

Education and training authorisation and monitoring activity September 2018 - August 2019

24 February 2021

Introduction and overview of 2018 - 19

We have a statutory responsibility for the education and training of solicitors, as set out in the Solicitors Act 1974 and the Legal Services Act 2007. Education and training requirements are a key regulatory tool to protect consumers of legal services. The purpose of this report is to tell our stakeholders about the outcomes of our quality assurance activity in relation to education and training. Unless otherwise stated, it relates to the period 1 September 2018 to 31 August 2019.

During 2018/19, we continued to prepare for the new Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE). This will be introduced on 1 September 2021 and the first assessments - for SQE1 - will take place in November 2021. The SQE will mean that anyone wishing to qualify as a solicitor will have to meet consistent high standards by taking the same rigorous assessment.

To prepare for the SQE, in November 2019 we introduced transition regulations as part of our new Standards and Regulations. These allow anyone already studying, or training, to continue to qualify through the existing routes, or they can choose to do the SQE instead.

These regulations mean that there will be people qualifying through existing routes for some years after the introduction of the SQE. We will continue our monitoring and reporting work of these routes for as long as the numbers qualifying remain high enough to do so.

Our new Standards and Regulations also introduced the new SRA Education, Training and Assessment Provider Regulations. These new regulations do not cover the period of this report and our monitoring work during 2018/19 was undertaken under Training Regulations 2014 and Qualified Solicitors Transfer Regulations 2011.

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