

First SQE assessment results

30 March 2023

For the first two SQE assessment sittings, we published additional information to help people understand the results. This is only for these two sittings. Headline results data will still be published after each sitting, and more detail will be in our annual SQE assessment reports.

The first SQE1 assessment ran on 8 and 11 November 2021, with the first SQE2 assessment between 11 - 29 April 2022. As these were the first sittings we have published a range of information to help people understand the results.

Headline [results data \[https://sqa.sra.org.uk/exam-arrangements/sqa-reports\]](https://sqa.sra.org.uk/exam-arrangements/sqa-reports) will still be published after each sitting and more detail will be in our annual SQE assessment reports.

- [SQE1 assessment \(November 2021\) \[#tab_a0831\]](#)
- [SQE2 assessments \(April 2022\) \[#tab_a0832\]](#)

How they went and next steps

The Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) is a single rigorous assessment for all aspiring solicitors. It consists of SQE1, which tests candidates' functioning legal knowledge, and SQE2 which tests candidates' practical legal skills. The first SQE1 assessments ran on 8 and 11 November 2021, with the first SQE2 assessments due in April 2022.

Below we provide information about how the first assessments went, how candidates performed and what we will report on in the future. This builds on the [summary report \[https://sqa.sra.org.uk/assessment-arrangements/results-and-resits/sqa-reports\]](https://sqa.sra.org.uk/assessment-arrangements/results-and-resits/sqa-reports) on candidate performance published by Kaplan, the SQE assessment provider. There is also an accompanying [report from the SQE Independent Reviewer \[https://qltt.sra.org.uk/sra/how-we-work/archive/reports/review-first-sitting-sqe1/\]](https://qltt.sra.org.uk/sra/how-we-work/archive/reports/review-first-sitting-sqe1/) who provides independent oversight and quality assurance of the SQE assessments.

How did the assessments go?

The SQE1 assessments were delivered successfully across more than 100 test centres in 26 countries.

1,090 candidates, including 27 solicitor apprentices, took part in the November SQE1 assessments, with 1,073 candidates sitting both Functioning Legal Knowledge 1 (FLK1) and Functioning Legal Knowledge 2 (FLK2). This is a transitional period with the majority of people still qualifying through the Legal Practice Course (LPC) or Qualified Lawyer

Transfer Scheme (QLTS) routes so we predicted that the size of the candidate cohort would be smaller than in later years.

The SQE Independent Reviewer confirmed that 'the initial SQE1 exam appears to have successfully delivered valid, fair, reliable and defensible outcomes. Each of the stages of preparation; delivery and processing outcomes for the exam demonstrated significant evidence of good practice. The operational and logistical processes to set up and deliver the exam proved effective.'

We are reviewing feedback from candidates and any learning points to help inform future assessments. We are running an [online event](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/578/home) [<https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/578/home>], in February 2022 where we will feed back on the SQE1 assessments. There will also be an opportunity for training providers to give their experience of preparing candidates for the first assessments.

How did we make sure the assessments were fair?

A key objective of any professional assessment is that it is fair. In other words, a candidate should get the result they deserve.

We have a range of measures in place, both prior to and after the delivery of the assessment, to assure a high quality examination that is fair to candidates. These include:

- pilot exercises, with more than 500 candidates in total across SQE1 and SQE2, to inform the final design and delivery of the SQE assessments
- training of all SQE question writers, including in relation to unconscious bias
- a robust process of editing and review of all questions, including in relation to cultural neutrality
- internal quality assurance by Kaplan and oversight quality assurance by the SRA and independent subject matter experts appointed by the SRA
- interrogation of data and the use of statistical analysis after the assessment.

SQE1 assessments are delivered and marked electronically. After delivery, Kaplan conduct detailed statistical analysis to determine whether the assessments were valid and reliable. The approach to analysis follows international best practice. These methods are well established and used to assess validity and reliability of assessments in a range of sectors including medicine. The review includes a detailed analysis of performance statistics for each question and each assessment. This statistical analysis is reviewed by an independent psychometrician appointed by the SRA.

This psychometrician confirmed that Kaplan employed psychometrically robust procedures in the standard setting and analysis of the assessment data and that the statistics indicate the assessment to be of a high standard. The SQE Independent Reviewer also confirmed that the process for creating the statistical analyses and quality assuring the results data was thorough and comprehensive.

How did we set the pass mark for the assessments?

