

BRISTOL LEGAL SQE SCHOLARSHIP (THE BLS SCHOLARSHIP)

APPLICATION GUIDANCE AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA 2026

Application Guidance

1 Eligibility

Applicants must meet the eligibility criteria in order to be considered for **BRISTOL LEGAL SQE SCHOLARSHIP** ('The BLS Scholarship'). Details of the eligibility criteria are set out below.

2 Scope - Courses

2.1 Applicants to The BLS Scholarship may apply to study one of the following courses:

The College of Legal Practice:

2.1.1 [LLM in Legal Practice combined with SQE 1&2 preparation courses](#)

2.1.2 [SQE1](#) and/or [SQE2](#) preparation course/s

2.2 The fees for the courses listed in (2.1) above shall be fully-funded by The BLS Scholarship and/or The BLS Scholarship partners.

2.3 Successful applicants will be contacted by The College of Legal Practice to discuss the most appropriate course for applicants. Please ensure you have considered the options and are familiar with the rules regarding these qualification routes.

2.4 Information can be found on the Solicitors Regulation Authority website <https://www.sra.org.uk/students/sqe/> and the College of Legal Practice website <https://www.collegalpractice.com/sqe>.

2.5 The BLS Scholarship shall be in respect of course fees only. Applicants must ensure they are able to meet all living costs for themselves (and any Dependents) during the period of study. Applicants are also responsible for any SQE exam fees as these are not included in The BLS Scholarship award.

2.6 Funding provided through the scheme is exclusively for course and will be paid directly to the institution at which you have chosen to study, or covered by the institution directly.

2.7 No additional funding is available to assist with any living expenses such as accommodation, childcare, transport; nor for any other costs which may be incurred in undertaking the SQE exams or SQE preparation course.

2.8 Applicants must also meet the general admissions criteria for their preferred courses with the College of Legal Practice. The application form will allow you to provide details of any extenuating circumstances if applicable.

2.9 Further details can be found at:

College of Legal Practice: <https://www.collegalpractice.com/>

3 Scope - Exam Funding

3.1 Applicants to The BLS Scholarship may apply for funding to take one of the following SQE exams:

3.1.1 SQE1 - January 2027

3.1.2 SQE2 - October 2026

3.2 The fees for the exam listed in (3.1) above shall be fully or partially funded by The BLS Scholarship (subject to acceptance of the candidate by the SRA).

3.3 Where an award is made from the BLS Scholarship in respect of agreed exam fees only. Applicants must ensure they are able to meet all study costs (if any) and all living costs for themselves (and any Dependents) during the period of study.

3.4 The successful candidate will be required to provide the necessary information to BLS within the required timeframes to enable BLS to provide the relevant information to the SRA within the relevant seat reservation booking window for the exam. Further information will be shared with any successful candidates. All funding will be dealt with directly between SRA and Kaplan and no funds will be paid to or by BLS or to the successful candidate.

3.5 No additional funding is available to assist with any living expenses such as accommodation, childcare, transport; nor for any other costs which may be incurred in undertaking the SQE exams or SQE preparation course.

4 Confirmations

4.1 All applicants will also be required to give the following confirmations:

4.1.1 All statements made in this application are true at the time of submission.

4.1.2 They have read and understand the application guidance and eligibility criteria.

- 4.1.3 They are committed to a career as a Solicitor.
- 4.1.4 They reside in the Bristol and Bath region (or its surrounding areas, generally within 30 miles) and I are committed to studying and working in Bristol and Bath region.
- 4.1.5 If shortlisted, they are able to attend an interview, either in person or via Microsoft Teams, Zoom or another virtual platform on **16 June 2026** (alternatives can be arranged if candidates circumstances require).
- 4.1.6 If their application is successful, they will provide regular updates on their progress to the Bristol Law Society and update the Bristol Law Society with their contact details.

Course Funding:

- 4.1.7 If their application for a course funding is successful, The College of Legal Practice may specify the course that is most appropriate for the applicant. The Applicant confirms that they are capable of commencing the Courses set out in 2.1 above in 2026/27.
- 4.1.8 If their application for course funding is successful and they are awarded The BLS Scholarship, they understand that The BLS Scholarship shall only be in respect of the course fees only and:
 - 4.1.8.1 they confirm they will be able to meet all living costs for myself (and any Dependents) during the period of study; and
 - 4.1.8.2 they understand they are responsible for any SQE exam fees and these are not included in The BLS Scholarship award; and
 - 4.1.8.3 They meet the general admissions criteria for their preferred course with The College of Legal Practice.
- 4.1.9 If their application is successful, this does not guarantee applicants qualifying work experience (QWE). The Applicant confirms that they are aware of and have considered the risk involved in starting the SQE without having secured QWE.

