APPRENTICESHIP SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

The College of Legal Practice

Solicitor Apprenticeship (Level 7)

2024-2025

1   Executive Summary

This Self-Assessment Report (SAR) provides a comprehensive evaluation of the College of Legal Practice's Level 7 Solicitor Apprenticeship provision for the 2024-2025 academic year. It reflects our position as a developing apprenticeship provider and is structured in accordance with the revised Education Inspection Framework (EIF) effective from November 2025.

The College launched its solicitor apprenticeship programme in August 2024, with subsequent cohorts joining in early 2025. As of 31 July 2025, no apprentices have completed their programme, and therefore outcome data is not yet available. However, early indicators suggest strong progress, high engagement, and positive learner feedback.

Key strengths identified include:

- A well-sequenced and academically rigorous curriculum, aligned with the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) and underpinned by our higher education quality assurance processes.

- A flexible delivery model that supports diverse learners and employer needs, with apprentices benefiting from high-quality digital resources and structured formative assessment.

- Robust safeguarding arrangements, including a highly experienced Designated Safeguarding Lead and clear Prevent protocols.

- A strong culture of inclusion, with early demographic data indicating successful outreach to learners from widening participation backgrounds.

Areas for development include:

- Strengthening attendance monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

- Enhancing written records of progress reviews to include SMART targets and employer feedback.

- Formalising observation of teaching and coaching to assure quality.

- Expanding personal development and online safety content within the curriculum.

A Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) has been developed to address these areas, with clear ownership, and success measures. The SAR will be reviewed annually and informs both internal quality assurance and external accountability, including preparation for Ofsted's New Provider Monitoring Visit.

The College remains committed to delivering a high-quality apprenticeship experience that supports learners to qualify as solicitors and thrive in the legal profession.

2   The Self-Assessment Process

The 24/25 SAR was prepared by the Chief Operations Director and the Registrar, drawing on evidence such as outcomes and participation data, learner and staff feedback, and in-course academic achievement.

The SAR identifies key strengths and areas for improvement or development and includes preparation of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

The SAR is considered first by the Apprenticeship Working Group and Senior Leadership Team, and will be validated by the Board.

Following approval by the Board, the SAR is published on the College website.

This is the first SAR prepared by the College, and reflects our status as a developing provider of apprenticeship provision. As such, we are not able to report against all criteria.

3   Programme Overview

The College of Legal Practice is a specialist higher education provider focused on providing flexible, high-quality legal education to individuals aiming to qualify as a solicitor in England and Wales. The College has probationary degree awarding powers (DAPs) through the Office for Students to award degrees up to Level 7 in the Law subject area.

In 2024, the College took the strategic decision to register to deliver Solicitor apprenticeship programmes through a 'gap in provision'. The College's first intake of apprentices joined in August 2024 on a two-year programme, and two additional cohorts were onboarded in February and March 2025.
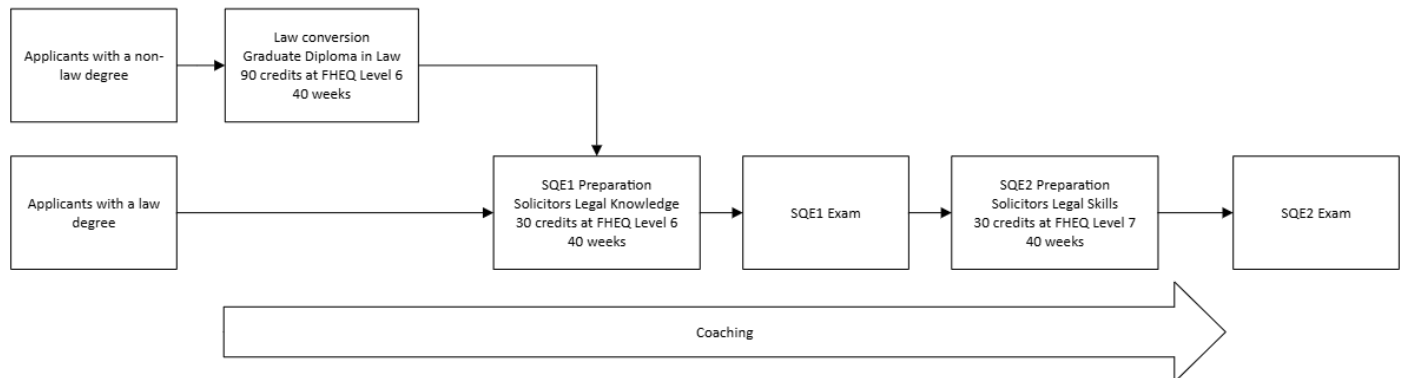
As at 31 July 2025, no apprentices had reached the end of their programme, therefore we are unable to report on completion however we can report on progress within the programme itself.

