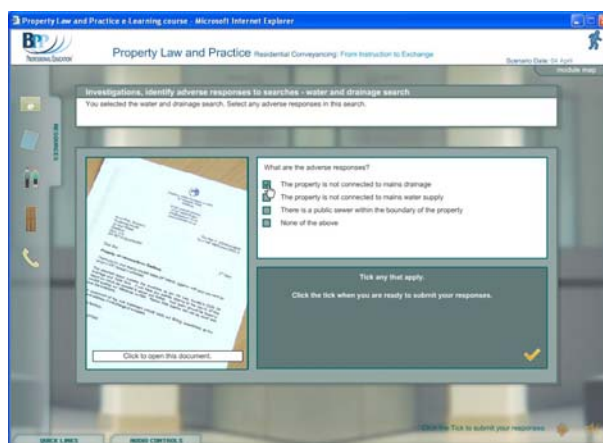


BPP HOLDINGS PLC (“BPP”) develops careers by training people for the qualifications they need to become business professionals and by providing continuing professional development throughout their careers. BPP is the trainer of choice for many of the world’s leading professional service firms. With a commitment to preparing its graduates for practice, BPP was seeking ways to differentiate itself by building the capability of their students to face the challenges of a demanding, commercial market place.

BPP and Head Light Communications pioneered the use of Situational Judgement Tests (increasingly used in graduate recruitment) at BPP to bridge the gap between theory and practice. This on-line assessment encouraged students to make judgements in work-related situations and appreciate the real-life consequences of their actions. The first area chosen was the BPP Law School, the fastest growing division, with over 4,500 students in the UK.

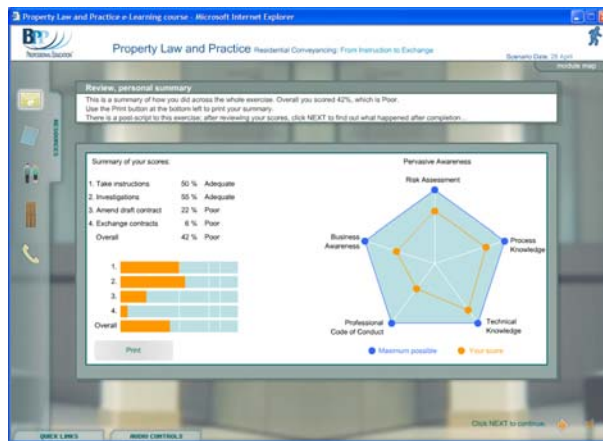


In the assessment, the students are invited to perform the role of Trainee Solicitor, working a probationary period for a law firm. They are challenged with typical situations often found when representing the interests of clients in residential property transactions.



Working closely with BPP’s instructors, Head Light Communications mapped out the property purchase process and identified the situations where judgement is critical.

At each of these points we defined the specific issues and the range of options available, and rated each to establish an ‘effectiveness rating’. Each option was also aligned with BPP’s professional legal competence framework for the role of Trainee Solicitor.



The use of consequence was an important part of preparing students for the role. Each situation faced is as a result of a decision taken earlier. The options and the resources made available also reflect those judgements.

The scores are calculated automatically and presented at the end of the assessment with areas of strength and weakness identified.

The scoring model is built around three key effectiveness measures:

- compliance with the regulations and procedures governing exchange and completion of a property purchase
- identification of the major risks to the interests of their clients and the most effective mitigation strategies
- demonstration of the competencies required for the role.

This Situational Judgement Test has been used by over 1000 students on the Legal Practice Course (LPC) at BPP so far, primarily as a consolidation and revision exercise to check understanding and application and has been very well-received. One of the key benefits of this on-line exercise is that users very quickly see the impact of inaccurate or inappropriate advice or actions on their part and learn the importance of checking the steps taken on behalf of their clients at every stage. It also helps users to recognise the commercial aspects of this type of transaction and the cost of requesting inappropriate information or failing to spot the relevance of information provided. This is therefore a useful situational judgment tool which students can use as many times as they wish to help them develop important skills and judgement at a crucial stage of their learning process.

*“Based on positive student feedback and how useful students found the exercise, we have introduced it at an earlier stage of the programme. Approximately 2000 students training to be solicitors will complete it this year.”* Amanda Blackmore, Director of LPC Programmes, BPP Law School.