



LawCAB

CENTRAL
APPLICATIONS BOARD
LTD

**ANNUAL STATISTICAL
REPORT 2022**

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Introduction

This annual statistical report provides information about the market for professional law courses for academic year 2022-23 and for the first time includes information about applications and enrolments for SQE courses offered by CAB members alongside information about GDL and LPC courses.

The report covers: The evolution of the market for these professional legal education courses, trends in applicant behaviour, applicant demographics and equality and diversity indicators, routes to university courses, and funding. Unlike the statistics for the GDL and LPC, which include all applications for these courses at all institutions offering them, the SQE statistics do not cover the whole market. CAB is able to provide statistics on SQE applications and on the applicants for such courses compared to traditional GDL and LPC candidates but not applicants for short courses or other types of institutions not currently offered through CAB.

It is difficult to estimate with a high degree of accuracy how many candidates are taking preparation courses; SRA/Kaplan statistics only cover those who apply for assessments and no information is yet being published on the route candidates took to assessments. Figures for SQE assessments are also still somewhat distorted by the fact that most of those who have sat the first few rounds of assessment have been mainly overseas qualified lawyers, LPC graduates following a transitional route, or apprentices.

Overall the professional legal course market in 2022 was still affected by the long tail of COVID-19, as some applicants who might in previous years have chosen to continue onto the LPC, decided to take a break from studying. And behind the noise of COVID, three broad themes emerged:

- The increasingly rapid displacement of the LPC by SQE courses;
- the resilience of the GDL as the ongoing need for conversion courses became clear; and
- the fracturing of SQE academic course offerings into different preparation pathways for the assessment.

The rest of this report sets out the evidence that illustrates these themes in more detail.

The Market for Professional Legal Education in 2022/23

The Supply of LPC Full-Time Places

In 2022/23, twenty-six higher education institutions opened Legal Practice Course (LPC) on CAB, in line with previous years and all went on to offer these courses even though enrolment declined to levels previously experienced in 2013/14.

Despite the falling number of LPC enrolments in autumn 2022, the ratio of offers to enrolments and offers to rejections also remained in line with the last couple of years. There is no evidence, in other words, of institutions compromising standards in order to fill courses.

Table 1: The Evolution of the Supply of LPC Places, 2017-2022

Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Offers made	13,780	14,967	15,614	14,608	12,962	10,960
Rejections	727	1,009	2,248	1,922	1,479	1,297
Enrolment	6,400	6,545	6,896	7,338	6,415	5,331
Rejection/Offers	5.3%	6.7%	14.4%	13.2%	11.4%	11.8%

The Supply of GDL Full-Time Places¹

For academic year 2022/23, twenty-three institutions offered GDL or equivalent conversion courses compared to twenty-six in 2021/22. Although the qualification journey for candidates without a qualifying law degree has changed, and the option is open for those who want to enrol onto SQE preparation to do so directly, the demand for full-time courses for non-law graduates has remained fairly resilient. This in part can be attributed to the ongoing requirements of the Bar Standards Board, and the fact that providers were evidently nervous about inviting non-law graduates to start the same SQE preparation courses as law graduates.

Table 2: The Evolution of the Supply of GDL Full-Time Places, 2017-22

Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Offers made	9,202	8,810	8,944	10,864	10,002	5,706
Rejections	1,197	1,550	1,822	1,697	1,258	792
Enrolment	3,066	2,984	3,209	3,884	3,607	2,214
Rejection/Offers	13.0%	17.6%	20.4%	15.6%	12.6%	13.9%

The Supply of SQE Courses

The supply of SQE courses is complicated by the diversity of courses available under this umbrella title. Eleven CAB member institutions offered SQE courses in 2022 in different forms, ranging from full one-year Masters' courses and postgraduate diploma courses through to modular preparation courses. All three types were also offered separately for law graduates and non-law graduates but not consistently by different institutions. The detailed breakdown of the supply and demand for

¹ Note: The statistics in this report that refer to GDL courses cover courses designed for non-law graduates that are agnostic in their outcome (i.e. they are not linked explicitly to either the SQE or Bar preparation). Courses which are advertised as suitable for both law and/or non-law graduates, offered in preparation for the SQE are, on the other hand, counted in the SQE statistics.

different types of SQE courses is made available to CAB member institutions on a monthly basis but a summary is shown in table 3.

