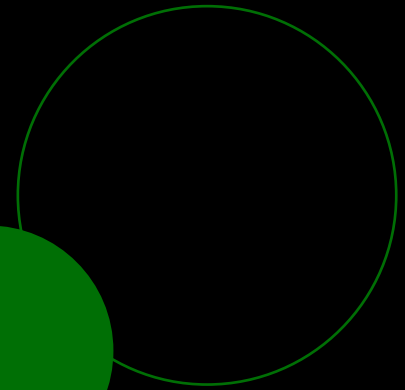
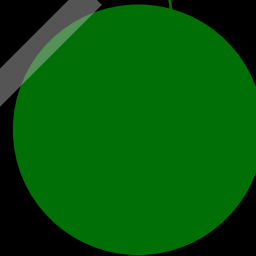
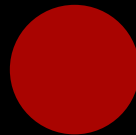
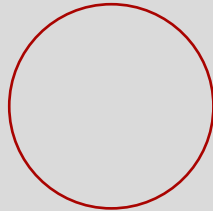


LEGALEASE RESEARCH SERVICES



**UK MID-SIZED FIRMS
UK MANAGING PARTNERS' CLIENT SATISFACTION REPORT 2021**

SAMPLE

The Managing Partner's Client Satisfaction Report 2021

Welcome to the Managing Partner's Client Satisfaction Report for the UK, 2021.

In this comprehensive examination of client perception of law firm service across the UK, we have worked with Legalease Research Services to assess the strengths and weaknesses of law firms across a range of criteria, setting out clients' appraisal of the quality of the teams they work with, the value they believe they get from law firms, and their confidence in the industry knowledge their legal advisers bring to the work they do for UK companies.

With over 150,000 clients contacted in the UK every year providing scored data assessments of law firm service, we are uniquely able to define objective, benchmark scores by jurisdiction and practice area, making this report the most reliable evaluation of client satisfaction available on the market.

This report is exclusively available to legal500.com profiling firms, and represents the largest survey of its kind ever conducted.

All Managing Partner Client Satisfaction Reports are prepared to statistically valid standards, facilitated by the unparalleled access to the vast datasets generated in the course of our annual research. Those datasets allow us to build scientific indicators of relative law firm performance, measured against the entire market and within specific peer groups and practice areas.

This report focuses on law firm performance among mid-sized UK firms. The tables on the following pages set out relative client satisfaction levels against the wider market, and report how clients in your part of the UK believe the services they provide stand up compared to national benchmark figures.

We're proud to be bringing objective assessments of client satisfaction to the UK legal market for the first time, part of legal500.com ongoing ambition to help law firms provide the very best service to their clients and fine tune the outstanding UK legal profession's engagement with the market.

All findings in this report are guaranteed accurate and correct (within the statistical parameters specified). This is objective data.◆