The pass mark for the assessments was set using a Modified Angoff method. This involves a panel of qualified solicitors, trained for the process, who are familiar with what we have set out as [day one competence](https://qltt.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/continuing-competence/cpd/competence-statement/1) [https://qltt.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/continuing-competence/cpd/competence-statement/1]. They consider each question on the assessment and estimate the proportion of day one qualified solicitors that would answer each question correctly (through reference to our [Threshold Standard](https://qltt.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/continuing-competence/cpd/competence-statement/threshold-standard/1) [https://qltt.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/continuing-competence/cpd/competence-statement/threshold-standard/1]).

The pass mark for FLK1 was 57% and for FLK2 was 56%.

How did candidates do?

As above, 1,090 candidates, including 27 solicitor apprentices, took part in the November SQE1 assessments, with 1,073 candidates sitting both FLK1 and FLK2.

To pass SQE1, candidates need to pass both FLK1 and FLK2. 53%* of candidates passed both assessments, with 67% of candidates passing FLK1 and 54% passing FLK2. In order to qualify, successful SQE1 candidates will then need to attempt SQE2 (unless they have an SQE2 exemption) as well as showing us that they have a degree (or equivalent), that they meet our character and suitability requirements and have completed two years' qualifying work experience (QWE).

*Note that for all statistics we have rounded to the nearest whole number

Comparisons with other legal assessments

There continue to be significant differences in successful completion rates on the LPC between providers. Between 2018 and 2020, pass rates ranged from 23% to 100%, with typical overall pass rates of [around 58%](https://qltt.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/education-training-authorisation-monitoring-activity-2021/1) [https://qltt.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/education-training-authorisation-monitoring-activity-2021/1]. For the QLTS multiple choice test between 2018 and 2020, the average pass rate was 57%.

Difference in performance on FLK1 and FLK2

Performance on FLK1 was better than on FLK2. As the Independent Reviewer observes, possible reasons for this difference in performance could include the fact that candidates had less time to prepare for FLK2 as it was taken just three days after FLK1. Another factor could be the fact that candidates tended to do less well on the more transactional subjects such as conveyancing and litigation of which there are more in FLK2 than FLK1.

Statistical analysis and a thorough review and analysis of the questions in FLK1 and FLK2 did not suggest that there was anything in the question design or the standard of the assessments to account for the difference in performance across FLK1 and FLK2. We will continue to monitor and report on performance across the two assessments in future sittings. We will also talk to training providers, at the event in February, about areas where candidates might benefit from more support.

Pass rates across different demographic groups

With more than 1,000 candidates taking the assessment (and, as above, we anticipate larger numbers as we move through what is a transition to SQE), we were able to look at performance by candidates from different demographic groups. However, we must be cautious in drawing firm conclusions at this stage because:

- some of the demographic groups remained small
- 63% of candidates said that they would prefer to not give details of their demographic background in one or more categories
- we will be able to identify more meaningful trends after a number of assessments and when we have larger sample sizes, as is likely to be the case as SQE is embedded
- we will not know how representative this first cohort of candidates is until we have run the assessments for a number of years.

Pass rates amongst males and females were identical when rounded with:

- 54% of females passing overall
- 54% of males passing overall
- 48% of those who preferred not to say passing overall.

Pass rates amongst candidates who declared a disability compared with those who didn't were also similar, with

- 55% of candidates who declared a disability passing overall
- 53% of those who said they did not have a disability passing overall
- 57% of those who preferred not to say passing overall.

We are keen to monitor whether factors such as socio-economic status affect performance on the SQE. We will look at this over the long term

but results from this first assessment suggested that there was no significant difference in results based on socio-economic background.

For example, there was no significant difference between the performance of candidates who declared they went to non-selective state schools (57%) and those who went to a private school without a bursary (54%). And between those who were from a working class background (54%) compared to those with a parent or guardian from a professional background (56%).

Factors such as achieving a top grade at university or prior work experience were indicators of a greater likelihood to pass. We will continue to monitor whether this is the case as candidate numbers increase over future sittings.

Although numbers were small (27 candidates), pass rates by solicitor apprentice candidates were well above average.