Table 3: The Supply of SQE Courses through CAB, 2021-22

<i>Year</i>	<i>2021/22</i>	<i>2022/23</i>
<i>Offers made</i>	543	2,223
<i>Rejections</i>	170	657
<i>Enrolment</i>	217	973
<i>Rejection/Offers</i>	31.3%	29.6%

The multiplicity of course offerings, and the fact that providers are still feeling their way in the absence of a regulated qualification, as to what might attract applicants, are issues that may explain the high rejection rates. This is explained by the fact that:

- Some providers opened SQE courses for applicants only to withdraw them before the start date, resulting in all applicants to those courses being recorded as rejections.
- There were also a marked number of applicants who applied for SQE courses they were not eligible for – in most cases non-law graduates applying for SQE courses which were really designed for graduates with qualifying law degrees.

These issues reinforce the benefits to both providers and candidates of the CAB service which is able quickly to help providers understand how to shape their offer and, more importantly, help candidates to find alternative academic provision if their first choice falls through, or if the eligibility requirements have not been clear.

The Demand for GDL, LPC and SQE Courses

Tables 4, 5 and 6 show the evolution of demand for LPC, GDL and SQE courses in more detail. Although applications for both types of courses were down significantly on 2020/21, total demand for courses was similar to other low points in previous economic cycles.

Table 4: The Evolution of the Demand for Full-Time LPC Places, 2017-2022

Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Enrolment	6,400	6,545	6,896	7,338	6,415	5,331
New applications	7,774	7,993	8,314	8,728	7,752	6,705
<i>Deferrals from previous year</i>	631	583	607	582	517	469
Total applications (incl. deferrals)	8,405	8,576	8,921	9,310	8,269	7,174
<i>Enrolments as % of applications</i>	76%	76%	77%	79%	78%	74%
<i>Annual change in total applications</i>	5.3%	2.0%	4.0%	4.4%	-11.2%	-13.2%
<i>Annual change in enrolment</i>	6.5%	2.3%	5.3%	6.4%	-12.6%	-16.9%

Table 5: The Evolution of the Demand for Full-Time GDL Places, 2017-22

Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Enrolment	3,066	2,984	3,209	3,884	3,607	2,214
New applications	4,804	4,562	4,746	5,816	5,295	3,084
<i>Deferrals from previous year</i>	410	436	410	441	585	385
Total applications (incl. deferrals)	5,214	4,998	5,156	6,257	5880	3,469
<i>Enrolments as % of applications</i>	59%	60%	62%	62%	61%	64%
<i>Annual change in total applications</i>	-1.8%	-4.1%	4.0%	21.4%	-6.0%	-41.0%
<i>Annual change in enrolment</i>	0.1%	-2.7%	7.5%	21.0%	-7.1%	-38.6%

Table 6: Emerging Demand for SQE Courses, 2021-22

Year	2021/22	2022/23
Enrolment	217	973
New applications	556	1769
<i>Deferrals from previous year</i>	63	122
Total applications (incl. deferrals)	556	1832
<i>Enrolments as % of applications</i>	39%	53.1%
<i>Annual change in total applications</i>	N/A	229.5%
<i>Annual change in enrolment</i>	N/A	348.4%

Trends in Applicant Behaviour

LawCAB application data provides insight into some interesting trends in the behaviour of aspiring entrants to the legal profession.

