

FAQs about continuing competence

Updated 25 November 2019

All solicitors must adopt our approach to continuing competence. This means that solicitors must reflect on their practice and undertake regular learning and development so their skills and knowledge remain up to date. All solicitors will need to make an annual declaration to us that they have done this. A toolkit [<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/continuing-competence/cpd/continuing-competence/>] is available to support solicitors and their employers in moving the new approach, plus we have frequently asked questions below.

Continuing competence basics

Open all [#]

When does the continuing competence year start and end?

It follows the practising year which runs from 1 November until 31 October each year.

Do I need to do continuing competence?

Yes if you are:

- a practising solicitor of England and Wales
- a registered European lawyer

How many hours of continuing competence do I need to do?

There is no longer a minimum requirement. You should reflect on your work and complete learning and development that keeps you competent.

Which activities can I use for my continuing competence?

You decide which activities will help you to deliver a proper standard of service.

How do I record my continuing competence?

You can decide how to record your continuing competence. For help with recording your learning and development see our toolkit



[<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/continuing-competence/cpd/continuing-competence/record-evaluate/>] .

Who should pay for my continuing competence?

This should be a discussion between you and your employer. There are a range of ways to meet your learning and development needs, some of them are free.

See our toolkit [<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/continuing-competence/cpd/continuing-competence/address-learning-development/>] for further information.

Why is there no longer a requirement to undertake accredited training?

We no longer require solicitors to undertake accredited training because our new approach allows solicitors freedom and flexibility to decide their own learning and development needs.

Do I have to do continuing competence if I am exempt from holding a practising certificate under section 88?

Yes as you are working in legal employment.

Can I have an extension?

No, we no longer grant an extension of time.

If you cannot complete all your activities you may wish to prioritise those which will best ensure you deliver a proper standard of service.

I am a Registered Foreign Lawyer, do I have to do continuing competence?

No.

I am unable to complete my continuing competence, what do I do?

We expect all solicitors to keep their knowledge and skills up to date. You should therefore complete it as soon as possible.

I am working abroad. Do I have to do continuing competence?

Yes if you are practising overseas. This applies whether or not you hold a practising certificate.

You need to decide how you deliver a proper standard of service in your role.

See our SRA Overseas and Cross-border Practice Rules 2019

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/overseas-cross-border-practice-rules/>]
for further information.

Suspension of continuing competence

Open all [#]

What do I do if I am going to be out of practice for a while?

You do not need to reflect on your work when you are not practising.

How do I suspend my continuing competence?

You no longer suspend your training requirements.

What do I have to do when I return to work?

You should reflect and decide your learning and development needs to ensure you deliver a proper standard of service.