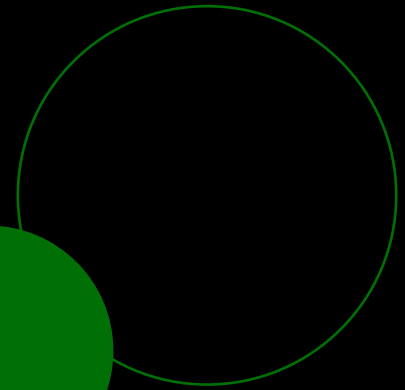
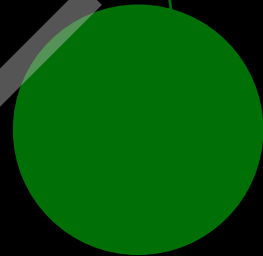
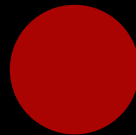
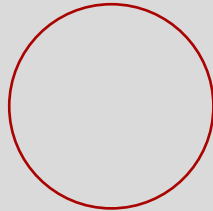


LEGALEASE RESEARCH SERVICES



**NORTHERN IRELAND
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 in Northern Ireland. 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

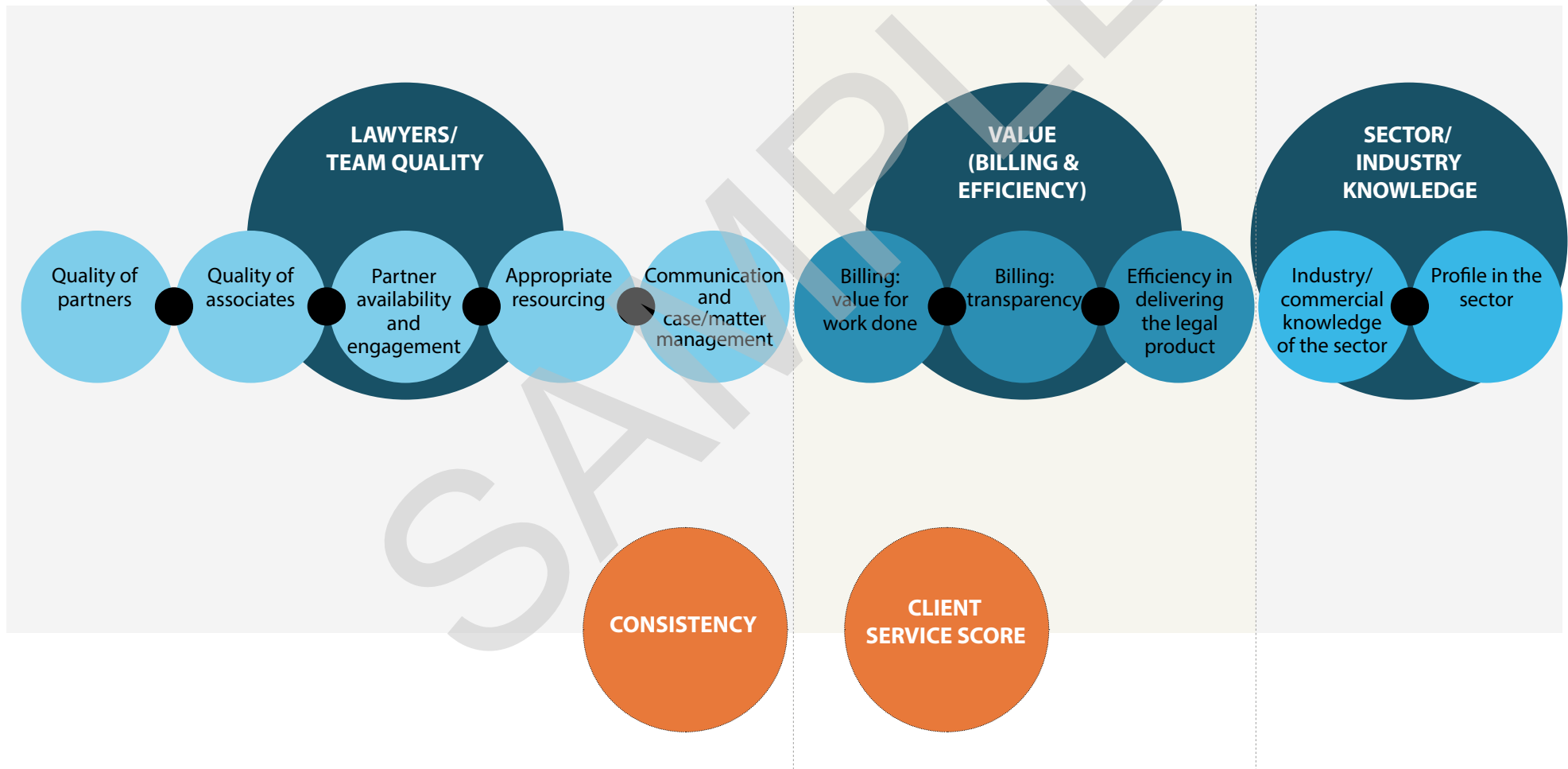
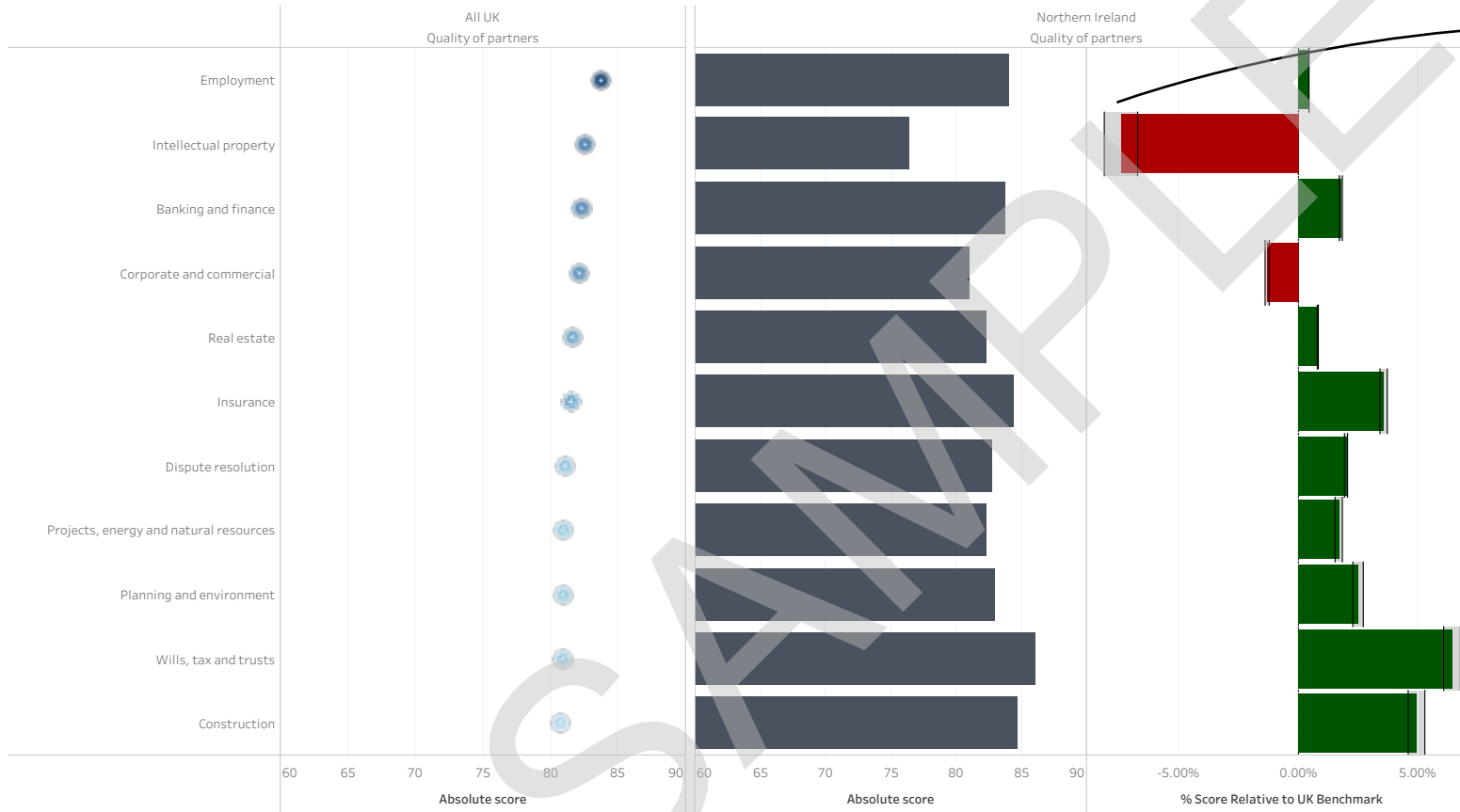