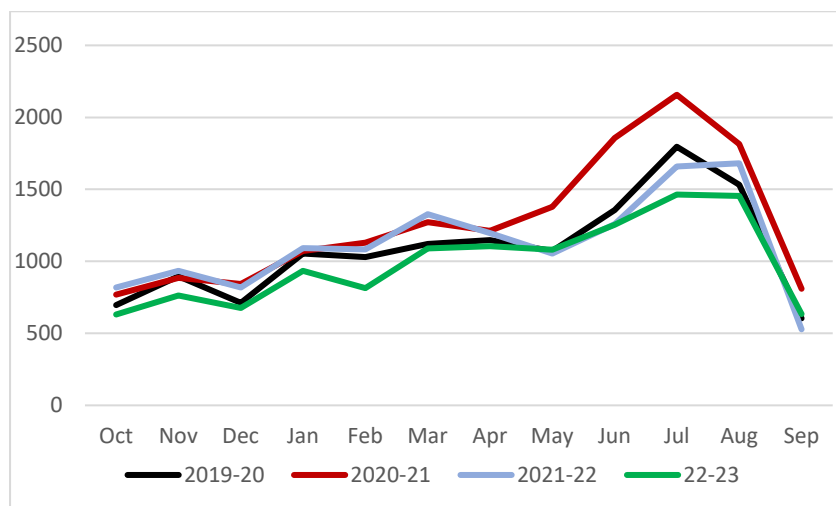
(a) The Timing of applications

The timing of applications for all courses has been pretty consistent over the past few years despite COVID-19 and the arrival of the SQE.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of applications (based on application fees paid) from academic year 2019-20 through academic year 2022-23. This illustrates a similar pattern across these years, with fairly consistent peaks and troughs, although there is a pause in applications around exam time in May and a very busy period between June and August, there are candidates looking for courses all year round and this may become a factor attracting candidates to apply to providers who offer rolling admission to SQE courses throughout the year.

Despite a similar overall pattern, there does appear to be some levelling out across the year for the 2022-23 cycle. This is an area to watch in future as it might indicate an SQE driven shift to rolling entry into preparation courses.

Figure 1: The Timing of Applications, 2019-23







Source: LawCAB/Stripe

(b) Decision time

Although many candidates come to the LawCAB website already knowing for which courses they plan to apply, others are uncertain about their options. The time taken by candidates between the first creation of their LawCAB application forms and eventual payment and submission of an application, is shown in figure 2. Figure 2 illustrates how the arrival of more choices in the form of

SQE courses and greater uncertainty amongst candidates about the implications of their choices, has led to longer decision making times. Now over 50% of candidates are taking more than a fortnight from registering on CAB to submitting an application. This reflects the ongoing shift in emphasis in CAB, from being purely an administrative portal for managing applications to a source of information and advice. Uncertainty about routes is also reflected in the fact that ninety-two candidates in 2022 applied for both LPC and SQE courses.

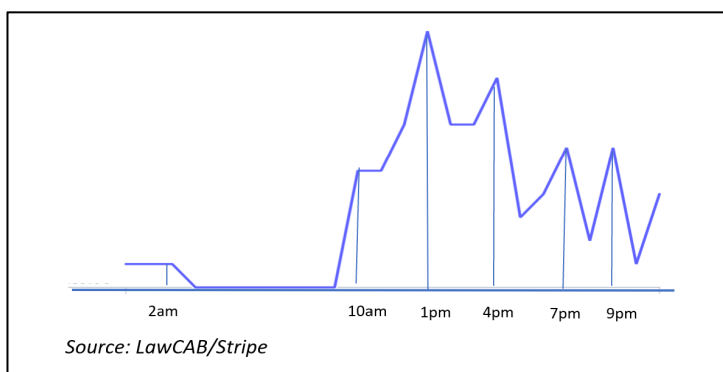
Figure 2: Time Taken by Candidates to Complete Applications, 2021-22

	2021/22	2022/23	Time from registration to submission
	41%	34%	One week or less
	22%	12%	Between one and two weeks
	13%	17%	Between two weeks and a month
	25%	37%	Longer than one month

Application data also tells us that candidates are most likely to apply on Mondays, with Saturday being the least popular day for completing and submitting an application. This pattern becomes less pronounced towards the end of the application cycle, but is still evident. It has also remained constant over the last few years and seems, so far, unchanged by SQE courses offered by institutions on an academic cycle.

There is also a fairly consistent pattern across the year in relation to the time of day when applicants finally press “send” on their applications, with a definite bias towards the afternoon and evening, as shown by the typical example in figure 3 based on 1 August, which was the busiest day for applications in 2022.