As has been seen over many years in legal professional assessments and assessments in other sectors, white candidates generally performed better than candidates from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups. It should also be noted that candidate numbers were small for some groups so analysis should be treated with caution. Overall, pass rates were:

- 43% for Asian/Asian British candidates
- 39% for Black/Black British candidates
- 58% for candidates from mixed/multiple ethnic groups
- 41% for candidates who declared 'other'
- 49% for candidates who preferred not to say
- 66% for White candidates

Although candidate numbers are very different, for comparison purposes 2019/2020 completion rates on the LPC were:

- 52% for Asian/Asian British candidates
- 39% for Black/Black British/Caribbean/African
- 57% for mixed/multiple ethnic candidates
- 52% for candidates from other ethnic groups
- 65% for White candidates
- 53% for candidates with unknown ethnicity

And on the QLTS multiple choice test in 2019/20:

- 56% of Black, Asian and minority ethnic candidates passed
- 68% of White candidates passed

As reported above and by the Independent Reviewer, we have a range of measures in place to make sure that the SQE assessments are fair and free from bias and we remain committed to doing whatever we can to

understand this difference in performance. The assessments are marked electronically which is the most objective way to mark. We conducted a thorough review and analysis of the questions and the data from the assessment to make sure there was nothing in the design or delivery of the assessment which might contribute to this difference in performance.

The Independent Reviewer has confirmed that the activities we have in place 'appear appropriate to assure that all demographic groups are treated fairly and equally in the assessment process'.

We have also appointed University of Exeter to conduct research to explore the reasons for differential performance in professional assessments by candidates from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.

We will continue to monitor and report on performance by candidates by ethnicity after each assessment. One of the benefits of the SQE is the rich dataset that it will provide over time to help explore this issue. We will provide more detailed analysis across a number of assessments in Kaplan's annual report, the first of which will be published in 2023.

Reasonable adjustments

76 candidates sat the assessments with reasonable adjustments. A range of reasonable adjustments were made available from additional time to complete the assessments to assistive technology. We have collected candidate feedback on how candidates found the reasonable adjustment process. The Independent Reviewer reported that 'Overall, given the confidentiality, complexity and importance of these processes and the sensitivities involved when making arrangements for candidates, the processes worked at least satisfactorily and were often good.'

We will review what went well and what improvements can be made for the future. We will also continue to engage with groups representing disabled solicitors to inform our work in this area.

Further information

The first SQE2 assessments will run in April 2022. Kaplan will publish a summary of SQE2 candidate results when they are released. We will also publish a report on the first SQE2 assessments by the Independent Reviewer.

Kaplan will continue to publish a summary of candidate results after each assessment

On an annual basis, from 2023, we will publish:

- an annual report from Kaplan which will include more detailed information on trends across a number of assessments



- a report on our quality assurance activity
- a report from the Independent Reviewer. They will not continue produce a report after each sitting.

We have also [committed \[https://qltt.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/sqe-information-strategy/\]](https://qltt.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/sqe-information-strategy/) to publishing candidate performance data, including pass rates by training provider. This will benefit future candidates as it may be a factor for them to consider when choosing a training provider and it could help education and training providers evaluate the effectiveness of their training.

We will make this data available from late 2023, using the intervening period to work with providers to develop and refine the processes. We will tell those training providers, in confidence, who have sufficient numbers of candidates whether their candidates performed better, in line with, or worse than average in the November 2021 assessments. Providers can use this information to evaluate their training. We plan to share this information with them on a confidential basis after each assessment until we can make more data available.

We need to make sure we get our approach to publishing candidate data absolutely right to avoid any inaccuracies or misleading data that could adversely affect candidates' ability to make good choices or the operation of what is an emerging training market. That includes making sure any data is appropriately anonymised and contextualised.

We are also mindful that we need a large number of candidates across multiple sittings to make the data we publish as meaningful and useful as possible, and we have been clear that numbers will grow as we move through the transition from the LPC and QLTS routes.

The importance of stakeholder involvement

The process of reaching the first SQE assessment has involved conversations with thousands of stakeholders including training providers, legal businesses, students, solicitors and representative groups. That engagement and feedback has led to us being able to design and develop the SQE assessments through to the launch of the SQE assessment website and the delivery of the first assessments.

For instance, our approach to reasonable adjustments was helpfully informed through feedback from representative and disability groups. We would like to thank all stakeholders for their input in getting us to this point. We will continue to engage with stakeholders to hear their valuable feedback and make sure that we deliver an effective assessment.

The Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) is a single rigorous assessment for all aspiring solicitors. It consists of SQE1, which tests candidates' application of functioning legal knowledge, and SQE2 which

tests candidates' practical legal skills and application of functioning legal knowledge.

The first SQE2 assessments ran during April 2022. Below we provide information about:

- how the assessments went
- how candidates performed and
- what we will report on in the future.