Georgina Stanley
Editor, The Legal 500 United Kingdom



The Managing Partner's Client Satisfaction Report 2021

Criteria and assessment

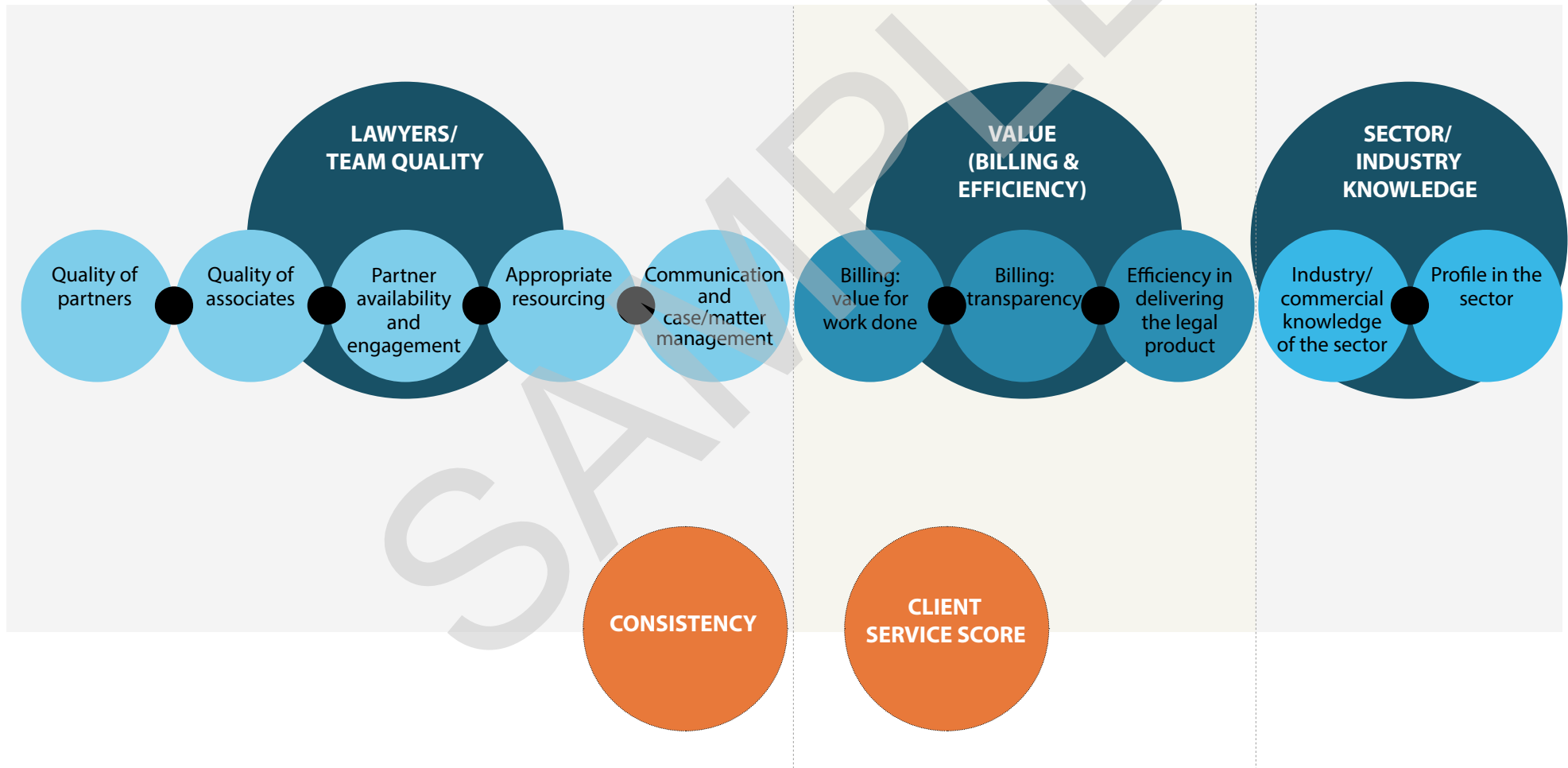
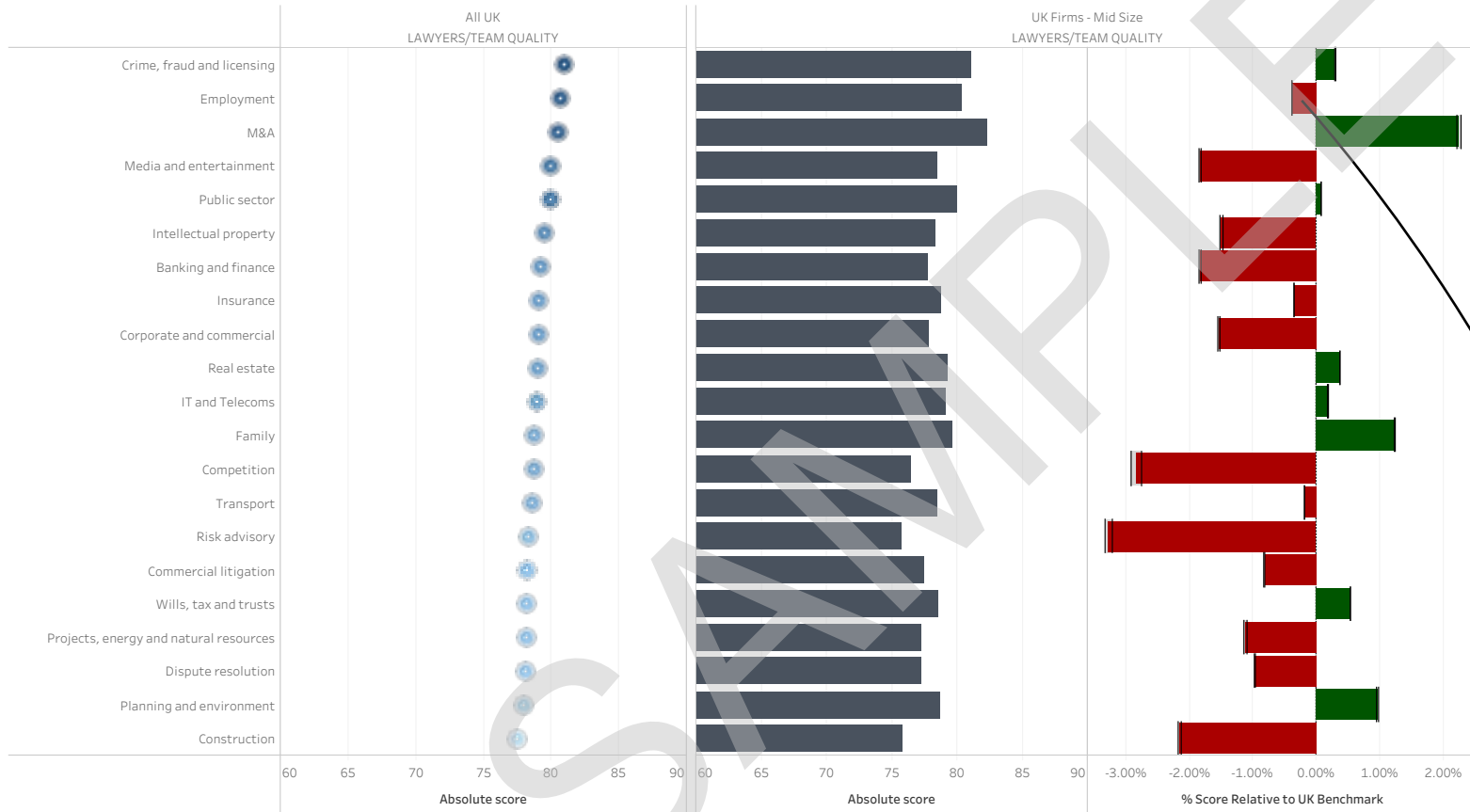


