

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

KEY FACTS

Programme name	Solicitors' Practice Programme
Award	LLM/PGDip in Solicitors' Practice
Exit Awards	PG Dip / PG Cert
School	The City Law School
Department or equivalent	Postgraduate & Professional Programmes
Programme code	
Type of study	Full-time, blended learning.
Total UK credits	180
Total ECTS	90

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The Solicitors' Practice Programme (SPP) provides comprehensive preparation for undertaking the Solicitors Qualifying Examinations (SQE) 1 and 2 and a career as a solicitor. Passing these assessments is part of the required training for qualification as a solicitor of England and Wales. The programme is taught at Masters' level, and the content meets the requirements of the SQE1 and SQE2 Assessment Specifications set by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). The SPP sets this content within a legal practice focussed context to support a good practical, as well as an academic, understanding.

The formal SQE1 and SQE2 assessments that are required to qualify as a solicitor can only be taken as part of a centralised process authorised by the SRA. The SPP aims to prepare you to succeed in these assessments by incorporating throughout multiple choice questions of the kind used in the SQE1 assessment, and Term 2 Modules are based on practical legal skills of the type used in the SQE2 assessment. The assessments set internally by City Law School are designed to help you to see how well prepared you are for the formal SQE assessments.

The programme offers you two possible routes:

- 1) Postgraduate Diploma in Solicitors' Practice
If you successfully complete the compulsory taught elements of the programme (120 credits) you will be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma. These elements comprise the support for passing the SQE1 and 2 assessments, preparing you to enter for those SRA authorised assessments.
- 2) LLM in Solicitors' Practice
If, in addition to the compulsory taught elements of the programme, you go on to successfully complete 2 Electives and a Research Project, you will be awarded a Masters' degree (180 credits).

The whole programme takes a real-world approach, encouraging you from the start to consider the scenarios you work with as real cases involving real clients. This will help you to develop commercial awareness, and to take into account practical considerations as you would need to do when advising on a transaction or dispute.

In term 1 you will cover the areas set out in the SQE1 Assessment Specification. The areas of legal knowledge covered are very wide-ranging, but to a significant extent they will consolidate your existing legal knowledge, whilst extending it in ways relevant to practice, and placing your knowledge firmly within the practical context of legal practice. The approach taken will help to ensure that you are accustomed to applying your knowledge to the form of questions used in SQE1.

In term 2 you will cover the practical legal skills listed in the SQE2 Assessment Specification, within the context of the five legal practice areas specified. Five areas of law may be relevant, so you will be drawing on and further extending the knowledge you acquired in Term 1. Much of your learning will take place within the context of realistic practical exercises enabling you to develop legal professional skills, while learning how to apply your knowledge. In addition, you will study pervasive subjects that have not yet been fully covered to ensure you have a full understanding of the professional and real-world context within which a solicitor works.

If you choose to take the LLM route, in addition to the above, in term 3 you will have the opportunity to specialise, selecting two Electives that will enable you to gain insight into specialist areas of legal practice. In addition, you will complete a Legal Practice Research Project to deepen your understanding of an area of legal practice that is of particular interest to you. This should assist you in further developing skills and knowledge that will support your career development and make you attractive to a potential employer.

While it is not essential to undertake a training programme in order to be able to take the SQE1 and SQE2 assessments, those assessments are very demanding, and most students are likely to undertake a course to support their preparation. The assessments cover a very wide range of legal and practice areas and are assessed at the level of what would be required of a competent newly qualified solicitor in practice. Benefits of taking the Solicitors' Practice Programme include: a blended learning approach with substantial online materials and face-to-face tutorial classes with tutors who are qualified solicitors; working within a legal practice and legal skills context throughout; having all the support for your studies that a university can offer.