This builds on the [statistical report \[https://sqa.sra.org.uk/exam-arrangements/results-and-resits/sqa-reports/\]](https://sqa.sra.org.uk/exam-arrangements/results-and-resits/sqa-reports/) on candidate performance published by Kaplan, the SQE assessment provider. There is also an accompanying [report from the SQE Independent Reviewer \[https://qirt.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/review-first-sitting-sqa2/\]](https://qirt.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/review-first-sitting-sqa2/) who provides independent oversight and quality assurance of the SQE assessments.

How did the assessments go?

The SQE2 assessments were delivered successfully across 86 written test centres in 24 countries and four oral test centres in England and Wales. SQE2 is made up of 16 stations that test legal skills and application of legal knowledge. Each station is an individual 'assessment' or 'exercise' that candidates take as part of SQE2. There are 12 written stations and four oral stations.

There are 726 candidates receiving their results for the assessments. The overall candidate pass rate was 77%.

The running of the assessment went well, and there were very few issues reported either at individual test centres or across the whole assessment. However, as would be expected from a new exam, delivered internationally, candidates reported a small number of technical and operational issues. These included an oral assessment being brought to an end ten minutes early on two occasions.

Some candidates also found it difficult to use the 'cut and paste' facility during written assessments. These candidates had the opportunity to submit claims for mitigating circumstances in line with our published policy. These are considered by the mitigating circumstances panel along with issues that affect groups of candidates, such as the shortened oral assessment.

The SQE Independent Reviewer confirmed that 'Overall, I felt the SQE2 exams were appropriate for a high stakes, competency based exam used for professional qualification...I was reassured and satisfied that the tasks set were valid and that the pass/fail grades awarded were fitting of the standards and competency expected of a newly qualified solicitor. I observed good levels of planning and preparation and a great deal of care and attention in setting valid and reliable assessment tasks.'

We are reviewing feedback from candidates and any learning points to help inform future assessments.

Who sat the assessments?

This is a transitional period with the majority of people still qualify through the Legal Practice Course (LPC) or Qualified Lawyer Transfer Scheme (QLTS) routes, so the size of the candidate cohort is smaller than we expect for future years.

To qualify through the new system, all candidates must pass SQE1 before they can attempt SQE2, unless they are a qualified lawyer with an exemption from SQE1. Also under our transitional arrangements, candidates with the LPC can choose to complete qualifying work experience (QWE) and SQE2 in place of the period of recognised training. These candidates do not have to take SQE1.

The professional background of candidates taking the SQE in these early stages is likely to be different to future sittings. During this transitional period, there is likely to be a higher proportion of candidates taking the SQE who have worked as paralegals, completed the LPC or qualified abroad.

In the future we expect, for instance, a higher proportion of candidates who have done SQE preparatory courses whilst at university and/or who have been offered training whilst working in a law firm.

The April 2022 cohort included 22 apprentices. It also included 390 candidates qualifying under the transitional arrangements who did not need to sit SQE1 - either qualified lawyers who had sat the QLTS multiple choice test or those candidates with the LPC referenced above.

There were more females than males sitting the assessment, and over half of the candidates were in the 25-34 age group. We explore the demographic background of the candidates in more detail below.

How did we set the pass mark for the assessments?

Overall SQE2 pass marks are calculated using the station scores for each group of candidates who sit the same assessment. Although the written questions are common for all candidates, the oral ones differ depending on the date on which they are taken. This is to make sure that the assessment exercises for each day remain confidential, so that all candidates are treated fairly.

Because the oral tasks vary from day to day, a pass mark is calculated for each set of dates. This is based on the common written questions and the specific oral questions which each candidate in each sitting has attempted.

As a result, the pass mark for SQE2 may differ across dates to reflect any small changes in the difficulty levels of the stations. This is to maintain equivalent standards and to be fair to candidates. This approach is used widely in professional assessments in the UK and abroad.

How did candidates do?

The oral stations were available on four different days. We commonly refer to these as 'sittings'. The combined pass rates for the written and oral stations were as follows:

- Sitting one – 77%
- Sitting two – 79%
- Sitting three – 79%
- Sitting four – 70%

The overall pass rate was 77%. As noted above, candidates typically have to pass SQE1 or have demonstrated their legal knowledge and understanding in other ways before they can enter for SQE2.

