SQE2 October 2023 Statistical Report

20 February 2024

SQE2 October 2023 Assessment Report

The Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) is a single rigorous assessment for all aspiring solicitors. It consists of two parts: SQE1, which tests candidates' functioning legal knowledge and SQE2, which tests candidates' practical legal skills and knowledge. SQE2 can only be taken if a candidate has passed SQE1 or is exempt from it.

The fifth round of SQE2 assessments ran between 23 October and 2 November 2023. SQE2 comprises 16 stations[1] — 12 written stations and four oral stations — that assess both skills and application of legal knowledge.

Candidates sat one of two oral sittings covering two consecutive days between 23 and 26 October. All candidates then sat the same written stations on the same dates (30 October – 2 November[2]). To protect the integrity of the assessments, different oral stations took place on different dates with the sittings identified below.

Station Type	Sitting 1	Sitting 2
Oral	23-24 October	25-26 October
Written	30 October – 2 November[2]	

This report includes statistics that provide feedback on the assessments and their performance.

SQE2 has a single pass mark for the overall 16 station assessment. There may be different pass marks between sittings due to the oral stations being different. There is no pass mark for an individual station or for all of the oral stations or written stations. Find out more about [how the SQE2 is marked](#).

The table below shows the number of candidates, the pass mark, and the pass rate for each sitting, as well as the overall pass rate.

Statistic	Sitting 1	Sitting 2	Overall
Pass Mark	62%	61%	-
Candidates (all graded)	408	234	642
Pass Rate (all graded)	66%	59%	64%
Candidates (first attempt)	345	197	542
Pass Rate (first attempt)	71%	66%	69%

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[1] Each station is an individual 'assessment' or 'exercise' that candidates take as part of SQE2. Each station is an assessment of a legal skill (one of six) in a practice area (one of five). Advocacy - Dispute Resolution is one station, Legal Drafting - Business organisations, rules and procedures is another station, and so on.

[2] A small group of candidates were rescheduled for day 1 of the written exams and sat these stations on 2 November. The marks of these stations have been aligned with the marks of the main cohort for the purposes of this report.

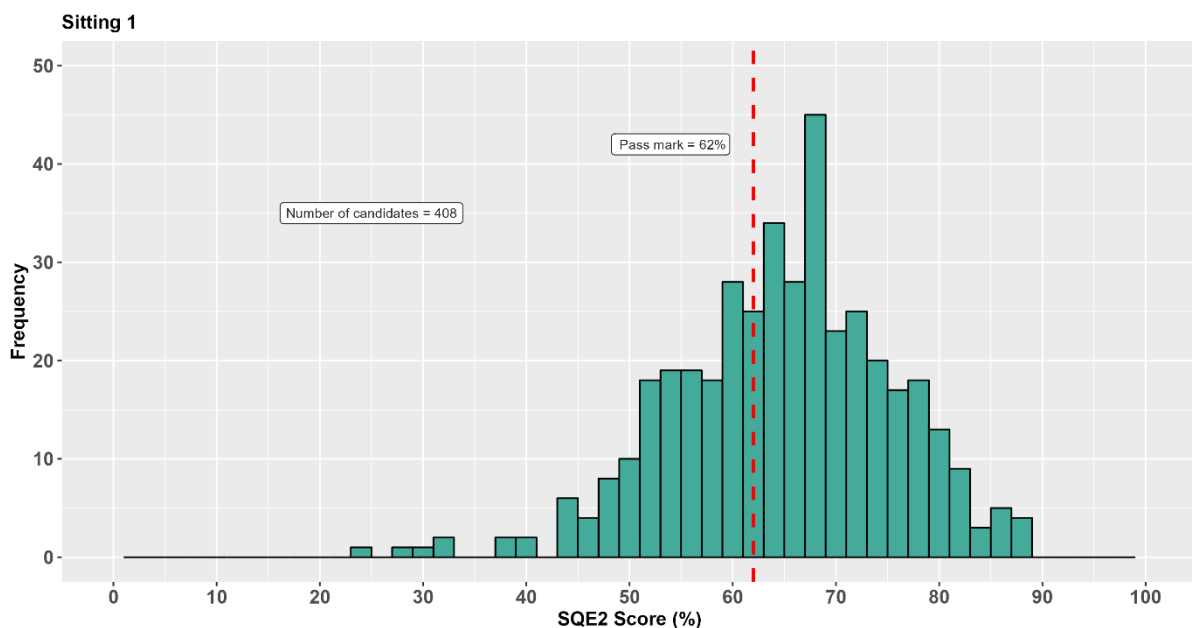# Sitting 1 – Oral (23-24 October) Written (30 October - 2 November)

Descriptive Statistics

The following table shows the average (mean) score, the standard deviation, median score, minimum score, maximum score and range of observed scores for SQE2 Sitting 1.