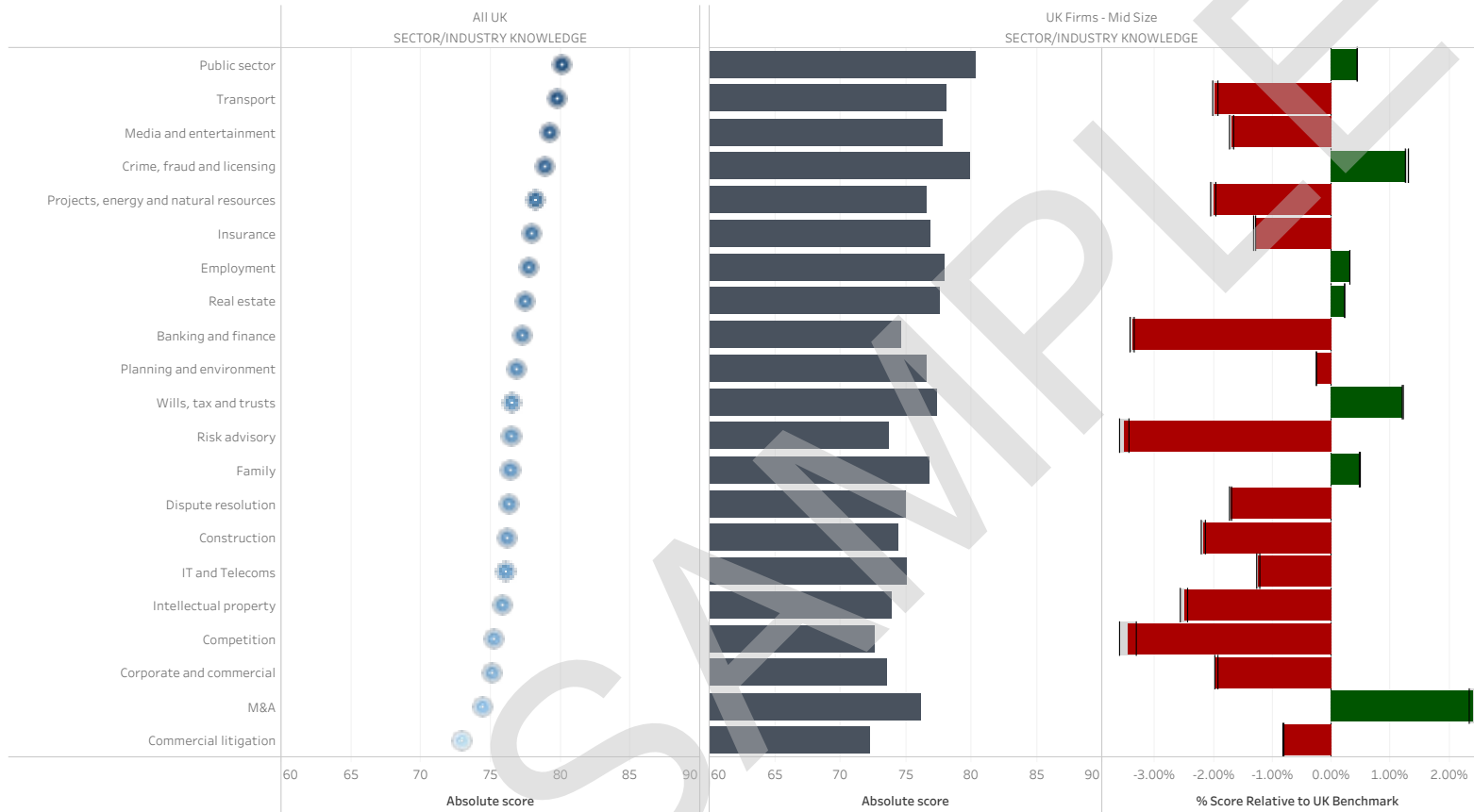
Fig 3.1 Client service by practice area compared to UK Benchmark | LAWYERS/TEAM QUALITY OVERALL



This series of charts breaks down performance by business practice area within large UK firms peer group. The grey bar charts in the middle show the absolute scores, while the red and green bars to the right indicate more specifically how each of those scores relates to UK Benchmarks for each business practice area (illustrated by blue pin markers to the left). The first chart shows firms' performance for overall Lawyers/Team Quality, with the strongest teams perceived to be found in the M&A, family and planning and environment practice areas, and the least well-received teams found within risk advisory law departments.

Note that while mid-sized UK firms' absolute score for employment in this criteria is fairly high, this score is marginally below the UK benchmark for this practice area, which nationwide is among the best performing sectors for team quality.

Fig 3.3 Client service by practice area compared to UK Benchmark | SECTOR/INDUSTRY KNOWLEDGE OVERALL