Figure 3: Illustrative figure of typical pattern of application timings - 1 August 2022



Who are Professional Law Course Students? : Applicant Demographics and Equality and Diversity Indicators

A full academic year of statistics in 2022 has provided us with the first opportunity to examine the impact of the SQE on diversity indicators.

Gender Identity

The gender breakdown across courses is broadly consistent, with female candidates representing between 58-65% of all applicants and enrolments for GDL, LPC and SQE courses. Female applicants are consistently more likely to enrol in courses than their male counterparts. Female candidates are also more likely to progress from the GDL to the LPC but there is a very slight tendency for male candidates to be more likely to opt for the SQE than the LPC. The latter conclusion is based on limited data so is worth watching in future.

A small number of candidates every year declare their gender identity as non-binary. Although this categorisation was introduced in 2017 it has only been in the last few years that any applicants have used it.

Table 7: Full-Time GDL Applicants by Gender Identity, 2018-22

	<i>Year</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Other</i>
<i>as % total applicants</i>	2018-19	42.1%	57.9%	0%
	2019-20	41.6%	58.4%	0%
	2020-21	39.5%	60.4%	0.1%
	2021-22	39.9%	59.7%	0.3%
	2022-23	41.7%	58.1%	0.2%
<i>as % total enrolments</i>	2018-19	41%	59%	0%
	2019-20	41%	59%	0%
	2020-21	37%	62%	0.1%
	2021-22	38%	61%	0.3%
	2022-23	40%	59.8%	0.2%

Table 8: Full-Time LPC Applicants by Gender Identity, 2018-22

	<i>Year</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Other</i>
<i>as % total applicants</i>	2018-19	36%	64%	0%
	2019-20	35%	65%	0%
	2020-21	35%	65%	0.02%
	2021-22	34%	66%	0.04%
	2022-23	34.9%	65%	0.1%
<i>as % total enrolments</i>	2018-19	36%	64%	0%
	2019-20	36%	65%	0%
	2020-21	34%	65%	0.03%
	2021-22	33%	66%	0.05%
	2022-23	35%	64.9%	0.1%

Table 9: SQE Applicants by Gender Identity, 2021-22

	<i>Year</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Other</i>
<i>as % total applicants</i>	2021-22	38%	62%	1%
	2022-23	37%	63%	0%
<i>as % total enrolments</i>	2021-22	35%	64%	1%
	2022-23	36%	64%	0%

Age

The vast majority of applicants for GDL, LPC and SQE courses through LawCAB are under 35. However, SQE applicants are markedly more likely to fall into the range 25-35 and over-35s are proportionately, slightly better represented amongst SQE applicants than amongst GDL or LPC applicants. This suggests that SQE courses may be pulling in a wider diversity of candidates than LPC courses which are, in general, still comprised of a majority of new law graduates.

But the differences become less significant when enrolments are considered. It is still too early to draw any firm conclusions from the statistics available so far, and the high level of rejections of SQE applicants by CAB member institutions suggests that there is still work to be done to explain the different types of courses and the eligibility requirements that individual institutions might impose on them.

Table 10: Full-Time GDL applicants and enrolments by age range²

Age	2021/22		2022/23		2021/22		2022/23	
	Applic ations	% Total	Applic ations	% Total	Enrol ments	% Total	Enrol ments	% Total
16-25	3,508	66%	1,881	61%	2,536	74%	1,437	71%
26-35	1,276	24%	839	27%	686	20%	435	21%
36-45	328	6%	221	7%	133	4%	102	5%
45+	169	3%	132	4%	68	2%	54	3%
TOTAL	5,281	99%	3,073	99%	3,423	100%	2,028	100%

Table 11: Full-Time LPC applicants and enrolments by age range

Age	2021/22		2022/23		2021/22		2022/23	
	Applic ations	% Total	Applic ations	% Total	Enrol ments	% Total	Enrol ments	% Total
16-25	6,283	81%	4,878	73%	5,153	83%	3,753	74%
26-35	1,109	14%	1,461	22%	828	13%	1,107	22%
36-45	195	3%	215	3%	116	2%	117	2%
45 +	151	2%	142	2%	88	2%	69	1%
TOTAL	7,738	100%	6,696	100%	6,185	100%	5,046	99%