3.1   Programme Structure

Learners with a law degree were eligible to enrol on a two-year apprenticeship programme, which includes SQE1 and SQE2 preparation modules.

Learners with a non-law degree were eligible to enrol on a three-year apprenticeship programme, which includes a Graduate Diploma in Law conversion course (GDL), and SQE1 and SQE2 preparation modules. This approach of routing non-law graduates through the GDL before enrolling on SQE-preparation mirrors the College's approach to preparation more generally – our experience under the HE model demonstrates that learners require a conversion course to be appropriately prepared for SQE1 study.

3.2 Visual representation of our apprentice pathways

4 Learner Data

The number of starts in the 24/25 year was modest and reflects the College's position that apprenticeship provision should be developed slowly to ensure the best possible experience for our learners.

The tables below show our learner data as at 31 July 2025.

4.1 2-Year Graduate Solicitor Apprenticeship

The 2-Year Graduate Solicitor Apprenticeship is suitable for apprentices with a law degree.

Intake	Starters	Achievers	Learners on a break in learning	Leavers	Passed Planned End Date
Aug 2024	7	N/A	0	0	N/A
Feb 2025	24	N/A	0	0	N/A

4.2 3-Year Graduate Solicitor Apprenticeship

The 3-Year Graduate Solicitor Apprenticeship is suitable for apprentices with a non-law degree.

Intake	Starters	Achievers	Learners on a break in learning	Leavers	Passed Planned End Date
Feb 2025	7	N/A	0	0	N/A

4.3 Demographics

Due to the low numbers of learners in each cohort, and the associated risk of a learner being identified, demographic data has been consolidated to cover all entrants in the 24/25 year.

Table 1: Learners by age bracket	No. of Learners
20-25	19
25-30	12
30-35	4
35-40	2
55-60	1
Grand Total	38

Table 2: Learners by sex	No. of Learners
Female	26
Male	12
Grand Total	38

Table 3: Learners by free school meal eligibility	No. of Learners
Yes	8
No	22
I don't know	6
N/A (Finished school pre-1980 or school overseas)	1
I prefer not to say	1
Grand Total	38

Table 4: Learners by type of school	No. of Learners
A state-run or state-funded school	33
Independent or fee-paying school	2
Attended school outside the UK	2
I prefer not to say	1
Grand Total	38

Table 5: Highest qualification on entry	No. of Learners
UK ordinary (non-honours) first degree	1

UK first degree with honours	27
Non-UK masters degree	1
UK masters degree	9
Grand Total	**38**

Table 6: Sexual Orientation	No. of Learners
Bisexual	3
Gay or lesbian	2
Heterosexual or straight	28
Prefer not to say	5
Grand Total	**38**

Table 7: Ethnic Origin	No. of Learners
Asian background	4
Black background	1
Mixed background	3
White background	29
Prefer not to say	1
Grand Total	**38**

Table 8: Religion	No. of Learners
Buddhist	1
Christian	7
Muslim	3
No religion	20
Prefer not to say	7
Grand Total	**38**

Table 9: Disability	No. of Learners
No disability	31
Disability declared	7
Grand Total	**38**

This is the first year of recruitment into the College's apprenticeship programmes. As such it is not possible to draw conclusions on the efficacy of the College's recruitment strategy, including the extent to which our programmes are attracting a diverse cohort.

Initial signs however are positive; we can see from the data above that there is a mix of students from different backgrounds, with a majority of learners joining from a state school background, and a subset having being eligible for free school meals. This is a positive indicator that the apprenticeship programme is attracting learners from widening participation backgrounds.

We also see a mix of ethnic and religious backgrounds in the data, which aligns with our broader higher education provision. The College's flexible delivery model attracts candidates who may otherwise be excluded from education, and it is pleasing that this has followed on into the apprenticeships.

We are however concerned with the age distribution of our learners. Under the funding rules taking effect from January 2026, the majority of our learners would not have been eligible to join the programme. This is very disappointing as it means that our cohorts of learners may become less diverse in the future, which undercuts the ability of an apprenticeship to provide a route to qualification for people who would otherwise be excluded from traditional higher education.

