



Solicitors Qualification Programme

The Solicitor (England & Wales) qualification is one of the most prestigious and recognised legal qualifications in the world. A recent and comprehensive overhaul of the qualification regime, which introduced the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE), has opened up significant opportunities to qualify right here in the Middle East region.

Jurisdictions such as the DIFC, AGDM and QFC are English law jurisdictions that recognise and support qualification as a Solicitor (England & Wales). With the prevalence and use of English law or English law-derived law and regulation continuing to surge, the qualification has never been more relevant.

We have curated a programme that will see individuals through both the academic and vocational requirements of the qualification.

Who can access the programme?

Our programme is open to all candidates, provided they have graduated from a recognised university. We specifically encourage applications from those seeking a recognised international professional legal qualification after graduating from university or those who are already practising under another legal qualification and seeking to dual-qualify.

Key benefits



Availing unique career opportunities for both local national and expat graduates and legal team members



Over 200 hours of live teaching through our virtual platform



Opportunities to create bespoke teaching models



Upskilling existing lawyers



Face-to-face tutorials



Inclusion in the Reed Smith legal community, together with access to our global legal network of more than 1,700 lawyers



Preserving and developing key talent by offering a genuine, high-quality and affordable path to qualification as a Solicitor (England & Wales)



All course materials included



Creating genuine leadership succession possibilities

What to expect on the programme



Academic component

- The Reed Smith Academy will run sequential courses for the SQE1 and SQE2 academic stages.
- Candidates will sit each set of exams following completion of the relevant preparatory course.
- SQE1 is designed to be sat early on, usually within a year of graduating. SQE2 is best sat after gaining the full two years of Qualifying Work Experience.
- Candidates that have already acquired some or all of the requisite Qualifying Work Experience may prefer to take both sets of exams “back-to-back”.



Vocational component

- Candidates are required to accumulate two years of Qualifying Work Experience before being eligible to qualify as a Solicitor (England & Wales).
- Our SQE preparatory courses are designed to be part-time programmes, allowing candidates to continue to work and begin to acquire Qualifying Work Experience simultaneously.
- Where a sponsor is unable to provide or procure sufficient Qualifying Work Experience for a candidate, the Reed Smith Academy may assist with secondments to eligible legal services providers in order to meet their Qualifying Work Experience requirements.

What is the SQE?

The SQE has replaced all the previous paths to qualification as a Solicitor (England & Wales), with some exceptions. This marks the end of the GDL, LPC, QLTS, qualification under “equivalent means” and training contracts.

The SQE is made up of four main components:



SQE1

Pass the SQE Part 1 exam



SQE2

Pass the SQE Part 2 exam



QWE

Accumulate at least two years of Qualifying Work Experience



Fitness & Suitability

Meet the SRA's current Character and Suitability criteria

Who is delivering the programme?

CLIP was established in 2014 with the firm aim of enabling candidates in the Middle East to qualify as Solicitors (England & Wales). Originally, this meant bringing GDL, LPC and QLTS courses to the region. CLIP's portfolio has now expanded to include delivery of SQE preparatory courses and professional legal training.

CLIP is a GDLAD CPLD-accredited institution and is regulated by the KHDA.