To qualify as a solicitor, you will need to:

- Have a degree in any subject (or an equivalent qualification or work experience), but note that to apply for this programme, your degree must be in Law, or you must have done a Law conversion course (GDL) following your degree.
- Pass both SQE1(functioning legal knowledge) and SQE2 (practical legal skills and knowledge) assessments, taking the central assessments authorised by the SRA
- Have two years of qualifying work experience
- Meet the SRA's character and suitability requirements

SQE1 tests Functioning Legal Knowledge (FLK). The assessment is closed book and has two parts - FLK1 and FLK2, each comprising 180 single best answer multiple-choice questions. Both should normally be taken in the same assessment window.

SQE2 assesses practical legal skills and knowledge, with 16 assessments overall that will combine six skills, five practice areas and 5 legal knowledge areas. It also has two parts – as one part, Client Interviewing and Advocacy, are each assessed with an oral and a written assessment. The other part, Case Analysis, Legal Research, Legal Writing and Legal Drafting, is assessed in 12 written assessments covering a range of practice and law areas. It is only possible to sit SQE2 once you have passed SQE1.

The centralised SQE 1 & 2 assessments authorised by the SRA cannot form part of an academic programme (and the course fee does not include the cost of the centralised SQE assessments). However, the SPP design and materials are all structured, together with personal guidance from tutors, to help you to monitor your progress and decide when you are ready to enter the centralised assessments.

Each module you take as part of the SPP will be assessed internally at City, but using assessments that are aligned with, and which will help you to prepare for, the central assessments. The formative and summative assessments at City will provide a good guide to your potential success: you will not need to register for the SQE assessments until you feel that you are ready (for more information about this please see the section on Assessment below)

Passing relevant City assessments will result in you being awarded a PG Diploma or Masters' award that should be of great assistance in helping you to gain and succeed in qualifying work experience and prepare you for a career as a solicitor.

The Solicitors' Practice Programme is designed for students who already have a Law degree or have completed a Law conversion course.

Aims

The core aims for both routes are:

- to provide a sound foundation for qualifying and working as a solicitor in England and Wales, ensuring each student has the required knowledge, and the legal professional skills to use that knowledge
- to place all study within a realistic, practical, and commercially aware context
- to support you in developing the requisite functioning legal knowledge as set out in the SRA SQE1 Assessment Specification to pass both SQE1 assessments
- to support you in developing the requisite practical legal skills and knowledge as set out in the SRA SQE2 Assessment Specification to pass the SQE2 assessments

If you choose the LLM route, there are the following additional aims:

- to provide you with the opportunity to acquire knowledge relevant to two selected specialist areas of practice as a solicitor, and develop skills relevant to those areas
- to provide you with the opportunity to undertake a Legal Practice Research Project to develop and deepen your understanding of a selected area of legal practice.

WHAT WILL I BE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE?

On successful completion of either route of this programme, you will be expected to be able to:

Knowledge and understanding:

- synthesise and critically apply legal knowledge in the areas of Business Law and Practice, Dispute Resolution, Contract, Tort, Legal System of England and Wales, Constitutional and Administrative Law and EU Law and Legal Services at a level suitable for entry into practice as a solicitor
- synthesise and critically apply legal knowledge in the areas of Property Practice, Wills and the Administration of Estates, Solicitors Accounts, Land Law, Trusts, Criminal Law and Practice at a level suitable for entry into practice as a solicitor
- synthesise and critically apply legal knowledge in the areas of Ethics, Professional Conduct and Taxation at a level suitable for entry into practice as a solicitor

Skills:

- demonstrate oral and written skills in relation to Client Interviewing and Advocacy, based on critical case evaluation, at a level suitable for entry into practice as a solicitor
- demonstrate written skills in relation to Case Analysis, Legal Research, Legal Writing, Legal Drafting, based on critical case evaluation, at a level suitable for entry into practice as a solicitor

Values and attitudes:

- demonstrate an ability consistently to act ethically and with integrity, in the light of critical case analysis
- demonstrate an ability consistently to act in accordance with the Principles and other requirements of the Code of Conduct of the Solicitors Regulation Authority