We will monitor the enrolment statistics in the coming years to determine whether the funding rule changes have affected the diversity and composition of our cohorts.

4.4 Learner Satisfaction

Formal learner satisfaction data is not yet available for the cohorts in question. This will be progressed throughout the 25-26 year. Anecdotal feedback is collected from apprentices at

5 Self-Assessment Grading

The College has employed the grading descriptors from the revised Education Inspection Framework, which takes effect from November 2025 (OFSTED, 2025). This is because the College will be subject to an Early Monitoring Visit from OFSTED at some point in the 25/26 academic year; this is likely (but not guaranteed) to take place once the new Framework is in effect.

Safeguarding	**Met**
Inclusion	**Expected Standard**
Leadership and governance	**Expected Standard**
Curriculum, Teaching and Learning	**Expected Standard**
Achievement	**Expected Standard**
Participation and Development	**Expected Standard**

6 Safeguarding

6.1 Policies, Training and Compliance

Do we have up-to-date safeguarding policies and a trained designated safeguarding lead (DSL)? Have all staff undergone Prevent training? Are there clear procedures for reporting concerns, and are they used effectively?

The College takes its safeguarding responsibilities seriously. The DSL is the Chief Operations Director, who was formerly an Executive Director at ChildLine, therefore he has significant, relevant, training in this space.

The College does not deliver to under 18s, therefore our Safeguarding Policy is designed to meet the needs of adult learners, however this would benefit from review and update as this was developed prior to onboarding of apprentices. This will include a review of sector approaches to suitability checks for academic and supervisory staff, to ensure that we follow best practice.

The College maintains a Sexual Harassment Policy which provides learners with an easy way to report an incident through the Canvas VLE.

All employed staff receive annual Prevent training appropriate to their role. The Prevent policy and the obligations of employers and apprentices are discussed at mandatory induction sessions.

7 Inclusion

7.1 Support for Diverse Learners and Learning Needs

Students are invited to declare any learning difficulties or disabilities which require support within the application form; in the enrolment call, students who declare a disability are invited to discuss what support they may need. Students who do not declare a disability are told in the enrolment call that if they are diagnosed with a disability to contact the College as we can make adjustments to the programme, ensuring that all apprentices are aware of the support available to them. We also notify apprentices in this call that the EPAO can make reasonable adjustments to the final assessments. Reasonable adjustment applications are considered by the Student Services Team, who ensure that these are implemented consistently in line with our *Approach to Reasonable Adjustments.*

At this stage we do not have outcomes data to analyse for differential outcomes between groups.

7.2 Inclusive Culture and Equity in Provision

How do we cultivate an inclusive environment for apprentices? Are staff trained and confident to address inclusion in the teaching and interactions?

We are particularly proud of our approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion, which is set out in the College's annual EDI Reports. Our early recruitment data for the apprenticeships indicate that a diverse cohort is forming.

8 Leadership and Governance

8.1 Vision, Strategy and Quality Assurance

Do senior leaders and managers have a clear and strategic vision for our apprenticeship provision? How do we quality assure the programme and drive improvement? Are governance bodies effective in challenging and supporting leaders?

In line with recommendations arising from an independent review, the Board now receives a report at each meeting on the operation of our apprenticeships and provides the necessary challenge to leaders. In the next strategic planning cycle, we will consider how best to represent our ambitious for the apprenticeship provision within our strategic plans.

The academic provision underpinning the apprenticeships is subject to rigorous quality assurance under our higher education regulations. All modules are reviewed annually by the Module Leader, taking into account feedback received from students on the module, plus comments from the independent external examiner. Annually, the Academic Committee considers a Programme Evaluation Report which is a critical evaluation of the operation of our programmes across the year. The Registrar prepares an Outcome of Examinations Report annually to consider the achievement of students by module and protected characteristic; these documents are a key data source for the Annual Quality and Standards Report, which is considered by the Board and provides assurance of the quality of our academic provision.

8.2 Employer Partnership and Compliance

How do we work with employers to ensure a high-quality apprenticeship experience? How do we manage compliance with funding rules?

We value the relationships with employers, which are managed jointly by the Registry and the Chief Operations Director. We communicated on a regular basis with employers about the engagement of their apprentices and welcome any feedback or suggestions for improvement. We will look to strengthen and formalise these feedback loops with employers in the coming year.