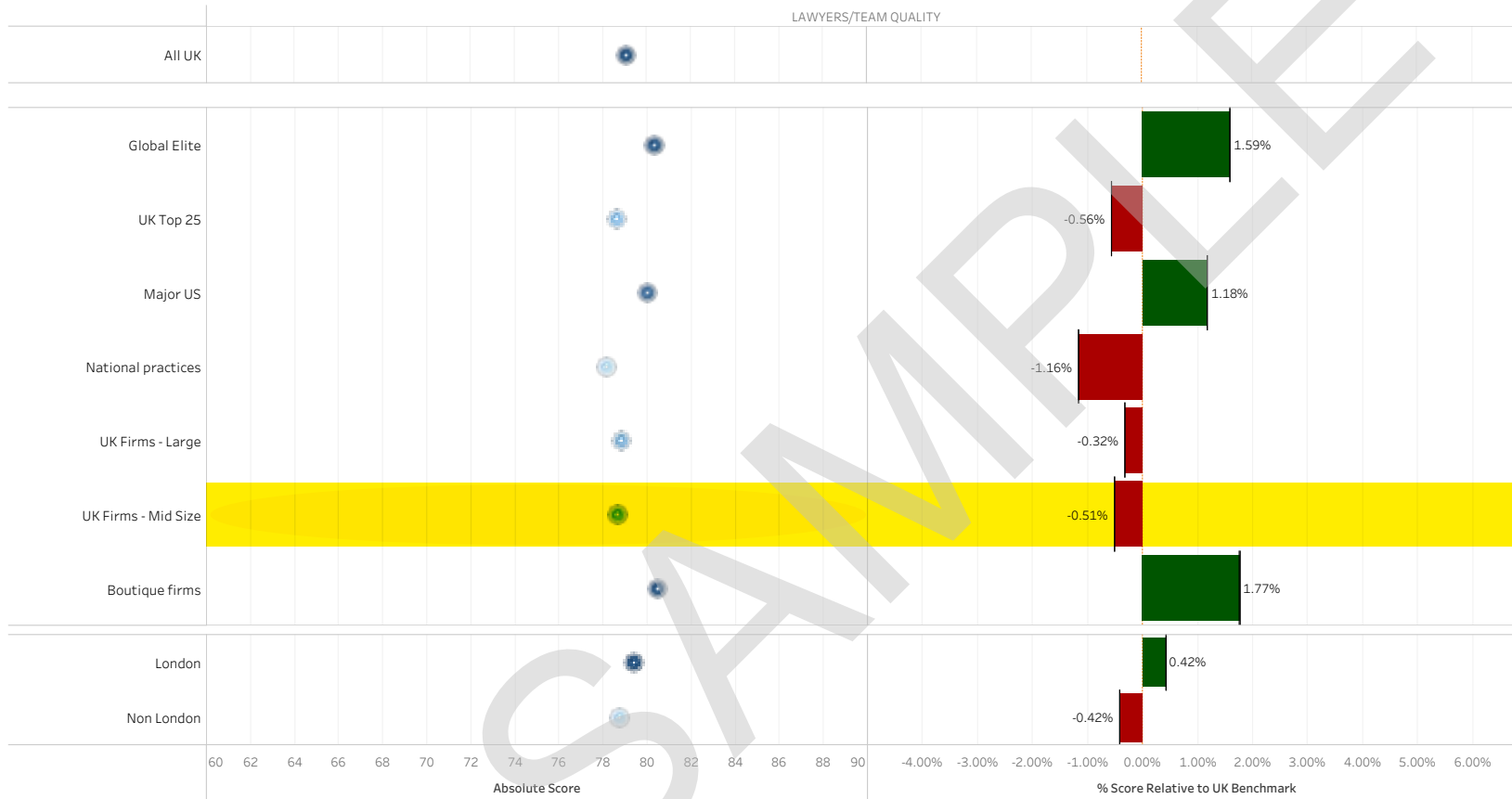


Industry knowledge scoring presents a mixed picture for mid-sized UK firms, with a fair amount of variation between practice areas and a significant proportion of scores falling below national Benchmark levels.

Firms in the peer group perform well for M&A services, scoring well where perceived market knowledge and presence perform less well across the UK as a whole.

Nevertheless competition, family and banking teams in particular score significantly lower than Benchmark levels. M&A and crime, fraud and licensing teams lead the scoring.

Fig 4.1 Client criteria scores compared to rest of UK | Lawyers/Team Quality overall



Part 4 measures UK firms' performance across each client criteria against other peer groups, including firms outside London.

