

The Application as an Auditable Claim

What 57 current elite-selection signals reveal about ownership, judgement and authenticity in the age of AI

AI did not create live assessment. It is making the purpose of live assessment clearer: institutions still need to verify who owns the thinking.

57

CODED OBSERVATIONS IN
REPORT 01

6

OBSERVATIONS CODED
NEWLY EXPLICIT ABOUT AI,
FROM THREE INSTITUTIONS

48

OFFICIAL SOURCES CITED

Hassan Akram

Founder and Principal Advisor, Elite Careers Strategy. Research lead: accountable for coding decisions, publication rulings, source grading and corrections.

REPORT 01 . REVISED 31 AUGUST 2026 . GLOBAL ELITE SELECTION MONITOR V1

Global Elite Selection Monitor: 57 signals drawn from 48 official sources, held in a 50-entry source register, across 23 institutions or systems. Sources checked 30 August 2026.

SECTION 01

The answer: selection is becoming a chain of verification.

The application is best understood as an auditable claim. It opens the inquiry; later stages test whether its facts, reasoning and voice survive scrutiny. Fifty of 57 observations were coded as existing processes at the review date: recorded signals describe existing processes.

FOUR FINDINGS

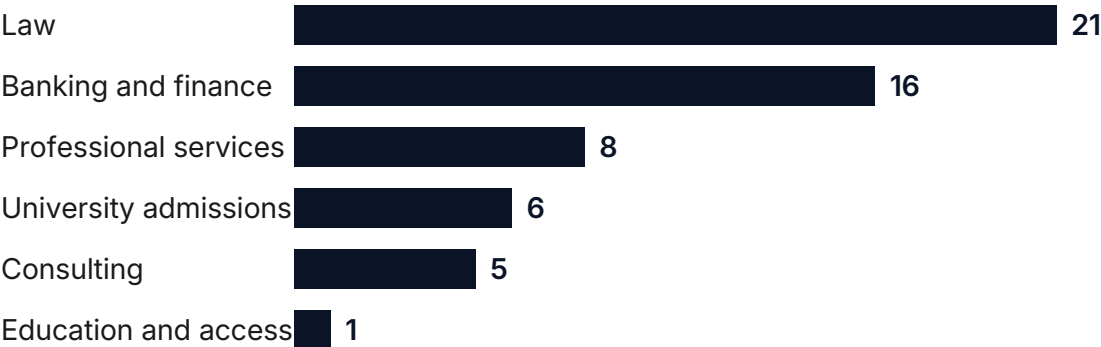
- 1. **Selection includes assessment the candidate does not write at leisure.** Verified examples of assessment beyond the written application include live judgement, simulation, cases, multimodal or technical assessment, problem solving or whole-person evaluation.
- 2. **A change of medium can make a written claim easier to test.** A claim written at leisure becomes harder to imitate when it must be explained, adapted, calculated, debated or defended under time pressure.
- 3. **New AI rules focus on ownership, not blanket prohibition.** All six newly explicit signals concern AI boundaries. DLA Piper, UBS and Cambridge allow forms of preparation while protecting independent assessment and truthful representation.
- 4. **Process design creates unequal translation burdens.** Thirteen signals map stage architecture or geographic variation. Candidates must transfer the same underlying evidence across different formats, sequences and markets.

SECTION 02

The evidence base is strong enough for pattern detection, not prevalence.

Exhibit 1. The sample is concentrated in law and in the United Kingdom.

Source: Global Elite Selection Monitor V1, 57-signal cohort. Official sources checked 30 August 2026. Full register at Section 08.



**THE LIMIT**

The sample is authority-led and cross-sectional. It is weighted toward UK and global process pages, law and banking. The percentages in this report describe the coded sample only; they are not estimates for the entire market.

SECTION 03

Assessment beyond the written application, in the institutions' own words.

Exhibit 2. Verified examples of assessment beyond the written application.

Source: Report 02 cross-report examples, reverified 9 September 2026; source IDs appear below.

Illustrations only: these six examples are outside Report 01's 57-signal denominator; no proportion is claimed.

MARKET	INSTITUTION	WHAT THE SOURCE STATES
UK	KPMG SRC-051	A cognitive assessment of numerical and logical reasoning; the page states it is timed and gives 36 minutes.
GCC	PwC Middle East SRC-054	An assessment centre combining reasoning tests, a written exercise, a group exercise and a partner or director interview.
GCC	Strategy& Middle East SRC-056	Three to four interviews, including a real-world case discussion.
India	Indian School of Business SRC-057	A panel interview of faculty, alumni and senior staff, with essays written on the interview day.
Singapore	NUS SRC-065	From 2026, Law applicants must pass an Admissions Written Test before they are invited to interview.
Singapore	DBS SRC-067	An in-person Case Challenge, followed by a panel interview involving HR and senior management.

Clifford Chance combines tests, prerecorded video and an assessment day [SRC-005, SRC-006]. UBS progresses from online assessments to a pre-recorded video interview and a final round of virtual or in-person interviews [SRC-032]. Deloitte uses work simulation and a final-stage discussion [SRC-039]. Cambridge uses interviews to explore thinking beyond the written file [SRC-046].