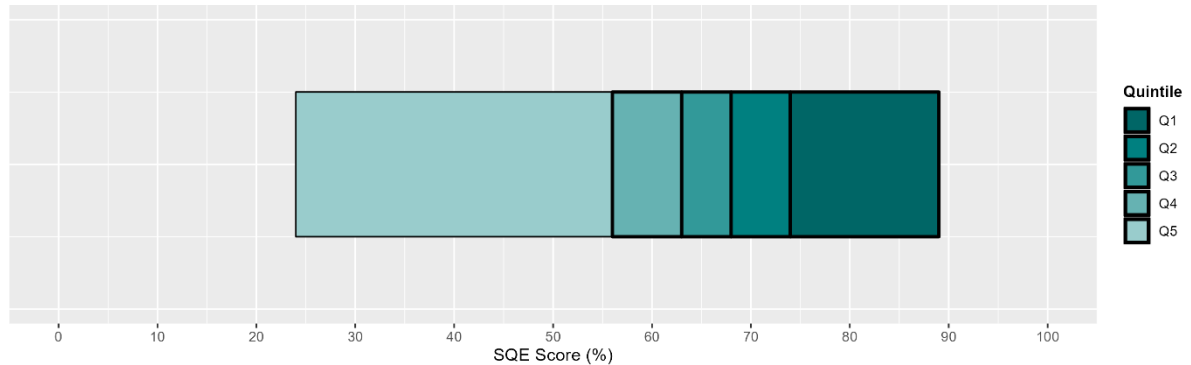| Statistic	Sitting 1
Mean %	65.2
Std. Dev. %	10.6
Median %	66
Min. %	24
Max. %	89
Range %	65

Score Distribution Chart

The following chart shows the distribution of scores for Sitting 1, with a red line showing the pass mark required.

Total Score Quintile Chart

This chart shows the **total scores** for Sitting 1 divided into quintiles. Each quintile shows the range of scores achieved by a fifth of the candidates, with Q1 showing the top fifth and Q5 showing the bottom fifth of scores.

Quintile Score Distribution - Sitting 1

Station Score Quintile Charts

This chart shows the 16 **station scores** for Sitting 1 divided into quintiles. Each quintile shows the range of scores achieved by a fifth of the candidates, with Q1 showing the top fifth and Q5 showing the bottom fifth of scores.
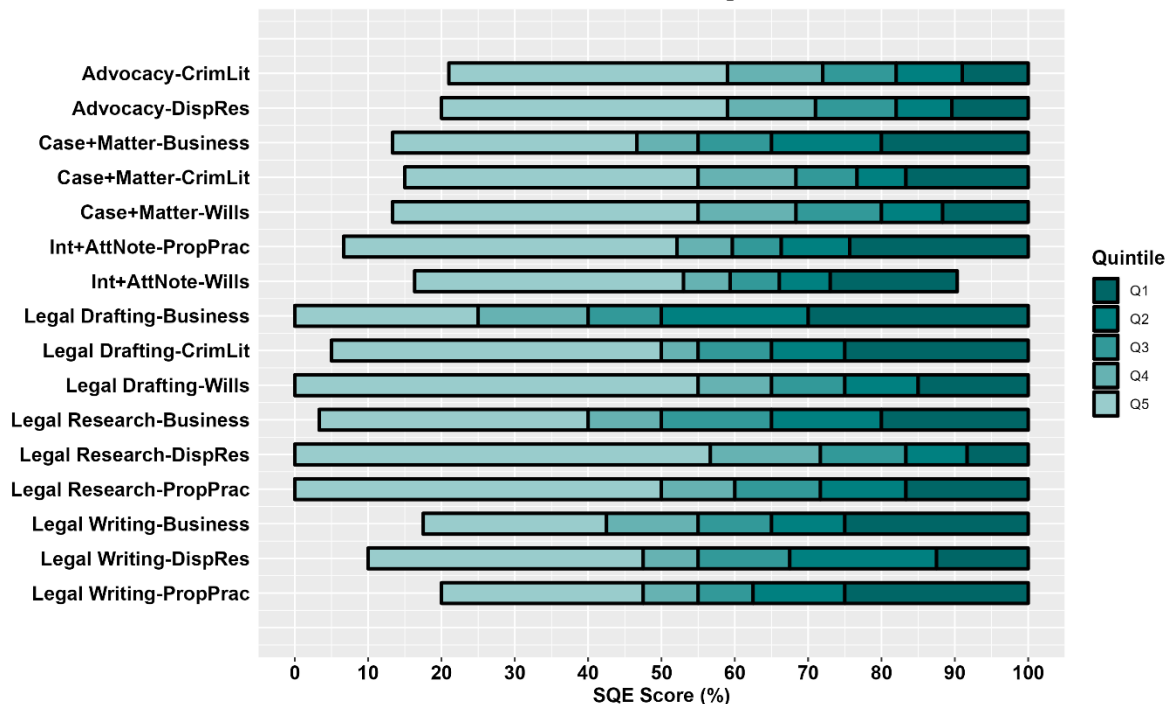
Station Quintile Score Distributions - Sitting 1