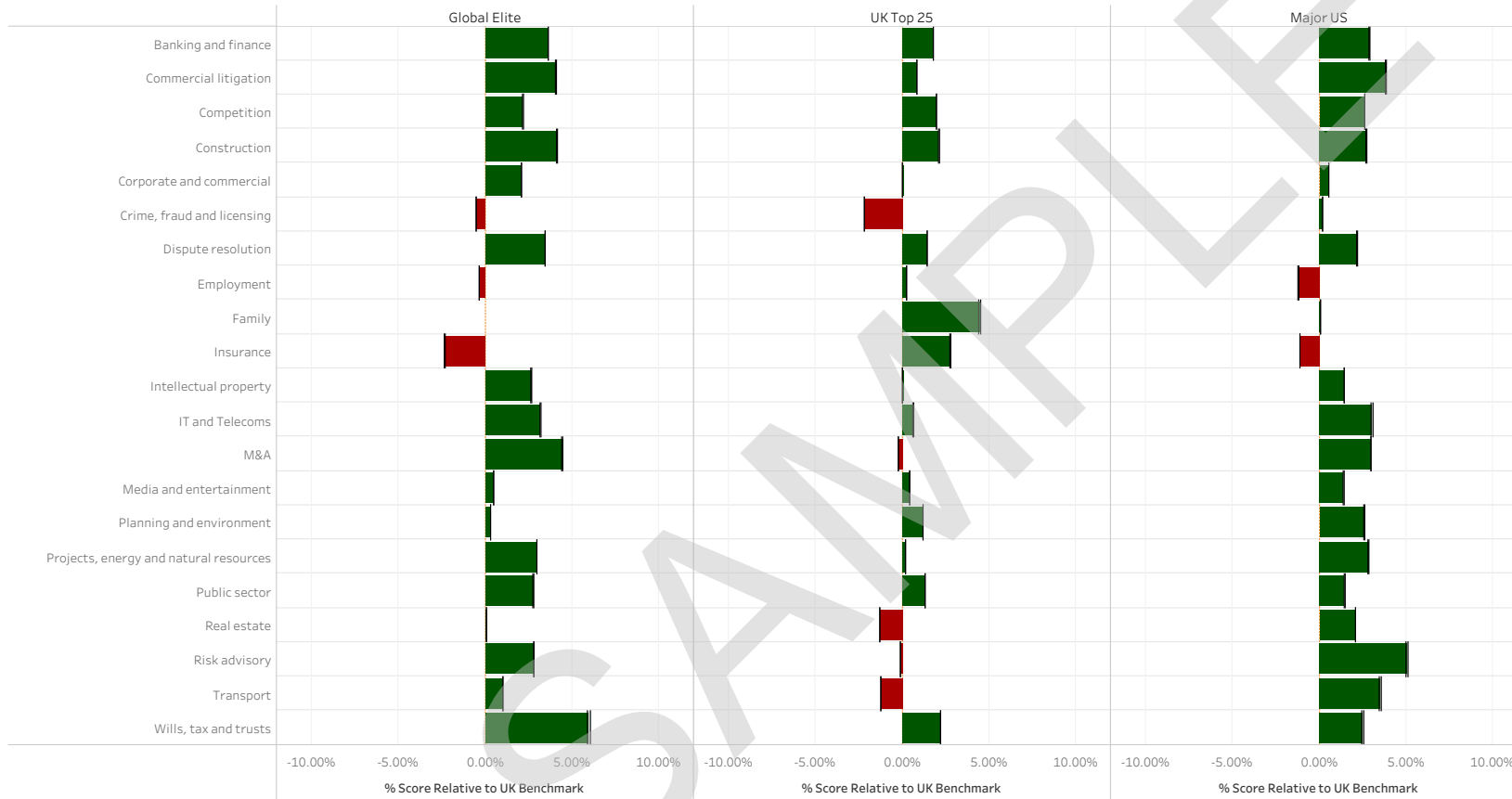
The pin markers to the left represent the absolute scores with the UK Benchmark at the top of the graph. The bars to the right indicate percentage scores relative to that benchmark.

UK mid-sized firms' scores are highlighted in yellow on each chart. Here they indicate scores lower than UK Benchmark levels.

The data shows better quality teams are perceived to be found among Global Elite and Major US firms than among leading UK-focused firms. Specialist offerings at smaller boutique practices also score highly.

London firms perform better overall than their peers across the UK.

Fig 5.2 Client Service Score compared to UK Benchmark | All practice areas



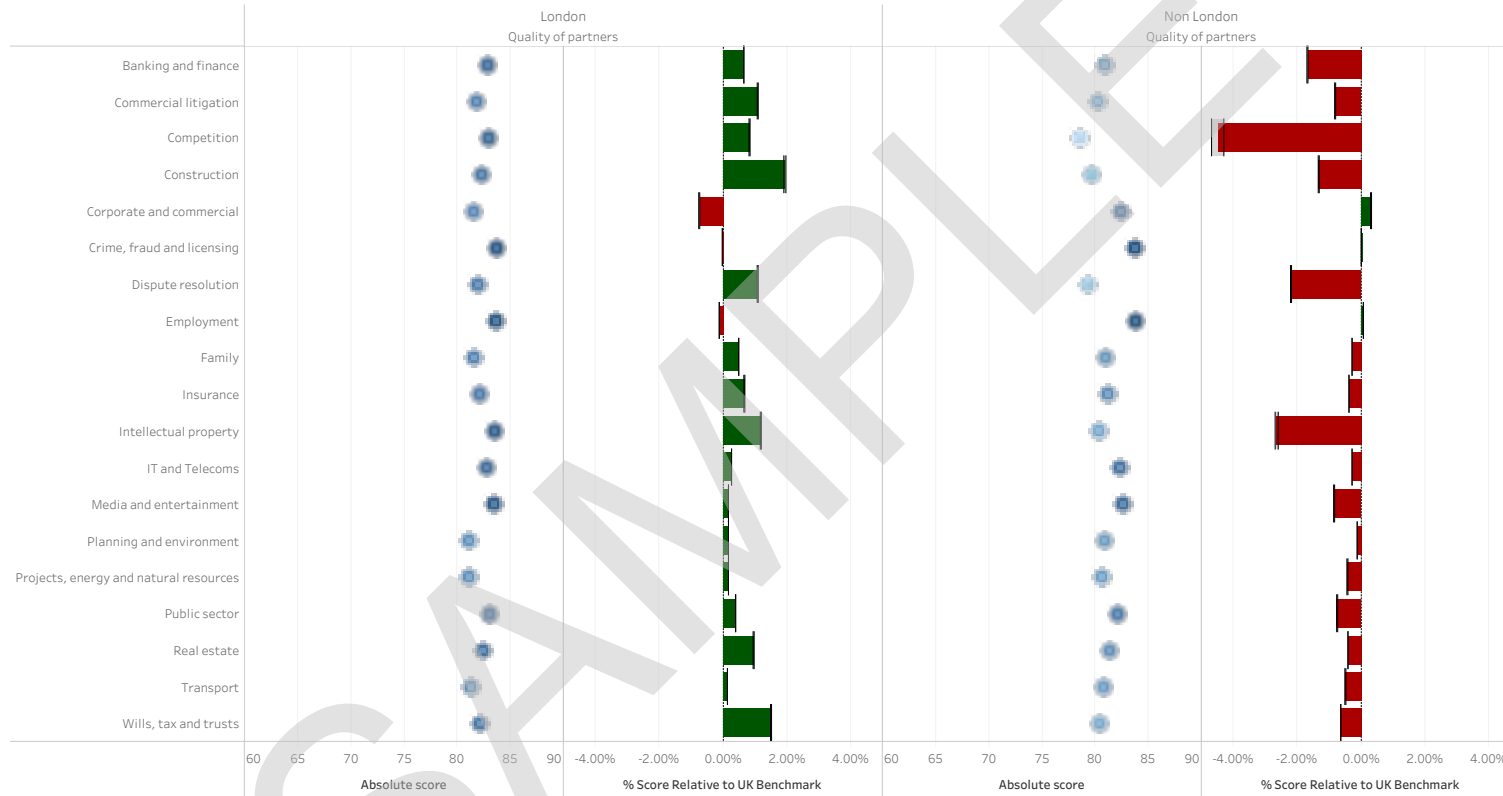
Across different peer groups, different practice areas stand out as specialisms even within areas that perform relatively poorly overall.

