

SQE – legal apprenticeships and opportunities for your firm

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What is the SQE?



- A single, national licensing examination for admission as a solicitor of England and Wales – Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE)
- We will no longer specify routes to admission as a solicitor

SQE key dates

Development

Testing and piloting

Approvals

Go live

2017

2018

2019

2020

2021

March 2018:
approval of first
LSB application

July 2017:
SRA decision to
introduce SQE

March 2019:
SQE1

July 2018:
appointment
of Kaplan to
run SQE

Final approval
of SQE design

Dec 2019:
SQE2

First SQE related
applications
available

Second LSB
application

Autumn 2021:
First SQE
assessment

SQE
regulations
come into
force

Benefits of the SQE

Aspiring solicitors – Fairness and choice; greater flexibility in how to train

Law firms – guarantee of standards; greater opportunity to tailor training to their needs; wider range of recruitment options

Education and training providers – ability to innovate, greater ability to offer training suited to local needs and wider recruitment options

General public – greater confidence in the competence of the solicitors they use; wider access to legal services

SQE1

Functioning Legal Knowledge Assessments

- Substantive and procedural law
- Test of application of fundamental legal principles
- Computer based assessment

Practical Legal Skills Assessment

- Legal Research and Writing Skills

SQE2

Practical Legal Skills Assessments

- Client interviewing, advocacy, case and matter analysis, legal research and written advice, legal drafting
- Simulated role plays/written tasks

Functioning Legal Knowledge Assessments

- Criminal Law and Practice; Principles of Professional Conduct, Public and Administrative law and the legal systems of England and Wales
- Business Law and Practice; Dispute Resolution; Contract; Tort
- Property Law and Practice; Wills and the Administration of Estates and Trusts

Practical Legal Skills Assessment

- Legal Research
- Writing Skills

Practical Legal Skills Assessments

- Client interviewing and attendance note
- Advocacy – rights of audience
- Case and Matter Analysis – including Negotiation Planning
- Legal Research and Written Advice
- Legal Drafting

Assessed in the following contexts:

- Criminal Practice; Dispute Resolution; Property; Wills and the Administration of Estates; Business Practice

Qualifying work experience (QWE)

- At least 2 years' experience of legal services which enables a candidate to develop the competences in the Statement of Solicitor Competence
- Can be with no more than four different organisations
- No requirement for three practice areas; QWE is about developing the competences in the Statement of Solicitor Competence

Qualifying work experience

- Working in student law clinic, or placements in law firms, can count; would need sign off by solicitor at university.
- Within law firms, can be signed off by COLP (or another solicitor). No requirement for Training Principal
- Sign off to confirm completion of QWE, not to assess that standard has been met

Practical arrangements



Initially, two exam sittings per year; 3 attempts; 6-year validity; SQE 2 only after passing SQE1; SQE1 to be taken in one sitting



SQE available in England and Wales; wide geographic network for written tests; limited number of centres for oral skills

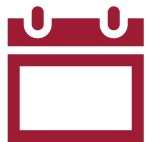


And (for written tests) internationally



Future – sittings/venues will keep pace with demand

Timing and transition



To give training providers and employers time to prepare for new system, we will introduce the SQE in **autumn 2021**



Start, or contract to start, Qualifying Law Degree/Common Professional Examination before 2021: choose to continue under old system to 2032, or qualify under SQE

Indicative fee range

- £3,000 - £4,500 for SQE1 and SQE2
 - SQE 1: £1,100 – £1,650
 - SQE 2: £1,900 - £2,850
- Indicative only – eventual fee may be inside or outside this fee range. Variables:
 - Size of assessments: numbers of questions, numbers of contexts and length of testing time
 - Offering SQE in both English and Welsh

SQE1 pilot – March 2019

- 318 candidates participated, in 46 centres in England, Wales, Scotland and internationally
- Tested Functioning Legal Knowledge (FLK) and SQE 1 skills

SQE1 pilot – March 2019

- Findings
 - It was a useful and valid exercise that gave us the information we needed about assessment design
 - It showed it is possible to design a FLK assessment that is robust and manageable
 - The operational aspects of the pilot went well

SQE1 pilot – March 2019

- Two recommendations for change
 - Reduce FLK from three to two assessments; same coverage and number of questions: we have accepted the recommendation
 - SQE1 skills model not effective and should not be used in live setting: we are now exploring alternative options

Keep in touch

- Email us with queries/to be added to our email list for training providers: sqe@sra.org.uk
- Take a look at our SQE resources pages – sra.org.uk/sqe
- Join our [SQE LinkedIn group](#)



