

NOTE: this version shows the changes made following the 2026 annual review process.

Assessments in SQE2

1. Client interviewing and completion of attendance note/legal analysis

Client interview

Overview

Candidates will be given an email from a partner or a secretary stating who the client is and providing an indication of what the client has come to discuss. The email may, but will not necessarily, be accompanied by documents. The email may also indicate specific legal issues which candidates should have particular regard to in the interview and the subsequent attendance note/case analysis.

Candidates will have 10 minutes to consider the email and/or documents.

They will then have 25 minutes to conduct the interview with the client. The client may be, but will not necessarily be, somebody in vulnerable circumstances.

An assessor who will play the role of the client will assess the candidate only on skills (not on application of law).

In the interview candidates should aim to win the client's trust and confidence. They should try to obtain all the relevant information and as full an understanding as possible of the client's concerns. Candidates do not need to provide detailed advice at this stage. They can conduct the interview on the basis that they will be advising the client in detail at a later date. However, candidates do need to give enough

preliminary advice and to address enough of the client's concerns to establish the client's trust and confidence.

Assessment objective

Candidates can demonstrate they are able to conduct an interview with a client.

Assessment criteria

Candidates' performance in the interview will be assessed against the following criteria:

Skills

1. Listen to the client and use questioning effectively to enable the client to tell the solicitor what is important to them.
2. Communicate and explain in a way that is suitable for the client to understand.
3. Conduct themselves in a professional manner and treat the client with courtesy, respect and politeness including respecting diversity where relevant.
4. Demonstrate client-focus in their approach to the client and the issues (ie demonstrate an understanding of the problem from the client's point of view and what the client wants to achieve, not just from a legal perspective).
5. Establish and maintain an effective relationship with the client so as to build trust and confidence.

Attendance note/legal analysis

Overview

Candidates will have 25 minutes to write, by hand, an attendance note/legal analysis of the interview they have just completed.

All relevant information obtained during the interview should be recorded in the attendance note/legal analysis. Candidates should provide an analysis of any legal issues that arise in the matter and record their initial advice for the client. The attendance note/legal analysis should also identify the next steps to be taken by the solicitor and, where applicable, the client, as well as any ethical issues that arise and how they should be dealt with. This may (but will not necessarily) include options and strategies for negotiation. If the email from the partner or secretary has asked the candidate to deal with any specific issues or questions, then advice on these issues should also be included.

Assessment objective

Candidates can demonstrate they are able to produce an attendance note recording a client interview and initial legal analysis.

Assessment criteria

Candidates will be assessed against the following criteria:

Skills

1. Record all relevant information.
2. Identify appropriate next steps.
3. Provide client-focused advice (ie advice which demonstrates an understanding of the problem from the client's point of view and what the client wants to achieve, not just from a legal perspective).

Application of law

4. Apply the law correctly to the client's situation.
5. Apply the law comprehensively to the client's situation.;

6. Identifying any ethical and professional conduct issues and exercising judgment to resolve them honestly and with integrity.

For further information on marking see [Marking SQE2](#).

[Annex 3 sets out the Statement of Solicitor Competence \(SoSC\)](#).

[Annex 4 maps the competences assessed in the SQE2 assessments against the SoSC](#).

2. Advocacy

Overview

Candidates are given a case study on which they will conduct a piece of courtroom advocacy. An email asks the candidate to conduct the advocacy and tells them in which court they are appearing. Where relevant, candidates are also given a file of documents. Candidates may be asked questions during the advocacy. They have 45 minutes to prepare.

Candidates will then have 15 minutes to make their submission to a judge who is present in the room. The judge will be played by a solicitor of England and Wales who will assess the candidate both on skills and application of law.

Assessment objective

Candidates can demonstrate they are able to conduct a piece of advocacy before a judge.

Assessment criteria

Candidates will be assessed against the following criteria:

Skills

1. Use appropriate language and behaviour.
2. Adopt a clear and logical structure.
3. Present a persuasive argument.
4. Interacts with/engages the court appropriately.
5. Include all key relevant facts.

Application of law

6. Apply the law correctly to the client's situation.
7. Apply the law comprehensively to the client's situation,
8. Identifying any ethical and professional conduct issues and exercising judgment to resolve them honestly and with integrity.

For further information on marking see .

[Annex 3 sets out the SoSC.](#)

[Annex 4 maps the competences assessed in the SQE2 assessments against the SoSC.](#)

3. Case and matter analysis

Overview

This is a computer-based assessment. Candidates will be given a case study with documents on which they will be asked to produce a written report to a partner

giving a legal analysis of the case and providing client-focused advice. This may, but will not necessarily, include options and strategies for negotiation.

Candidates will have 60 minutes to complete this task.