UK firms score better than Global Elite and Major US firms for insurance and employment; conversely the Global Elite and Major US firms generally score better for M&A and or risk advisory work.

Boutique and specialist firms record the highest scores across a range of practice areas, with client service levels perceived to be appreciably higher at boutique teams than they are at their international full-service competitors.

UK mid-sized firms score above the UK Benchmark for all but two practice areas.

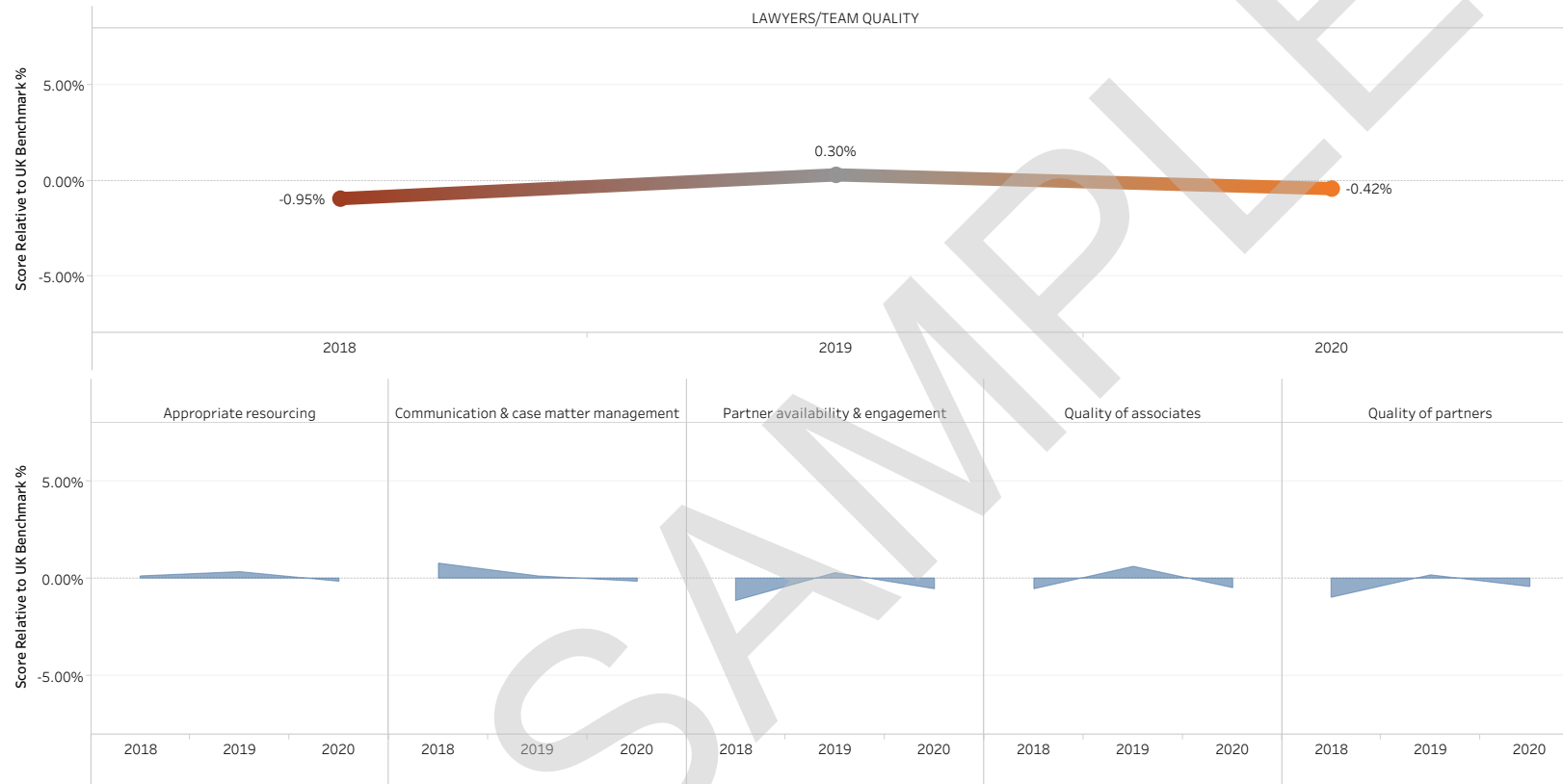
Fig 7.1.1 London firms v firms outside London | Quality of partners



At partner level, scores diverge a little less substantially between London firms and those outside the capital, with perceived quality of partners scoring considerably higher for London practices for competition law, construction, dispute resolution and IP. No practice area delivers dramatically superior quality of partners at firms outside London to that available at London practices, though corporate commercial partners at non-London firms are noteworthy for bucking general trends.

