

Suggested actions for the SRA in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion

A. General

- i. All SQE2 assessors to be fully trained in EDI, including unconscious bias.
- ii. Produce and disseminate information about the SQE in a way that is timely, accessible and reaches diverse candidates.
- iii. Set out scenarios for how Covid-19 may impact the assumptions made about how the system will work and any implications for EDI.

B. Monitoring and evaluation

- i. Monitor and publish data on the profile of candidates and performance in the SQE1 and SQE2, separately and together, by protected characteristic and socio-economic background.
- ii. Break down and aggregate data in the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic category to assess differential impacts within the group as well as in comparison to White candidates.
- iii. Analyse issues where the intersection of different protected characteristics (e.g. ethnicity and gender), or different protected characteristics and socio-economic background, might lead to particular disadvantage.
- iv. Collect and analyse data on prior academic performance to help assess the particular impact of the SQE in widening or narrowing attainment gaps.
- v. Analyse:
 - o The relationship between performance in the SQE and the type/form of Qualifying Work Experience.
 - o The relationship between performance in the SQE and graduate careers destinations.
 - o The relationship between performance in the SQE and longitudinal performance and progression in the profession.
- vi. Qualitative research to understand better the factors contributing to potential differences in performance in the SQE.
- vii. The SRA should make an initial evaluation after the first set of assessments, so that any issues can be immediately addressed. Then there should be an independent interim review of the SQE after 2 years, with an independent full evaluation after 5 years.
- viii. Ensure that if any negative impacts are identified through the monitoring and evaluation that action is planned and taken to address them.
- ix. Stakeholders to be kept up to date on the details of research planned by the SRA in a transparent and collaborative way and to be consulted on any action to address any concerns about impacts on equality, diversity and inclusion of the SQE.

C. Disability

- i. Kaplan to appoint Disability Officers to advise and support disabled candidates and ensure reasonable adjustments are identified and made in a timely way.
- ii. Publication of a full reasonable adjustments policy, including procedures, criteria for assessment, evidence required and appeals process, including who at the SRA is designated to deal with appeals against Kaplan's decisions regarding reasonable adjustments. Stakeholders (including the Law Society's Lawyers with Disabilities Division) to be consulted.

- iii. Confirm that extra time for the completion of Multiple-Choice Tests has been trialled and any issues dealt with (as this can cause the systems to crash due to software and hardware clashes linked to vital accessible software on disabled students' computers).
- iv. Demonstrate how the needs of those requiring extra time between assessments will be addressed (more than the standard two days).
- v. Demonstrate how Kaplan's assumption of 25% of candidates requiring reasonable adjustments have been accommodated, including the availability of separate rooms at all centres or suitable alternative arrangements for candidates sitting an exam in another pre-arranged location.
- vi. Clearly demonstrate that each region has sufficient number of accessible centres (physically, by public transport and with parking) for the first year of SQE assessments and details on how this will be increased over the following three years as demand increases. Consideration must be given to evidence from law schools and LPC providers on the volume and travel distances of disabled students when determining how many assessment centres are sufficient.
- vii. Details of how the concerns raised about PearsonVue Centres, during 2020's Bar exam have been considered and addressed where necessary.
- viii. Evaluate the support for disabled candidates on an ongoing basis, including their satisfaction with the process for securing reasonable adjustments and the accessibility of assessment centres.