

Statement Regarding the SQE

Dear Members,

Many of you will have seen the Solicitors Regulation Authority's (SRA) announcement that they now have permission from the Legal Services Board (LSB) to push ahead with the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE). It is important to understand exactly what this means and what **has and has not** been approved.

The SRA announcement is available here: <https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/lb-gives-first-stage-sqe-approval.page>

The LSB announcement notes

"The introduction of the Solicitors Qualifying Exam (SQE) does not automatically follow from today's approval. The SRA will have to submit and the LSB will have to approve further rules change applications. Approval of this application does not mean any further rule changes will be approved" The announcement (and full decision) can be viewed here:

http://www.legalservicesboard.org.uk/news_publications/LSB_news/PDF/2018/20180327LSB_Approves_SRA_SQE_Application.html

The Subject Associations in Law, ALT, SLSA, SLS and CHULS draw your attention to the following key points.

1. The SQE itself has not been approved.
2. In making the decision to allow the SRA to proceed, the LSB acknowledged some of the concerns raised by the associations in our various responses. The SRA will need to provide further assurances in any future applications in relation to, for example, the cost of the SQE and its diversity implications.
3. A further application by the SRA will be required and is expected in 2019. This application will need to include the detail of the SQE and its operation.
4. The Associations will be monitoring the developments and will respond to consultations and comment on any applications made as appropriate. If you or your institution have matters which you would like us to consider and/or include in our responses/statements, please get in touch with us.

Dr Jessica Guth (Chair, ALT)

Professor Peter Alldridge (President, SLS)

Professor Rosie Harding (Chair, SLSA)

Professor Carl Stychin (Chair, CHULS)