Assessment objective

Candidates can demonstrate they are able to produce a written report to a partner giving a legal analysis of the case and client-focused advice.

Assessment criteria

Candidates will be assessed against the following criteria:

Skills

1. Identify relevant facts.
2. Provide client-focused advice (ie advice which demonstrates an understanding of the problem from the client's point of view and what the client wants to achieve, not just from a legal perspective).
3. Use clear, precise, concise and acceptable language.

Application of law

4. Apply the law correctly to the client's situation.
5. Apply the law comprehensively to the client's situation.
6. Identifying any ethical and professional conduct issues and exercising judgment to resolve them honestly and with integrity.

For further information on marking see .

[Annex 3 sets out the SoSC.](#)

Annex 4 maps the competences assessed in the SQE2 assessments against the SoSC.

4. Legal research

Overview

This is a computer-based assessment. Candidates will be required to investigate a problem for a client. They will be given an email from a partner asking the candidate to research an issue or issues, so that the partner can report back to the client. Candidates will have to produce a written note explaining to the partner their legal reasoning and the key sources they rely on, as well as the advice the partner should give the client. They will not need to produce a research trail.

Annex 4 maps the competencies assessed in the Legal research station to the Statement of Solicitor Competence. Of particular note is **B2: Undertake legal research**, which includes recognising when legal research is required, assessing the relevance of sources of law, interpreting the results of the research and presenting the findings accurately and clearly.

Please note that while the subject matter of the research will be within the broad heading of the practice area in which the assessment is set, it may be outside the scope of the Functioning Legal Knowledge, thus requiring research.

Candidates will be provided with sources for the legal research exercises. These may include both primary and secondary sources. Some of the sources provided may not be relevant. **Candidates will be required to identify the relevant sources and apply them to the scenario in their answer.**

Candidates will have 60 minutes to complete this task.

Assessment objective

Candidates can demonstrate they are able to conduct legal research from a variety of resources provided and produce a written report.

Assessment criteria

Candidates will be assessed against the following criteria:

Skills

1. Identify and use relevant sources and information.
2. Provide advice which is client-focused and addresses the client's problem.
3. Use clear, precise, concise and acceptable language.

Application of law

4. Apply the law correctly to the client's situation.
5. Apply the law comprehensively to the client's situation.
6. Identifying any ethical and professional conduct issues and exercising judgment to resolve them honestly and with integrity.

For further information on marking see .

[Annex 3 sets out the SoSC.](#)

[Annex 4 maps the competences assessed in the SQE2 assessments against the SoSC.](#)

5. Legal writing

Overview

This is a computer-based assessment. Candidates will be asked to write a letter or an email as the solicitor acting in a matter, which clearly and correctly applies the law to the client's concerns and is appropriate for the recipient. This may, but will not necessarily, be in the context of a negotiation. Candidates will be given an email from a partner explaining what is required. The email may or may not be accompanied by electronic documents. The following is a non-exhaustive list of the possible recipients: a client, a third party, the other side to litigation or to a client transaction, or a partner within their organisation.

Candidates will have 30 minutes to complete this task.

Assessment objective

Candidates can demonstrate they are able to produce a letter or an email as the solicitor acting in a matter.

Assessment criteria

Candidates will be assessed against the following criteria:

Skills

1. Include relevant facts.
2. Use a logical structure.
3. Advice/content is client and recipient focused.
4. Use clear, precise, concise and acceptable language which is appropriate to the recipient.

Application of law

5. Apply the law correctly to the client's situation.

6. Apply the law comprehensively to the client's situation.

7. Identifying any ethical and professional conduct issues and exercising judgment to resolve them honestly and with integrity.

For further information on marking see .

[Annex 3 sets out the SoSC.](#)

[Annex 4 maps the competences assessed in the SQE2 assessments against the SoSC.](#)

6. Legal drafting

Overview

This is a computer-based assessment. Candidates will be asked to draft a legal document or parts of a legal document. This may take the form of drafting from a precedent or amending a document already drafted but it may also involve drafting without either of these.

Candidates will have 45 minutes to complete this task.

Assessment objective

Candidates can demonstrate they are able to draft a legal document or parts of a legal document for a client.

Assessment criteria

Candidates will be assessed against the following criteria:

Skills

1. Use clear, precise, concise and acceptable language.
2. Structure the document appropriately and logically.

Application of law

3. Draft a document which is legally correct.
4. Draft a document which is legally comprehensive.
5. Identifying any ethical and professional conduct issues and exercising judgment to resolve them honestly and with integrity.

For further information on marking see

[Annex 3 sets out the SoSC.](#)

[Annex 4 maps the competences assessed in the SQE2 assessments against the SoSC.](#)