Table 12: Full-Time SQE Applications and Enrolments by Age Range¹

Age	2021/22		2022/23		2021/22		2022/23	
	Applic ations	% Total	Applic ations	% Total	Enrol ments	% Total	Enrol ments	% Total
16-25	318	56%	1008	57%	154	72%	608	63%
26-35	163	29%	539	31%	32	15%	264	27%
36-45	60	11%	139	8%	19	9%	56	6%
45 +	28	5%	77	4%	9	4%	37	4%
TOTAL	569	100%	1763	100%	214	100	965	99%

Ethnicity

Tables 13 to 15 show the ethnic breakdown of UK applicants for LPC, GDL and SQE courses in 2021 and 2022. The proportions of applicants declaring different ethnicities was also very similar across the LPC and SQE in 2022. This comparative breakdown between the types of courses will be important to monitor over time, as the SRA's intention was that the SQE route to qualification would remove barriers to qualification, including barriers faced by minority candidates.

² Enrolment totals do not match those shown in previous tables due to the impact of deferrals.

These tables also show that white candidates were proportionately reflected in enrolments for the SQE compared to applications made, slightly overrepresented in enrolments for the LPC and significantly overrepresented in GDL enrolments. This suggests that there are UK nationals of non-white ethnicity who would like to become lawyers, having not done a first degree in law, but who are not able to get a foot on the first rung of the qualification ladder.

Table 13: Full-Time LPC applicants and enrolments by ethnicity, 2021-22

	% of UK applicants 2021	% of UK applicants 2022	% of UK enrolments 2021	% of UK enrolments 2022
<i>White</i>	50%	51%	50%	52%
<i>Black</i>	6%	7%	6%	6%
<i>Asian</i>	18%	21%	17%	20%
<i>Mixed</i>	5%	5%	5%	6%
<i>Other</i>	3%	3%	2%	2%
<i>Unstated</i>	19%	13%	20%	14%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 14: Full-Time GDL applicants and enrolments by ethnicity, 2021-22

	% of UK applicants 2021	% of UK applicants 2022	% of UK enrolments 2021	% of UK enrolments 2022
<i>White</i>	50%	51%	65%	64%
<i>Black</i>	6%	7%	4%	5%
<i>Asian</i>	18%	21%	10%	10%
<i>Mixed</i>	5%	5%	6%	6%
<i>Other</i>	3%	3%	2%	2%
<i>Unstated</i>	19%	13%	13%	13%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 15: SQE applicants and enrolments for Full-Time study by ethnicity, 2021-2022

	% of UK applicants 2021	% of UK applicants 2022	% of UK enrolments 2021	% of UK enrolments 2022	UK candidates sitting SQE 1 assessments 2021 (SRA)
<i>White</i>	48%	52%	53%	52%	46%
<i>Black</i>	9%	7%	6%	6%	5%
<i>Asian</i>	22%	21%	19%	20%	32%
<i>Mixed</i>	5%	6%	5%	7%	3%
<i>Other</i>	3%	3%	3%	2%	6%
<i>Unstated</i>	13%	11%	14%	13%	8%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 15 shows applications and enrolments onto SQE courses when compared to SRA statistics on candidates sitting SQE 1 assessments. This may illustrate the potential of the SQE to encourage greater diversity but it is too early to reach any firm conclusions given the highly transitional nature of early cohorts sitting the SQE assessments. Nonetheless the ethnic breakdown of candidates sitting the SQE directly compared to those enrolling in courses, and success rates of candidates taking different routes, will be important to monitor in future.

Disability

Table 16 shows the number of UK nationals enrolling in GDL, LPC and SQE courses with certain self-declared disabilities. The proportion of those declaring some disability was consistent across all courses and dyslexia and mental health issues continued to account for the greatest proportion of declared disabilities.