On successful completion of the LLM programme route, you will, in addition, be expected to be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

- synthesise and critically apply legal knowledge in two selected areas of specialist legal practice at a level suitable for entry into practice as a solicitor
- demonstrate an ability to acquire knowledge in a selected area relevant to legal professional practice, and use that knowledge critically to develop a deeper understanding of issues relating to legal professional practice

Skills

- demonstrate appropriate oral and written skills, based on critical case evaluation, in relation to two selected areas of specialist legal practice at a level suitable for entry into practice as a solicitor
- demonstrate an ability to carry out research into a selected area relevant to legal professional practice, and to analyse the results of that research critically to address issues relating to legal professional practice

HOW WILL I LEARN?

The Solicitors' Practice Programme has been developed to provide supportive and coherent blended learning. The primary emphasis is on face-to-face teaching to support you to secure understanding of the relevant knowledge, and to perform the relevant skills, of the work of a solicitor. This is designed to take place within a flexible environment where structured online resources support your learning in a range of ways. The core elements of this blended learning approach are:

- A clear week on week framework will guide you incrementally through the elements of each module.
- This framework provides a systematically presented virtual learning environment that clearly indicates topics to be covered each week, and work to be done.
- The online materials may include video, audio, graphical and text-based resources, all designed to help you to prepare effectively for class and develop your learning.
- There will be weekly pre-reading and/or self-study tasks to be completed, with written or recorded guides to topics to help you to acquire and assimilate knowledge prior to a class.
- Lecture type material may be pre-recorded where appropriate to provide you with flexible access, though lectures/large group classes will take place face-to-face where that is more appropriate.
- The online materials will set out the work to be done in preparation for the face-to-face seminars, and classes will be conducted on the basis required preparation has been completed.
- Following the class, online materials may relate to consolidation, and may include, where relevant, sample answers.
- The online materials will also include links to other resources, additional exercises to complete for practice, and guidance on how to get support for study.

Face-to-face teaching on the compulsory modules takes place mainly in seminars (normally of approximately 16 students), with some lectures in larger groups and tutorials (normally of about 8 students) for Interpersonal Professional Skills. These classes are all designed to support the knowledge, skills and practical understanding you will be developing.

- In Term 1, the focus on professional knowledge means there will be a significant amount of reading and consideration of the application of that knowledge to be completed before each class. Seminars will focus on ensuring you understand

relevant topics in sufficient detail and can apply your knowledge in legal practice focussed problem questions. To help you to prepare for the SQE 1 assessment, your preparation and work in seminars will include consideration of a range of single best answer questions, but wider problem questions will also be used to help you to develop a breadth of understanding and prepare you to be able to use your knowledge within professional skills-based scenarios in Term 2.

- In Term 2, the focus on professional skills and the application of knowledge in legal scenarios means that classes will often be based on simulated case papers which raise issues similar to those you might encounter when starting work as a qualified solicitor. You will again be expected to do a significant amount of preparation before each class, getting to grips with factual scenarios and carrying out relevant analysis and legal research. The seminars will then focus in detail on how a task should be performed effectively, or what advice should be given and why. You may, for example, be asked to draft a document or perform part of a client interview or an advocacy application in class. You will constantly be asked to call on the knowledge acquired in Term 1 and apply it
- Throughout the course, the emphasis will be on taking a real-life approach and developing awareness of commercial realities. Pervasive topics such as professional conduct and ethics will be relevant to many classes, as well as being taught discreetly in specific modules. In acquiring professional skills, learning by doing is key, and you will be expected to take responsibility for your own learning, taking a professional approach and reflecting on your own development.

The materials for the course will largely be provided online. Moodle, our virtual learning environment, will include structured access to learning materials, case papers, sample single best answer questions, sample answers for knowledge and skills exercises and other support materials. In addition, you will have online access to relevant practitioner texts, and to Westlaw, Lexis, and other resources for legal research. You will also have full access to the City Law School library to consult hard copy sources. This is all included within the course fee.