Fig 3.1.1 Northern Ireland Client service by practice area compared to UK Benchmark | Quality of Partners

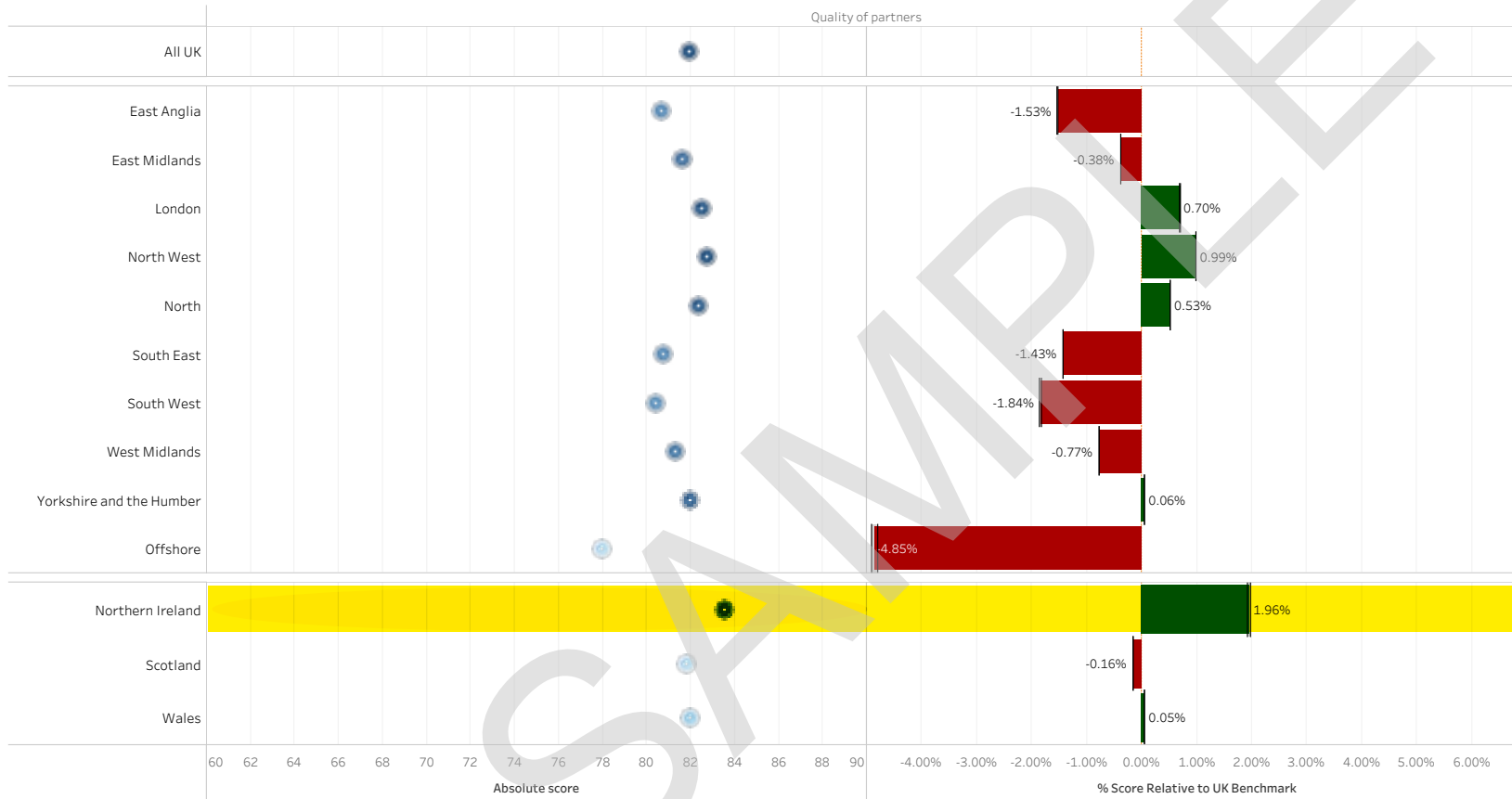


Grey banding on the bar chart indicates possible statistical deviation of this score within our 95% certainty range. See methodology on p.4 for more details.

The graph on the previous page (Fig 3.1) indicates the overall Lawyers/Team Quality performance; the following three pages offer more granular analysis of component criteria Quality of partners; Quality of associates; Partner availability and engagement; Appropriate resourcing; and Communication and case/matter management.

In Northern Ireland, wills, tax and trusts, construction and insurance partners are all rated above the UK Benchmark figure. Meanwhile IP partners are scored significantly below.

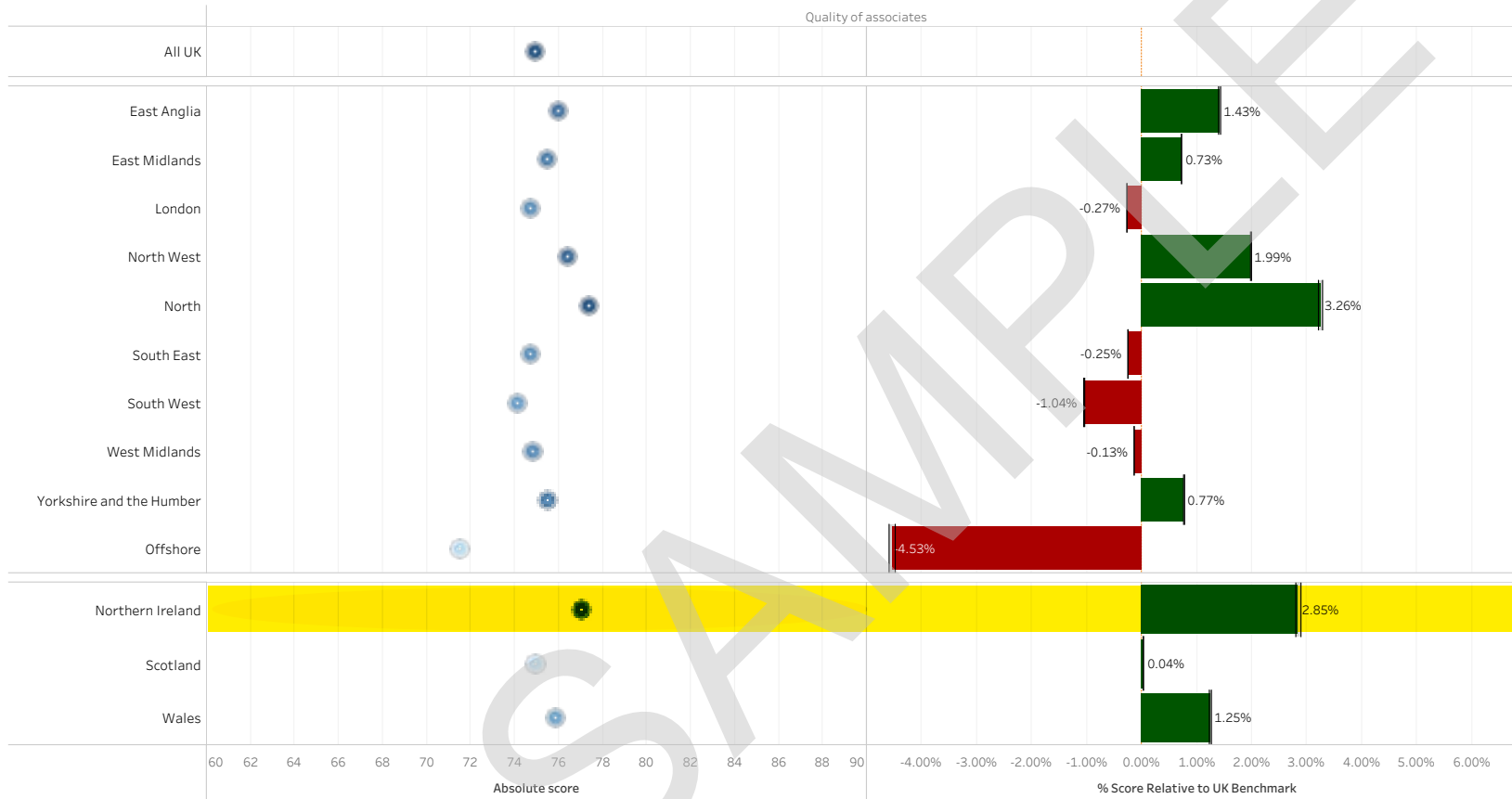
Fig 4.1 Northern Ireland client criteria scores compared to rest of UK | Quality of partners



One of Northern Ireland's stronger scores against the UK benchmark figure is for Quality of partners, where the national picture is relatively variable.

