# Part 2 - Academic Component of Bar Training

## 2A: Foundations of legal knowledge

**This section includes information on the foundations of legal knowledge subjects, the pass mark for these subjects, the maximum number of attempts at each subject and what happens in the event of a marginal failure or deemed pass in these subjects.**

### Overview

**1** The seven foundations of legal knowledge are:

Criminal Law;

Equity and Trusts;

Law of the European Union;

Obligations 1 (Contract);

Obligations 2 (Tort);

Property/Land Law; and

Public Law (Constitutional Law, Administrative Law and Human Rights Law).

**EU Law in Context**

The UK has now left the European Union, but EU Law still has significant relevance to the laws of England and Wales and therefore practise as a barrister. Knowledge of current and developing EU Law may be used to assist in the interpretation and evolution of retained EU Law and as a result, for the purposes of the academic component of Bar training, the Law of the European Union will continue to be a required academic element of a barrister's training.

### The pass mark, marginal failure and deemed passes

**2** All **foundations of legal knowledge subjects** must be passed at **40%** or above. If a course provider has a pass mark below 40%, it must ensure that students who are intending to qualify as barristers are aware that they must obtain at least 40% in each of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects.

**3** A course provider may compensate or condone a single marginal failure in one of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects where the following requirements are satisfied:

**a.** The course provider's assessment regulations permit condonation and/or compensation; and

**b.** There are exceptional circumstances in your case that are likely to have impacted on your performance; and

**c.** Your mark for the subject to be condoned or compensated is not less than 35%; and

**d.** There is evidence of your academic strength across your course studies.

**4** If you fail one of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects that is not condoned, you must pass that subject at the course provider which awarded your law degree, or pass the relevant subject in the GDL, within a maximum of **three** attempts. This is subject to your law degree being awarded at lower second class honours (2:2) or above. If you are completing a subject within the GDL for this purpose, you must obtain a **Certificate of Partial Exemption** from us (see **Part 2E** of this Bar Qualification Manual).

**5** A course provider may, if permitted by its assessment regulations, deem you to have passed one or more of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects that you failed or did not take due to a substantial cause beyond your control (including illness or bereavement). If this results in your being awarded a law degree without a classification (eg an Aegrotat degree), you will need to apply for the **exercise of discretion** (see **Part 2B** of this Bar Qualification Manual).

### Maximum number of attempts

**6** The maximum number of attempts permitted for any of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects is normally **three** . If you have exhausted all three attempts (within a law degree, the GDL, or a combination of the two) you must complete a full law degree or GDL programme afresh to satisfy the academic component of Bar training. In exceptional circumstances, a course provider may allow you additional attempts at foundations of legal knowledge subjects.

**7** Where one of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects is taught and assessed as two separate units (eg Criminal Law I and Criminal Law II), you will be permitted three attempts at each unit, rather than collectively for the whole subject.

### Implementation of Future Bar Training

The Joint Statement no longer applies to either profession as the BSB and the SRA are now taking divergent approaches to qualification as barristers and solicitors. There is more information about these approaches - and what they mean if you want to become either a barrister or a solicitor - in the **Common Protocol on the Academic Component of training** (see **Part 2G** of this Bar Qualification Manual), which we have published jointly with the SRA.

The requirement to complete the academic component of Bar training in order to become a barrister has not changed. Depending on which of the approved pathways is offered by an Authorised Education and Training Organisation (AETO), this component may be integrated with the vocational component, rather than taken sequentially, or may continue to be completed as a stand-alone component that is completed before the vocational component of Bar training.

The SRA will cease to be involved in the approval or recognition of new QLD/CPE courses that start on (or after) **31 December 2021** , following the introduction of the **Solicitors Qualifying Examination** (SQE).

Subject to further detail from the SRA in due course, we intend to allow some equivalence for part-qualified solicitors. For example, we expect that passing the SQE Stage One (which incorporates knowledge of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects) should be sufficient as an equivalent to the academic component of Bar training. This, we think, should aid students in deciding what law programme to attend, meaning that they could postpone decisions on their eventual career intentions.