The course is full-time, and you will typically have a mix of face-to-face teaching together with asynchronous online activities each week. You will also be expected to do a significant amount of personal study each week, engaging in reading and research, online activities, and preparing for classes. Most classes are timetabled between 9am and 6pm. You will have a regular study day with no classes each week, and we try to timetable classes to create a second study day if this is possible.

Formative assessment and other feedback will be provided in various ways:

- You will be able to monitor your progress online through sample single best answer questions and other short tests that will be built in throughout the programme. This will help you to estimate your level of preparedness to take and pass the SQE1 and SQE2 assessments.
- You will be getting regular informal feedback in class, especially in Term 2, to help you to develop your skills.
- You are encouraged to see your tutors to get feedback and support if needed
- Students are encouraged to provide constructive peer feedback to each other.

- For professional knowledge areas, there will be formative assessment through a test with single best answer questions similar to those used in the SRA central assessments
- For each professional skill area, there will be formative assessment through a practice oral/written exercise that will broadly mirror what will be expected in the summative assessment.

The LLM route

Two Elective Modules

If you are completing an LLM, in addition to the work above (which comprises the PG Dip route) you will go on to complete the two Elective modules that you choose over a five-week period in Term 3. The blended learning approach as outlined above will continue, with a similar structure and a similar range of materials to support your studies. The classes will be seminars, normally of not more than 20 students.

The focus of each Elective will be on a specialist area of practice as a solicitor, looking at the types of transactions, cases and issues that are likely to arise. In each case you will study relevant principles of substantive law, and work on realistic case papers and scenarios to help you to develop relevant skills and practical understanding alongside your knowledge. The use of relatively small class sizes should provide you with support in developing your competencies, building on the knowledge and skills you have gained earlier in the course, and helping to prepare you for work as a solicitor.

The Legal Practice Research Project

If you choose the LLM route, you will be required to complete a Legal Practice Research Project. You will be able to select a topic within a range of specified subject areas linked to the compulsory and elective modules and carry out practice-focussed work to develop your understanding of that topic. The Project is different from a dissertation in that, while it should involve relevant legal research and analysis, it should look at the topic from a legal practitioner viewpoint, exploring current issues and possible practical problems a solicitor working in the area might encounter.

Completing your Project will further support your development in preparation for entering the legal profession. As is appropriate at this level, there is a strong emphasis on independent work in carrying out research, analysis and writing up.

Your work will be supported by workshops, online materials, library support and two one-to-one supervision sessions. The workshops and online materials will help to train you in research, analytical and writing skills. The 1-hour workshops will take place throughout Terms 1 & 2. Most of your research and writing work will be completed in Term 3, continuing across the summer for submission in September.

WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK CAN I EXPECT?

Assessment

There will be a single summative assessment for each module, each using a method that is soundly based on the knowledge/skills being assessed, and appropriately aligned to the

forms of assessment specified by the SRA for the SQE. The general standard of assessment is “the standard to be expected of a newly qualified solicitor”, as that is the standard set for the SQE. Assessments will be weighted in line with the level of credits they carry.

The assessments are as follows:

Professional Knowledge areas:

Professional Legal Knowledge 1 – Written supervised time-limited assessment with questions of types that will help you to prepare for centralised SQE assessments.

Professional Legal Knowledge 2 – Written supervised time-limited assessment with questions of types that will help you to prepare for centralised SQE assessments.

Professional Skills areas

Interpersonal Professional Skills – Advocacy and Client Interviewing, assessed in a relevant practical context, and incorporating relevant legal knowledge from Term 1. This will comprise at least one filmed performance, and an appropriate piece of written work.

Analytical Professional Skills – Case Analysis, Legal Analysis and Research, assessed in a relevant practical context, and incorporating relevant legal knowledge from Term 1. This will comprise a time limited written coursework assessment.

Written Professional Skills – Legal Writing and Drafting, assessed in a relevant practical context, and incorporating relevant legal knowledge from Term 1. This will comprise a time limited written coursework assessment.