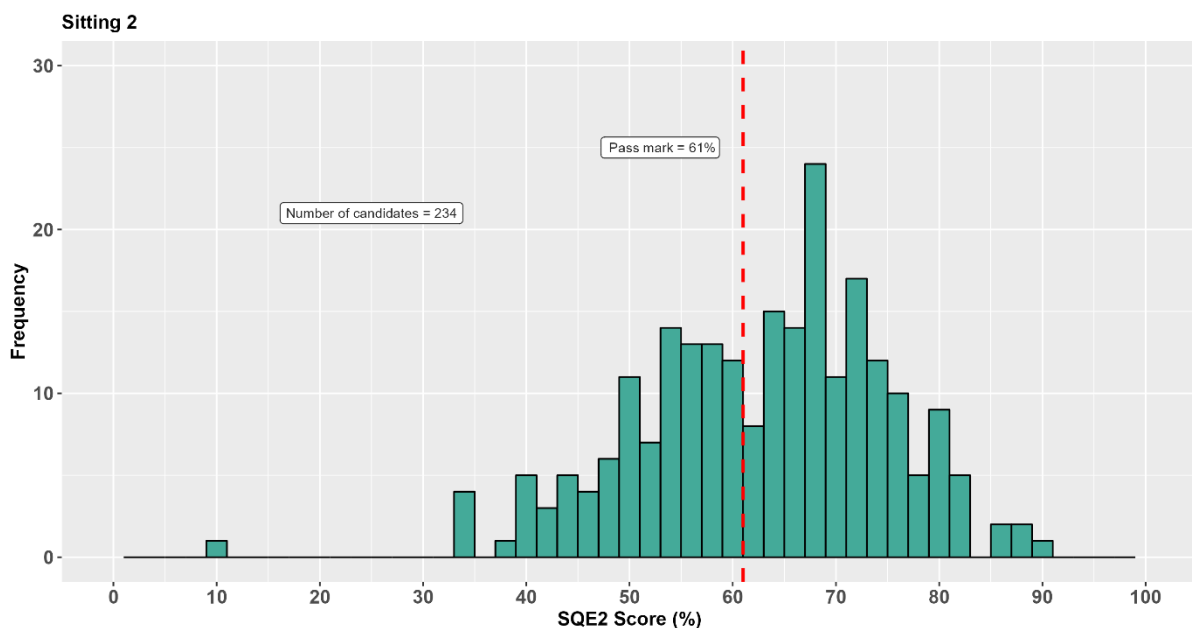# Sitting 2 – Oral (25-26 October) and Written (30 October - 2 November)

Descriptive Statistics

The following table shows the average (mean) score, the standard deviation, median score, minimum score, maximum score and range of observed scores for SQE2 Sitting 2.