The Registry are responsible for ensuring that apprentice records are maintained in compliance with funding rules. In October 2025, we led an audit of all apprentice records to ensure that all documents are present – this highlighted some instances

where documents were missing which have been resolved. This audit cycle will be implemented on an ongoing basis to ensure continued compliance with funding rules. The Registry team maintain an ongoing watch for changes to funding rules and adjust accordingly.

An initial external audit in April 2025 confirmed that the College was operating in line with the funding rules.

9 Curriculum, Teaching and Training

9.1 Recruitment and Initial Assessment

Are we enrolling the right candidates onto the solicitor apprenticeship, and do we assess their starting points thoroughly? How is initial assessment used to shape individual learning plans?

Applicants complete an initial skills assessment with their line manager. This is discussed in an enrolment call and apprentices are challenged where they rate themselves as competent in a skill. Where applicants have engaged in study at Level 7, they are awarded RPL with a commensurate fee reduction, however as a principle we do not reduce the content requirements of the programme. This is because the SQE is a challenging exam with a low overall pass rate; our assessment is that by providing apprentices with all the content, at a reduced cost to recognise RPL, we can ensure they have the best possible chance to succeed.

As part of the enrolment process, all applicants complete functional skills screenings through BKSB, which are discussed in the enrolment call.

9.2 Curriculum Ambition and Coherence

Is our curriculum for solicitor apprentices ambitious, and does it coherently cover all required Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs)? Is there a rationale for what and how we teach? How do we integrate enrichment beyond the standard?

This is a significant strength of the College's approach to apprenticeships. The College's *Learning and Teaching Strategy* sets out a comprehensive approach to delivering best practice learning activities. Apprentices are enrolled on the same SQE-preparation modules as our HE students, meaning that these learning opportunities have been rigorously quality assured under the HE regime and are subject to ongoing improvement initiatives.

In April 2025, the College commissioned an independent report into our readiness for OFSTED early monitoring inspection; the inspector's report noted: "The curriculum provided has been very well designed to develop apprentices' knowledge and skills

over time to support them to undertake the very challenging Solicitor (sic) Qualifying Examinations".

Alongside preparation for SQE, apprentices complete and receive formative feedback on 9 portfolio assessments, where they are required to demonstrate the KSBs in practice. These are reviewed with apprenticeship coaches in the 6 and 12 week reviews.

Enrichment activities are offered to apprentices to support their personal and professional development beyond the core training. This has included sessions on negotiation skills and sessions on building a personal 'brand', among others. We maintain an ongoing dialogue with apprentices through 6-weekly whole group check-ins, where we ask whether any additional training or enrichment would be welcomed by the group.

9.3   Meeting Employers' Needs and Skills Gaps

How do we ensure the curriculum meets the needs of employers and the legal sector? Have we tailored the programme in response to employer feedback?

The SQE is an industry-led assessment process, and our programme is designed to deliver the legal knowledge required to pass these assessments. As such we are responding well to employer need to provide flexible training to apprentices to qualify as a solicitor.

9.4   Sequencing and Progression

Is the curriculum structured in a logical sequence that incrementally builds apprentices' knowledge and skills?

This is a strength of the College's provision. Throughout the SQE-preparation modules, apprentices engage with learning activities which build in complexity and skill, along with several formative assessments which mimic the SQE assessments – these start very small and build in length and complexity across the programme.

Apprentices without an undergraduate law degree are enrolled on the College's Graduate Diploma in Law, which is a targeted law conversion programme aimed at support non-law grads to become ready for SQE-preparation.

The independent review confirmed: "exercises and short tests are carefully constructed which build up in complexity. Many exercises are scenario based which align well with the requirements of the examinations".

9.5   Teaching Quality and Tutor Expertise

Do tutors and skills coaches deliver training effectively according to the curriculum plan? Do our staff have strong occupational expertise and teaching skills?

The College's tutors are either specialists in the academic study of law, or qualified solicitors. This ensures that the content is rigorous and relevant to the apprenticeship standard.

Across the next calendar year, we will be enhancing our approach to quality assessment of teaching and supervision.

9.6 On- and off-the-job training integration

How well do we coordinate what apprentices learn off-the-job with what they do with it at work? Are apprentices getting their full OTJ entitlement, and recording it?

As part of the enrolment process, apprentices and their employers are required to confirm that the apprentice will be permitted the 6 hours OTJ per week; this is discussed in detail with the apprentice at their enrolment call, to ensure that their plans for OTJ are well thought through and agreed with their employer.