Northern Ireland's absolute score is appreciably higher than the UK Benchmark.

Fig 4.1 Northern Ireland client criteria scores compared to rest of UK | Quality of associates

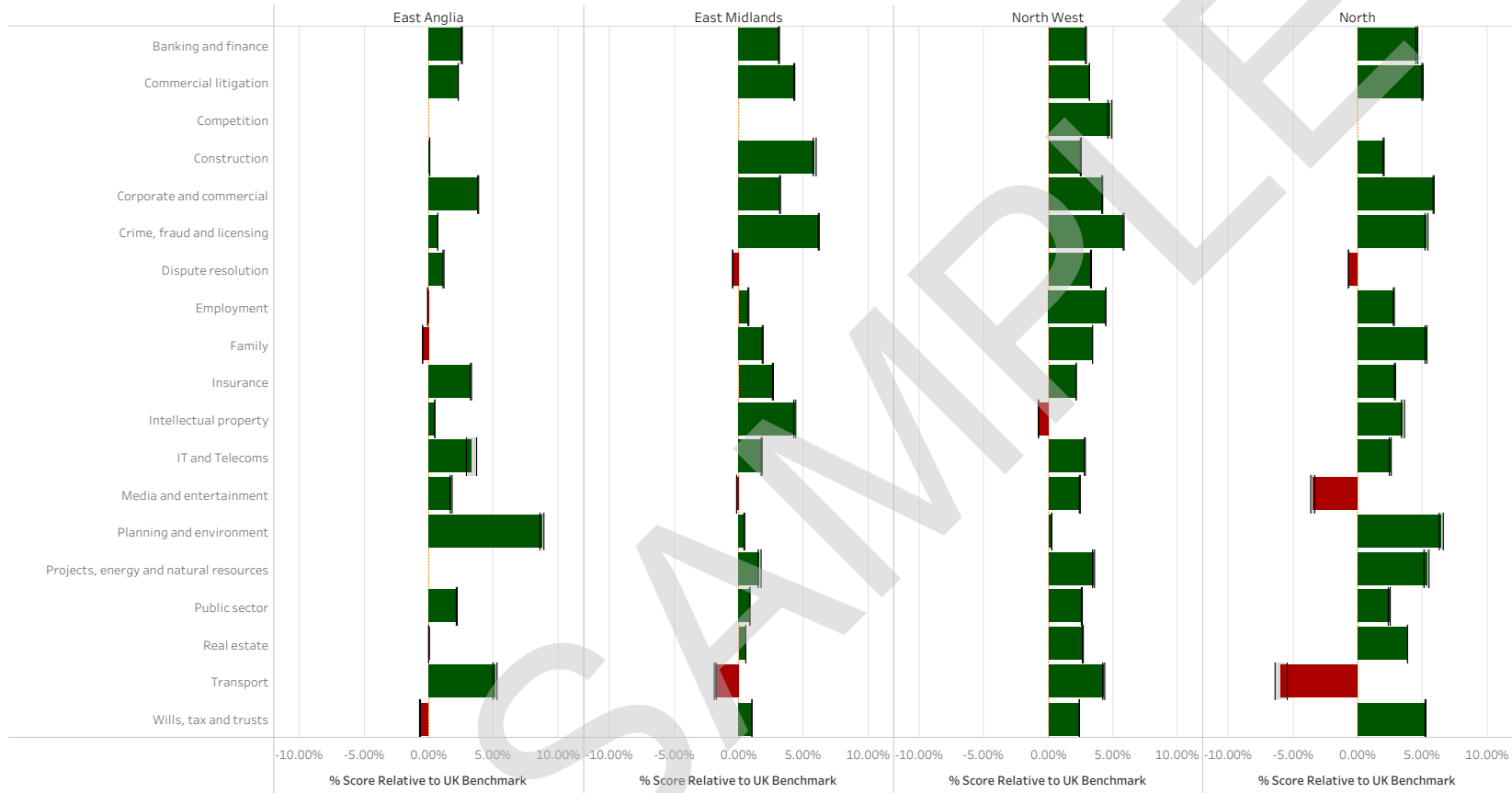


Nationwide there is some evidence of an inverse correlation between perceived quality of partners and perceived quality of associates within teams.

This phenomenon is less noticeable in Northern Ireland where associates outperform more senior colleagues, but the overall picture is one of strength across entire teams.

The following pages continue to show consistently high scoring for Team quality in Northern Ireland, with scores in each criteria significantly above Benchmark levels.

