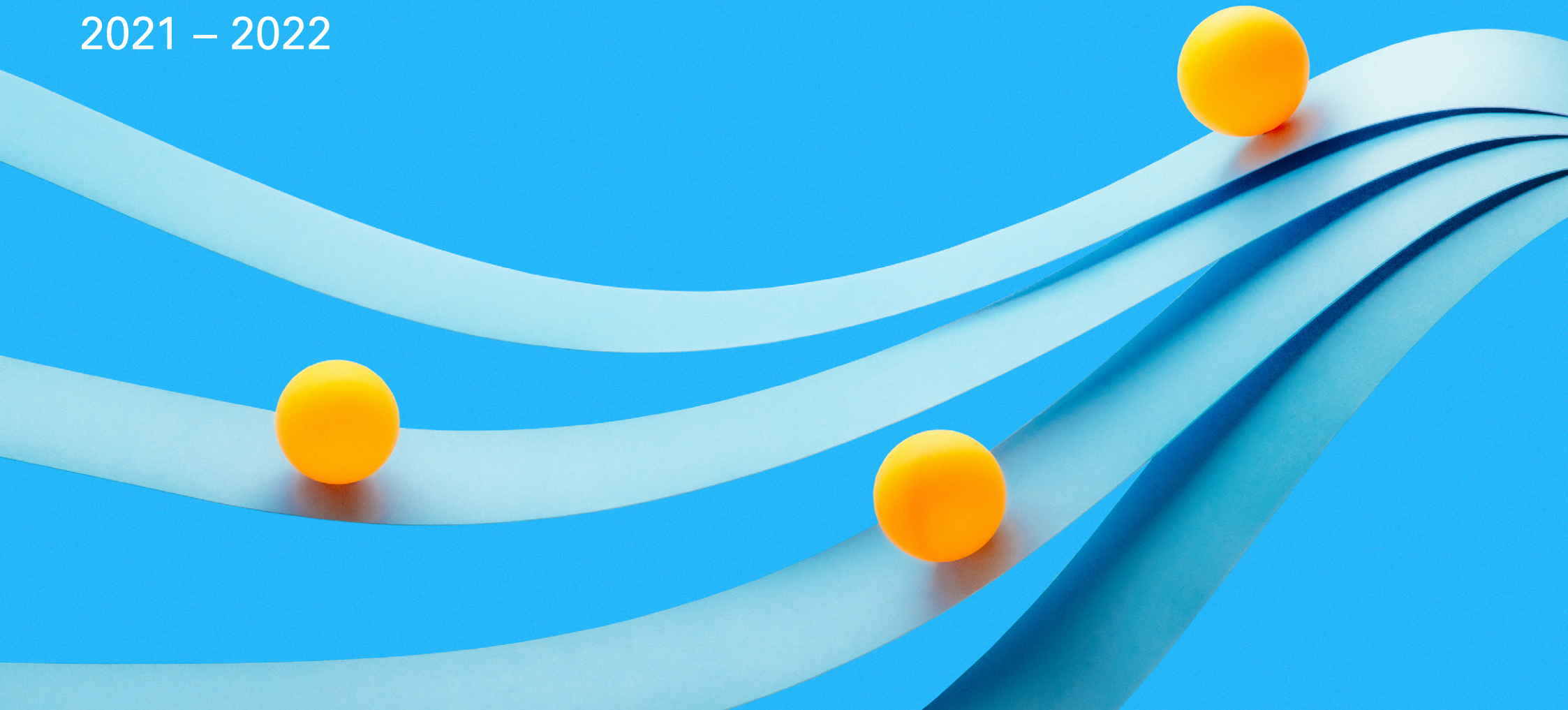


# Social Mobility Impact Report

2021 – 2022





“Ability is not the preserve of the privileged. Squire Patton Boggs is committed to being a fair, equitable and progressive organisation. We have been active in social mobility initiatives for a decade because it means a lot to us. We still strive to improve year on year against our mission and objectives.”

**Rob Elvin**, Social Mobility Partner Champion

## Introduction

According to the Social Mobility Commission, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic will have a profound impact on the UK over the next decade and there is a huge risk that the gulf between the rich and the poor will continue to grow even deeper and wider. As we emerge from the crisis and move towards recovery, we must take bold and decisive action to improve social mobility.