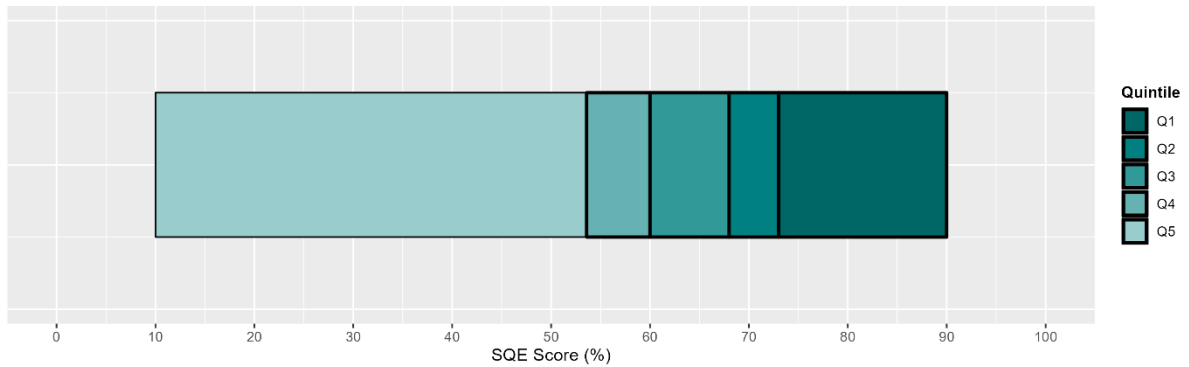| Statistic	Sitting 2
Mean %	63.2
Std. Dev. %	12.1
Median %	65
Min. %	10
Max. %	90
Range %	80

Score Distribution Chart

The following chart shows the distribution of scores for Sitting 2, with a red line showing the pass mark required.

Total Score Quintile Chart

This chart shows the **total scores** for Sitting 2 divided into quintiles. Each quintile shows the range of scores achieved by a fifth of the candidates, with Q1 showing the top fifth and Q5 showing the bottom fifth of scores.

Station Score Quintile Charts

This chart shows the 16 **station scores** for Sitting 2 divided into quintiles. Each quintile shows the range of scores achieved by a fifth of the candidates, with Q1 showing the top fifth and Q5 showing the bottom fifth of scores.
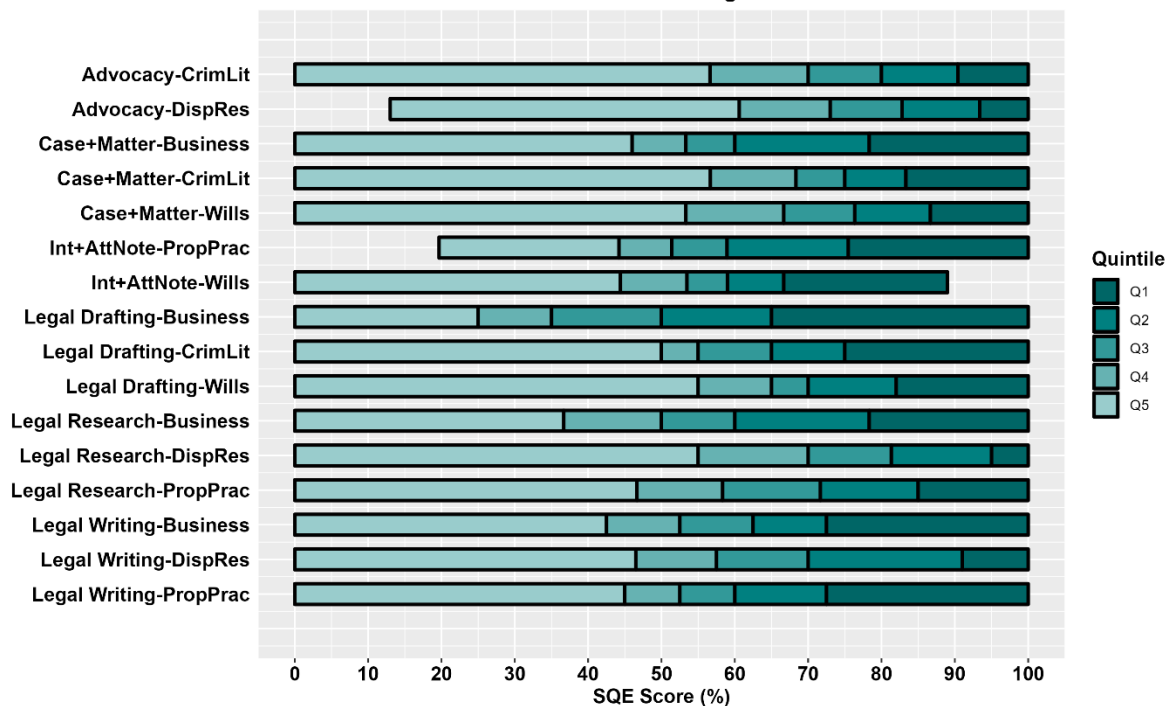
Pass Rates

The SRA collects diversity and socio-economic data to help understand how candidates with different characteristics and backgrounds perform in the assessments. The data categories are consistent with data collected by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Social Mobility Commission.