## 2B: Completing the academic component (law degrees)

**This section includes information on law degree requirements for completion of the academic component of training including the minimum standard (degree classification), time limits for completion of a law degree, credit transfer, and progression to the vocational component.**

### Overview

**1** In order to complete the academic component of training based on a law degree awarded in the UK/Republic of Ireland, you must hold a degree which meets the following requirements.

### UK/Republic of Ireland Law Degrees:

must be awarded at Level 6 (or above) of the ‘ Framework for Higher Education Qualifications ’, by a recognised degree-awarding body;

must comply with the **QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Law (Mar 2023)** ;

must incorporate study of the **foundations of legal knowledge** subjects (see **Part 2A** of this Bar Qualification Manual);

must be awarded at (or above) the **minimum standard** ; and

must not considered to be a **stale qualification** (see **Part 2F** of this Bar Qualification Manual).

**2** You should contact the course provider to confirm if a particular law degree complies with the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Law.

**3** If you hold a law degree from outside the UK/Republic of Ireland and wish to qualify as a barrister, you must apply to us for a **Certificate of Academic Standing** (see **Part 2D** of this Bar Qualification Manual).

**4** Vocational component course providers ( **Authorised Education and Training Organisations** – AETOs) are responsible for ensuring that prospective students have complied with the standards set out above, at the point of admission to a vocational component Bar Course.

**5** Entry requirements for full-time undergraduate law degrees differ from one course provider to another. Further details of these requirements may be obtained from the Universities and Colleges Admission Services (UCAS) . Applications for part-time undergraduate law degrees or graduate-entry law degrees (‘Senior Status’ degrees) should be made directly to the course provider.

### The minimum standard

**6** The minimum standard for UK/Republic of Ireland undergraduate law degrees for completion of the academic component of Bar training is **lower second class honours (2:2)** .

**7** If you have failed to meet the minimum standard in your law degree due to exceptional circumstances, you may apply to us for the **exercise of discretion** . If discretion is granted, you will be able to progress to the vocational component of Bar training.

**8** Discretion will be exercised where:

**a.** there is clear evidence that you are academically of second class quality overall;

**b.** there is clear evidence of a temporary cause which prevented you from fulfilling your full academic potential, which has not already been considered by the course provider in the award of a third class degree;

**c.** there is clear evidence that this cause will not render you unsuitable to practise at the Bar; and

**d.** there is clear evidence of a motivation to qualify and practise at the Bar.

**Exercise of Discretion – Application Form**

**Exercise of Discretion – Application Guidelines**

### Time limits

**9** The maximum time limit for completion of a law degree for the purpose of Bar training (studied either full-time, part-time or by distance learning) is **six years** .

**10** If you are unable to complete your law degree within the time limit due to exceptional circumstances, you should apply directly to your course provider for an extension of time. Course providers should apply their own assessment policies and regulations when assessing these applications.

**11** You are no longer required to apply to us for acceptance of a law degree completed outside of the maximum time limit.

### Credit transfer

**12** A course provider may allow you to transfer credit for a law degree from another course provider without needing our approval.

### Commencement of the vocational component

**13** You must commence the vocational component of Bar training within **five** years of completion of the academic component (including any relevant re-sits).

**14** You may apply to us for permission to commence the vocational component of Bar training before completion of the academic component. An application is unlikely to be granted unless:

**a.** the offer of a place on a vocational component Bar Course place remains open to you despite the outstanding results;

**b.** results are outstanding in no more than one subject;

**c.** there is clear evidence from your course provider that the final overall classification of your incomplete UK Law Degree is predicted to be at (or above) the minimum standard;

**d.** the result(s) of the outstanding subject(s) will be known by 1 October of the year in which you commence the vocational component; and

**e.** both you and your vocational component Bar Course provider accept that you must withdraw if you have not satisfactorily completed the academic component of training for the Bar by 1 October of the year in which you commence the Bar Course.