The Social Mobility Commission cites that:

- Nearly one in three children in the UK live in poverty
- Young people have been more susceptible to job losses, with an 8.7% drop for working class men aged 16-24
- You are still 60% more likely to be in a professional job if you are from a privileged background rather than a working class background
- Opportunities are still based on what your parents did

At Squire Patton Boggs (SPB) we understand how important it is for us to offer young people from low socio-economic backgrounds training, mentoring and work experience opportunities, as well as alternative routes into law via our apprenticeship scheme. We recognise that our support is needed now more than ever before, to create a real societal impact to improve diversity and socio-economic change.

**This report highlights our achievements over the past year, from April 2021 to April 2022. This includes:**

<b>Our Mission</b>	<b>Review of the Year 2021-2022</b>	<b>Who Are Our Young People?</b>	<b>Our Partnerships</b>	<b>Our Impact</b>	<b>Accelerate Programme</b>
<b>Meet Our Social Mobility Champions</b>	<b>Creating a Supportive, Socially Mobile Environment</b>	<b>Candidate Attraction and Accessibility</b>	<b>Apprenticeship Schemes</b>	<b>Looking to the Future</b>	

## Our Mission

To be a fair and equitable employer and organisation by generating more equal opportunities both into and through the firm, where people succeed on merit and are able to take advantage of career opportunities regardless of their socio-economic background as outlined in the Social Mobility Pledge.

## Our Focus

Facilitating opportunities for individuals from low socio-economic backgrounds to access meaningful interaction with employers.

Enabling individuals from low socio-economic backgrounds to attain the skills and competencies required to succeed in their applications achieved by partnering with schools, colleges, universities and third parties.

Creating a business environment that is supportive of individuals from low socio-economic backgrounds to progress through the application and career development phases to secure senior roles within the firm.

## Measured by

Maintaining a top ranking in the Social Mobility Employer index – currently ranking 15.

Increasing the intake of people from low socio-economic backgrounds.

Increasing our outreach to pupils, students and potential employees from low socio-economic backgrounds.

## Review of the Year 2021-2022

We have been continually working on ways to drive forwards our social mobility commitment to develop our recruitment and outreach activities, whilst also focussing on supporting our employees within the firm to thrive, no matter what their background. Through action, we have:

**Increased activity within our local communities** – Working to reduce barriers where possible, connecting with local communities, schools, colleges and universities to raise skills and provide opportunities for a variety of candidates to access our work experience, mentorship, open days, student support and legal industry insights.

**Apprenticeship scheme expansion** – Creating alternative pathways in to law through our apprenticeship scheme, which was expanded in 2021 to include both legal and non-legal apprenticeships. In September 2022, we will welcome a further cohort of apprentices increasing our total across our four UK offices.

**Social mobility governance** – Internally strengthening our social mobility framework by introducing Social Mobility Champions in each of our four UK offices. Supporting social mobility is one of our firm's inclusion priorities both internally and externally. Our champions help us to drive and support change in our local communities and ensure that we are making a difference in all areas to build a stronger culture together.

**Programme delivery** – In order to advance our DEI efforts within the firm, we have doubled the size of our delivery team. This has enhanced our capabilities to focus more on inclusion as a whole and means we have dedicated support on all social mobility activities and partnerships year round. Our Emerging Talent team now oversee our Apprenticeship programmes, and work in partnership with our Learning and Development team to ensure clear pathways and opportunities for progression are accessible to all.



## Our Partnerships

We strongly believe that collaborating with other social mobility programmes helps strengthen our ability and outreach, meaning we can have maximum impact on young people across the UK.

Hear about our partnership impact below and find out more about each organisation by clicking on their name:



Sponsoring partner of the Social Mobility Business Partnership (formerly known as the Legal Social Mobility Partnership) with Manchester office managing partner Rob Elvin sitting on their Board of Trustees. We act as a “Cluster Head” for their North West “Work Insights and Skills Week” that takes place in the summer holidays. Our role is to co-ordinate their employer partner network and source students to ensure the smooth running of the programme. This is a great opportunity for us to collaborate with clients building engaging skills-based sessions for the students.



