

*Qualifying under
the new Solicitors
Qualifying
Examination*



Welcome to the SQE

After years of design and planning the SRA has revealed the final form of the new Solicitors Qualifying Examination. This has now been signed off by the Legal Services Board. The first SQE exam will take place in November 2021.

The reality is that the SQE will allow candidates a more transparent and less complicated (and cheaper) path to qualification. In turn, law firms and in-house legal teams will now be able to offer a path to qualification at either no, or very low, additional cost, especially when compared to the old “training contract” regime.

Key highlights:

- The SQE has replaced all the previous paths to qualification as a Solicitor (England & Wales), with some exceptions. This marks the end of the GDL, LPC, QLTS and qualification under “equivalent means”. Lawyers can still elect to qualify under the old regime provided they commence the qualification process (e.g. enrolling on a GDL or completing Stage 1 of the QLTS) prior to September 2021.
- The SQE is made up of 4 main components:

SQE1		Pass the SQE Part 1 Exam
SQE2		Pass the SQE Part 2 Exam
QWE		Accumulate at least 2 years Qualifying Work Experience
Fitness & Suitability		Meet the SRA's current Character and Suitability criteria

Only the exams need to be completed sequentially (a candidate cannot sit SQE2 without having first passed SQE1), otherwise candidates can collect QWE at any time or order prior to applying to be admitted as a Solicitor.

- There will no longer be a “training contract”. Instead, candidates will need to show that they have completed at least 2 years of Qualifying Work Experience. This requires supervising lawyers to confirm that the work carried out by the candidate meets the basic “competencies” set out by the SRA. It is meant to be simpler, easier and much less burdensome on employers.

Like it or not,
the SQE has
arrived.

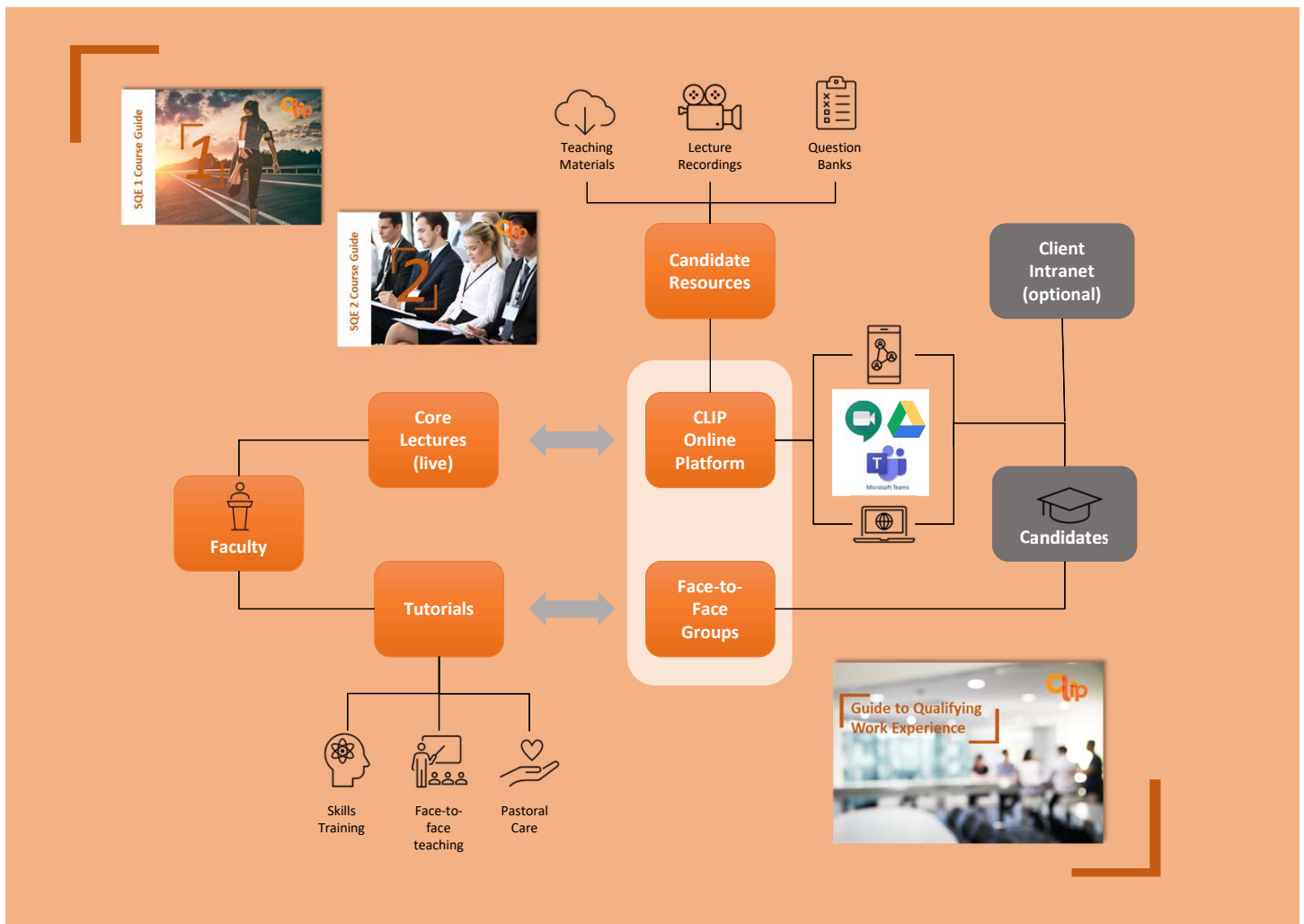
In the Middle
East it
presents new
and exciting
opportunities
for lawyers,
legal practices
and in-house
legal teams.