Preparation for Practice – This will comprise a time limited written coursework assessment.

Electives

Each Elective is assessed by means of a written time limited coursework assessment which includes a skills element.

Legal Practice Research Project

This is assessed by a piece of written coursework.

Assessment Criteria

Assessment Criteria are descriptions, based on the intended learning outcomes, of the skills, knowledge or attitudes that you need to demonstrate in order to complete an assessment successfully, providing a mechanism for objective measurement of the quality of work. Grade-related Criteria are descriptions of the level of skills, knowledge or attributes that you need to demonstrate in order to achieve a certain grade or mark in an assessment, providing a mechanism by which the quality of an assessment can be measured and placed within the overall set of marks.

Assessment Criteria and Grade-related Criteria will be made available to you at the start of the course in the Programme Handbook, and in the Module Specifications. The criteria for a specific assessment will be made available on the virtual learning environment and will be attached to a specific assessment task. Exercises during the course are designed to help you to understand what the Assessment Criteria mean and how they are used.

Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be provided in line with our Assessment and Feedback Policy. In particular, for formative assessments, you will normally be provided with feedback within three weeks of the submission deadline or assessment date. This would normally include a provisional grade or mark. For summative assessments feedback will normally be provided within four weeks. The timescale for feedback on final year projects or dissertations may be longer. The full policy can be found at: <https://www.city.ac.uk/about/education/quality-manual/6-assessment>

Feedback will help you to estimate your level of preparedness to take and pass the SQE1 and SQE2 assessments. If you fail a summative assessment, you will receive feedback at the time of issue of results and be given the opportunity to review your assessment with an appropriate tutor.

Assessment Regulations

(a) The Postgraduate Diploma in Solicitors' Practice

In order to pass the course, you must successfully complete all of the Term 1 & 2 assessments.

In order to pass an assessment, you must obtain a mark of at least 50%.

Your award classification will be based on a weighted average of your modules.

(b) The LLM in Solicitors' Practice

In order to pass, you must successfully complete the Research Project, the two Elective assessments and all of the Term 1 & 2 assessments.

The pass mark for all assessments is 50%. Your award classification will be based on a weighted average of your modules, including the Research Project.

There is no compensation on the programme, if you fail an assessment you will be offered one resit attempt. If you fail the research project you will be offered one opportunity to resubmit.

If you are successful in the resit, you will be awarded the credit for that module. The mark for the assessment will be capped at the pass mark for the module.

If you are registered on the LLM route and fail to meet the requirements for the Programme, the Assessment Board will consider whether you are eligible for the Postgraduate Diploma.

If you fail to meet the requirements for the Programme but successfully complete taught modules to the value of at least 60 credits, the Assessment Board will consider whether you are eligible for an Exit Award of Postgraduate Certificate as per the table below.

If you would like to know more about the way in which assessment works at City, please see the full version of the Assessment Regulations at:

https://www.city.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/453652/s19.pdf

Solicitors Qualifying Examinations

Whilst the SPP prepares you for the Solicitors Qualifying Examinations (SQE 1 & 2), those assessments cannot form part of the programme. It is only possible to take SQE1 and SQE2 assessments through the centralised arrangements set up by the SRA. You will need to individually register for, pay for, and take those tests – see the SRA website for details, <https://sqa.sra.org.uk/exam-arrangements/assessment-information>

The SPP design and materials are all structured, together with personal guidance from tutors, to help you to monitor your progress and decide when you are ready to enter the centralised assessments, but it will be for you to take a personal decision on when you are ready to do so.

You will be given clear information about the dates of the SQE assessments and the options that are available to you. In principle, you could apply to sit SQE1 during the SPP, and SQE2 at the end of the programme, but you should do this only if it is clear in term 1 that your performance is very strong. To do as well as possible, you should be aware that your understanding of legal knowledge will continue to develop and be reinforced during term 2 in the context of practical skills, and some topics that are assessed in SQE1 will only be fully covered during Term 2. If you take the LLM route, the Electives you select and the Project work you do should further enhance your knowledge and skills.

