

Student enrolment and completion of the academic stage of training

What you need to know

Information Directorate

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Important dates – for applicants applying through the Central Applications Board only *

March 2010	We will send an application form to those applying through the Central Applications Board (CAB).
1 April 2010	Deadline for receipt of completed application forms and fees from those students with character and suitability issues
2 August 2010	Deadline for receipt of completed application forms and fees for students without character and suitability issues
31 August 2010	Students who have not received confirmation of completion of the academic stage of training by this date should contact us (www.sra.org.uk/contact-us).
31 October 2010	Deadline for receipt of results for confirmation of the academic stage of training

* **Important** - if you are applying for a part-time course direct to the University/College, you can submit an application form up until the start of your LPC course, on the condition that you give the LPC provider a written undertaking on enrolment that you will lodge your application with the SRA within 7 calendar days of enrolment on the LPC.

If we do not receive your application within 7 days of enrolment, we will not process your application for the 2010 intake, we will return your application form and fee directly to you and you will be required to leave the course.

Students who intend to complete a part-time course but who have a character and suitability issue must apply for student enrolment no later than 1 April in the year they intend to start the LPC.

If you do not receive an EN1, or if you are applying to take the LPC part-time please download the form from www.sra.org.uk/enrol#form. **Before you return it to the SRA** please [contact us](#) to obtain a reference number that will enable us to track your application.

Introduction

The Solicitors Act 1974, the Solicitors' Training Regulations 2009, the Qualified Lawyers Transfer Regulations 2009 and the Solicitors' Admission Regulations 2009 oblige the SRA to ensure that an individual is of the requisite character and suitability before they are granted admission as a solicitor.

This requirement applies throughout the qualification process, although the construction of the regulations means that character and suitability are likely to be considered at specific points in the process, such as application for student enrolment.

Regulation 5 of the Solicitors' Training Regulations 2009 places an obligation on all applicants intending to commence a Legal Practice Course (LPC) to obtain a certificate of enrolment with the SRA and Regulation 7 of the same regulations places an obligation on all applicants to obtain a certificate of completion of the academic stage before attending the LPC.

Under the Training Regulations, we can refuse or revoke student enrolment.

Why you need to enrol as a student

Before you start your LPC, you must

- enrol as a student, and
- obtain written confirmation from us that you have completed the academic stage of training, i.e. that you have successfully completed a Qualifying Law Degree (QLD), or a Common Professional Examination (CPE) or a Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL) or have been awarded full exemption from the CPE

Until you have done both, you will not be able to start the LPC or enter into a training contract.

(For information about these courses, see www.sra.org.uk/students/academic-stage.page and www.sra.org.uk/students/conversion-courses.page.)

How to apply

If you have applied for a full-time LPC through the Central Applications Board (CAB), the board will give us your details and at the beginning of March we will post you an application for student enrolment and completion of the academic stage.

If you do not receive an EN1, or if you are applying to take the LPC part time please download the form from www.sra.org.uk/enrol#form. **Before you return it to the SRA** please contact us to obtain a reference number that will enable us to track your application.

When to apply

For applicants applying through the Central Applications Board only

If you have no character and suitability issues, you must send your application and fee early enough to ensure that we receive it **before 2 August** in the year you intend to start the LPC. We aim to process 95 per cent of applications within 30 days of receiving them.

If you have any [character and suitability issues \(see below\)](#) that we need to consider, you must send your application, supporting documents and fee so we receive it before 1 April of the year you intend to start the LPC. These applications take longer to process and may involve an interview with an SRA Adjudicator.

Applications received after both applicable dates of **1 April** and **2 August** will not be considered in time to enable students to enrol on the LPC in 2010 and will be returned with the fee.

Your application is not complete without the £80 fee.

When to apply – for applicants applying for part-time courses direct to the University/College - only

If you are applying for a part-time course direct to the University/College, you can submit an application form up until the start of your LPC course, on the condition that you give the LPC provider a written undertaking on enrolment that you will lodge your application with the SRA within 7 calendar days of enrolment on the LPC.

If we do not receive your application within 7 days of enrolment, we will not process your application for the 2010 intake, we will return your application form and fee directly to you and you will be required to leave the course.

If you have no character and suitability issues, we aim to process 95 per cent of applications within 30 days of receiving them, subject to the applications being complete.

Important note - If you are attending a part-time course and have [character and suitability issues \(see below\)](#) that we need to consider, you must send your application, supporting documents and fee so we receive it **before 1 April** of the year you intend to start the LPC. These applications take longer to process and may involve an interview with an SRA Adjudicator.

Applications received after both applicable dates of **1 April** and **within 7 days of enrolment** will not be considered in time to enable students to enrol on the LPC in 2010 and will be returned with the fee.

