

Education and training authorisation and monitoring activity - September 2022 - August 2023

16 December 2024

Introduction and overview of 2022-23

We have a statutory responsibility for the education and training of solicitors, as set out in the Solicitors Act 1974 and the Legal Services Act 2007. Our education and training requirements are a key regulatory tool to protect consumers of legal services.

This report summarises our quality assurance activity in relation to the Legal Practice Course (LPC) route to qualification. This route usually involves obtaining a qualifying law degree or Common Practice Examination, an LPC and a period of recognised training.

Unless otherwise stated, the report relates to the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023.

In 2021, the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) replaced the LPC route to qualification. However, we have transitional regulations in place to allow anyone who had begun studying or training when we introduced the SQE, to continue to qualify through the LPC route. Consequently, people could be qualifying through this route for some years, potentially until 2032. However, we expect most courses to come to an end over the next few years.

We will continue to monitor the LPC route and to report on our activities for as long as the numbers qualifying this way remain high enough for us to do so. We are mindful that as LPC providers wind down their courses, new risks to the quality and standard of LPCs could arise. We will monitor the extent to which they might arise and take appropriate mitigating action.

In previous years, we have reported headline figures for students qualifying through the various routes, including the Qualified Lawyers Transfer Test (QLTT), the Qualified Lawyers Transfer Scheme (QLTS), the LPC and the SQE. This report will continue to provide headline figures for those seeking to qualify as a solicitor but focuses solely on the information we receive from LPC providers each year.

The number of solicitors qualifying has increased by about 33% from 2016/17 to 2022/23. In 2022/2023, 75% of those admitted had taken the LPC, but this is shifting towards the SQE route. SQE admissions have risen significantly from 437 in 2021/22 to 1,469 in 2022/23, mostly involving qualified lawyers from other jurisdictions or barristers qualified in England and Wales. Further information is in our [annual education and training corporate report](https://sra/research-publications/education-training-2021-22/) [\[sra/research-publications/education-training-2021-22/\]](https://sra/research-publications/education-training-2021-22/).

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Key findings

SRA Monitoring

Legal Practice Course

LPC results by provider

LPC results by gender

LPC results by ethnicity

LPC results by disability

LPC results by socio-economic categories

Periods of recognised training

	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
Age	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
18 - 21	44	1%	31	1%	44	1%	46	1%	51	1%
22 - 25	3,484	57%	3,513	58%	3,380	57%	3,904	57%	3,955	58%
26 - 30	1,797	30%	3,512	58%	1,812	30%	2,102	31%	2,102	31%
31 - 35	399	7%	378	6%	379	6%	398	6%	381	6%
36 - 40	165	3%	157	3%	152	3%	175	3%	164	2%
41 - 45	86	1%	85	1%	107	2%	102	1%	81	1%
46 - 50	53	1%	55	1%	47	1%	56	1%	49	1%
51 - 55	24	0%	22	0%	22	0%	36	1%	20	0%
56+	16	0%	14	0%	16	0%	16	0%	14	0%
Total known	6,068	100%	6,044	100%	5,959	100%	6,835	100%	6,835	100%
Declaration rate	100%		100%		100%		100%		100%	
Unknown	1	0%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	6,069	100%	6,045	100%	5,959	100%	6,835	100%	6,835	100%

Qualifying through equivalent means

Since the introduction of the SRA Training Regulations 2014, applicants may apply to have their qualifications and experience assessed against the academic or vocational requirements of training by an equivalent means application.

We may recognise prior learning and grant exemptions where:

- the level, standard, volume and content of prior learning achieved is equivalent to all or part of a stage of education and training and
- there is relevant, sufficient and adequate evidence of such achievement.

We may also grant exemptions based on prior experiential learning. The key principle here is that we will recognise the achievement of learning and outcomes and not simply evidence that an applicant has had experience of doing something.

The number of those qualifying with part of their training satisfied through equivalent means has decreased relative to the previous two years. We make decisions about equivalent means following our assessment of applicants' workplace experience and/or qualifications, considering if these are equivalent to the relevant academic and/or vocational stage requirements.

Figure 8 shows the number of individuals who qualified with part of their training satisfied through equivalent means for the period from 2016/17 to 2022/23.

Individuals on the LPC route will continue to be able to apply to qualify through equivalent means during the transition period.

Figure 8: Number of individuals who qualified through equivalent means 2016/17 to 2022/23

2016/17	71
2017/18	85
2018/19	88
2019/20	98
2020/21	109
2021/22	114
2022/23	101

Figures are for SRA financial years, which run from 1 November to 31 October.