Tripartite reviews are conducted every 12 weeks with the apprentice and their employer; these discuss the progress of the apprentice against the KSBs and how well they are applying learning from the OTJ into their work.

9.7 Assessment & Feedback

How do we assess apprentices' learning throughout the programme? Do apprentices receive constructive, timely feedback? How is assessment data used to adjust training?

Apprentices are offered access to LawDrills, an adaptive learning technology tool available in exclusive partnership with the College. This tool uses AI to analyse a learner's knowledge in specific areas of law, and points them in the direction of additional learning activities to fill in the knowledge gaps.

Apprentices receive direct feedback on all SQE1 practice questions they answer; where they answer incorrectly, they are pointed to the chapter of the SLK manual which explains the points of law in more detail.

Apprentices are assigned a Personal Supervisor who monitors their academic progress in regular meetings and support with development of academic study plans. In addition, Apprenticeship Coaches will in their 6 and 12 week reviews discuss academic progress with apprentices.

9.8 End Point Assessment Preparation

How do we prepare apprentices for their End Point Assessment? Do we track EPA outcomes and use them for improvement?

The College's apprentices have not yet entered the EPA stage, so no definitive statement on our efficacy can be provided.

10 Achievement

10.1 Attainment of Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour

Do apprentices achieve the intended knowledge, skills and behaviour by the end of the programme? Can they apply this learning effectively in their job roles?

The College has not had any learners reach the end of the programme, therefore we cannot provide a definitive assessment of this.

10.2 End-Point Assessment Success and Timely Completion

Do apprentices successfully complete the apprenticeship and pass their EPA? Are completions timely?

It is not possible to comment against this criterion as no apprentices have reached their anticipated EPA point.

10.3 Retention and Progression

Do apprentices stay on their programme? What do apprentices do after completing?

At the 31st July 2025, no apprentices had withdrawn from their programme. No apprentices have reached the EPA point therefore we cannot comment on destinations of apprentices.

11 Participation and Development

11.1 Attendance and Professional Conduct

Do apprentices attend training sessions and any required activities reliably? How do apprentices behave in the workplace and during training?

The College sets high expectations of behaviour in the Student Charter and Code of Conduct. Breaches of these expectations are investigated and dealt with through the Student Disciplinary Process.

Engagement with learning activities is monitored through Canvas analytics, and is reported on regularly to the apprentice's employer. This ensures a shared understanding and ownership of engagement with learning. However, we note that

further enhancements could be made to our attendance monitoring processes, which we will progress in the next cycle.

11.2   Wider Personal Development and Wellbeing

What opportunities do apprentices have for broader development beyond their academic and technical learning? How are apprentices supported in terms of wellbeing and life skills? Are British values and ethical characteristics promoted?

The SQE is a very challenging set of examinations requiring significant preparation for apprentices. As such, we are cognisant of the need not to overload apprentices with 'nice to haves', at the expense of the 'must haves'. We have provided additional personal development to apprentices where requested: for example, a session on negotiation skills. Beyond the core SQE and KSB development, we do not see a benefit at this stage to offering lots of additional personal development opportunities.

British values are discussed with apprentices at the 6- and 12-week reviews, and apprentices are asked to reflect on these values and how they are demonstrated in their behaviours.

12   Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

NB: owners are expressed as the member of senior leadership with oversight and accountability for the action.

Action(s)	Owner	Success Criteria
Improve attendance tracking and reporting	Registrar	Attendance tracking in place.
Strengthen written records of 12-week reviews	Registrar	New 12-week review form implemented; evidence of use available.
Formalise observation of apprenticeship coaching	Chief Operations Director	Observation framework piloted, reviewed, and implemented.
Introduce online safety training for apprentices	Registrar	Online safety materials designed and embedded into Canvas. Records of engagement available.
Launch employer feedback mechanism	Chief Operations Director	Central record of employer feedback and responses produced
Develop a 48-hour OFSTED readiness checklist	Registrar	Checklist approved; standing item to review at each AWG
Create SQE exam and payment tracker	Registrar	Tracker developed and utilised
Publish guidance on OTJ hours	Registrar	Guidance embedded into Canvas
Create an Individual Learning Plan	Registrar	Template prepared for use in April 2026 cohort

13   Version Control

This version was approved 16 December 2025 by the Board.