We work with Sutton Trust participating in national Pathways to Law programmes aimed at year 12 students who are interested in exploring a career in law. The objective is to widen access to the legal profession and combines university taster sessions with work experience placements in the legal sector. Our partnership with Sutton Trust impacted 36 students directly, who were able to attend a work experience placement. As a key employer partner, we provide online employability support for Sutton Trust students and alumni across the country.



“As a small, volunteer-led charity, we could not deliver our Work Insight and Skills Programmes without the support from our key partners. Squire Patton Boggs has been involved in SMBP since it launched and has been instrumental to its growth in the North West. It also delivers work insight days for students across London, Manchester, Oldham, Blackpool, Rugby and Coventry. We are hugely thankful to it for its support to date and look forward to exploring new collaborations in the future, something it is always keen to hear about!”

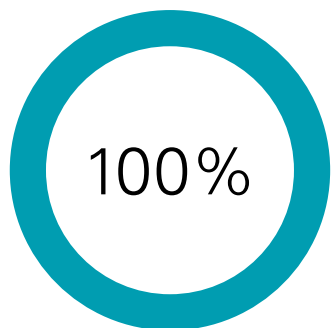
**Jess Organ**, Programme Director, SMBP

“I gained an insight into commercial law and the profession. It’s made me want to pursue a career in law more and push myself to get there. Everyone at the firm was amazing and made the experience so enjoyable and interesting”

**Work Experience Student**, Sutton Trust

# Who Are Our Young People?

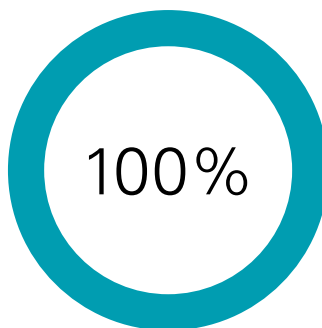
**Number of SMBP students impacted: 473**



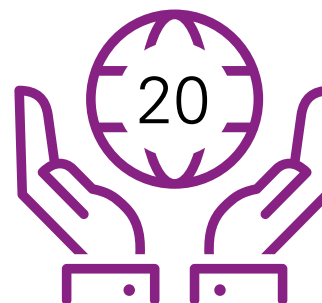
Low income background\*



Are currently a carer for someone

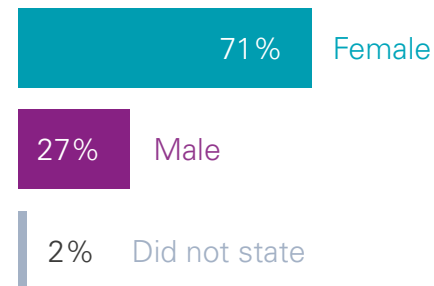


State school educated



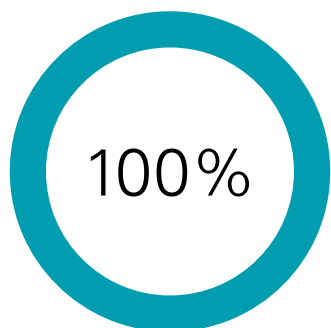
Different ethnic groups

## Gender Split

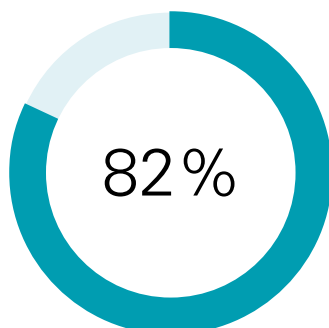


\*Have been eligible for free school meals (FSM), postcode dependent, or gross household income is equal to or less than the average household expenditure for that area.

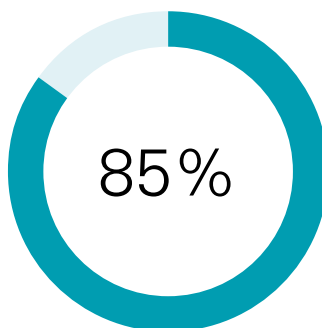
**Number of Sutton Trust students impacted: 551**



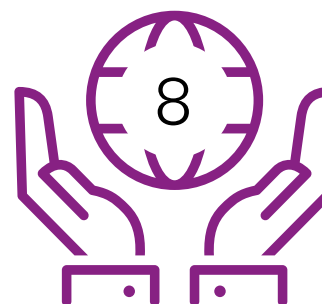
From disadvantaged or low-performing school



