

SQE Update – December 2021

In this bulletin find out about SQE1 assessment results timescales, recording qualifying work experience and SQE assessment contingency planning. Learn more about our on demand webinar for employers on what the SQE means for them.

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First SQE1 assessment results in January

The first SQE1 assessments took place last month with more than 1,000 candidates sitting it. In the interests of candidates, we will now provide their results on 20 January 2022, a few days ahead of the SQE2 bookings opening on 25 January.

We will also publish a short SQE1 post-assessment report providing feedback about overall candidate performance, and the key results from the assessment, such as pass mark and pass rate. Look out for more on this in our next bulletin.

Changes to recording qualifying work experience

We've updated how candidates record their qualifying work experience with a new online form within mySRA. Now candidates register their work experience, including where it took place and who will confirm it, and we contact the nominated solicitor to confirm this. Recording experience can no longer be done through the previous pdf form.

Find out more about recording qualifying work experience

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/qualifying-work-experience-candidates/registering-qualifying-work-experience/>]

SQE assessment contingency planning

We continue to monitor the possible impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the smooth running of the SQE. Our preference is to continue to offer the SQE through dedicated test centres, as this provides the best way to maintain the integrity and safeguard the security of the assessment in line with our planned assessment delivery model.

However, we are putting in place contingency arrangements for remote assessment should there be significant Covid-19 related disruption due to the closure of large numbers of test centres or of UK borders. Where this



results in widespread difficulty for candidates in travelling or accessing test centres, we will decide whether it is appropriate to offer remote assessment. We therefore cannot guarantee that candidates will be able to take the SQE – this is because we will not offer remote assessment where local centre closures, or travel restrictions imposed by a country, affects only small numbers of candidates. This contingency will be possible for written SQE2 assessments from April 2022.

For oral SQE2 assessments, remote assessment won't be possible in April 2022. If we need to invoke this contingency for those taking the April 2022 SQE2 assessment, we will aim to hold a remotely assessed sitting for candidates affected, likely in July 2022, if possible.

This would enable candidates to complete the assessment quicker than if we did not offer remote assessment, but it would naturally result in a consequential delay in those candidates receiving their SQE2 results. We will communicate with candidates as early as possible if we need to invoke this contingency.

Candidates who are unable to take an SQE assessment due to travel restrictions relating to Covid-19 can cancel their booking and receive a refund, subject to providing appropriate evidence that they cannot attend. They can also book the next available date, subject to availability. However, it is important candidates are aware that if they book SQE2 preparatory training courses to prepare them for a specific sitting, they do so at their own risk.

Candidates who have a health issue which prevents them from travelling as a result of the pandemic should refer to the reasonable adjustments process. Any reasonable adjustment applications will be considered on a case by case basis.

QLTS candidates sitting SQE2

New information has been added to the SQE website for existing Qualifying Lawyers Transfer Scheme candidates. This explains what they need to do if they are looking to sit the SQE2 assessment, rather than the final OSCE, to become qualified as a solicitor.

Find out more [<https://sqa.sra.org.uk/about-sqa/what-is-the-sqa/qlts-mct-candidates>]

Dealing with a refusal to confirm qualifying work experience

We've published helpful advice for candidates who may be having issues getting their qualifying work experience confirmed. This tells them what we expect from solicitors and what to do if they refuse.

Read our advice [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/qualifying-work-experience-candidates/refusal-confirm-qualifying-work-experience/>]

#SQEready – what employers are doing

We're showcasing how law firms and other organisations are getting ready for the SQE. Our latest case study is now live and features law firm Reed Smith. Read more about their new SQE training programme.

Take a look [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sqe-update/sqe-ready-case-studies/>]

SQE in numbers – a big year!

It's been a big year for all things SQE. Here are some of the highlights:

- 157,000 visits to the SQE assessment website since its May launch
- 15,000+ views of our SQE webinars
- 5,800+ SQE-related phone and email queries answered by us
- 5,200+ candidates have registered an SQE candidate account
- 4,500+ followers on Career in Law, our social media channel for aspiring solicitors
- 1,000+ candidates sat the first SQE1 assessment
- 130 attendees at our face-to-face SQE events across England and Wales.

Annual monitoring report

We've published the annual monitoring report as part of our quality assurance activities relating to the Legal Practice Course (LPC) and Qualified Lawyer Transfer Scheme (QLTS) routes. This covers the academic year 2019-20 and includes data from training providers on:

- qualifying law degrees
- Common Professional Examination
- the LPC
- periods of recognised training
- equivalent means
- QLTS.

Read the report [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/how-we-work/archive/reports/education-training-authorisation-monitoring-activity/>]

Get involved

On demand webinar

SQE: what it means for employers

We recently ran a live session as part of our Compliance Officers Conference on what the SQE means for employers. Hear from two law firms and an in-house team about how they have responded to the SQE. They talk about the opportunities, challenges, as well as practical tips. Other topics covered include how the training market is developing, apprenticeships and qualifying work experience.

Watch the webinar [https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/compliance-conference-2021/#heading_fd8f]

Future events in 2022

Looking ahead, we are keen to do more face-to-face events where possible next year, as well as online webinars. This will include an event to discuss the first SQE1 assessment and results. We plan to run this in early spring. Watch out for more information on this in SQE Update in the new year.

Other ways to get involved

Join our LinkedIn reference group [<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8548868/>] . It will help you keep up to date with the latest SQE developments and opportunities to get involved in our surveys and events.

If you are thinking about taking the SQE, or know someone who is, please follow Career in Law [<https://www.facebook.com/careerinlaw>] for the latest information aimed at aspiring solicitors.

If you have any questions, or want more information on how you can get involved, contact us [<https://www.sra.org.uk/home/contact-us/>] .

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