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

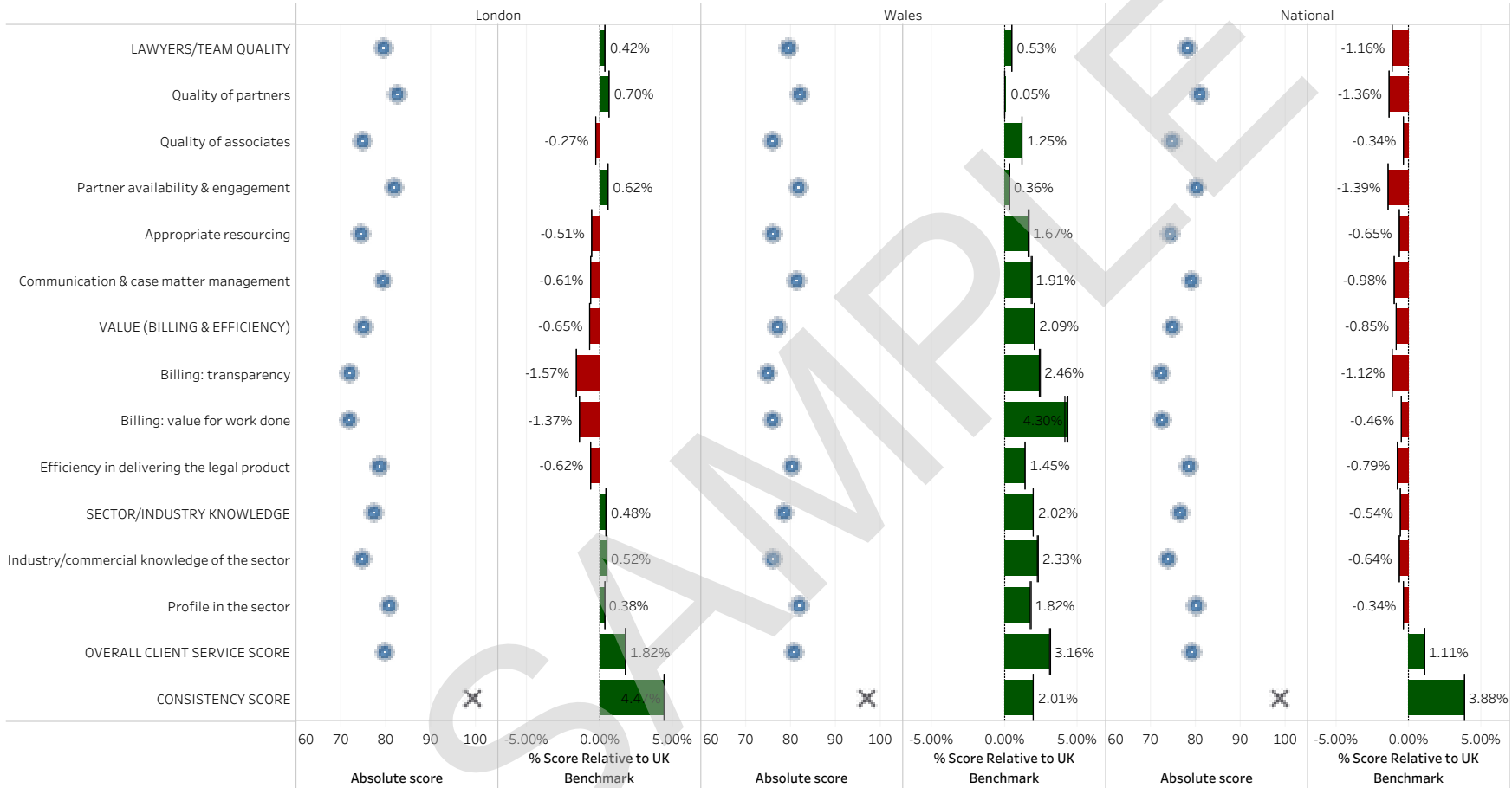


Across different regions of the UK, different practice areas stand out as local specialisms even within areas that perform relatively poorly overall. North West attracts lower scores relative to UK benchmarks overall and in that context its planning teams score very favourably.

Northern parts of the UK deliver the best all round scores across the widest range of practice areas, with the North and North West both scoring above the UK benchmark scores for the vast majority of practice areas listed.

Firms in Northern Ireland score above the UK benchmark in all practice areas.