Would be first generation to attend university

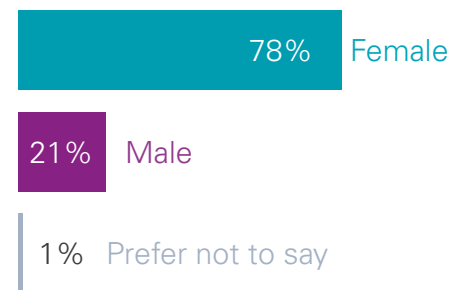


From disadvantaged, low progression neighbourhood



Different ethnic groups

## Gender Split



# Delivering Impact Through Our Partnerships

## Skills Development

Across the year, we have provided multiple programmes across the UK, via our various different offices.

### SMBP

Young people participating in placement schemes: 18

#### Transferable Skills

 <p><b>Teamwork &amp; Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative working</li> <li>• Resolving conflict</li> <li>• Project management</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Networking</li> <li>• Negotiating</li> <li>• Presenting</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Resilience &amp; Goal Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and organisation</li> <li>• Working under pressure</li> <li>• Self-motivation</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Creativity &amp; Problem Solving</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Critical thinking</li> <li>• Initiative and decision-making</li> </ul>
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### Sutton Trust

Young people participating in placement schemes: 36

#### Transferable Skills

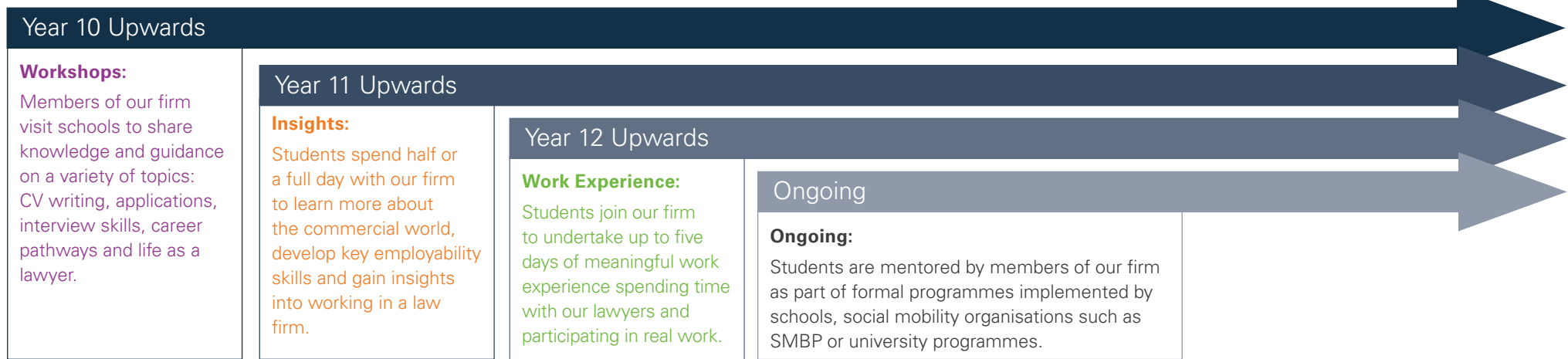
 <p><b>Teamwork &amp; Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative working</li> <li>• Resolving conflict</li> <li>• Project management</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Networking</li> <li>• Negotiating</li> <li>• Presenting</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Career Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building networks</li> <li>• Learning about career pathways</li> <li>• Experience for CV</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Creativity &amp; Problem Solving</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Critical thinking</li> <li>• Initiative and decision making</li> </ul>
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# Accelerate Programme

Our Accelerate Programme enables students to engage with our firm at different stages of their education and in different ways by offering:

**Workshops Insights Work Experience Mentoring**



Below is an example of how our Accelerate Programme is implemented on a national level. All of our UK offices are currently expanding their outreach building valuable relationships with local schools and colleges. If you would like to find out more or get involved with any initiatives, please contact your local Social Mobility Champion.