Fig 8.1 UK mid-sized firms client criteria scores Year on Year | LAWYERS/TEAM QUALITY OVERALL

UK Firms - Mid Size



The Legal 500 has been compiling client satisfaction scoring data since 2018, allowing us to present year on year assessments of changing views of client service.

Part 8 of our report records year on year variation by Client Satisfaction Criteria across all practice areas.

In this visualisation the black line indicates the overall trend for the main Client Satisfaction Criteria, with more detail provided below with the blue pillars for each specific criteria, and improvement or otherwise illustrated by the angle of the pillar.

UK mid-sized firms' clients' assessment of overall team quality improved in the year to 2019 but has fallen back marginally below the UK Benchmark figure since then. Partner and associate quality and engagement were higher than Benchmark levels in 2019 but have declined since.

Fig 9.1 Peer group comparative year on year client service scores 2019-20 | LAWYERS/TEAM QUALITY OVERALL



Part 9 of our report scrutinises regional differences between year on year performance across client criteria for all practice areas.

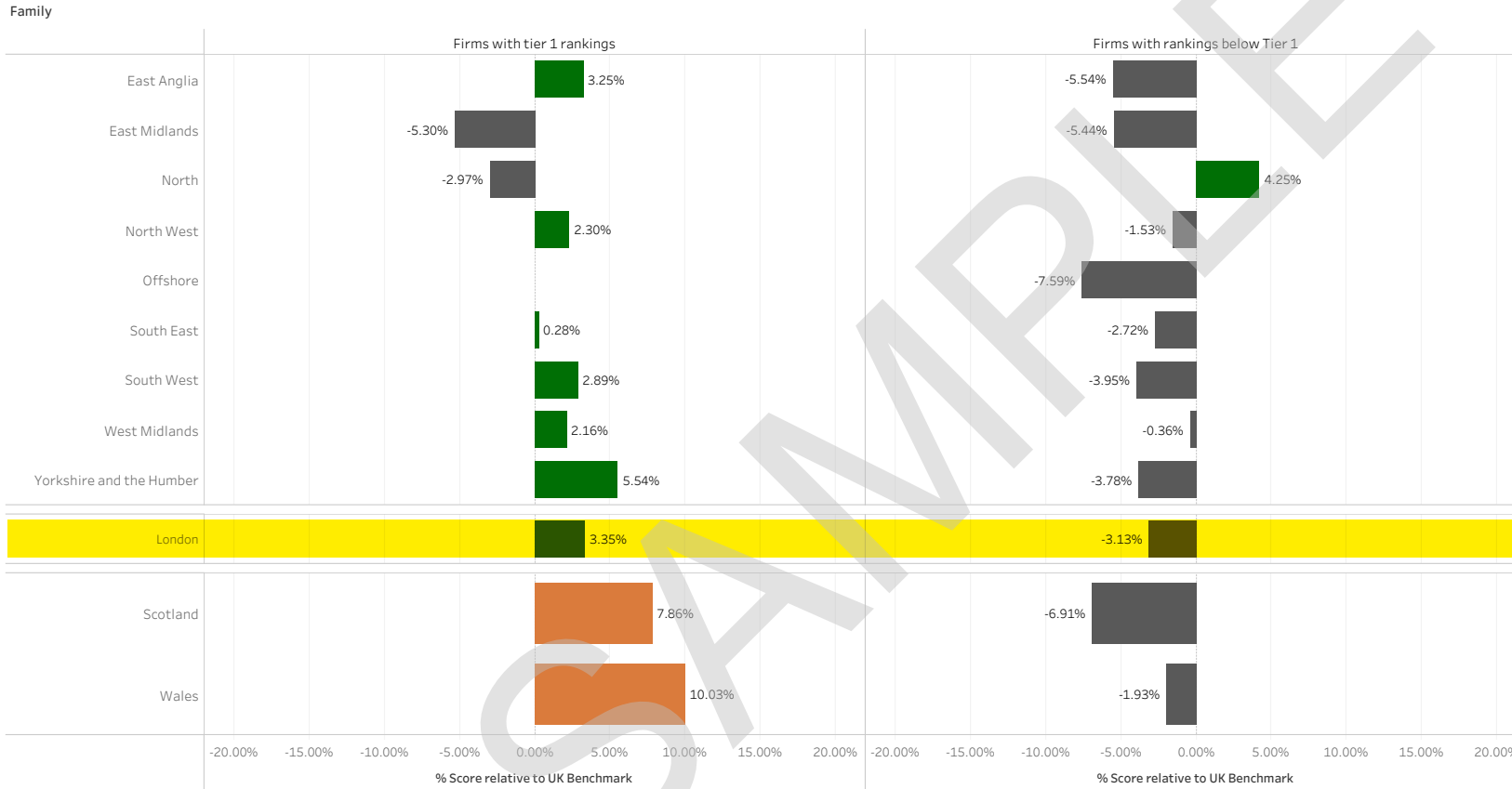
The data visualised here reveals that larger UK firms have been consistently squeezed by client scoring for Global Elite and major US offerings at one end of the spectrum and by boutique, specialist firms at the other, over a three year period.