**Early commencement of the vocational component – Application Form**

**Early commencement of the vocational component – Application Guidelines**

## Implementation of Future Bar Training

The Joint Statement no longer applies to either profession as the BSB and the SRA are now taking divergent approaches to qualification as barristers and solicitors. There is more information about these approaches - and what they mean if you want to become either a barrister or a solicitor - in the **Common Protocol on the Academic Component of training** (see **Part 2G** of this Bar Qualification Manual), which we have published jointly with the SRA.

The requirement to complete the academic component of Bar training in order to become a barrister has not changed. Depending on which of the approved pathways is offered by an Authorised Education and Training Organisation (AETO), this component may be integrated with the vocational component, rather than taken sequentially, or may continue to be completed as a stand-alone component that is completed before the vocational component of Bar training.

The SRA will cease to be involved in the approval or recognition of new QLD/CPE courses that start on (or after) **31 December 2021** , following the introduction of the **Solicitors Qualifying Examination** (SQE).

Subject to further detail from the SRA in due course, we intend to allow some equivalence for part-qualified solicitors. For example, we expect that passing the SQE Stage One (which incorporates knowledge of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects) should be sufficient as an equivalent to the academic component of Bar training. This, we think, should aid students in deciding what law programme to attend, meaning that they could postpone decisions on their eventual career intentions.

## 2C: Completing the academic component (conversion courses)

**This section includes information on requirements for completion of the academic component of training through a conversion course including the minimum standard (degree classification), time limits for completion of a conversion course, credit transfer, and progression to the vocational component.**

### Overview

**1** In order to complete the academic component of training based on a conversion course, you must:

hold a UK/Republic of Ireland undergraduate degree awarded at (or above) the minimum standard; or

have been granted a **Certificate of Academic Standing** (see **Part 2D** of this Bar Qualification Manual) by us.

**2** If you complete a conversion course without holding a UK/Republic of Ireland degree of the required standard or a Certificate of Academic issued by us, you will not be permitted to progress to the vocational component of Bar training.

**3** A conversion course is a course which incorporates study of the **foundations of legal knowledge** subjects (see **Part 2A** of this Bar Qualification Manual) and complies with the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Law (Mar 2023) . The most common type of conversion course is a **Graduate Diploma in Law** ( **GDL** ). Other types of conversion course include a Common Professional Examination (CPE) or Postgraduate Diploma in Law (PGDL).

**4** Applications for full-time GDL courses are made through a central application system run by the Central Applications Board . Applications for part-time and distance learning GDL courses should be made directly to the course provider.

### The minimum standard

**5** The minimum standard for UK/Republic of Ireland undergraduate degrees for completion of the academic component of Bar training is **lower second class honours (2:2)** .

**6** If you have failed to meet the minimum standard in your degree due to exceptional circumstances, you may apply to us for the **exercise of discretion** . If discretion is granted, you will be able to undertake the GDL for completion of the academic component and progression to the vocational component of Bar training.

**7** Discretion will be exercised where:

**a.** there is clear evidence that you are academically of second class quality overall;

**b.** there is clear evidence of a temporary cause which prevented you from fulfilling your full academic potential, which has not already been considered by the course provider in the award of a third class degree;

**c.** there is clear evidence that this cause will not render you unsuitable to practise at the Bar; and

**d.** there is clear evidence of a motivation to qualify and practise at the Bar.

**Exercise of Discretion – Application Form**

**Exercise of Discretion – Application Guidelines**

### Time limits

**8** A full-time GDL should normally be completed in not less than one year and not more than three years.

**9** A part-time GDL should normally be completed in not less than two years and not more than four years.

**10** If you are unable to complete your GDL within these time limits due to exceptional circumstances, you should apply directly to your course provider for an extension of time. Course providers should apply their own assessment policies and regulations when assessing these applications.