So candidates who sit SQE2 will have already demonstrated that they have sufficient functioning legal knowledge to have passed SQE1. We would expect the pass rate for SQE2 to be higher than for SQE1, therefore. The pass rate for the first SQE1 assessments in November 2021 was 53%.

Although the pass mark and the quality indicators (which tell us whether there was consistency across the sittings) are similar across all four sittings, the fourth sitting had a higher number of low scoring candidates. It also contained fewer candidates than the first two sittings. The higher number of candidates with low scores had a greater impact on the overall pass rate for that sitting, therefore. This explains the lower pass rate for the fourth sitting.

Typically, the higher a candidate's degree classification the better they scored on the SQE2 assessment. For instance, of those candidates who told us their degree classification, 92% of those with a first class degree and 82% of those with a 2.1 passed SQE2 compared to 57% of those with a 2.2.

Candidates who did well on SQE2 had typically done well on SQE1. Candidates who told us that they had completed some QWE also did better than those who told us that they had not done. Although it should be noted that some candidates told us that they preferred not to say whether they had done QWE. Of the 492 candidates who told us that they had done some QWE, 80% passed compared to 70% of the 53 candidates who told us they had not undertaken any QWE.

Twenty two candidates were apprentices. Their pass rate was well above the overall pass rate for all candidates. This mirrors the first SQE1

assessments where apprentices also performed well above average.

Overall, candidates performed better in the advocacy, interview and attendance note and legal research tasks, with the exception of the legal research task in business in which candidates performed less well. Candidates did not perform as well in the legal drafting, legal writing and case and matter analysis stations.

There was also a strong positive correlation between the overall skills and overall legal scores. In other words, candidates who did well in the skills elements of the stations also did well in the legal components. Each candidate's scores were also generally consistent across all 16 stations.

*Note that for all statistics we have rounded to the nearest whole number.

Pass rates across different demographic groups

We were able to look at performance by candidates from different demographic groups. However, as with the November 2021 SQE1 assessments, we must be cautious in drawing any conclusions at this stage because:

- some of the demographic groups remained small
- 66% of candidates said that they would prefer not to give details of their demographic background in one or more categories. This means we cannot include them in the multivariate demographic analysis
- identifying meaningful trends will only be possible after a number of assessments and when we have larger sample sizes, as is likely to be the case as SQE is embedded
- we will not know how representative this first cohort of candidates is until we have run the assessments for a number of years.

In contrast to SQE1 where performance between males and females was broadly similar, in SQE2 females performed better than males with:

- 79% of females passing overall
- 75% of males passing overall.

Pass rates amongst candidates who declared a disability were better than amongst those who did not, with

- 92% of candidates who declared a disability passing overall
- 77% of those who said they did not have a disability passing overall.

We are keen to monitor the relationship between socio-economic status and performance on the SQE. There was some difference in results based on socio-economic background. 84% of candidates who said they

attended an independent school passed SQE2 compared to 82% who said that they attended a state-run school.

While 74% of candidates who said they came from a working class household passed SQE2, compared to 78% who said they came from a professional household and 81% from an intermediate household.

As has been seen over many years in legal professional assessments and those in other sectors, and in the November SQE1 assessments, white candidates generally performed better than candidates from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups. It should also be noted that candidate numbers were small for some groups so analysis should be treated with caution. Overall, pass rates were:

- 72% for Asian/Asian British candidates
- 53% for Black/Black British candidates
- 92% for candidates from mixed/multiple ethnic groups
- 55% for candidates who declared 'other'
- 76% for candidates who preferred not to say
- 85% for White candidates

We are committed to exploring the reasons for this long standing pattern of differential attainment and we have [appointed the University of Exeter \[https://qltt.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2021-press-releases/exeter-university-attainment-gap-research-launch/\]](https://qltt.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2021-press-releases/exeter-university-attainment-gap-research-launch/) to conduct research into this important area. Additional (multivariate) analyses, which looked at multiple demographic categories including education and training alongside protected characteristics and socio-economic background, did not provide any evidence of ethnic bias in the assessment and, as with SQE1, with candidates with better prior educational attainment doing better on SQE2.

We have a range of measures in place, both prior to and after the delivery of the assessment, to assure a high-quality examination that is fair to candidates and we remain committed to doing whatever we can to understand this difference in performance. These include:

- pilot exercises, with more than 500 candidates in total across SQE1 and SQE2, to inform the final design and delivery of the SQE assessments
- training of all SQE question writers and markers, including in relation to unconscious bias
- a robust process of editing and review of all questions, including in relation to cultural neutrality
- internal quality assurance by Kaplan and oversight quality assurance by us and independent subject matter experts appointed by us
- interrogation of data and the use of statistical analysis after the assessment. For example, to check whether candidates with different characteristics performed differently in response to any of the stations.