Among UK firms generally the most noticeable decline in scores comes with communication and case/matter management, while quality and availability of partners has remained largely static over three years of scoring.

Meanwhile partner quality and engagement is the Global Elite and Major US firms's greatest strength.

Overall firms in London outscore those outside, but the gap has narrowed appreciably since 2018.

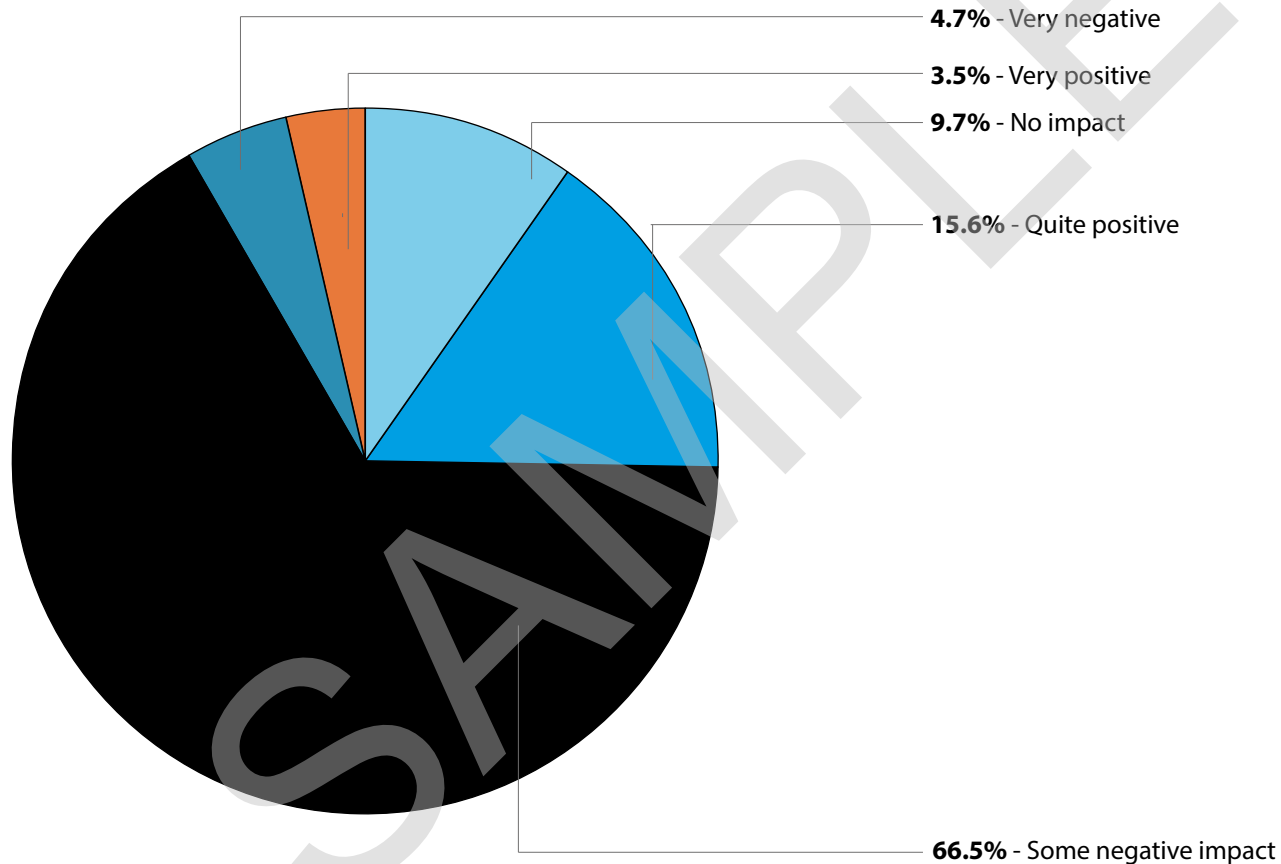
Fig 10.9 Regional/National Client Service scores for top tier and other tier firms compared to UK Benchmark | Family



Top-tier Family law practices excel across the UK, with a very clear distinction to be drawn between the highest-ranking firms and their lower-tier competitors.

In East Anglia, the South West, Scotland, London, Wales and Yorkshire and the Humber, the contrast in scores is particularly significant. Only in the North of England is the trend reversed.

Fig 11.1 What impact has Covid-19 and the ensuing recession had on your firm so far?



“Costs sensitivities have increased and are likely to remain a big driver for client work placements for at least 12-24 months”

Subscribers to *fivehundred* magazine, made up of partners and senior lawyers at the UK's top law firms, were invited to participate in a short survey designed to assess the impact of the Covid-19 led recession on the legal market in 2020, and to give their views on likely ongoing effects on client service and the law firm client relationship.

The overwhelming majority of those surveyed indicated they had already felt a moderately negative impact on their firms from the pandemic and ensuing recession.

Nevertheless a healthy proportion - some 16% - felt that from their firm's perspective the impact had been quite positive.

Relatively few of those surveyed felt that the consequences for their firms had been extreme at this stage. But there were notes of caution: “the bigger challenge is in building new relationships and winning new work in this climate”.