

Red Tape Initiative - Phase 3: Changes to the SRA's education and training regulations

Consultation questionnaire form

This form is designed to be completed electronically—in MS Word. Please save it locally before and after completing it.

Question 1

Do you foresee any impacts of our proposal?

No , as the changes in relation to this question which is dealing with Welsh speaking solicitors and is giving them equivalence of english speaking only solicitors

Question 2

Do you agree with the proposal that we no longer require a check on character and suitability as a requirement to sit the assessment, provided that we retain the check at admission and we provide an opportunity to candidates to seek an early assessment if they wish?

We agree that there is no reason to check character and suitability for those who need to sit the QLTS, twice when this is only done on admission for non-QLTS lawyers. As long as the check is done on admission. It prevents the need for this financial and administrative resource to be of impact . It would not be considered proportionate. If they have any doubt a check as stated can be made earlier.

Question 3

Do you agree that in order to achieve parity between European candidates and International candidates we should on rely on the QLTS assessment as a means of ensuring that an appropriate level of English language skills has been achieved?

The one doubt we did have was whether the QLTS was sufficiently rigorous to ensure the appropriate level of English language skills. However, looking at the criteria set out in paragraph 15 detailing the proposals as to the standard set we do accept that the QLTS does address the benchmark required even this criteria is applied in marking the QLTS assessments.

Question 4

Do you agree that we should remove the five year restriction on completing the entire suite of QLTS assessments?

The proposal is to remove the 5 year certificate of eligibility which prohibits an individual from applying for a new certificate before the expiry of an existing one. Currently if a candidate does not complete all stages within the 5 years or has failed 3 times within that 5 year period they cannot apply for a new one until the 5 years is expired. If the 5 year restriction is removed the candidate can have as many attempts they wish whereas now it restricts to 3 in the 5 year period. We do believe that the 5 year restriction was there, perhaps, to make it more in line with LPC attempts e.g. 3 attempts, then start all over again and prevents a progressive roll of picking up assessments one at a time. If this is the case we would not agree to the 5 year rule being lifted as we feel it is there to protect the public as well as the individual from spending a lot of money and not having time to reflect. We also do not think it is comparable with the assessment regime for home students. We do feel this opening up of carrying forward endlessly attempts which would be assisted by removing the 5 year rule is not in the interests of the public.

Question 5

Do you agree that we should no longer restrict applicants to a maximum of three assessment attempts?

Please see above. We do not agree with this proposal as set out above

Question 6

Are there adverse impacts or risks to the public interest in removing these requirements that we have not identified?

No other than stated

Question 7

Do you foresee any impacts, positive or negative from the proposal to remove the requirement to undertake MCS1?

No. We feel that the large firms go above and beyond MCS1 and it may actually adversely affect the training which large firms have in place as the course may not compliment the firm's training programme for newly qualifieds. However, it is felt that smaller firms may need to be gudied/monmitored to ensure that such traing is put in place to develop any newly qualified.

As CPD is becoming self or entity regulated the retention of the MCS1 would be contrary to the future approach. Also, the proposed competency statement from the SRA may/will cover such areas.

Thank you for completing the **Consultation questionnaire form**.

Please save a copy of the completed form.

Please return it, along with your completed **About you form**, as an email attachment to trainingconsultations@sra.org.uk, by **17 November 2014**.

Alternatively, print the completed form and submit it by post, along with a printed copy of your **About you form**, to

Solicitors Regulation Authority
Education and Training Unit – Red Tape Initiative 3
The Cube
199 Wharfside Street,
Birmingham,
B1 1RN