**11** You are no longer required to apply to us for acceptance of a GDL completed outside of the maximum time limit.

### Credit transfer

**12** A course provider may allow you to transfer credit for a GDL from another course provider without needing our approval.

### Commencement of the vocational component

**13** You must commence the vocational component of Bar training within **five** years of completion of the academic component (including any relevant re-sits).

**14** You may apply to us for permission to commence the vocational component of Bar training before completion of the academic component. An application is unlikely to be granted unless:

**a.** the offer of a place on a vocational component Bar Course place remains open to you despite the outstanding results;

**b.** results are outstanding in no more than one subject;

**c.** there is clear evidence from your course provider that the final overall result of your incomplete GDL is predicted to be a 'Pass' (or above);

**d.** the result(s) of the outstanding subject(s) will be known by 1 October of the year in which you commence the vocational component; and

**e.** both you and your vocational component Bar Course provider accept that you must withdraw if you have not satisfactorily completed the academic component of training for the Bar by 1 October of the year in which you commence the Bar Course.

**Early commencement of the vocational component – Application Form**

**Early commencement of the vocational component – Application Guidelines**

### Implementation of Future Bar Training

The Joint Statement no longer applies to either profession as the BSB and the SRA are now taking divergent approaches to qualification as barristers and solicitors. There is more information about these approaches - and what they mean if you want to become either a barrister or a solicitor - in the **Common Protocol on the Academic Component of training** (see **Part 2G** of this Bar Qualification Manual), which we have published jointly with the SRA.

The requirement to complete the academic component of Bar training in order to become a barrister has not changed. Depending on which of the approved pathways is offered by an Authorised Education and Training Organisation (AETO), this component may be integrated with the vocational component, rather than taken sequentially, or may continue to be completed as a stand-alone component that is completed before the vocational component of Bar training.

The SRA will cease to be involved in the approval or recognition of new QLD/CPE courses that start on (or after) **31 December 2021** , following the introduction of the **Solicitors Qualifying Examination** (SQE).

Subject to further detail from the SRA in due course, we intend to allow some equivalence for part-qualified solicitors. For example, we expect that passing the SQE Stage One (which incorporates knowledge of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects) should be sufficient as an equivalent to the academic component of Bar training. This, we think, should aid students in deciding what law programme to attend, meaning that they could postpone decisions on their eventual career intentions.

## 2D: Certificates of academic standing

**This section includes information on Certificates of Academic Standing issued by us, including when and how to apply for a Certificate.**

Overview

**1** If you hold a degree from an institution based outside the UK/Republic of Ireland and wish to undertake the GDL for the purpose of qualification as a barrister, you must apply to us for a **Certificate of Academic Standing** .

**2** If you hold a UK/Republic of Ireland postgraduate degree but have not obtained a UK undergraduate degree, you must also apply to us for a Certificate of Academic Standing. If you hold a UK medical, dental or veterinary degree, you should contact the Authorisations Team for further advice.

**3** If you do not hold any degree qualifications, you may apply for a Certificate of Academic Standing based on considerable experience or exceptional ability in an academic, professional, business, or administrative field.

**4** We will issue a Certificate of Academic Standing if we are satisfied that the qualifications you hold and/or the experience you have gained are equivalent to a UK honours degree of at least lower second class (2:2).

**5** We refer to the general comparability statements prepared by UK ENIC (formerly, UK NARIC) when assessing overseas degree qualifications. UK ENIC is the designated United Kingdom national agency for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills. It performs this official function on behalf of the UK Government.

**6** We will not accept Certificates of Academic Standing issued by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) for the purpose of qualification as a barrister.

**Certificate of Academic Standing – Application Form**

**Certificate of Academic Standing – Application Guidelines**

### Implementation of Future Bar Training

The Joint Statement no longer applies to either profession as the BSB and the SRA are now taking divergent approaches to qualification as barristers and solicitors. There is more information about these approaches - and what they mean if you want to become either a barrister or a solicitor - in the **Common Protocol on the Academic Component of training** (see **Part 2G** of this Bar Qualification Manual), which we have published jointly with the SRA.