## Birmingham

- **Working in Law Workshops** – Delivered to Year 9, 10 and 6th Form students (50% Students Eligible for FSM\*)
- **Routes to Professions Programme** – Offering Year 12 and 13 students insights into professional career routes (University of Birmingham Social Mobility Programme)



“Social mobility is a cause I hold close to my heart. I come from a single parent family, I was the first member of my family to attend university and I know first-hand the barriers that can affect underrepresented groups in joining the profession. Being a champion is enabling me to help young people who were in a similar position to me to access resources that can make a real difference to them. I am really proud of what we have achieved so far as a firm and look forward to what we are going to do in the future.”

**Oliver Ward-Jones**, Social Mobility Champion, Birmingham



“I am a big believer in everyone should be given the opportunity to shine and social mobility is an area of diversity that epitomises this. Coming from a background where no one in my family went to university, and having trodden the path of not taking the traditional route to my Business and Finance degree myself, I enjoy being a champion, as it gives me the opportunity to tell my story. I really enjoy being able to talk to and assist young people and encourage them to think of all of the routes they can take to achieve what they want, rather than just the traditional routes. Being co-chair with Oliver Ward-Jones has meant I have been able to assist with leading my office’s efforts to make a difference in this area.”

**Wendy Wilkes**, Social Mobility Champion, Birmingham

\*Free School Meals (FSM), also known as Pupil Premium funding, is a statutory benefit available to school-aged children whose families receive other qualifying means-test benefits from the Department for Work and Pensions. This is one of the numerous indicators commonly used to measure social mobility. (Office for National Statistics)





“Social mobility isn’t just about the individuals who may be negatively affected by its barriers. By being a champion, I’ve seen that (like most things) you need a collective effort, in this case across the whole socioeconomic strata, to make a real difference. Potential can come from anywhere and by investing in meaningful social mobility initiatives, we can help unlock that for many individuals. By supporting students at a local university (including individual mentoring over the last year), I’ve been inspired by the ambition and ability of a number of young students and it’s great to think our social mobility pillar may have helped to lay the odd stepping stone for them, as they look towards their future career choice.”

**Naomi Parkin**, *Social Mobility Champion, Leeds*



## Leeds

- **Mentoring** – Eight members of our firm mentoring law students from Leeds Beckett University (*Non-Russell Group*)
- **BPP Law Ambassador Programme** – Skills-based workshops with Year 12 and 13 students (*Leeds Pro Bono Centre Project*)



## London

- **Inspiring Boys in Law Programme** – One-day career insights session with 30 students (*52% Students Eligible for FSM\**)
- **Mentoring and Work Experience Programme** – Nine-month “Adopt a Student” programme with 21 students from Lilian Baylis Technology School (*58% Students Eligible for FSM\**)
- **Talking Legal Workshops** – Series of discussion groups on topics such as ESG, labour shortages and supply chain with 30 students (*Non-Russell Group*)



“Social mobility is an area of diversity that is often overlooked, but I think it is one of the most important, as it overlaps with many of the other strands of diversity, and as a result causes an even wider gap in terms of access to opportunities. As a Black woman, I am passionate about seeing that gap being narrowed significantly during my lifetime. Being a champion has enabled me to use my experience, network and contacts to give back to the next generation by driving meaningful initiatives that make a real difference to those that are marginalised by society and would otherwise struggle to gain experiences that prepare them for a brighter future. I have really enjoyed the opportunity to lead my office’s efforts, meet inspiring young people and build relationships with local schools and community-led initiatives”

**Keshinda Gage**, *Social Mobility Champion, London*

\*Free School Meals (FSM), also known as Pupil Premium funding, is a statutory benefit available to school-aged children whose families receive other qualifying means-test benefits from the Department for Work and Pensions. This is one of the numerous indicators commonly used to measure social mobility. (*Office for National Statistics*)



## Manchester

- **Mentoring and Work Experience Programme** – Employability and skills workshops delivered throughout the academic year to 21 students from Consilium Multi Academy Trust (41% Students Eligible for FSM\*)
- **Work Experience** – Opportunities via Manchester Metropolitan University (Non-Russell Group)



“I thoroughly enjoy my role as the local champion in Manchester for Social Mobility. It is an area that is being given more and more consideration but still requires further improvement from businesses across the UK. Over the last three years in which I have been in the role, I have noticed not only improvements nationally, but also that great strides have been made in Manchester, and it is a privilege to have been part of that process. We are involved in a number of initiatives and have made key changes in our recruitment policy, but one of our proudest achievements to date is the founding of the Elevate Mentoring Scheme with Consilium Multi Academy Trust. We have provided support and careers guidance for students with low socio-economic indicators in a scheme that runs the full school year. It is a great feeling for all the mentors to be making such a positive impact on the students’ lives and future careers.”