Slaughter and May runs a discussion of a current-affairs article supplied on the day [SRC-020]. A&O Shearman runs a partner case-study interview [SRC-017], and Morgan Stanley states an interest in how candidates work through a scenario [SRC-034]. Yale describes an evaluative conversation read alongside the written file [SRC-047].

BOUNDARY

This does not show that live assessment is new, increasing or superior. It shows that current elite-selection systems already contain substantial verification architecture that becomes more strategically important when polished output is abundant.

SECTION 04

Every newly explicit signal defines an AI boundary.

INSTITUTION	PERMITTED OR ACCEPTED	BOUNDARY
DLA Piper [SRC-025]	Research, structure, personal editing and practice where use is transparent and fact-checked	No completing assessments, replacing thinking, misrepresenting experience or reading scripted answers
UBS [SRC-033]	Preparation of CVs and cover letters where content genuinely reflects the applicant	Assessments and interviews must be independent; AI answers, recording, transcription, avatars and deepfakes are prohibited
Cambridge [SRC-045]	Prompts for ideas or assistance with research	Over-reliance risks false claims treated as fraud and weak output that harms the application

Table 1. Every newly explicit rule bounds AI use rather than banning it.

Source: Global Elite Selection Monitor V1, signals SIG-025, SIG-026, SIG-036 to SIG-038 and SIG-054. Sources checked 30 August 2026.

The emerging norm in this sample is bounded assistance plus personal accountability. This is a governance model, not a technology ban.

SECTION 05

A change of medium is the practical authenticity test.

IMPLICATION FOR CANDIDATES

Evidence must survive translation. The same underlying material has to hold up when it is written, spoken, calculated and defended.

IMPLICATION FOR INSTITUTIONS

Access is partly the ability to translate evidence across systems. Where a process adds formats without adding signal, it adds cost and advantages the already well prepared.

GEOGRAPHIC CAVEAT

The geographic sample is still too thin for league tables or broad country rankings. The next defensible step is a like-for-like comparison of equivalent roles across London, New York, Dubai, Mumbai, Singapore and Hong Kong.

SECTION 06

The three-gate model turns the research into action.

GATE	QUESTION
Admission	Does the written claim clear the threshold and open the inquiry?
Progression	Does the claim survive live testing in a different medium?
Conversion	Does judgement hold under final-stage scrutiny?

Table 2. The three gates a claim has to survive.

Source: ECS analytical model, not an employer taxonomy and not drawn from the Monitor. Presented as interpretation of the coded sample.

If AI makes polished output abundant, which forms of assessment reveal judgement – and which merely add cost, complexity and new advantages for the already well prepared?

SECTION 07

Methodology and limits.

UNIT OF ANALYSIS

One row records one verifiable selection signal: a requirement, stage, assessment, institutional statement or material change. Multiple signals may come from the same source.

SOURCE STANDARD

The 57 signals cite 48 distinct official employer or university pages, all checked on 30 August 2026. The published source register contains 50 entries; SRC-049 and SRC-050 are held in the register but are not cited by any signal in this report.

CODING

Report 01 coded signals to categories including live judgement, simulation, case or work simulation, multimodal or technical assessment, problem solving, gamified assessment or whole-person evaluation. No proportion is published from those codes: the inclusion rule and row-level review are not complete. Six observations were coded newly explicit about AI, from three institutions.

MATERIAL LIMITS

This is a purposive, cross-sectional sample. It overweights the UK, global careers pages, law and banking. Published process pages may omit informal practices and may describe different programmes that are not directly comparable. The dataset cannot establish prevalence, causal change over time, candidate outcomes or institutional intent beyond the stated process.

PUBLICATION RULE

Market-wide claims require triangulation across institutions and sectors. Historical trend claims require longitudinal evidence. This report therefore distinguishes what the sample shows from what remains a hypothesis.

SECTION 08

Source register.

All sources below were checked on 30 August 2026 and graded A - official primary. The register carries 50 entries; the 57 signals in this report cite 48 of them.

SOURCE ID	INSTITUTION, PAGE TITLE AND HOST
SRC-001	Goldman Sachs - Prepare for interviews (goldmansachs.com)
SRC-002	Goldman Sachs - Process for students - India (goldmansachs.com)
SRC-003	JPMorganChase - How we hire (jpmorganchase.com)
SRC-004	JPMorganChase - Software engineer cohort (jpmorganchase.com)
SRC-005	Clifford Chance - How we hire - London (jobs.cliffordchance.com)
SRC-006	Clifford Chance - Training contract - London (jobs.cliffordchance.com)
SRC-007	Clifford Chance - Training contract - Middle East (jobs.cliffordchance.com)
SRC-008	Clifford Chance - Guide to application - London (jobs.cliffordchance.com)
SRC-009	Linklaters - Pathfinder (linklaters.com)
SRC-010	Linklaters - Making Links Scholarship (linklaters.com)
SRC-011	Linklaters - School opportunities (linklaters.com)
SRC-012	Linklaters - International clerkships (linklaters.com)