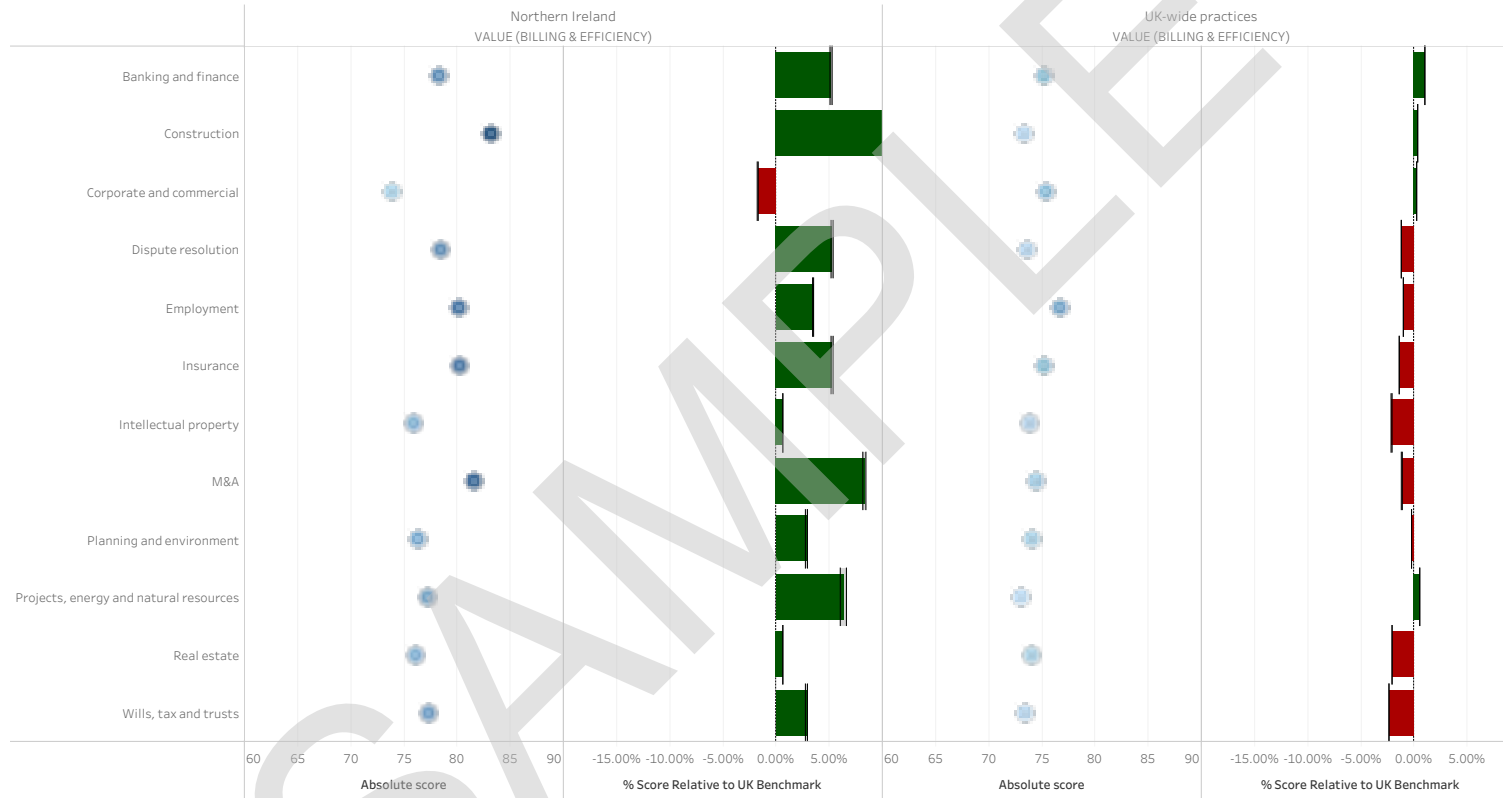
Fig 6.2 London and Wales v national firms | All client service criteria



While national practices score lower than local firms overall, the gap to the UK Benchmark is minimal, and national practices might be said to offer a more consistent service across the full range of client criteria than local firms. For example, East Anglian local firms score well for three or four criteria (most notably value for money), but where they score lower the variation from the Benchmark is appreciably more significant than it is at national practices.

The more in-depth coverage of relative performance of local and national firms by practice area in part 7 (see page X) reveals specifically where variations in client perception of firms' strengths and weaknesses occur.