Your application is not complete without the £80 fee.

If we receive your application after the deadline, we will return your form and fee and we will not deal with your application except in exceptional circumstances, such as

- close family bereavement,
- prolonged period of hospitalisation or illness which made it impossible to meet the deadline; or
- trauma, such as being the victim of a serious crime.

Inability to meet the deadline because of a holiday or a late decision to attend an LPC course are unlikely to meet our definition of exceptional circumstances.

Each case is judged on its individual merits, following submission of the late application with all relevant supporting evidence.

Once granted, student enrolment remains valid for four years. For example, if your enrolment is granted on the 2 August 2010, it remains valid for the remainder of the year and until 31 December 2014. Shortly before your student enrolment expires a REN2 application for re-enrolment will be sent to you asking whether you want to renew your student enrolment. If you do, you will be required to complete and return the application with a fee. It is therefore essential for you to keep the SRA informed of any change of address details.

If you are not enrolled as a student then you will not be able to start your LPC.

Your character and suitability to be a solicitor – what you need to tell us

When you enrol as a student, you must declare any information that might affect your suitability to be a solicitor. This includes

- any criminal conviction, including cautions, fines, reprimands and warnings (even if they are spent);
- any instance of cheating in examinations or plagiarism during a course of study;
- any County Court Judgments against you, declarations of bankruptcy (even if they have been satisfied) or evidence of inability to manage financial affairs; or
- any other incident in which your character has been called into question.

Details of the supporting documents you must supply can be found in the guidance notes in section B of the EN1 application form at www.sra.org.uk/enrol#form.

You must send us all of the required information and supporting documents by the closing date 1 April of the year that you intend to start the LPC, or we will return your form and fee.

You must disclose any character or suitability issues at the earliest opportunity. Failure to do so may have serious implications if you wish to practise as a solicitor.

Why you have to make these declarations

Under the Solicitors Act 1974, the SRA has been delegated responsibility for setting, maintaining and enforcing standards for all solicitors admitted in England and Wales. We therefore have a duty to consider the character and suitability of anyone who wishes to enter the profession.

When you apply for admission to the roll of solicitors you must complete a Criminal Records Bureau standard disclosure (see www.crb.gov.uk for more information).

What happens if you have convictions or other issues?

Every case is considered on its own merits. You will be asked to supply written confirmation of the relevant issues and you may be asked to appear before an SRA adjudicator to explain your situation.

If matters arise after your student enrolment which may affect your character and suitability to remain a student, you must tell us immediately. If you do not, there may be a delay to your application for admission as a solicitor or, after admission, in your application for a practising certificate.

Your referees

You must provide details of referees who can confirm that you are suitable to be a solicitor. Your referees should be

- people who know you well enough to vouch for your character,
- professional people (e.g. doctor, solicitor, teacher),
- people who know of any problems you have had such as convictions, instances of plagiarism or any other factors which might relate to your suitability to become a solicitor, e.g. if you have had any instances of plagiarism, you must provide an academic reference from your course provider.

We do not accept references from relatives.

What happens next?

We will tell you in writing whether we have granted you student enrolment. If you have not heard from us thirty days after we received your application, contact us via www.sra.org.uk/contact-us.

Completion of the academic stage of training

Before you can start your LPC or enter into a training contract, we must verify that you have the academic qualifications necessary to do so. You must have passed the foundations of legal knowledge within a QLD or CPE/GDL within the required time frame.

There is a strict limit on the validity of these qualifications for the purposes of qualifying as a solicitor. They are valid for seven years from 1 October in the year of the award. After this time, the qualification is considered 'stale' and you must retake all of the foundation subjects by completing the entire CPE/GDL.

In exceptional cases, we may re-validate a 'stale' academic qualification if there is reliable, independent evidence that you have undertaken ongoing legal updating. This may include evidence of the applicant having maintained a sound working knowledge of the foundations of legal knowledge by actively engaging in legal work in professional practice or as a legal educator, throughout the period following the completion of the academic stage of training.

Re-validation of qualifications more than 7 years old is a discretionary process and such discretion will only be exercised when an applicants qualifications are no more than 10 years old.

You must make a formal application for completion of the academic stage of training by completing section D of the EN1 application form at www.sra.org.uk/enrol#form. Please fully complete this section to help us verify your qualifications with results that may have been sent by your university. Failure to do so may result in the application taking longer to process.

When we have received your qualifications, we will confirm in writing that you have completed the academic stage of training. You will not be allowed to undertake the LPC if you have not received this confirmation from the SRA.

The certificate of completion of the academic stage of training will remain valid for seven years from 1 October of the year in which the applicant obtained the QLD, CPE/GDL or satisfactorily completed an Integrated Course, or for two years from the date of the certificate, whichever is the later.