After delivery, Kaplan conduct detailed statistical analysis to assess the quality of the assessment. The analytic techniques follow international best practice, having been well established in a range of sectors including medical education. The review includes a detailed analysis of performance statistics for each station and each assessment. This statistical analysis is reviewed by an independent psychometrician appointed by us who confirmed that the analysis carried out was robust and fit for purpose, and that the interpretations of these analyses were appropriate.

Separately, the SQE Independent Reviewer confirmed that 'the investigations cannot find fault in how the assessments have performed; they have met the assessment objectives and have been demonstrated to be impressively reliable...There was no evidence of bias in the administration or conduct of the exam, including that reported by candidates.'

We will continue to monitor and report on performance by candidates by ethnicity after each assessment. One of the benefits of the SQE is the rich dataset that it will provide over time to help explore this issue, including through our formal evaluation of the impact of the SQE. We will provide more detailed analysis across a number of assessments in Kaplan's annual report, the first of which will be published in 2023.

Reasonable adjustments

Fifty seven candidates sat the assessments with a reasonable adjustment plan. Different plans were in place for the written and oral tasks. The most common adjustment was for extra time or breaks. Around half of those with a plan were given access to a sole-use room and/or access to medication, snacks and water. We have collected feedback on how candidates found the reasonable adjustment process.

Kaplan has been proactively working to improve the process for arranging reasonable adjustments. The average turnaround time for processing requests for reasonable adjustments has improved since the first sitting of the SQE1 in November. Feedback shows that satisfaction levels amongst candidates with a reasonable adjustment plan was higher amongst those who took SQE2 in April compared to SQE1 in November, and the range of reasonable adjustments was greater, because of the different nature of the assessments.

The SQE Independent Reviewer reported that 'overall, the reasonable adjustments process appeared to perform well and improvements were delivered following lessons learned from the first delivery of SQE1'.

We will continue to review what went well and whether further improvements can be made for the future. We will also continue to engage with groups representing disabled solicitors to inform our work in this area.

Further information

The second SQE1 assessments ran in July 2022. The second SQE2 assessments will run in October 2022. Kaplan will continue to publish a statistical report on candidate performance after each assessment.

On an annual basis, from 2023, we will publish annual reports:

- from Kaplan, which will include more detailed information on trends across a number of assessments
- on our quality assurance activity
- from the Independent Reviewer.

We have also [committed \[https://qltt.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/sqe-information-strategy/\]](https://qltt.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/sqe-information-strategy/) to publishing overall candidate performance data, including pass rates by training provider. This will benefit future candidates as it may be a factor for them to consider when choosing a training provider and it could help education and training providers evaluate and enhance the effectiveness of their training.

We will make this data available from late 2023, using the intervening period to work with providers to develop and refine the approach. We will, in confidence, tell those training providers which have sufficient numbers of candidates whether their candidates performed better, in line with, or worse than average in the April 2022 assessments. Providers can use this information to evaluate their training. We plan to share this information with them on a confidential basis after each assessment until we can make more data available and publish it.

We need to make sure our approach to publishing candidate data will help candidates make good choices. We will make sure data is appropriately anonymised and contextualised.

We are also mindful that we need a large number of candidates across multiple sittings to make the data we publish as meaningful and useful as possible, and we expect that numbers will grow as we move through the transition from the LPC and QLTS routes.

The importance of stakeholder involvement

The process of reaching the first SQE assessments has involved conversations with thousands of stakeholders including training providers, legal businesses, students, solicitors and representative groups. That engagement and feedback has supported us throughout the design and development of the SQE assessments, through to the launch of the SQE assessment website and the delivery of the first assessments.

For instance, our approach to reasonable adjustments was helpfully informed by feedback from representative and disability groups. Kaplan also hosts a number of candidate focus groups to hear first-hand

feedback from candidates, in addition to post-assessment candidate surveys.

We would like to thank all stakeholders for their input in getting us to this point. We will continue to engage with stakeholders to hear their valuable feedback and make sure that we deliver an effective assessment.

We will run an online event in October which will provide an opportunity to hear about how the assessments went and to ask questions. Directly after this event, there will also be a roundtable discussion with SQE training providers so that we can hear their thoughts on the first SQE2 assessment.