BCLP's Apprenticeship Schemes

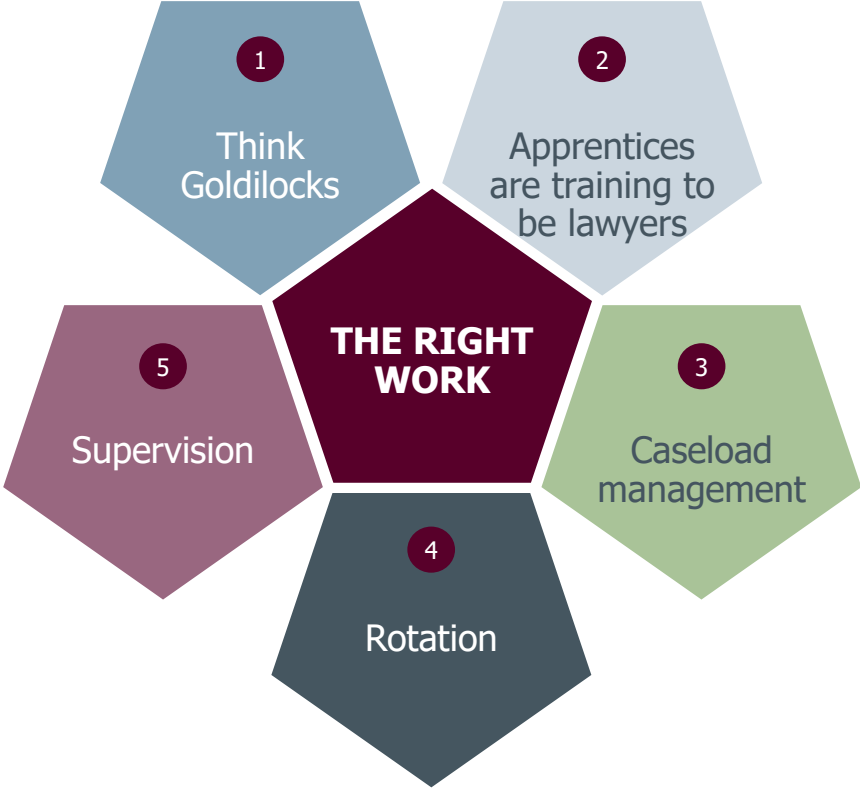
SRA Compliance Conference

31st October 2019

A brief history ...

- BCLP Manchester office opened in 2014
- First three legal apprentices joined in September 2015
- Annual intake thereafter of legal apprentices
- Two legal apprentices moved onto Solicitor Apprenticeship in 2017
- Currently
 - 9 Solicitor Apprentices
 - 8 Paralegal Apprentices

What we have learned?



What have we learned?



How has BCLP benefitted?

- Our apprentices are engaged, keen to learn, their progress is rapid, and they are loyal
- Apprentices bring different skills and approaches that compliment our traditional trainee route
- We now have a deep talent pipeline and can plan several years ahead with certainty
- The diversity it brings to our office creates energy and challenges norms



This document provides a general summary only and is not intended to be comprehensive. Specific legal advice should always be sought in relation to the particular facts of a given situation.