Automatic notification of your academic achievements

The majority of academic stage results are sent to us directly by universities, colleges and course providers. This may apply to you if you have completed a QLD or CPE/GDL within the last four years or you expect to graduate or complete the course by 31 August.

To ensure this happens, you must make your university or course provider aware that you wish your name and result to be added to the information that is sent directly to the SRA.

Other notification of your academic achievements

If your academic stage results have not been sent directly to us, you must provide us with other evidence of your attainment. If you have completed a QLD or the CPE/GDL, you must supply certified copies of your degree certificate and transcripts for each year of your degree studies that have been signed by a professional person (e.g. a solicitor, doctor or teacher) as being true copies of the original documents.

If you have a condoned/compensated mark your degree will need to be assessed. Please ask your institution to provide your full academic transcript which indicates all the foundation subjects of legal knowledge and a letter of support.

If you have obtained your qualification via a credit transfer or completed part of your course at an overseas institution, please ask both your institutions to provide your full academic transcript which indicates all the foundation subjects of legal knowledge.

Only send original documents when absolutely necessary. Send them by recorded delivery to the SRA with a stamped addressed envelope for their return.

If you are a Member or Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives (ILEX) or you have a non-qualifying degree, you will need to complete a CPE Exemption application in order to be granted completion of the academic stage of training.

You can download the application form and notes from www.sra.org.uk/students/conversion-courses.page or [contact us](#).

All results must be received by the SRA by 31 October in order for completion of the academic stage of training to be confirmed.

What happens next?

We will confirm in writing that you have been granted completion of the academic stage of training. If you do not have this by 31 August, [contact us](#).

Refunds for student enrolment

We will refund your fee (after deducting £10 for administration costs) in the following circumstances only:

- your application has been received but not processed, or
- in the unfortunate event that the student has died.

If you decide not to undertake the LPC, or if you transfer to the Bar Vocational Course (BVC), after student enrolment has been granted, a refund will not be issued.

Reminder

You **must not** undertake a LPC or enter into a training contract until you have obtained written confirmation from the SRA that:

- you are enrolled as a student, **and**
- you have completed the academic stage of training.

If you start a course without both documents, you may not be allowed to complete it, and you may not be entitled to any refunds of course fees paid.

Guidance notes and frequently asked questions (FAQ)

Students will need to enrol with the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) before they can start the Legal Practice Course (LPC) and should apply for student enrolment by **no later than 2 August** in the year they intend to start the LPC.

All students with character and suitability issues are required to apply for student enrolment **no later than 1 April** in the year they intend to start the LPC.

Student enrolment with the SRA is for a four year period and is required for both the duration of the LPC and registration of any training contract.

Part A – Personal details

Please ensure you provide your full name as it appears on your birth certificate, marriage certificate or deed poll both to the SRA and LPC Provider and amend any details regarding your permanent address. The address must be a fixed address, e.g. your parents' address, rather than a term-time address, as this will ensure that you receive any correspondence regarding student enrolment.

Part B – Character and suitability

All questions must be answered on this section and the declaration must be signed.

FAQ

Q. I have answered “Yes” to question 1 — how do I get a Police National Computer (PNC) check?

A. You must complete a “subject access request form”. The relevant application form to request a PNC can be downloaded from the Metropolitan Police’s website at www.met.police.uk/information/request_forms.htm. Please be aware that a Scottish Enhanced/Standard Disclosure is not sufficient for student enrolment purposes.

A PNC check can take up to 40 days to process and the Metropolitan Police will require a £10 fee. It is advisable that you make your request in advance, so that you can send the PNC check with your application form by 1 April. However, do not miss that deadline because you have not received the PNC check. If you are unable to send the PNC check with your application form, please indicate the date on which you requested it in Part H (the ‘checklist section’). We will then be aware of when we should receive the check from you.

Q. I have had a speeding ticket. Do I answer “Yes” to any of the questions in Part B?

A. If you were sent notification of this through the post and received a fine, provided that the fine has been paid, you do not need to disclose this. However, if this fine led to disqualification from driving, you must answer “Yes” to question 1 and follow the notes on that page.

Q. I have answered “Yes” to a question in Part B; do I need to submit details of additional referees?

A. Yes – you will need to supply details of 3 referees who have knowledge of what you are disclosing and have given their consent to be contacted on your behalf. Applicants are requested to advise their referees to attach a written statement referring to the matters to the questionnaire that will be sent by the SRA.

This mandatory referee can be:

- **Educational** – the referee should have known the applicant for a least one year and have taught them within the last three years. The only exception is for students who have completed a CPE course—their referee must have known them for at least six months.
- **Employment** – the referee should be the applicant’s most recent employer, excluding any temporary or short-term employment of less than six months. Normally, they should have known them for at least two years.