Fig 7.2 Northern Ireland v UK-wide firms | VALUE (BILLING & EFFICIENCY) OVERALL

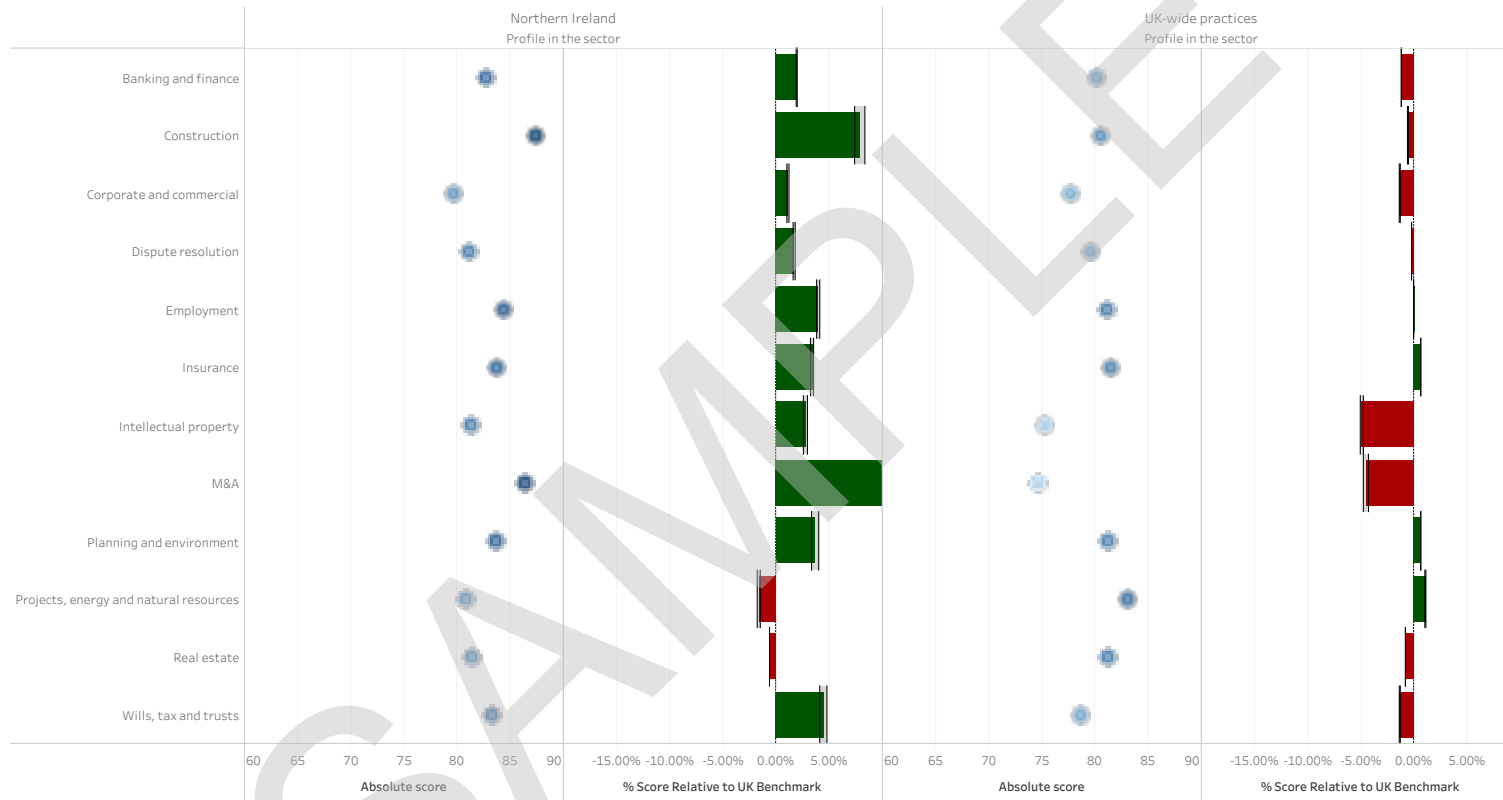


The majority of departments record positive scores relative to UK Benchmark figures for overall value at firms in Northern Ireland, with construction teams leading the way. Variations from Benchmark levels are a little more marginal among UK-wide practices, and more predominantly negative.

Some of Northern Ireland's highest performance indicators appear for billing: value for work done and transparency. For value for work done all listed departments except planning and environment score positively

relative to Benchmark levels. Similarly, in terms of billing transparency only corporate and commercial teams fall below Benchmark levels and again the overwhelming majority of scores outperform peer firms with a UK-wide presence.

Fig 7.4 Northern Ireland v UK-wide firms | CLIENT SERVICE SCORE OVERALL

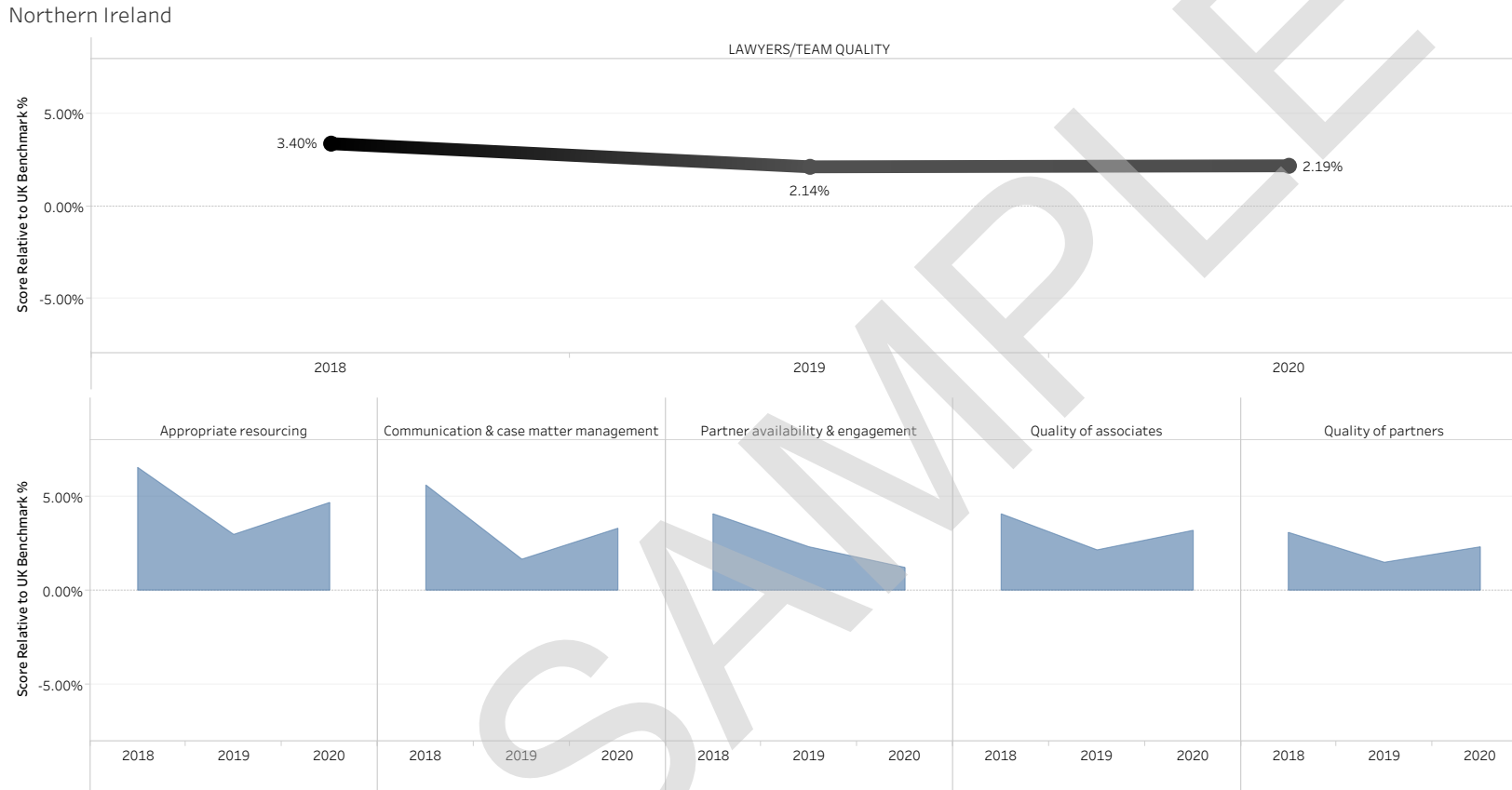


Overall client service scores are very positive at firms in Northern Ireland, with the vast majority of teams scoring comfortably above UK Benchmark levels, and the weakest departments, real estate and projects, nevertheless only fall just short of Benchmarks.

