

# Qualified lawyers

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A qualified lawyer is someone who holds a professional legal qualification which confers rights to practise in England and Wales or in another jurisdiction.

## *What you need to become a solicitor of England and Wales*

Qualified lawyers need to

- have a degree that is the same level as a UK degree [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/degree-equivalent/>] , or other qualification and/or experience that is equivalent to this
- pass the SQE assessment which is made up of two parts:
  - SQE1 tests legal knowledge through a multiple choice test
  - SQE2 test practical skills through oral and written exams
  - Find out what the SQE tests [<https://sqe.sra.org.uk/about-sqe/what-is-the-sqe/assessment-topics>] and the exam costs [<https://sqe.sra.org.uk/about-sqe/costs-and-fees>] .
- meet our character and suitability requirements [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/character-and-suitability/>] .

## *Qualified lawyers do not need qualifying work experience*

Unlike other aspiring solicitors, qualified lawyers do not need two years' qualifying work experience.

## *SQE assessment exemptions*

Qualified lawyers can apply for SQE assessments exemptions based on their qualifications and/or experience. Find out what exemptions are available [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/qualified-lawyers/sqe-exemptions/>] .

If someone is granted an exemption from SQE2, they may also have to demonstrate their English or Welsh language competence [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/qualified-lawyers/sqe-exemptions/english-or-welsh-language-competence/>] .

## *If you are a UK lawyer*

Find out your steps to admission if you are a:



- Barrister of England and Wales (who has completed pupillage)  
[<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/pathways-qualification/barrister-england-wales/>]
- CILEX Practitioner or Chartered Legal Executive [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/pathways-qualification/chartered-legal-executives/>]
- Cost Lawyer [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/pathways-qualification/qualified-lawyers/>]
- Licensed Conveyancer [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/pathways-qualification/qualified-lawyers/>]
- Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland solicitor [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/pathways-qualification/northern-ireland-republic-ireland-solicitor/>]
- Patent Attorney [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/pathways-qualification/qualified-lawyers/>]
- Scottish solicitor [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/pathways-qualification/scottish-solicitor/>]
- Trade Mark Attorney [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/pathways-qualification/qualified-lawyers/>]

### *Our approach to qualified lawyers*

Find out more about principles and requirements for qualified lawyers

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/qualified-lawyers/principle-admission/>] .

### *Pathways to qualification*

Find your pathway to qualification [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/pathways-qualification/>] and what you need to do next.

### *Jurisdictions where there is political unrest*

Qualified lawyers in jurisdictions where there is political unrest, for example, Ukraine, Syria or Afghanistan, may want to come to England and Wales to practise law. We welcome applications for admission from lawyers from these jurisdictions and are happy to discuss an individual's circumstances.

We recognise that access to certain documentation or evidence, such as a certificate of good standing, can be difficult, but alternative documentation can be used to support an application. We make our decisions on a case-by-case basis, using the available evidence.

There are also a number of different ways of practising in England and Wales, in addition to becoming a solicitor.

Please contact our Education team [<https://www.sra.org.uk/home/contact-us/>] so we can provide more detail and arrange to discuss your situation, if that would be helpful.