GOWLING WLG

APPRENTICESHIPS AT GOWLING WLG

CHLOE LLOYD – HEAD OF RESOURCING



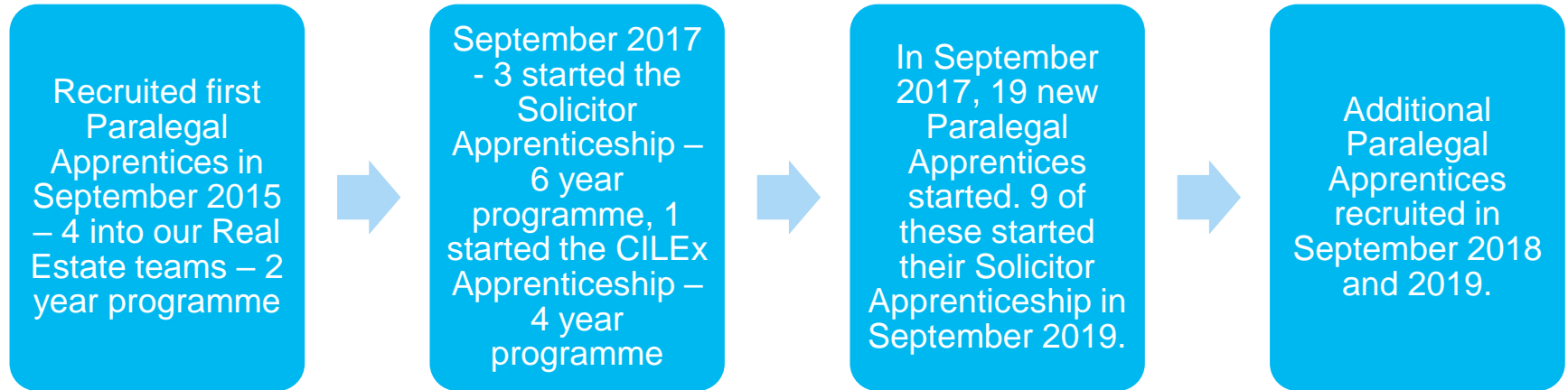
GOWLING WLG

CURRENT POSITION

- 27 Legal Apprentices – 12 Solicitor Apprentices, 15 Paralegal Apprentices
- Across several practice areas – Real Estate, Corporate, Commercial, Pensions, Employment, Dispute Resolution
- 8 Business Services Apprentices – Finance, Business Development, Human Resources, IT



HOW DID WE GET THERE



WHAT THE PROGRAMMES LOOK LIKE

- 2 year Paralegal Apprenticeship:
 - Sit in one legal team
 - Half a day study leave per week
 - Various assessments throughout the programme and an end point assessment
- 5 year Solicitor Apprenticeship:
 - Initially remain in the same legal team
 - Rotate to different legal teams in year 4 and 5
 - One day study leave per week
 - End point assessment will be SQE



BENEFITS OF APPRENTICES

- Diversity of candidates – opportunity of a legal career for candidates who are unable to attend university
- Knowledge of practice area
- Knowledge of firm
- Benefits for Apprentice
- But, not without its challenges...



FEEDBACK FROM THE BUSINESS

SUPERVISOR FEEDBACK

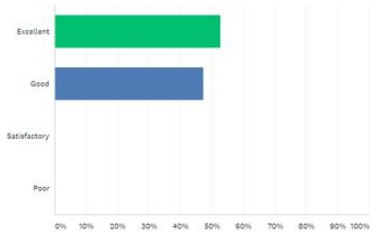


FEEDBACK FROM THE APPRENTICES

APPRENTICES FEEDBACK

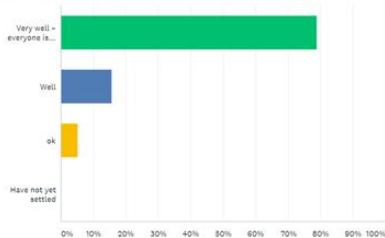
How would you rate the selection process? (application form, video interview, assessment centre)

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



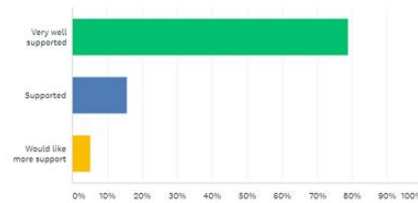
How well have you settled into the firm?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



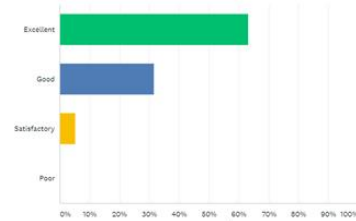
How well do you feel supported by your supervisor and/or line manager?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



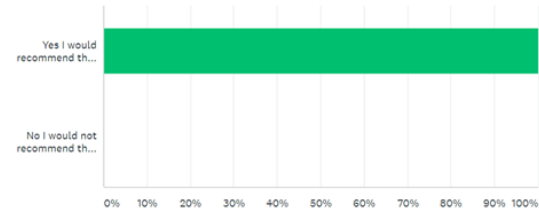
How would you rate the 'non work' aspects (CSR work, social events etc) of your apprenticeship?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



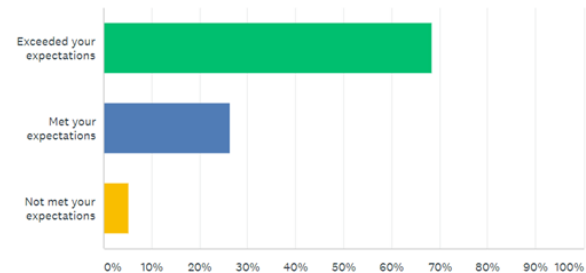
Would you recommend this scheme to others?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



So far, has your apprenticeship:

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



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