

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Candidate Brief



Kaplan

SQE2 Academic Head

Y0902

October 2021

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For a confidential conversation please contact Sarah Thewlis, Managing Director of Thewlis Graham Associates on 0207 850 4781 or email applications@thewlisgraham.com.

I. About Kaplan

Who we are & what we stand for.

We design and deliver world-leading professional assessments. The Qualified Lawyers Transfer Scheme (QLTS) provides the sole route for lawyers qualified in another jurisdiction to qualify as solicitors of England and Wales. Kaplan has run the QLTS on behalf of the solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) since its inception in 2011.

In 2018, we were appointed as the independent assessment organisation for the new Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) which has now received Legal Services Board approval and will be introduced in 2021. This will become the sole route to qualifying as a Solicitor of England and Wales and be taken by upwards of 13,000 candidates per year. QLTS will continue to run until 2022.

We are part of the Kaplan group, one of the world's largest and most diverse education and assessment providers. We operate in over 30 countries and maintain relationships and partnerships with more than 1,000 school districts, colleges and universities, professional bodies and over 10,000 businesses. Our vast breadth and scope in terms of both capabilities and assets sets us apart.

As an employer, we work hard to make sure this a great place where everyone has an opportunity to succeed, regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or other belief, marital status, pregnancy or parenthood. If you require any adjustments, or additional support within the recruitment process, please contact us directly and we'll do our best to help.

To view our candidate privacy notice [click here](#).

How you'll help us succeed

This is a challenging, influential and varied role. Working closely with the SQE Academic Director and the academic team, it offers an exciting opportunity to be part of the academic team responsible for establishing, operating, improving and growing a major new licensing examination.

You'll help us to deliver world-leading assessments by leading a team of SQE Subject Heads in developing questions for the SQE2 oral and written assessments, and for the QLTS until it finishes in 2022. You will liaise with key stakeholders in preparing for delivery of the assessments and take forward development of the assessments in order to improve accuracy and reliability.

You will join an existing academic team comprising the Academic Director, Academic Head SQE1, SQE2 Deputy Academic Heads and Subject Heads SQE1 and 2 in various disciplines to contribute to the content, quality and delivery of the QLTS and SQE assessments.

2. The role and responsibilities of the SQE2 Academic Head

Location:	Flexible, with some time spent in London (N7) and other SQE2 assessment venues
Grade:	A2
Reports to:	SQE Academic Director
Direct reports:	SQE2 Deputy Academic Heads, SQE2 Academic Resources Manager
Key stakeholders:	SQE Team, Solicitors Regulation Authority, Interact, Pearson VUE, Freelance assessors, markers and question writers

Your role will include:

Tactical planning for SQE2 Assessments

- Working with the Academic Director, Head of Stakeholder Engagement and Director of Operations to plan for sufficient capacity within the SQE2 Assessment Windows
- Working with the SQE2 Deputy Academic Heads and SQE2 Academic Resources Team to plan team resources to ensure capacity requirements can be met
- Ensure effective project planning and management ahead of each assessment window.
- Working with the Director of Psychometrics and Assessment Development to become highly conversant in the methodology of high stakes assessments leading to licensure
- In conjunction with the Academic Director and the Director of Psychometrics & Assessment Development, consider changes to the assessments and assessment methodology to improve the accuracy and reliability of the SQE2 assessments
- Drive a culture of continuous improvement within the team

Assessment Windows and Quality Assurance

You will take the role of Assessment Lead for specific Assessment Windows, where you will:

- Develop the Window Assessment plan outlining the assessment tasks to be included within the Assessment Window
- Working with the Subject Heads, develop and approve their Window Subject Plans for their respective practice areas
- In conjunction with the SQE2 Subject Heads, plan the delivery of the SQE2 assessments
- Liaise with the Operational team and Pearson VUE over delivery of the assessments
- Lead SQE2 calibration/standard setting oral assessment meetings for solicitor and actor assessors
- Attend SQE2 oral assessments at assessment venues as academic lead/facilitator
- Oversee the marking process of SQE2 assessments, both oral and written
- Mark SQE2 assessments where appropriate
- Review the statistical performance of questions and markers and taking appropriate action as necessary
- Analyse assessor and marker feedback and ensuring feedback is fed forward with the aim of continuous improvement of the SQE2 assessment

- Convene, or sit as a member of, Boards and Panels as required

Partnership with the SRA

- Helping to build a positive and productive relationship with the SRA
- Identifying any significant challenges and concerns early and find solutions in conjunction with the Academic Director and other members of the Academic Team
- Represent Kaplan in external discussions or presentations relating to the SQE2 Assessment.

In addition, you'll also carry out other duties, within the broad scope and spirit of your role, as requested by your line manager or senior manager, including development and delivery of the QLTS OSCE assessments until 2022 and performing a quality assurance role in respect of SQE1. Our business is continuously evolving, so your job description will evolve too.