Overall, the design and content should put you in a good position to take SQE1 at the end of the SPP. You can then take SQE2 at the next sitting or go straight into work experience and take SQE while you are completing qualifying work experience, with the benefit of insights into the realities of practice. You will continue to have access to SPP materials on Moodle for one year following your year of registration on the programme, while you take SQE1 (and, if necessary, a resit) and to support you taking SQE2 within that timeframe. This is included in the programme fee. You will also be able to apply to have access extended further for an additional fee.

Please note the following rules relating to the SQE:

- You must pass SQE1 before you attempt SQE2
- You may only make 3 attempts at each SQE assessment, subject to extenuating circumstances
- You must pass both SQE1 & 2 within 6 years of making your first attempt at SQE1.
- You cannot resit to improve an SQE mark.

The centrally-set SQE assessments cannot be taken into account as part of your City qualification, because those assessments are not carried out by City Law School. Each SPP module you take will be assessed internally at City Law School, using assessments that are aligned with, and which will help you to prepare for, the centralised SQE assessments, but are separate from them. The formative and summative assessments at City will provide a good guide to your development, helping you to judge when you are ready to register for the central SQE assessments. You will also be given access to a mock SQE1 assessment.

WHAT AWARD CAN I GET?

Master's Degree:

	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)	Class	% required
Compulsory modules	7	120	66.7%	With Distinction	70
Elective modules & Research Project	7	60	33.3%	With Merit	60
				Without classification	50

Postgraduate Diploma:

	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)	Class	% required
Any combination of modules	7	120	100	With Distinction	70
				With Merit	60
				Without classification	50

Postgraduate Certificate:

This is an Exit Award which is awarded to any student who fails to meet the requirements for the other awards listed above, but nevertheless successfully completes at least 60 credits.

	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)	Class	% required
Any taught modules	7	60	100	With Distinction	70
				With Merit	60
				Without classification	50

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

There are 6 compulsory Modules

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Compensation available	Level
Professional Legal Knowledge 1	LSV001	30	C	N	7
Professional Legal Knowledge 2	LSV002	30	C	N	7
Interpersonal Professional Skills	LSV003	15	C	N	7
Analytical Professional Skills	LSV004	15	C	N	7
Written Professional Skills	LSV005	15	C	N	7
Preparation for Practice	LSV006	15	C	N	7

There are 6 Elective Modules (LLM route only), of which you can select any 2:

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Compensation available	Level
Advanced Litigation	LSV011	15	E	N	7
Advanced Commercial Property	LSV012	15	E	N	7
Commercial Law & Intellectual Property	LSV013	15	E	N	7
Employment Law	LSV014	15	E	N	7
Family Law	LSV015	15	E	N	7
Mergers & Acquisitions	LSV016	15	E	N	7

The Research Project (LLM route only)

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Compensation available	Level
Legal Practice Research Project	LSV010	30	C	N	7

TO WHAT KIND OF CAREER MIGHT I GO ON?

As a student on the SPP, you will be able to benefit from the Training Contract Advisory Service, led by a tutor with experience of recruitment in practice. As this programme is designed for students intending to qualify as solicitors, gaining a training contract or other qualifying work experience is likely to be the desired goal and you will be able to get advice on the options open to you – there are an increasing number of ways to gain the two years of qualifying work experience in different legal environments, including for example different types of paralegal work, which may in turn lead to a training contract.

We can assist you with development of your CV, covering letters, application forms and preparation for assessment days and interviews.

