

SQE Update - December 2023

In this bulletin we include an update on our plans to publish more data about SQE candidates' performance, and information on two consultations about qualified lawyers and the new SQE1 sample questions. Plus how you can catch up with our recent session on the SQE and qualifying work experience for law firms.

Subscribe to alerts [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sqe-update/sqe-subscribe/>] so that you know when we publish the latest SQE Update bulletin.

Publishing data about the SQE assessments

After SQE results are released to candidates, we publish a report [<https://sqa.sra.org.uk/exam-arrangements/sqa-reports>] showing the pass marks and the pass rates for the sitting. This includes a breakdown of candidate performance by demographic characteristics. We also publish an annual report [<https://sqa.sra.org.uk/exam-arrangements/sqa-reports/sqa1-january-2023>] that brings together data on all the sittings held over a year.

We are committed to publishing further data to help potential SQE candidates decide how best they might prepare for the assessments. We had intended to publish, before the end of 2023, data that would link candidate outcomes with the training they told us they had undertaken. However, we do not yet have sufficient data to enable us to publish information in a way that would be useful, given the variety of training options available.

The bank of data on which we can draw will, of course, grow as more candidates take the SQE. These numbers are increasing significantly, particularly for SQE1. We will review the data that becomes available after each sitting in 2024 to determine whether the data bank is large enough to inform a useful publication.

In the meantime, we will refresh the list of training providers [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqa/sqa-training-options/training-provider-list/>] offering SQE support and the range of their provision.

New SQE1 sample questions

We have published 40 new SQE1 sample questions, in addition to the existing 90 questions. We also have a short video to help candidates understand the structure of an SQE1 question.

Take a look at the new questions and video [<https://sqe.sra.org.uk/news-item/2023/11/30/sqe1-sample-questions---release-of-40-new-questions-and-short-video>]

Consultation on qualified lawyer regulation changes

We are consulting on two proposed regulation changes affecting qualified lawyers who have an SQE exemption:

1. Introducing a new rule preventing qualified lawyers from being granted an SQE exemption from a part of the SQE they have previously failed.
2. Changing when and how we seek assurance that a qualified lawyer with an SQE2 exemption has the English or Welsh language proficiency needed to practise as a solicitor.

Both are open until 24 January. Find out more about these consultations [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/consultations/>]

Future SQE candidate numbers training provider survey

To help us plan operationally so that SQE candidates get the best experience possible, we are again gathering information from training providers on potential candidate numbers for future SQE sittings. Some of the information may simply be an update of what providers have previously given us.

If you are a training provider, please respond by 5 January.

Take our survey [<https://kaplan.keysurvey2.com/f/41691940/168f/>]

SQE2 July 2023 results report

The results for the SQE2 July 2023 sitting were published in late November and 1,004 candidates received their results. Of these, 944 candidates sat SQE2 for the first time and they achieved an 82% pass rate.

The overall pass rate, including those resitting for the first or second time, was 79%. The pass mark for each of the four sittings was either 61% or 62%.

Read the full report [https://sqe.sra.org.uk/docs/default-source/pdfs/reports/sqe2-jul-2023-statistical-report.pdf?sfvrsn=d6e32f47_1]

Booking SQE2 for April 2024

Bookings for the SQE2 in April will open on 10 January. To sit this assessment, candidates must have either:

- passed SQE1
- have the Legal Practice Course and be using SQE2 and qualifying work experience as an equivalent to a period of recognised training.

Candidates need to complete the registration and pre-booking processes before booking their assessment. Also, if someone needs any reasonable adjustments, they should make the request as early as possible as part of their pre-booking steps. As with all sittings, spaces are subject to availability.

Find out more on what candidates need to do [<https://sqa.sra.org.uk/registering-and-booking/booking-assessments>]

Get involved

SQE: What it means for law firms (webinar)

Last month, we held a session on what the SQE means for law firms and updates on the assessment and qualifying work experience. Hear how firms have taken different approaches to the SQE, including apprenticeships.

Watch on demand [https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/compliance-conference-2023/#heading_639b]

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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