Almost all UK-wide practices record scores either very near to or above UK Benchmark levels.

Relative to each other, Northern Irish firms outscore UK-wide practices in a number of practice areas, with M&A and construction teams recording some of the most substantial relative differences.

Fig 8.1 Northern Ireland client criteria scores Year on Year | LAWYERS/TEAM QUALITY OVERALL



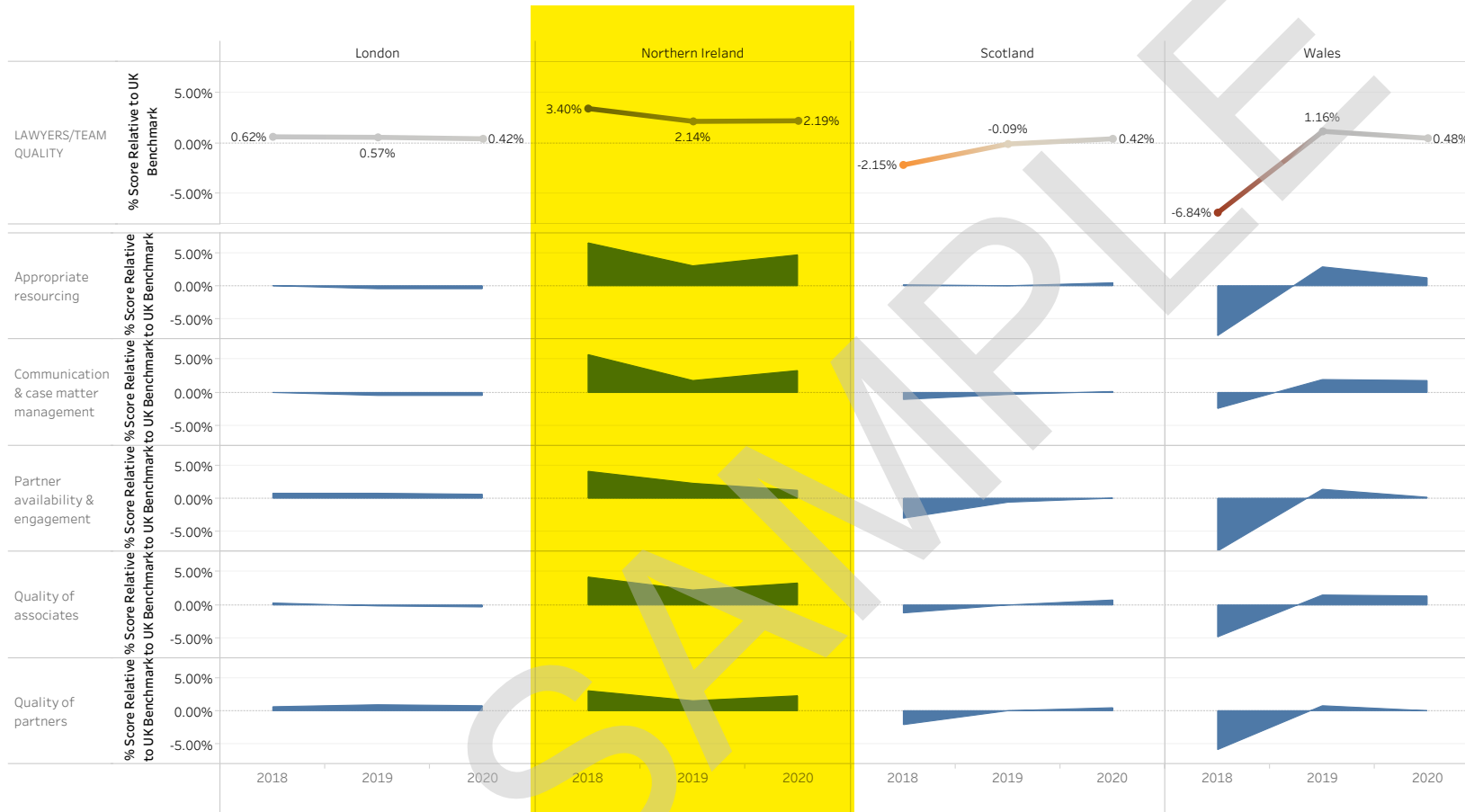
The Legal 500 has been compiling client satisfaction scoring data since 2018, allowing us to present year on year assessments of changing views of client service.

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.

Northern Ireland clients' assessment of overall team quality has improved marginally in the past twelve months, though a moderate decline (from a high base) is discernable over three years. Resourcing and case management scores have improved markedly this year, with corresponding upticks in scores for quality of partners and associates..

Fig 9.1 Regional/national year on year client service scores 2018-20 | LAWYERS/TEAM QUALITY OVERALL



Nationally, Northern Ireland's Client Service performance leads the way for lawyers/team quality, though a slight decline is discernable over three years and both Scotland and Wales' scores have risen sharply in the same period.

London scores have remained consistent throughout the three-year period though some variation can be seen within individual criteria, with London firms scoring below Benchmark levels for resourcing and communication but maintaining healthy scores for quality and availability of partners.