SOURCE ID	INSTITUTION, PAGE TITLE AND HOST
SRC-013	McKinsey & Company - Interviewing (mckinsey.com)
SRC-014	McKinsey & Company - Solve assessment (mckinsey.com)
SRC-015	Boston Consulting Group - Interview process (careers.bcg.com)
SRC-016	Bank of America - Hiring process (careers.bankofamerica.com)
SRC-017	A&O Shearman - How to prepare for assessment days (careers.aoshearman.com)
SRC-018	A&O Shearman - Assessment framework (careers.aoshearman.com)
SRC-019	A&O Shearman - First Year Programme - London (careers.aoshearman.com)
SRC-020	Slaughter and May - The Training Contract Interview (slaughterandmay.com)
SRC-021	Slaughter and May - Apply - Early Careers (slaughterandmay.com)
SRC-022	Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer - UK Early Careers (careers.herbertsmithfreehills.com)
SRC-023	Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer - India Internship (careers.herbertsmithfreehills.com)
SRC-024	Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer - Hong Kong Early Careers (careers.herbertsmithfreehills.com)
SRC-025	DLA Piper - Early Careers - GenAI guidance (careers.dlapiper.com)
SRC-026	DLA Piper - Summer Internship - UK (careers.dlapiper.com)
SRC-027	DLA Piper - Seasonal Clerkship Programme - Australia (careers.dlapiper.com)
SRC-028	Hogan Lovells Cadwalader - Solicitor Apprenticeships (ukearlycareers.hoganlovells.com)
SRC-029	Hogan Lovells Cadwalader - Careers in the United States (hoganlovells.com)
SRC-030	Barclays - Early Careers Application Process (search.jobs.barclays)
SRC-031	Barclays - Apprentice Application Process (search.jobs.barclays)
SRC-032	UBS - Early Careers (ubs.com)
SRC-033	UBS - Usage of AI during the application process (ubs.com)
SRC-034	Morgan Stanley - Interview Preparation (morganstanley.com)
SRC-035	Morgan Stanley - 10 Tips for a Successful Video Interview (morganstanley.com)
SRC-036	Bain & Company - Case Interview Preparation (bain.com)
SRC-037	Bain & Company - Interviewing (bain.com)
SRC-038	PwC - Assessment and Selection Process (pwc.co.uk)
SRC-039	Deloitte - Early Careers Assessment Support - UK (deloitte.com)
SRC-040	Deloitte - How We Hire - Australia (deloitte.com)
SRC-041	EY - Early Careers Application Guidance - US (ey.com)

SOURCE ID	INSTITUTION, PAGE TITLE AND HOST
SRC-042	EY - How to Apply - UK (ey.com)
SRC-043	Oxford University - UCAS Application (ox.ac.uk)
SRC-044	Oxford University - Interviews (ox.ac.uk)
SRC-045	University of Cambridge - AI and Undergraduate Applications (undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk)
SRC-046	University of Cambridge - Improve Your Application (undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk)
SRC-047	Yale University - Interviews (admissions.yale.edu)
SRC-048	Stanford University - Application and Essays (admission.stanford.edu)
SRC-049	Stanford University - Interview (admission.stanford.edu) Held in the register; not cited by any signal in this report.
SRC-050	PwC - Assessments - What to Expect (pwc.co.uk) Held in the register; not cited by any signal in this report.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hassan Akram is Founder and Principal Advisor of Elite Careers Strategy, an independent advisory firm in London working with candidates and families on entry to the most selective employers and universities. He is the research lead for the Global Elite Selection Monitor and is accountable for its coding decisions, publication rulings, source grading and corrections.

ABOUT THE MONITOR

The Global Elite Selection Monitor is a standing register of published selection practice at elite employers and universities. Version 1 holds 107 coded signals citing 69 official sources, held in a 71-entry source register, across six markets. This report draws on 57 of those signals, citing 48 sources.

Each signal records one verifiable selection signal from an official employer or university page, with its own source ID, observation date, grade, publication ruling and analyst note. Sources carry a scheduled review date; findings are corrected in place and the correction is stated in the report rather than made silently.

SUGGESTED CITATION

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CORRECTIONS AND VERSIONS

This is the revised issue of 31 August 2026; it corrects the source count and register wording published in the first issue. Corrections to published figures are listed in the section they affect. If you believe a signal is miscoded or a source has changed since the observation date, write to hassan@accessecs.com and the entry will be re-checked against the live source.

COMMENT, DATA AND REPRODUCTION

Journalists may quote any passage of this report with attribution to Who Gets In?, Elite Careers Strategy. The underlying signal-level data behind any figure is available on request. Interview within three working days; data checks and source verification same working day. Contact hassan@accessecs.com.

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Elite Careers Strategy - 45 Albemarle Street, Mayfair, London W1S 4JL
accessecs.com

REVISION NOTE - 12 SEPTEMBER 2026

Page 3 identifies six Report 02 examples and their source IDs, reverified 9 September 2026. Report 01 retains 57 signals and its original publication and revision dates.