**Alex Villers**, Associate, Litigation

## Work Experience

Aligning with our ESG strategy, we have committed to provide 75% of internship/work experience opportunities to disadvantaged/underprivileged students through our social mobility programmes. Our current position based on data from our contextualised recruitment system:

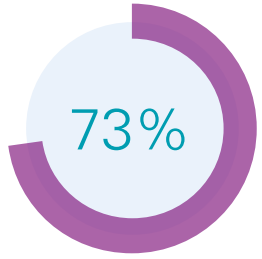
**68%** of work experience placements to individuals with lower socio-economic indicators.



\*Free School Meals (FSM), also known as Pupil Premium funding, is a statutory benefit available to school-aged children whose families receive other qualifying means-test benefits from the Department for Work and Pensions. This is one of the numerous indicators commonly used to measure social mobility. (Office for National Statistics)

# Creating a Supportive, Socially Mobile Environment

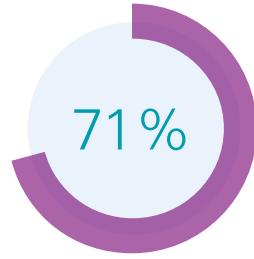
Who we are:



of firm, attended state school



of partners, attended state school



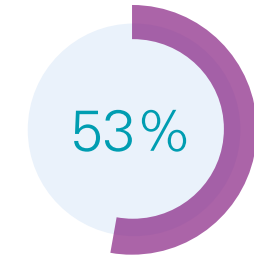
of lawyers, attended state school



of firm, first in family to attend university



of partners, first in family to attend university



of lawyers, first in family to attend university



# Candidate Attraction and Accessibility

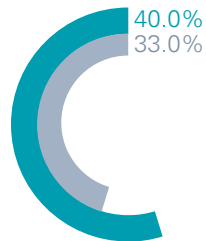
## Rare Contextualised Recruitment

Adoption of a mechanism to contextualise academic achievement has been in place since 2019. In 2021, we adopted the Rare Contextualised Recruitment System to contextualise the academic achievements of our candidates. In our first year, we have exceeded the legal sector benchmark in attracting candidates from lower socio-economic backgrounds across all three Rare indicators – socio-economic disadvantage; academic achievement vs school average; and personal status as a care leaver, refugee or as a carer.

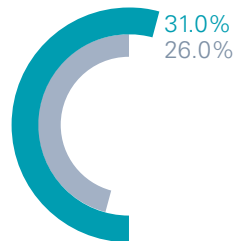
- Squire Patton Boggs
- Law



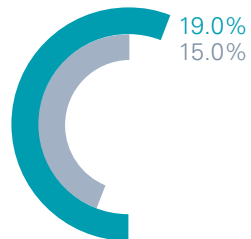
Application with Indicators



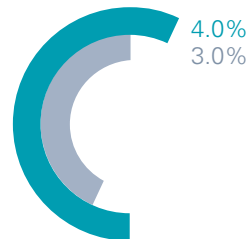
Applications with Socio-economic Flag



Applications with Academic Flag



Applications with Personal Flag



## Assessment Framework

We have been progressing towards a strengths-based approach in our assessment centres to allow candidates to showcase their potential rather than focusing on past experience. Following feedback from the social mobility foundation, in 2021 we reviewed our whole approach to introduce greater transparency to our process, removing ambiguity from our application questions, introducing an objective scoring matrix acknowledging Rare indicators and sharing details of our assessment centre to allow more time to prepare. This has proven to be a successful strategy enabling candidates with Rare indicators to progress successfully through our assessment process.

