

The logo features the text 'HCR' in a white, sans-serif font above the word 'FLEX' in a larger, bold, white, sans-serif font. To the left of 'FLEX' is a stylized orange graphic consisting of three horizontal bars of varying lengths, resembling a 'Z' or a series of stacked 'U' shapes. The background is a dark teal color with light-colored, wavy, abstract lines flowing across it.

HCR FLEX

Cost effective, flexible legal
advice for the Higher Education
industry from our Commercial
team for your institution

hcr law



What is HCR UniFlex?

HCR UniFlex redefines traditional legal resourcing by offering a tailored, flexible legal support model designed specifically for the Higher Education industry.

HCR UniFlex provides immediate access to interim legal expertise through our legal counsel and in-house secondment service. Whether on a temporary or fixed-term basis, our experienced commercial lawyers integrate seamlessly with your institution's legal or governance teams, delivering high-quality, sector-relevant advice precisely when and where it's needed.

Our lawyers bring a deep understanding of the complexities facing Higher Education (HE) institutions, from regulatory compliance and governance to contracts, partnerships, and commercialisation.

HCR UniFlex is designed to complement your internal legal resource or serve as a cost-effective alternative to traditional outsourced legal services. With UniFlex, you gain control over legal spend while ensuring continuity and quality of support.

Who benefits most from HCR UniFlex?

Now more than ever, HE leaders need timely, cost-effective access to specialist legal expertise. Whether your institution is undergoing rapid growth, restructuring, navigating regulatory change, or delivering complex projects, having experienced legal professionals who understand the HE landscape can make all the difference.

We're Higher Education experts

We've over

50 years'

education experience

There are more than

40 lawyers

in our specialist education team

We count over

30

universities

as clients, including numerous Oxford and Cambridge colleges

Recognised by our peers as experts

**EducationInvestor
Awards
2025 FINALIST**

Legal Advisor of the Year
to Education Institutions

“ ”

We advised a University client on a successful collaboration with a large corporation to establish new commercial income streams. Key commercial terms were advised on, along with an explanation of the risks involved and proposed changes to the contract.

HCR UniFlex is particularly valuable for:

HE leaders and departments stretched for capacity

When legal compliance, contract negotiation, or risk management is competing with an already full agenda, UniFlex provides essential support—filling gaps without increasing permanent headcount.

- **Institutions seeking a fresh, external perspective**

Whether it's through participation in remuneration or risk committees, or providing insight at board level, our lawyers offer an independent, sector-aware view that helps identify and manage unseen risks.

- **Legal teams needing additional bandwidth**

If your in-house legal resource is under pressure, HCR UniFlex delivers targeted expertise, from a specialist lawyer that understands their sector, to support day-to-day operations or strategic initiatives, whether for surge capacity or specialist input.

- **Leaders investing in internal capability-building**

HCR UniFlex can deliver bespoke training, mentoring, and supervision, supporting legal teams or wider university staff to navigate specialist areas such as procurement, data protection, research contracts, or regulatory compliance.

HCR UniFlex is designed for those who recognise the value of proactive, embedded legal support and professionals who can move quickly, integrate smoothly, and contribute meaningfully to institutional goals.

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We supported a Midlands-based University in navigating the appropriate public procurement procedures for tendering a social care contract. The University had developed strong partnerships with several community-based social care charities, many of which were recipients of public grants to deliver education and training services.

Our advice focused on ensuring compliance with the relevant procurement regulations while preserving the University's collaborative relationships with these third-sector providers. We helped structure the process in a way that was both legally robust and aligned with the University's strategic goals for community engagement and social impact.

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HCR UniFlex: Legal support that adapts with you

HCR UniFlex means we're by your side. Because we specialise in HE, we understand your priorities, the regulatory frameworks you operate within, and the unique challenges that HE institutions face.

As your legal support needs evolve, HCR UniFlex gives you the flexibility to scale up or down with ease. Our service is designed around how HE clients use legal resource in practice, offering responsive, cost-effective support when and where it's needed most.

You can choose from the following flexible arrangements:

- **Interim Secondment** — On-site or virtual legal support for periods when your in-house team is unavailable or under-resourced, due to annual leave, parental leave, sickness, staff and personal changes, or project-driven demands. Our lawyers integrate seamlessly, maintaining continuity and minimising disruption.
- **Mixed Secondment** — A flexible model that allows more than one of our solicitors to support your institution, depending on need. This is ideal for situations where capacity gaps are varied or where different specialisms are required over the course of a project or time period.
- **Virtual Secondment** — Remote in-house style legal support that gives you access to a range of commercial law expertise at a significantly lower cost than traditional models. You retain a single point of contact but can switch between legal specialisms as your needs dictate.
- **Retained Service** — Ideal for institutions needing occasional, ad hoc legal advice, typically under seven hours per month. This fixed-cost arrangement offers peace of mind, allowing you to pick up the phone without worrying about time-based billing. Advice is provided remotely, ensuring accessibility and cost-efficiency.



Why Choose HCR UniFlex?

Better value, built for HE — Because we understand your institution and its priorities, we provide faster, more relevant legal advice, saving you both time and money. We can reserve time in advance, ensuring you have guaranteed access to legal support with quick turnaround times. Our pricing reflects your commitment to a long-term partnership: the more you use HCR UniFlex, the greater the discount we can offer. You also benefit from the flexibility to switch between service options as your needs evolve.

Reduced risk through sector specific expertise — With HCR UniFlex, you gain access to specialist legal knowledge drawn from a team of over 800 professionals across 10 offices. Your dedicated legal relationship manager will work closely with you, developing a deep understanding of your institution so we can anticipate and manage risks before they escalate, giving you confidence that you've got expert support in your corner.

Certainty and cost control — HCR UniFlex allows you to tailor legal support around your institution's needs and budget. You receive monthly invoicing, quarterly reconciliations, and regular usage updates to ensure transparency and control. You can adjust your plan or end the arrangement at any time with written notice - no long-term tie-ins or hidden costs.

The right expertise, when you need it — Whether you're navigating governance and compliance, preparing for institutional growth, or managing the day-to-day, we match you with lawyers who understand the HE environment. Your UniFlex lawyer will be fully briefed on your institution and ready to deliver strategic, practical advice from day one.

Proactive, strategic advice — As our relationship with your institution develops, we'll not only respond to your current needs, but also help you anticipate future challenges, offering early warnings, informed insights, and actionable solutions that keep your institution moving forward with confidence.

Broader access to HCR's full-service legal offering — In addition to your dedicated HCR commercial secondees or team, you'll benefit from discounted rates on a broad range of specialist legal services. These include education, charity, dispute resolution, regulatory matters, employment and property, ensuring you can access trusted, sector-aware expertise across the full spectrum of legal needs.

“ HCR UniFlex supported a university post-merger, aligning policies and contracts to streamline collaboration over a six-month transition. ”

Talk to our team of leading Commercial specialists



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“ We guided a University without in-house counsel through a strategic legal review to shape its future legal resourcing. ”

“ Rebecca Quinn is simply brilliant – has knowledge across a wide range of areas and lots of sector insight which she can bring to any matter she advises on. ”



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Hereford | London | Thames Valley | Worcester | Wye Valley



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INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
We invest in people Standard

Lexcel
Legal Practice Quality Mark
Law Society Accredited

THE LEGAL 500
UNITED KINGDOM

CHAMBERS
AND PARTNERS