Exam Funding:

- 4.1.10 The Applicant confirms that they are capable of sitting the relevant SQE1 or SQE 2 Exam. Candidates must be booked onto their Exam by 30 September 2026. Funding is not available for exams beyond this period.
- 4.1.11 If their application for exam funding is successful and they are awarded The BLS Scholarship, they understand that exam scholarship shall only be in respect of the exam fees only and:

- 4.1.11.1 they confirm they will be able to meet all living costs for myself (and any Dependents) during the period of study; and
 - 4.1.11.2 they understand they are responsible for any SQE course fees and these are not included in the exam funding award; and
 - 4.1.11.3 They meet the general exam criteria for their preferred examination dates
 - 4.1.11.4 and that BLS can share their details with the SRA for the purpose of obtaining funding as part of the SRA A&R Fund and securing their exam place.
- 4.1.12 If their application is successful, this does not guarantee applicants qualifying work experience (QWE). The Applicant confirms that they are aware of this.
- 4.1.13 Any selected candidates will be responsible for opening their own SQE account, completing pre-booking steps and any reasonable adjustment applications, providing their CSQE number and completing the seat reservation form and booking onto the assessment within any specified timeframes. They will be subject to the SQE terms and conditions (link below).
- 4.2 Applicants can email any questions that are not covered in this guidance or The BLS Scholarship webpage to SQEScholarship@bristollawsociety.com.

5 Eligibility Criteria

- 5.1 Applicants who fulfil criteria in Clauses 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 are automatically eligible to apply to The BLS Scholarship.
- 5.2 Residence
- 5.2.1 Applicants will be required to confirm they reside in Bristol (or its surrounding areas) and can commit to studying in Bristol.
- 5.3 Financial Circumstances
- 5.3.1 Applicants will be required to confirm the following statements:
- 5.3.2 They do not have access to familial loans or financial gifts.
- 5.3.3 They do not have more than £5,000 in their savings account, current account, ISA or held elsewhere.
- 5.4 Background

- 5.4.1 Applicants will be asked to confirm if any of the following statements apply (applicants may be asked to provide evidence supporting these statements during the application/interviewing process):
- 5.4.2 Attending a non-fee paying, non-selective school
- 5.4.3 Being part of the first generation in your family to attend higher education
- 5.4.4 Any experience in local authority care
- 5.4.5 Estrangement from family
- 5.4.6 Refugee status
- 5.4.7 Being the sole carer of a parent(s), child or the sole carer of a sibling (including providing unpaid care to those with long-term physical or mental conditions as a result of age or a disability).
- 5.4.8 Being disabled (according to the definition in the Equality Act 2010) or neurodivergent. The Equality Act 2010 defined a disabled person as someone who has a mental or physical impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.
- 5.4.9 Being from a Low household income demonstrated by:
 - 5.4.9.1 Being in receipt of Income Support, Job Seeker's Allowance, or Employment and Support Allowance
 - 5.4.9.2 Being eligible for free school meals whilst at secondary school
 - 5.4.9.3 Being in receipt of Universal Credit
 - 5.4.9.4 Being in receipt of, or living with a parent/Guardian in receipt of Asylum Support
 - 5.4.9.5 Being in receipt of a 16-19 Bursary in England or EMA (Education Maintenance Allowance) in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland
 - 5.4.9.6 Being in receipt of Learner Support (FE 19+) or equivalent FE funding for Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland
 - 5.4.9.7 Living with a parent/Guardian in receipt of Child Tax Credit where the candidate is named on the award and the household income used to calculate the tax credits is less than £25,000

- 5.4.9.8 Living with a parent/Guardian in receipt of Income Support, Income based Jobseeker's Allowance or Income-based Employment and Support Allowance
- 5.4.9.9 Living with a parent/Guardian in receipt of Universal Credit, if the annual household take-home pay as stated on the award is less than £25,000

6 Exceptional Circumstances

- 6.1 Applicants that do not fulfil the criteria in Clauses 5.3 and/or 5.4 may still be eligible to apply to The BLS Scholarship if they face, or have faced, exceptional circumstances in pursuing their legal education or career as a result of their:
 - 6.1.1 Cultural background
 - 6.1.2 Health
 - 6.1.3 Disability or other condition (which falls outside of the Equality Act 2010 definition).
 - 6.1.4 Sex
 - 6.1.5 Gender identity
 - 6.1.6 Sexual orientation
 - 6.1.7 Race or ethnicity
 - 6.1.8 Religion
 - 6.1.9 Or other challenging personal circumstances
 - 6.1.9.1 Applicants will be required to provide a brief description of their challenging circumstances on the application form.
 - 6.1.9.2 Applicants may be asked to provide documents in support of their declarations and application in advance of any invitation to interview.

7 Further information

- 7.1 More information about all aspects of the application criteria and process can be found in our [website](#).
- 7.2 Further information on the SQE Terms and Conditions can be found on the SRA website. <https://sqa.sra.org.uk/policies/sqa-assessment-terms-and-conditions>.

- 7.3 Further information about the timings for the SQE Assessments can be found on the SRA website. <https://sqa.sra.org.uk/booking/assessment-dates-locations/booking-windows>.
- 7.4 Further information on the SRA SQE Access and Reinvestment Fund which has been awarded to BLS can be found on the website. Please note that distribution of the award is subject to the criteria set out in this document and the terms of the SRA Access and Reinvestment Fund. <https://guidance.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqa/access-reinvestment-fund/>.
- 7.5 Applicants can email any questions that are not covered in this guidance or The BLS Scholarship webpage to SQEScholarship@bristolbillsociety.com.