Table 16: Full-Time Enrolments of UK nationals by disability, 2020-22

Form of Disability	GDL			LPC			SQE	
	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022	2021	2022
<i>Autism</i>	6	11	6	7	11	9	0	4
<i>Blind/partially sighted</i>	2	1	1	14	13	11	2	3
<i>Deaf/partial hearing</i>	6	5	4	9	9	12	0	1
<i>Dyslexia</i>	118	114	76	172	151	153	7	26
<i>Mental Health issues</i>	52	73	57	77	144	139	8	21
<i>Multiple disabilities</i>	17	28	14	17	30	34	1	7
<i>Unseen disability</i>	32	38	23	52	69	71	2	14
<i>Wheelchair user</i>	3	5	2	15	13	5	0	0
<i>Not listed</i>	45	80	45	89	55	101	2	12
<i>Personal care support</i>	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Total citing disability	281	355	228	453	496	535	22	88
% of Total UK enrolments	7.5%	10%	15%	6%	8%	14%	10%	14%

Routes to Qualification and Funding

Academic background and access to funding also have an important influence on the diversity of candidates. Applications for academic year in 2022/23 have provided the first opportunity to look at how the SQE route to qualification may affect the path that candidates take and how they fund qualification.

Tables 17 and 18 show the breakdown of routes to qualification. A number of interesting themes emerge from these.

- First, the proportions of graduates following a direct route to SQE courses would appear to be distributed proportionately between former GDL candidates and those who would previously have sat the LPC having just completed a qualifying law degree, although, once again, this is based on only one year's full data.
- Russell group graduates were disproportionately highly represented in SQE course enrolments compared to LPC enrolments, accounting for close to 40% of all graduate enrolments on the SQE, compared to 29% on the LPC. This may reflect better access to information about the SQE at those universities or the adoption of the SQE route by some employers who fund places on the LPC for their graduate intake.

Table 17: Route to the LPC, Enrolments for Full-Time Study 2021-2022

<i>Route</i>	<i>2021/22</i>	<i>% Total enrolments 2021/22</i>	<i>2022/23</i>	<i>% Total enrolments 2022/23</i>
<i>GDL</i>	1584	26%	1349	27%
<i>QLD/LLB</i>	4598	74%	3681	73%
<i>o/w Russell Group</i>	1827	29%	1465	29%
<i>FILEX</i>	15	0%	22	0%
TOTAL	6197	100%	5052	100%

Table 18: Route to SQE courses, Enrolments for Full-Time Study 2021- 2022

<i>Route</i>	<i>2021/22</i>	<i>% Total enrolments 2021/22</i>	<i>2022/23</i>	<i>% Total enrolments 2022/23</i>
<i>New graduates</i>	194	91%	900	93%
<i>Russell Group (out of all graduates)</i>	58	27%	376	39%
<i>Lawyers from other jurisdictions</i>	19	9%	59	6%
<i>Previously completed LPC</i>	1	0%	6	1%
TOTAL	214	100%	965	100%

Who Funds Participation in the Courses?

Tables 19 – 21 show how applicants funded their enrolment in GDL, LPC and SQE courses in 2021-22. Historically the proportion of self-funders for all courses has been high, and particularly high for the GDL.

The most striking point to emerge from these tables is the growth in employer funding for SQE courses from 2021-22. In terms of overall numbers, there were only about 300 employer funded places on SQE courses compared to 1800 for the LPC and 365 for the GDL, but given the fact that it is

still very early days for the SQE, the increase from 2021 to 2022 is striking and suggests that employer allegiance could shift rapidly from traditional courses to preparation for the new route to qualification.

Table 19: How the GDL is funded, enrolments for Full-Time Study 2021-2022

Course Fee Payer	2021/22	% of Total	2022/23	% of Total
<i>Self-funded³</i>	3023	88%	1684	83%
<i>Employer</i>	409	12%	348	17%
TOTAL	3432	100%	2032	100%

Table 20: How the LPC is Funded, enrolments for Full-Time Study 2021-2022

Course Fee Payer	2021/22	% of Total	2022/23	% of Total
Self-funded	4396	71%	3327	66%
Employer	1801	29%	1725	34%
TOTAL	6197	100%	5052	100%

Table 21: How the SQE is Funded, enrolments for full-time study 2021-2022

Course Fee Payer	2021/22	% of Total	2022/23	% of Total
<i>Self-funded⁴</i>	192	90%	703	73%
<i>Employer</i>	22	10%	262	27%
TOTAL	214	100%	965	100%

Table 22 shows the breakdown of funded places on different types of course by type of employer. Magic Circle firms funded course enrolments for the academic year 2022/23 in similar proportions across both LPC and SQE, whilst firms falling into the bracket of Top 50-100 by revenue have been slightly slower in shifting to the new training route than their larger counterparts. US firms were significantly less likely to fund SQE courses.