What you'll bring:

Essential

- Professionally qualified as a solicitor of England and Wales
- Knowledge of or a willingness to quickly develop knowledge of assessment methodology for high stakes credentialing assessments
- The ability to write and edit skills assessments for the SQE2 assessment
- The ability to use legal research databases proficiently
- The ability to think originally and analytically
- The ability to lead, manage and develop a team of highly qualified and experienced solicitors
- The ability to respond positively under pressure to assessment editing and production deadlines
- The ability to communicate clearly and effectively with internal and external stakeholders, including building strong and productive relationship with freelance question writers and assessors
- Strong presentation skills
- The ability to operate within a team and to work efficiently and sensitively with both fellow academic and academic resources staff
- Experience of leading and coordinating teams
- Strong administrative skills including organisational, time and document management skills and attention to detail
- Willingness to be flexible and work within the business required hours

Desirable

- Experience at a senior level within high stakes credentialing assessment
- Experience of writing, marking and editing QLTS or other professional legal assessments
- Experience at a senior level of teaching and/or examining law
- Experience of working in a professional environment with a variety of stakeholders
- Experience of working with a regulator
- Strong administrative skills and proficient in the use of business software packages
- Dedication to continuous improvement
- Proven ability of working in a demanding and changing environment

What you can expect

A competitive salary & clear pay structures, progression paths, and a comprehensive benefits package. You'll be joining a great place, driven by a shared purpose, where everyone can succeed and build a brighter future together.

How you can progress

From this role, your potential routes for progression include:

- Academic Director

3. Remuneration and benefits

The salary for this role will be £74K - £84K depending on location

Core benefits

Annual leave - 28 days annual leave in addition to the normal bank holidays (pro-rata for part-time employees).

Company pension - Up to 5% contribution towards your company pension.

Life assurance - The scheme pays a lump sum of 4 x your basic salary to your nominated person should you die while employed by the company.

Income protection - If you are sick for over 26 weeks while you are a member of the scheme and if your claim is accepted the scheme pays up to 50% of your salary.

Private medical - After successful completion of your probationary period, you are eligible to join at the company's expense.

Salary sacrifice benefits

Cycle scheme - Get 40% off the price of a bike and spread the cost over a year.

Salary sacrifice health screening - Salary sacrifice for an annual health screening.

Pension saver - Make tax efficient personal contributions to your personal pension.

Free benefits

Employee assistance programme - This confidential service provides practical information, referrals to local services and even counselling on a wide range of issues from relationships to work-life balance, childcare to elder care, moving home to retirement, consumer issues to debt management.

Volunteer days - All employees can take up to two paid days off to support a charity or good cause which is dear to them.

Eye tests - Receive a free eye test if you use a computer display screen as part of your normal day to day work, and also receive up to £50 towards your glasses.

Salary deduction benefits

Season ticket loan - Buy an annual season ticket to travel to work and spread the cost over the whole year.

Annual leave purchase scheme - Boost your annual leave entitlement by purchasing up to 20 days a year.

Company discounts

Your benefits discount scheme - Enjoy discounts and cash back at your favourite high street stores and online.

The Gift of Knowledge - Discounts on Kaplan courses for family.

Taste Card and Gourmet Society - Enjoy 2 for 1 or 50% off the bill at over 5,500 restaurants all over the UK as well as discounts on a whole host of other outings and activities.

Discounted gym membership - Enjoy lower corporate rates at over 2,000 gyms in the UK.

4. Timeline, Application Process and How to apply

Timeline

Dates	Activity
11 November 5pm	Applications close
W/C 15 November	Thewlis Graham consultant interviewing of interested candidates
W/C 13 December	Client Assessments
W/C 10 January 2022	Client Interviews

Application Process

Thewlis Graham Associates will acknowledge all applications. These will be assessed against the criteria in the Role and Responsibilities section and the people who best meet these will be invited for a Covid-secure online interview with Thewlis Graham Associates.

Those candidates not invited to interview will be advised by email by end November.

Longlisted candidates will be advised by email. After a consultation between Kaplan and Thewlis Graham Associates a Shortlist will be drawn up and Shortlisted candidates invited for interview with the Client.

How to Apply

To apply for this role, please email in word format to applications@thewlisgraham.com the following documents quoting reference **Y0902**: -

1. A comprehensive CV.
2. A covering letter which fully addresses your suitability for the role and your motivation for applying.
3. A document with your current remuneration details and notice period, and the name, job title, organisation, email address and mobile number of two professional referees. (Please note referees will not be approached without your prior permission.)
4. We also ask that you complete a diversity and inclusion monitoring form, the link for which is in the next section.

Please ensure that you include your mobile phone number and email address in your application. Do not hesitate to contact Claire Drummond on 020 7850 4781 if you have any queries. Additionally, if you would prefer to receive this candidate brief in a more accessible format, please contact us.

5. Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring

Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring is independent of the recruitment process but please do complete your form as Thewlis Graham Associates is committed to monitoring and analysing diversity and inclusion information so that we can ensure that our processes are fair, transparent, promote equality of opportunity for all, and do not have an adverse impact on any particular group.

The link to this form is here: [click here](#). If you have any problems with this, please contact Tracey on: tct@thewlisgraham.com.

Any information provided on this form will be treated as strictly confidential and will be used for statistical purposes only. It will not be seen by anybody directly involved in the selection process. No information will be published or used in any way which allows any individual to be identified.

Thank you

6. Organisation Chart

