

# Continuing professional development

## Suspension of the requirements

### Summary information

Education & Training Unit  
Version 1

Solicitors and registered European lawyers (RELs) can suspend the requirement to undertake continuing professional development (CPD) activities if they are not in legal practice or legal employment. Relevant circumstances would include

- illness
- maternity leave
- a career break
- working overseas
- unemployment

A suspension can be applied even if a current practising certificate is held. A solicitor or REL may also suspend the requirements if working, on average, less than two hours per week in legal employment.

To suspend the requirements, an individual need not apply to the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA); the individual should enter the dates of and reason for the suspension in their personal training record.

A solicitor or REL returning to work on a full-time basis must undertake two hours of CPD for each complete month, up to the following 31 October.

Technically, a solicitor or REL has no requirement in his or her current CPD period **prior** to a period of suspension. Only on their return to practice would they rejoin the scheme.

However, if suspending during a 'newly admitted' period, one hour for each complete month should be obtained both **before and after** the suspension, if returning before the following 31 October. If insufficient hours have been taken before the suspension, the individual will need to make up the hours, and the SRA can grant an extension of time if necessary.

The compulsory course(s) may also be suspended until such time as a solicitor or REL returns to legal practice or legal employment, as necessary.

If a solicitor or REL requires the SRA to determine their requirements on returning to practice, they will be asked to provide the following details:

- the CPD year they were in when the suspension began
- the amount, if any, of CPD activities they had undertaken
- an indication as to whether they are returning to work on a full-time basis or a part-time basis (if returning on a part-time basis, the number of hours per week that will be/are worked; details of hours worked should be entered in the personal training record for future reference)

Download a complete version of the Guidelines for suspension of the requirements.