Given the early stage of rollout of SQE courses, it is perhaps unsurprising that figures do not differ markedly from the type of organisations funding the LPC. This table should therefore be regarded principally as a baseline against which to measure further evolution of the impact of the SQE.

³ Including funding from parents or guardians

⁴ Including funding from parents or guardians

Table 22: Source of funding for course enrolments, 2022/23

Employer	SQE		LPC	
	No. of funded enrolments	Share of funded enrolments	No. of funded enrolments	Share of funded enrolments
<i>Magic Circle</i>	62	24%	406	24%
<i>Top 50 UK law firms</i>	130	50%	723	42%
<i>Top 50-100 UK law firms</i>	15	6%	148	9%
<i>US law firms</i>	30	11%	321	19%
<i>Other</i>	25	9%	127	7%
Total	262	100%	1725	100%
All enrolments	965	27%	5052	34%

International Applicants

Most candidates applying for GDL and LPC courses and for SQE courses offered through LawCAB are UK nationals. Nonetheless, as shown in table 23, international applicants have consistently accounted for a significant minority of applications and enrolments for different courses. In 2022/23, over a third of all applications for the GDL and more than a quarter of all applications for the LPC came from UK nationals. However, for both courses, over 80% of applicants for 2021/22 courses were UK domiciled, which suggests that students already studying in the UK are an important source of applications for postgraduate professional law courses. Figures for 2022/23 applications show that international applicants were much more heavily reflected in applications for SQE courses than in the legacy GDL and LPC. This in part reflects the fact that international candidates were less likely to be eligible for legacy routes, but may also reflect the much greater flexibility of the qualifying work experience element of the SQE for international candidates when compared to the LPC route.

Table 23: Share of International Applicants⁵ in Applications and Enrolments, 2022

	<i>Share of international students in total applications</i>	<i>Share of international students in total enrolments</i>
<i>GDL</i>	36%	25%
<i>LPC</i>	26%	22%
<i>SQE</i>	42%	33%

Tables 24-26 show in greater detail the breakdown amongst the nationalities most frequently reflected in applications and enrolments for different courses. This shows that populous Common Law countries, such as Pakistan, India and Nigeria are the biggest source of applications and enrolments for professional law courses. The proportion of applicants eventually enrolling in courses is quite variable with applications from EU nationals tending to convert more consistently into

⁵ International is defined by nationality



enrolments. This may be a reflection of the fact that an applicant from a Civil law jurisdiction is likely to have to be more certain of how an English law course will serve them in future, than an applicant from a Common law jurisdiction. However, funding, visas and language tests also have an impact.

SQE courses are now being taken up in a similar range of countries to those where applicants for the LPC and GDL have historically originated. SQE applications and enrolments have grown markedly since SQE launch in 2021 but numbers enrolling remain small.

Table 24: Top 20 Nationalities applying for and enrolling in full-time GDL courses, 2021-22