### Progression of Candidates with Rare Indicators

- No Indicators
- Indicators

Progressed from application stage



Progressed from digital assessment




Progressed from assessment centre



# Apprenticeship Scheme

**Apprentice Programme**  
2022 Paralegal Apprentice Programme



**SQUIRE PATTON BOGGS**

Play video to add notes

01:21

Chante Morris - Paralegal Apprentice

Our Apprenticeship programme launched in March 2021 and we currently have 11 colleagues on our legal and non-legal apprenticeship pathways. Apprenticeships enable individuals to pursue a career pathway that best suits their circumstances and learning preferences and have opened up the legal profession to young people for whom it has previously felt unattainable.

In September 2022, we look forward to further expanding our apprenticeship schemes across our four UK offices.

To find out more about our Apprenticeship programme, please click [here](#).

Watch the [video](#) from Chante Morris, one of our paralegal apprentices, to hear her views on our Apprenticeship programme.



“To me, apprenticeships are the most logical way to success that provide opportunities that are not always accessible on the traditional route. You are able to earn a qualification, put theory into practice, come out debt free, and build connections at 18. I have loved my journey so far with the firm – being able to build connections across the national team and learning from experts in the field has really supported my personal development. I truly could not recommend this route enough!”

**Zoya Alam**, Paralegal Apprentice

## Sharing Best Practice



L-R **Fran Eccles-Bech** (Manchester Law Society), **Rob Elvin** (Squire Patton Boggs), **Kurt Satney** (BPP University), **Helen Mahy CBE**, **Helen Westerman** (NSPCC), **Alice Kinder** (Anthony Collins Solicitors), **Shez Anjum** (DWF), **Jess Organ** (Social Mobility Business Partnership).

In March 2022, our firm and Manchester Law Society welcomed speakers, panellists and delegates to our Manchester office for a landmark Social Mobility Conference, with NSPCC Manchester Childline being chosen as the nominated charity.

The half-day Social Mobility Conference demonstrated the importance of improving this key area, as well as providing delegates with practical information on how to implement a social mobility strategy within their respective organisations, and providing examples of the benefits to organisations, as well as individuals. The conference was attended by delegates from various organisations, including Ernst & Young, BPP University, Trowers & Hamlins, Manchester Metropolitan University, DLA Piper and many more. The conference programme featured inspiring and thought-provoking speakers from across the UK, case studies of success and challenge stories, and an insightful panel discussion.

The conference was opened by Helen Mahy CBE, an experienced chairperson, non-executive director and long-term sponsor for greater diversity, inclusion and equality in business.

We look forward to replicating this conference model in Birmingham in June in collaboration with the Birmingham Law Society.

## Looking to the Future

Following two tumultuous years of a pandemic, we anticipate the following interventions will be required:

1. A critical review of our assessment of academics will be required as the impact of two years of teacher assessed grades and no exams follows through into applications for apprenticeships and training contracts. [Research](#) conducted by Sutton Trust suggests that the attainment gap has further widened between selective, private and non-selective state schools that struggled with technology and resources during the periods of home schooling. We also know that the quality and engagement with learning will have been impacted for those in challenging home environments. This will also be reflected in the university choices available to students and so we will need to continually review our attraction strategy to maintain a breadth of relationships across both Russell and non-Russell group universities.
2. Deepening our connections with local schools either directly or via our third-party partnerships to support with careers guidance and employability workshops that develop confidence and skills to enable young people to realise their potential. We know that this has been an area of challenge for schools who needed to prioritise the learning curriculum during the last two years and we hope to continue to be a vital ally for those schools in our local communities for whom our support is most needed.
3. To expand our Apprenticeship programme to build sustainable alternative pathways into professional roles within our firm that allow young people in our local communities to have more choices to reach their potential whilst earning as they learn.
4. To continue our partnerships with universities to nurture future talent pipelines and provide relevant and meaningful interventions that lead to successful applications and training contract offers.
5. To ensure that there is the right support and development for those within our firm looking to advance to more senior roles. This will require some greater data analysis, both qualitative and quantitative, that enables us to fully understand any potential barriers to progression.
6. We intend to expand upon our social mobility focus on young adults, to include a wider range of candidates, which will provide further access to the workplace across the social mobility spectrum.
7. Through events such as our Social Mobility Conferences, our intention and belief is to share best practice with our clients and other law firms, to truly make law a more accessible profession.
8. We are being more purposeful in our data collection, to ensure that we are adding value to the right demographics.

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[squirepattonboggs.com](http://squirepattonboggs.com)