The requirement to complete the academic component of Bar training in order to become a barrister has not changed. Depending on which of the approved pathways is offered by an Authorised Education and Training Organisation (AETO), this component may be integrated with the vocational component, rather than taken sequentially, or may continue to be completed as a stand-alone component that is completed before the vocational component of Bar training.

The SRA will cease to be involved in the approval or recognition of new QLD/CPE courses that start on (or after) **31 December 2021** , following the introduction of the **Solicitors Qualifying Examination** (SQE).

Subject to further detail from the SRA in due course, we intend to allow some equivalence for part-qualified solicitors. For example, we expect that passing the SQE Stage One (which incorporates knowledge of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects) should be sufficient as an equivalent to the academic component of Bar training. This, we think, should aid students in deciding what law programme to attend, meaning that they could postpone decisions on their eventual career intentions.

## 2E: Exemptions from individual foundation subjects

**This section includes information on obtaining exemptions from the individual foundations of legal knowledge subjects, including the types of qualifications that will or will not be accepted by us.**

### Overview

**1** The rules regarding exemption from any of the individual components of Bar training are set out in the BSB Handbook at **Rules Q7-Q12** .

**2** You may apply to us for exemption from the individual **foundations of legal knowledge** subjects which must be passed for completion of the academic component of Bar training (see **Part 2A** of this Bar Qualification Manual).

### Application – Certificate of Exemption

**3** You may apply to us for exemption on a subject-by-subject basis. If the application is successful, you will be granted either:

a **Certificate of Partial Exemption** – exemptions granted from some, but not all, of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects; or

a **Certificate of Full Exemption** – exemptions granted from all of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects.

**4** You must pass any of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects outstanding after the award of a Certificate of Partial Exemption within a Graduate Diploma in Law course (GDL).

**5** Certificates of Exemption granted by us remain valid for five years after the award of the qualification in which the relevant foundations of legal knowledge subjects were passed.

### Eligibility

**6**

| | |
|---|---|
| Degrees awarded in England and Wales | Exemptions will only be granted based on an Honours degree awarded at lower second class honours (2:2) or above. |
| Degrees awarded in the Republic of Ireland | Exemptions will only be granted based on an Honours degree awarded at lower second class honours (2:2) or above. |
| Degrees awarded in Scotland | Exemptions will only be granted based on an Honours degree (normally a four-year course) awarded at lower second class honours (2:2) or above. |
| Degrees awarded outside the UK/Republic of Ireland and Postgraduate degrees where no UK undergraduate degree is held | Exemptions will only be granted based on a degree for which we have granted a **Certificate of Academic Standing** . |

Professional qualifications

Exemptions will only be granted where the relevant subjects have been studied to the same breadth and depth as they would be studied on a law degree or GDL.

**Exemptions (England and Wales Degree Provider) – Application Form**

**Exemptions (England and Wales Degree Provider) – Application Guidelines**

**Exemptions (Non-England and Wales Degree Provider) – Application Form**

**Exemptions (Non-England and Wales Degree Provider) – Application Guidelines**

**Exemptions (Professional Qualifications) – Application Form**

**Exemptions (Professional Qualifications) – Application Guidelines**

Exclusions

**7** Exemptions will not be granted based on:

**a.** an incomplete degree (ie a degree which has not been completed and awarded by the course provider).

**b.** a degree that does not meet the Bar's minimum standard, unless you have been granted the **exercise of discretion** (see **Part 2B** of this Bar Qualification Manual) by us.

**c.** a degree that has become a **stale qualification** (see **Part 2F** of the Bar Qualification Manual), unless you have been granted reactivation by us.