Nationality	Applications		Enrolments		Enrolments/ Applications, %	
	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
<i>Pakistani</i>	169	134	47	51	28%	38%
<i>Ghanaian</i>	152	117	53	30	35%	26%
<i>Indian</i>	164	106	71	50	43%	47%
<i>Nigerian</i>	85	62	22	15	26%	24%
<i>US Citizen</i>	95	61	56	30	59%	49%
<i>Chinese</i>	84	51	45	25	54%	49%
<i>French</i>	54	32	32	19	59%	59%
<i>Bangladeshi</i>	53	32	17	9	32%	28%
<i>Italian</i>	69	31	45	15	65%	48%
<i>Irish</i>	38	29	22	23	58%	79%
<i>Hong Kong</i>	97	28	63	18	65%	64%
<i>German</i>	28	20	18	14	64%	70%
<i>Canadian</i>	44	20	20	7	45%	35%
<i>Turkish</i>	45	15	18	4	40%	27%
<i>Polish</i>	19	13	13	8	68%	62%
<i>Spanish</i>	25	13	12	10	48%	77%
<i>Romanian</i>	12	12	5	8	42%	67%
<i>Dutch</i>	19	11	10	7	53%	64%
<i>South Korean</i>	22	10	14	7	64%	70%
<i>Portuguese</i>	15	7	6	5	40%	71%
All	1774	1108	841	505	47%	46%

Table 25: Top 20 non-UK Nationalities applying for and enrolling in full-time LPC study, 2021-22

Nationality	Applications		Enrolments		Enrolments/ Applications, %	
	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
<i>Indian</i>	113	117	70	56	62%	48%
<i>Pakistani</i>	102	106	52	46	51%	43%
<i>Nigerian</i>	161	102	99	49	61%	48%
<i>Italian</i>	65	73	58	54	89%	74%
<i>Ghanaian</i>	65	67	37	36	57%	54%
<i>Canadian</i>	68	57	44	39	65%	68%
<i>Hong Kong</i>	65	56	41	36	63%	62%
<i>US citizen</i>	51	54	39	35	76%	65%
<i>Malaysian</i>	58	53	47	38	81%	72%
<i>Irish</i>	63	49	51	40	81%	82%
<i>French</i>	59	47	53	35	90%	74%
<i>Trinidadian</i>	54	46	37	21	69%	46%
<i>Singaporean</i>	54	46	48	34	89%	74%
<i>Polish</i>	62	46	52	39	84%	85%
<i>German</i>	51	41	40	29	78%	71%
<i>Cypriot</i>	51	40	37	32	73%	80%
<i>Chinese</i>	42	38	27	26	64%	68%
<i>Greek</i>	37	37	30	27	81%	73%
<i>Romanian</i>	35	35	28	28	80%	80%
<i>Portuguese</i>	40	28	35	16	88%	57%
All	1848	1743	1415	1108	77%	64%

Table 26: Top 20 Nationalities Applying and Enrolling on Full-Time SQE Courses, 2021-22

<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Applications</i>		<i>Enrolments</i>		<i>Applications/Enrolments, %</i>	
	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
<i>Indian</i>	19	93	5	26	26%	28%
<i>Nigerian</i>	23	82	6	28	26%	34%
<i>Pakistani</i>	16	51	4	11	25%	22%
<i>Ghanaian</i>	22	30	4	5	18%	17%
<i>Malaysian</i>	5	30	4	17	80%	57%
<i>Canadian</i>	6	24	1	17	17%	71%
<i>Italian</i>	6	22	2	15	33%	68%
<i>Chinese</i>	9	20	2	11	22%	55%
<i>US citizen</i>	5	17	1	9	20%	53%
<i>Singaporean</i>	3	17	1	13	33%	76%
<i>French</i>	5	14	0	11	0%	79%
<i>Irish</i>	7	14	4	10	57%	71%
<i>German</i>	6	14	2	7	33%	50%
<i>Hong Kong</i>	2	13	1	6	50%	46%
<i>Romanian</i>	3	10	2	6	67%	60%
<i>Portuguese</i>	3	9	0	9	0%	100%
<i>Polish</i>	5	8	4	5	80%	63%
<i>Greek</i>	0	5	0	2	0%	40%
<i>Dutch</i>	4	5	1	3	25%	60%
<i>Cypriot</i>	0	4	0	4	0%	100%
All international	230	734	66	317	29%	43%

Concluding Remarks

Although the SQE formally came into existence as a qualification route in autumn 2021, the 2022/23 academic year was the first in which candidate awareness took hold. It is therefore still early days for this new qualification and providers and candidates are still uncertain about it. Nonetheless, the SQE is clearly growing in significance and a full transition from the LPC to SQE may happen faster than the market originally anticipated.

CAB Ltd Secretariat

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