As much of the legal knowledge and many of the skills developed on the SPP are transferable, students could find work in other professional environments such as:

- Employed lawyers
- Government Legal Service
- Crown Prosecution Service
- Local Government lawyers
- Regulators
- Academic lawyers
- Legal publishing
- Finance industry and banking
- Commerce and business
- Banking
- Accountancy

- Tax
- Corporate governance
- Ombudsman departments

LLM

You will find completing the LLM of help to you in a number of different careers. The focus on particular areas of legal practice in the Electives will stand you in good stead to apply for a training contract or employment in that particular field. The fact that you have undertaken independent research and analysis and written a 7,500 – 10,000 word Project will be evidence of your research and writing skills. It may also provide you with the basis for a later academic career.

If you would like more information on the Careers support available at City, please go to:
<https://www.city.ac.uk/careers/your-career>

WILL I GET ANY PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION?

The SPP is designed to prepare you to take the SQE1 Assessment and the SQE2 Assessment authorised and required by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) as well as developing the skills and knowledge you require for a career as a solicitor.

Passing SQE1 and SQE2 is a formal requirement for qualification as a solicitor, but in addition you must:

- Have a degree in any subject (or an equivalent qualification or work experience)
- Have two years of qualifying work experience
- Meet the SRA's character and suitability requirements

The SRA arranges the assessment of SQE1 and SQE2, but it does not accredit any bodies to provide training for those assessments or recognise any specific forms of training.

In practice, it is likely that many of those intending to qualify as solicitors will in fact take a training programme, to help to ensure that they pass and do well in what are likely to be quite demanding SQE assessments. The SPP is designed for this purpose, and the Electives and the Project should further enable you to succeed in your chosen career. Passing the SPP, or any of the assessments within it, is not required in order to become a solicitor, but should be of real assistance towards that goal.

For further information see:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/>

HOW DO I ENTER THE PROGRAMME?

The SPP is designed as a postgraduate course. To enter the course, you must have:

- A UK honours degree in law, normally with a classification of 2:1 or above; OR
- A UK honours degree in a subject other than law, normally with a classification of 2:1 or above, AND a UK Graduate Diploma in Law (or equivalent graduate or postgraduate course that covers the necessary foundations of legal knowledge), normally with an average of at least 50%; OR
- An overseas degree (in any subject), normally with a classification equivalent to 2:1 or above, AND a UK Graduate Diploma in Law (or equivalent graduate or postgraduate course that covers the necessary foundations of legal knowledge), normally with an average of at least 50%; OR
- An overseas degree in law, normally with a classification equivalent to 2:1 or above, which is based on common law and is specified in the list of exceptionally permitted overseas degrees.

It is possible for a person without a Law degree or Law conversion course (such as the GDL) to qualify as a solicitor (provided they have a degree in another subject or an equivalent qualification or work experience), however the SPP is designed for students who already have a sound grounding in the basic principles of law, so such applicants will not be accepted for this programme.

In addition, you must have good English language skills. You must have an effective command of the language and be able to use it appropriately, accurately and fluently so as to handle complex and detailed arguments. To satisfy this admission requirement, you must be able to demonstrate English language ability that is at least equivalent to a minimum score of 7.5 overall (and no less than 7 in each section) in the IELTS academic test or equivalent (see our website for details of alternative acceptable tests).

Applications for both the PGD and LLM routes of the programme should be made via the SRA's central application system: <https://www.lawcabs.ac.uk/solicitors-qualifying-examination-sqe>

In considering your application, we will take the following into account: academic profile and achievement, strength of personal reasons for wishing to take the course and evidence of your motivation to become a solicitor (work experience, training contract applications etc).

In addition to a written application, applicants whose written application is considered borderline may be offered the opportunity to take part in an additional selection exercise (such as an interview).

UK applicants should be aware that if you take the LLM route you will be eligible to apply for a government backed postgraduate loan, see <https://www.gov.uk/postgraduate-loan/overview>. The PG Diploma alone is not eligible for this funding. Students who obtain such a loan will need to complete the full programme (they will not be able switch to the PG Dip route) or else may breach the terms of their loan agreement.

The School offers a wide range of scholarships, details of which are available on the website.

Version date: 9 May 2022
For use from: 2023-2024

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