**8** Unless approval is granted by us, a law degree will not be accepted for completion of the academic component of Bar training where you have been granted exemption from one or more of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects by:

**a.** passing a diploma which contains some of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects;

**b.** passing law papers in the examinations of professional bodies;

**c.** passes in the Business Technology Education Council's HND and HNC law papers or foundation degrees which do not have qualifying status; or

**d.** Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL).

**9** Individual foundations of legal knowledge subject exemptions granted by a UK/Republic of Ireland course provider may not be accepted by us. You must seek confirmation from us that the qualification on which the exemption is based meets our requirements.

**10** We will not accept Certificates of Exemption issued by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) for the purpose of qualification as a barrister

### Implementation of Future Bar Training

The Joint Statement no longer applies to either profession as the BSB and the SRA are now taking divergent approaches to qualification as barristers and solicitors. There is more information about these approaches - and what they mean if you want to become either a barrister or a solicitor - in the **Common Protocol on the Academic Component of training** (see **Part 2G** of this Bar Qualification Manual), which we have published jointly with the SRA.

The requirement to complete the academic component of Bar training in order to become a barrister has not changed. Depending on which of the approved pathways is offered by an Authorised Education and Training Organisation (AETO), this component may be integrated with the vocational component, rather than taken sequentially, or may continue to be completed as a stand-alone component that is completed before the vocational component of Bar training.

The SRA will cease to be involved in the approval or recognition of new QLD/CPE courses that start on (or after) **31 December 2021** , following the introduction of the **Solicitors Qualifying Examination** (SQE).

Subject to further detail from the SRA in due course, we intend to allow some equivalence for part-qualified solicitors. For example, we expect that passing the SQE Stage One (which incorporates knowledge of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects) should be sufficient as an equivalent to the academic component of Bar training. This, we think, should aid students in deciding what law programme to attend, meaning that they could postpone decisions on their eventual career intentions.

**2F: Stale academic qualifications**

**This section includes information on the time limit for progression to the vocational component after completion of the academic component and the process to reactivate qualifications which have become 'stale'.**

Overview

**1** Students proceeding to the vocational component must be able to rely upon legal knowledge which is reasonably current. For this reason, both law degrees and GDL courses have a time limit after which they are regarded as 'stale'.

**2** You must start the vocational component within **five years** of completion of the academic component, whether by means of a law degree or GDL. The same time limit applies to any of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects passed individually following the award of a **Certificate of Partial Exemption** (see **Part 2E** of this Bar Qualification Manual).

**3** If you wish to qualify as a barrister after this five-year period has elapsed, you must reactivate your stale qualifications, usually by undertaking the whole of the GDL.

Application – reactivation of stale qualifications

**4** In exceptional circumstances, we may reactivate stale qualifications without requiring completion of the GDL. We will only do so where there is reliable evidence from an impartial and professional source that you have kept your knowledge of all of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects up to date, eg through further legal study or relevant employment.

**5** Generally, we will not grant reactivation of qualifications that are eight years old or more.

**Reactivation of Stale Qualifications – Application Form**

**Reactivation of Stale Qualifications – Application Guidelines**

### Implementation of Future Bar Training

The Joint Statement no longer applies to either profession as the BSB and the SRA are now taking divergent approaches to qualification as barristers and solicitors. There is more information about these approaches - and what they mean if you want to become either a barrister or a solicitor - in the **Common Protocol on the Academic Component of training** (see **Part 2G** of this Bar Qualification Manual), which we have published jointly with the SRA.

The requirement to complete the academic component of Bar training in order to become a barrister has not changed. Depending on which of the approved pathways is offered by an Authorised Education and Training Organisation (AETO), this component may be integrated with the vocational component, rather than taken sequentially, or may continue to be completed as a stand-alone component that is completed before the vocational component of Bar training.

The SRA will cease to be involved in the approval or recognition of new QLD/CPE courses that start on (or after) **31 December 2021** , following the introduction of the **Solicitors Qualifying Examination** (SQE).