Based on the responses provided in the online diversity survey completed ahead of registering for the assessment, the following is provided in each table:

- Proportion of candidates in each group (Candidates %)
- Average score within each group (Mean Score %)
- Pass rate for each group (Pass Rate %)

The tables provide data for candidates taking SQE2 as a first attempt. Data is not reported for groups with fewer than 10 candidates. Performance data from all candidates, including resitting candidates, will be presented in the SQE Annual Report.

What is your ethnic group?	Candidates %	Mean Score %	Pass Rate %
Asian / Asian British	24	65	65
Black / Black British	5	58	24
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	4	65	70
Other ethnic group	7	61	59
White	49	69	81
Prefer not to say	11	61	50

Do you consider yourself to have a disability according to the definition in the Equality Act 2010?	Candidates %	Mean Score %	Pass Rate %
Yes	9	67	74
No	84	66	70
Prefer not to say	7	59	45

What is your sex?	Candidates %	Mean Score %	Pass Rate %
Female	58	67	73
Male	37	64	64
Other	-	-	-
Prefer not to say	5	62	54

Which is your religion or belief?	Candidates %	Mean Score %	Pass Rate %
Buddhist	-	-	-
Christian	29	65	62
Hindu	7	67	64
Jewish	-	-	-
Muslim	10	60	49
Sikh	-	-	-
No religion or belief	36	70	87
Other	-	-	-
Prefer not to say	18	62	54

What age category are you in?	Candidates %	Mean Score %	Pass Rate %
16 - 24	15	70	87
25 - 34	58	68	78
35 - 44	18	61	47
45 - 54	5	53	12
55 - 64	-	-	-
65+	-	-	-
Prefer not to say	4	58	55

Did either of your parents attend university by the time you were 18?	Candidates %	Mean Score %	Pass Rate %
Yes, one or both of my parents attended university	54	66	69
No, neither of my parents attended university	32	66	71
Do not know / not sure	2	66	60
Prefer not to say	12	63	65

Have you undertaken any qualifying work experience?	Candidates %	Mean Score %	Pass Rate %
Yes	62	67	73
No	32	64	65
Prefer not to say	6	60	47

What is your highest level of education?	Candidates %	Mean Score %	Pass Rate %
At least an undergraduate degree	88	67	71
Qualifications below degree level	-	-	-
No formal qualifications	-	-	-
Not applicable	4	56	48
Prefer not to say	8	60	51

What was the your undergraduate degree classification?	Candidates %	Mean Score %	Pass Rate %
1st	17	73	89
2:1	43	68	81
2:2	9	60	49
3rd	-	-	-
Commendation	-	-	-
Distinction	4	67	60
Pass	-	-	-
Prefer not to say	7	60	40
Not applicable	20	61	56

Are you a qualified lawyer?	Candidates %	Mean Score %	Pass Rate %
Yes	34	62	49
No	66	68	80
Prefer not to say	-	-	-

Which type of school did you attend for the most time between the ages of 11 and 16?	Candidates %	Mean Score %	Pass Rate %
State-run or state-funded school - non-selective	27	67	79
State-run or state-funded school - selective on academic, faith or other grounds	15	69	81
Independent or fee-paying school	13	66	69
Independent or fee-paying school, where I received a bursary covering 90% or more of my tuition	-	-	-
Attended school outside the UK	33	65	60
I don't know	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-
Prefer not to say	12	61	58

What was the occupation of your main household earner when you were aged about 14?	Candidates %	Mean Score %	Pass Rate %
Professional background	54	67	71
Intermediate background	11	67	77
Working class background	12	66	69
Other background	4	65	68
Prefer not to say	19	62	59

Please state what your first language is?	Candidates %	Mean Score %	Pass Rate %
English	58	68	77
Other	28	64	60
Not applicable	14	61	53
Prefer not to say	-	-	-