If the student is unable to use either an educational or employment referee, the referee should be someone who

holds or has held a position of responsibility or is accustomed to providing references, and

has agreed to act as a referee on the student’s behalf.

References from relatives are not permitted.

Q. I am applying direct to the university to attend a part-time course but I have a character and suitability issue to disclose. When do I need to send in my EN1 application?

A. Your EN1 application needs to be received by the SRA no later than 1 April in the year you intend to start the LPC.

Part C - Vetting

Your application for student enrolment may be subject to a series of checks to verify the details given. This process could involve checking your identity and information provided with third party suppliers, who collate open source information from a

variety of data sources such as the electoral roll and financial institutions. If your application is randomly selected for vetting we may contact you.

FAQ

- Q. I have not got a passport will this delay my application?**
- A. No, just ensure that you enter N/A into the appropriate box.
- Q. I need more information regarding visas.**
- A. Further assistance regarding visas can be found at:
www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/doineedvisa

Part D – Confirmation of completion of the academic stage

FAQ

- Q. Why is there a “Yes” and “No” box for the statement “I wish to apply for the completion of the academic stage of training”. Why would I tick “No”?**
- A. If your intention is to sit the LPC this year, then you should tick “Yes”. Please ensure that you complete this section fully as this will help us validate your academic studies.

If you have already completed the LPC – previous student enrolment has expired – and it is your intention to register into a training contract, then you should tick “No”.

Part G - Declaration

FAQ

- Q. My son/daughter is unable to complete the application form for student enrolment because they are travelling overseas.**
- A. The EN1 application can be downloaded from our website www.sra.org.uk/students. If you download the application form, please add the eight-digit number which is found on the EN1 form that we originally sent you, if applicable.

If the student is unable to access the internet, you as a parent, may sign the form and return it to us, provided a Power of Attorney has been granted. If you send a letter authorising parents without attaching the original copy of a Power of Attorney, we will not be able to process your application. We will send a chase letter requesting that you complete the form, which will delay the application process.

Once the EN1 form is submitted, the SRA can confirm receipt of the form to a parent following security checks. However, due to our Data Protection policy, this is all that we can confirm, no details about the

progression of the application can be disclosed, unless submitted with a Power of Attorney.

Q. How long does student enrolment last?

A. A letter of enrolment is valid for the remainder of the year in which you first enrol and a further four years.

Student enrolment is automatically renewed up to FOUR enrolments and you do not have to contact us for this.

Shortly before your student enrolment expires a REN2 Application will be sent to you, asking whether you want to renew your student enrolment. If you do, you will be required to complete and return the application with a fee. It is therefore essential for you to keep the SRA updated of any change of address details.

The fee

FAQ

Q. Why do I need to submit a fee of £80 with the EN1 application, when I have already paid a fee to the college where I will be studying the LPC?

A. These two fees are completely separate. In addition to the student enrolment fee (payable with EN1 form), an LPC Student Registration Fee is payable to the LPC provider on commencement of the course. This fee is collected from the provider by the SRA and is used for the purposes of monitoring, supporting and developing the LPC.

Q. Will I have to pay £80 each year?

A. No. The fee of £80 will cover your student enrolment up until 31 December of the year in which you apply, and then four more complete years. We will send you a letter each year to confirm that your student enrolment has been renewed.

Granting completion of the Academic Stage of Training

In most cases, results from universities/colleges are automatically sent to the SRA regarding the academic stage of training, i.e.

- law degrees,
- common professional examination (CPE) and
- graduate diploma in law (GDL).

It is a student's responsibility to ensure that their details will be sent to us directly from the university/college. Please do not submit transcripts unless we specifically

request you to do so. Should you be contacted at a later date, please note you will be asked for certified copies of your transcript and degree certificate. Please be aware that uncertified copies will not be acceptable.

Applications for student enrolment should be processed within 30 days unless the application is incomplete or the individual has disclosed a character and suitability issue—these applications will take longer.

In July/August, once we have received the student's results, we will send letters confirming completion of the academic stage of training.

If we are able to confirm both student enrolment and completion of the academic stage of training at the same time, we will send you one letter confirming this, as opposed to two separate letters.

FAQ

Q. Can I start the LPC without my certifying letters?

A. If you wish to start the LPC before receiving the certifying letters, you can do so at your own risk. Your course provider should be able to provide you with a date by which you must provide the certifying letters, if not, you could be asked to leave the course.

USEFUL LINKS

www.sra.org.uk/enrol

www.met.police.uk/information/info_about_you.htm

<http://www.sra.org.uk/sra/how-we-work/decision-making/criteria/character-and-suitability-assessment-of.page>

www.sra.org.uk/sra/how-we-work/records-mangement.page

<http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/doineedvisa/>