Our SQE Programmes

We believe that there is (still) nothing better than live, interactive teaching. Some candidates can do well on purely online platforms but our experience is that the majority become lost, frustrated and demotivated when they cannot turn to a teacher for guidance or further explanation. Access to faculty based many miles and time zones away only partially solves the problem. All CLIP faculty are based right here in the UAE.

We have combined our philosophy with the latest online tools to maximise the efficacy of our teaching.

- We offer comprehensive preparatory courses for both SQE exams. We are currently the only provider based in the Middle East to do so. We will continue to offer our QLTS preparatory courses until the QLTS is finally phased out.
- Our programmes use a “reversed learning” approach: candidates will learn core materials through live and interactive online lectures followed by detailed face-to-face tutorials in small groups with our faculty. Teaching is timetabled for evenings and weekends to minimise disruption to the working day.
- We also offer bespoke programmes for law firms and larger in-house legal teams. This allows for great flexibility and seamless integration with existing Learning & Development pathways.



Enhancing your Training and Qualification Programme

The SQE offers an unprecedented opportunity for law firms, in-house legal teams and individuals considering qualification as a Solicitor (England & Wales). This new regime essentially liberates law firms and in-house legal teams, allowing them to offer employment to graduates, paralegals and other qualified lawyers that has a transparent and authentic path to qualification as a Solicitor (England & Wales).



How they Compare

	The Old Model	Under the SQE
Eligibility	Graduate from a recognised institution	Graduate from a recognised institution
Academic/vocational stage	<p>Qualifying law degree + completion of the Legal Practice Course (usually 12 months through a SRA-accredited institution), or</p> <p>Non-qualifying degree + completion of the Graduate Diploma in Law + the Legal Practice Course (each usually 12 months through a SRA-accredited institution).</p> <p>Completion of the Professional Skills Course (usually 2 to 4 weeks).</p>	<p>Pass SQE1, and then</p> <p>Pass SQE2.</p> <p>Neither exams require training or attendance at any accredited institution.</p> <p>Exams are centrally administered by Kaplan (not as before by the teaching institute).</p>
Prescribed Training	<p>2-year “training contract” via a SRA-registered training provider, or</p> <p>Accumulation of training equivalent to that prescribed under the SRA “training contract” regulations and approved by the SRA under an “equivalent means” application.</p>	Accumulation of at least 2 years of Qualifying Work Experience.
Suitability and Fitness	Meet the SRA Character and Suitability requirements	Meet the SRA Character and Suitability requirements

Worth noting:

- Law firms and in-house legal teams no longer need SRA-accreditation to offer “training contracts”. The requirement for a “training principal” and pretty much all of the old regulatory apparatus imposed by the SRA around training has been removed.
- Removal of the training contract structure has also removed the requirement to send trainees to England to complete their period of recognised training (most firms are still doing this despite there having been a path to complete training contracts wholly outside of England & Wales).
- The requirement to complete the Professional Skills Course has also been removed.
- The SRA has instead introduced a requirement to complete at least 2 years of Qualifying Work Experience (“QWE”). This is work experience that has been verified to meet the basic competencies set out by the SRA. Unlike training under a training contract, QWE can be accumulated from just a single discipline or department and from multiple employers (up to 4). There is less onus on assessing the quality of the candidate’s performance by the employer as the SRA believes this will be suitably tested via the SQE2 exam.

Our holistic approach



CLIP has been delivering legal education in the Middle East for over 6 years now. During that time we have helped many lawyers along their path to qualification as Solicitors (England & Wales).



We have delivered many hours of CLPD-accredited training to law firms. These have included courses that focus on core legal knowledge, topical issues, regulation and compliance and legal skills.



We are proud to be part of the Middle East legal community and we are actively working with many firms, in-house teams, recruiters, information providers and individuals to enlarge and connect that community.



To be the leading professional Law School in the Region

CLIP was established in 2014 with a firm aim of enabling candidates in the Middle East to qualify as Solicitors (England & Wales). Originally, this meant bringing GDL, LPC and QLTS courses to the region. We still do this.

We have now expanded our portfolio to include delivery of SQE preparatory courses and professional legal training. We are a GDLAD CPLD-accredited institution and we are also regulated by the KHDA.