Subject to further detail from the SRA in due course, we intend to allow some equivalence for part-qualified solicitors. For example, we expect that passing the SQE Stage One (which incorporates knowledge of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects) should be sufficient as an equivalent to the academic component of Bar training. This, we think, should aid students in deciding what law programme to attend, meaning that they could postpone decisions on their eventual career intentions.

## 2G: Common protocol on the academic component of training

**This section includes Version 3 of the Common Protocol between the Bar Standards Board and the Solicitors Regulation Authority on academic legal training. Version 3 supersedes the first and second versions of the Protocol which were published in Spring 2018 and November 2018, respectively.**

**1)** Scope

This protocol concerns the Bar Standards Board's (BSB) and the Solicitors Regulation Authority's (SRA) Joint Statement on the academic stage of training. It concerns both regulators' new training regulations that will impact on the current Qualifying Law Degree (QLD) and Common Professional Examination (CPE) courses, eg Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL). It is the policy position for both the BSB and the SRA.

**2)** Transitional arrangements

Following the introduction of the BSB's new rules in 2019 and the introduction of the SRA's Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) in autumn 2021, the Joint Statement requirements will be as follows:

**For those wishing to qualify as a barrister:** the requirements will remain in force for QLD/CPEs that start in or before the academic year 2018/19 and last until students on those courses complete their studies, in accordance with the requirements of the Academic Stage Handbook.

**For those wishing to qualify as a solicitor:** the requirements will remain in force for QLD/CPEs that start up to and including 31 December 2021. Students must have accepted their offers on such courses up to and including 31 August 2021 and the requirements last until students on those courses complete their studies, in accordance with the requirements of the Academic Stage Handbook.

**3)** Administering the academic stage of training

The SRA will continue to administer the academic stage of education and training for solicitors and barristers on behalf of both regulators. Since 2014, providers of QLD and CPE courses have been required to self-certify compliance with the Joint Statement to the SRA in the event of:

validation of new programmes;

re-validation of existing programmes; and

major modification to existing programmes.

These arrangements will continue to apply for all approved programmes beginning up to and including 31 December 2021, until students have completed their courses in accordance with the requirements of the SRA's Academic Stage Handbook. Students must have accepted their offers on these courses up to and including 31 August 2021. In the case of new courses starting in academic year 2020/21, the SRA will be operating on its own behalf only, and not on behalf of the BSB.

**4)** Extension of approvals

The BSB extended approvals for QLD/GDL courses up to and including the 2018/19 academic year. After this, the BSB reduced its regulatory involvement in legal academic learning to a minimum.

The SRA is now extending approvals for QLD/CPE courses that start up to and including 31 December 2021, as long as the offer to start the course has been accepted by the student up to and including 31 August 2021. The SRA will cease to be involved in the approval or recognition of new QLD/CPE courses that start after 31 December 2021.

Course providers may make student offers for courses under the existing Joint Statement on that basis.

**5)** The BSB's future training arrangements

For undergraduate law degree courses which started in or after 2019/20, current Joint Statement requirements will no longer apply.

Subject to approval, the BSB's only regulatory involvement in undergraduate law degrees or CPE courses (ie Graduate Diploma in Law) which will start in or after academic year 2019/20 will be the continuing requirements that law degrees are compliant with the QAA subject benchmark statement for law and that degree courses contain the seven "Foundations of Legal Knowledge" subjects as well as the skills associated with graduate legal work such as legal research.

Please be aware that the seven "foundations of legal knowledge" subjects are not always a compulsory element of pure law or mixed law degree programmes. However, the foundations of legal knowledge subjects remain compulsory for all students who wish to be called to the Bar and practise as a barrister in England and Wales. It will be the responsibility of Authorised Education and Training Organisations (AETOs) to ensure compliance with these arrangements.

**6)** The SRA's future training arrangements

For undergraduate law degree courses that start after the introduction of the SQE (1 September 2021), the current Joint Statement requirements will only apply to courses that start up to and including 31 December 2021 (as long as the offer to start the course has been accpeted by the student up to and including 31 August 2021).

