introduced in 1988: The Higher Certificate in Paralegal Studies (now the **Level 4 Diploma in Paralegal Studies**). Since 1989 when the first examinations were held, over 10,000 Members have sat for the qualification of Associate Member (A.NALP) - **the NALP Level 4 Diploma in Paralegal Studies**.

Continuing growth saw the introduction of further qualifications: The **Level 7 Post Graduate Diploma in Paralegal Practice** which was introduced in 1999, as a result of referrals by The Law Society, to assist law graduates, who were unable to obtain a training contract, to achieve the



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necessary knowledge and skills in procedural law to progress to the alternative career route as a career paralegal. Success in this leads to Graduate membership of NALP (Grad.NALP)

Licensing: In order for the paralegal profession to become more in tune with the changing legal market., NALP, after consultation, published its strategic plan for the self-regulation of the paralegal profession by way of licensing which was implemented in 2005. NALP was restructured as "The National Association of Licensed Paralegals" (NALP) and commenced issuing licenses to paralegals who could satisfy the criteria laid down by NALP. This is now regarded as the benchmark in England and Wales for the qualified, experienced and dedicated paralegal professional.

In 2009, NALP became an Awarding Organisation regulated by Ofqual (Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation) and since 2010 both the Level 4 and Level 7 qualifications are regulated by Ofqual. In 2012 NALP's new **Level 3 Qualifications** were added to the framework of nationally recognised paralegal qualifications.

In 2010 NALP Training Company was formed and is now the main NALP Centre offering all its qualifications via distance learning.

NALP Training now works closely with a number of universities to offer the NALP Training Joint Diploma Programme for LLB undergraduates to enable them to gain an extra diploma on graduation.

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