Under the proposed SQE, students will need to hold a degree or equivalent qualification or experience, but they will no longer need to study for a QLD or CPE recognised or approved by the SRA. The SRA will no longer specify the academic content of law degrees. However, the SQE will ask students to demonstrate the knowledge set out in the Statement of Legal Knowledge. This includes the seven foundations of legal knowledge subjects currently specified in the Joint Statement (in addition to other areas of law and practice)

The seven foundations of legal knowledge are:

Criminal Law

Equity and Trusts

Law of the European Union

Obligations 1 (Contract)

Obligations 2 (Tort)

Property/Land Law

Public Law (Constitutional Law, Administrative Law and Human Rights Law).

European Law will continue as one of the foundation subjects for the foreseeable future. However, this will be subject to the future developments in relation to the UK's withdrawal from the European Union and/or any future agreement made on European Law in the future.

## 2H: Oversight of the academic component

**This section includes information on arrangements for joint oversight of the academic component of legal training by the Bar Standards Board and the Solicitors Regulation Authority, and the Joint Statement.**

### Overview

**1** Formerly, the Bar Standards Board (BSB) and the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) jointly approved course providers of qualifying law degrees (QLDs) and conversion courses (eg the Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL) or the Common Professional Examination (CPE)).

**2** For the purpose of Bar training, the concept of a QLD does not apply to law degree courses which started in (or after) the 2019/20 academic year and vocational component courses which started in (or after) the 2020/21 academic year. If you started a QLD/GDL course in (or before) the 2018/19 academic year, you will remain subject to the requirements set out in our 2018-19 Academic Stage Book until you complete your course. If you require a copy of 2018-19 Academic Stage Book, please contact the Authorisations Team ( authorisations@barstandardsboard.org.uk ).

**3** In order to have programmes validated and revalidated for the purpose of solicitor training, course providers are required to self-certify their compliance with the Joint Statement and with QAA standards and quality assurance requirements.

**4** The SRA acts as administrator of this validation process, and monitors the supporting documentation submitted.

**5** A copy of the self-declaration form for course providers is available on the SRA website.

### The Joint Statement

**6** The Joint Statement was issued in 1999 by the Law Society and the General Council of the Bar.

**7** The Joint Statement set out the minimum requirements which must be complied with for an undergraduate degree to be recognised as satisfying the academic component of training for entry into the legal profession.

### Determination of Learning Resources for recognised law programmes

**8** This document can be used by validation and review panels to help identify whether or not the resources provided for an academic law programme are adequate to satisfy the requirements of the Joint Statement. The guidance document covers a range of areas, including human resources, staff development, physical resources and student support.

### Implementation of Future Bar Training

The Joint Statement no longer applies to either profession as the BSB and the SRA are now taking divergent approaches to qualification as barristers and solicitors. There is more information about these approaches - and what they mean if you want to become either a barrister or a solicitor - in the **Common Protocol on the Academic Component of training** (see **Part 2G** of this Bar Qualification Manual), which we have published jointly with the SRA.

The requirement to complete the academic component of Bar training in order to become a barrister has not changed. Depending on which of the approved pathways is offered by an Authorised Education and Training Organisation (AETO), this component may be integrated with the vocational component, rather than taken sequentially, or may continue to be completed as a stand-alone component that is completed before the vocational component of Bar training.

The SRA will cease to be involved in the approval or recognition of new QLD/CPE courses that start on (or after) **31 December 2021** , following the introduction of the **Solicitors Qualifying Examination** (SQE).

Subject to further detail from the SRA in due course, we intend to allow some equivalence for part-qualified solicitors. For example, we expect that passing the SQE Stage One (which incorporates knowledge of the foundations of legal knowledge subjects) should be sufficient as an equivalent to the academic component of Bar training. This, we think, should aid students in deciding what law programme to attend, meaning that they could postpone decisions on their eventual career intentions.