Solicitor apprenticeships

Updated 28 November 2025

Aspiring solicitors can qualify through a <u>solicitor apprenticeship</u> [https://skillsengland.education.gov.uk/apprenticeships/st0246-v1-1]_ in England. All apprentices must pass the SQE and meet our suitability requirements to qualify as a solicitor. Solicitor apprenticeships are not currently available in Wales.

There are two different apprenticeship routes: the trailblazer apprentice and the graduate apprentice.

Trailblazer apprenticeship

Key facts

- Typically takes five to six years to complete and can be started post-A level.
- Offers an alternative to going straight to university and may suit if you want to 'earn as you learn'.
- · As with all aspiring solicitors, you must pass both parts of the SQE .
- · All the SQE training and assessments cost is paid for through the apprenticeship levy fund.
- At least 20% of the training (eg one day a week) such as studying for university undergraduate degree or SQE training takes place away from the office.
- The time spent working as an apprentice counts as the <u>qualifying work experience [#qwel</u> you need to become a solicitor.
- You will have gained a level 7 qualification (equivalent to a Master's degree) upon completion of the apprenticeship.
- At the end, providing you pass the SQE and meet our <u>suitability requirements [https://www.sra.org.uk/becomesolicitor/character-and-suitability/]</u>, you can qualify as a solicitor.

Entry requirements

Many employers have their own requirements which will be posted on their apprenticeship advert. However, the recommended entry requirements are:

- 5 GCSEs, including mathematics and English grade C or above (or equivalent) or grade 4 or above for those attaining qualifications in 2017 or afterwards.
- 3 A Levels (or equivalent) minimum grade C.

Some employers also offer solicitor apprenticeships to individuals who have already completed some legal training. This could be a law degree, the Legal Practice Course or the Trailblazer level 3 paralegal apprenticeship. These candidates also need to complete all the elements of the SQE. However, depending on their experience and skills they may not take the full 5 to 6 years.

Graduate apprenticeship

Key facts

- This scheme can be used for graduates to complete their training as a solicitor.
- It typically takes two to three years to complete which counts as their <u>qualifying work experience</u> [https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/qualifying-work-experience-candidates/].
- As with all aspiring solicitors, you must pass both parts of the SQE .
- · All the SQE training and assessments cost is paid for through the apprenticeship levy fund.
- At least 20% of the training (eg one day a week) such as studying for the SQE takes place away from the
 office.
- At the end of the graduate solicitor apprenticeship, providing you pass the SQE and meet our <u>suitability</u> requirements [https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/assessment-character-suitability-rules/], you can qualify as a solicitor.

Entry requirements

You would need a level 6 undergraduate degree to join a graduate solicitor apprenticeship programme.

More about apprenticeships and where to find them

Go to <u>GOV.UK_[https://skillsengland.education.gov.uk/apprenticeships/st0246-v1-1]</u> for more information on apprenticeships. You can also search and apply for apprenticeships available in England.

 $\underline{Read\ our\ Q\&As\ [https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/qa/\#apprenticeships]}\ on\ the\ solicitor\ apprenticeship.$

Solicitor apprenticeship infographic



Employers taking on apprentices

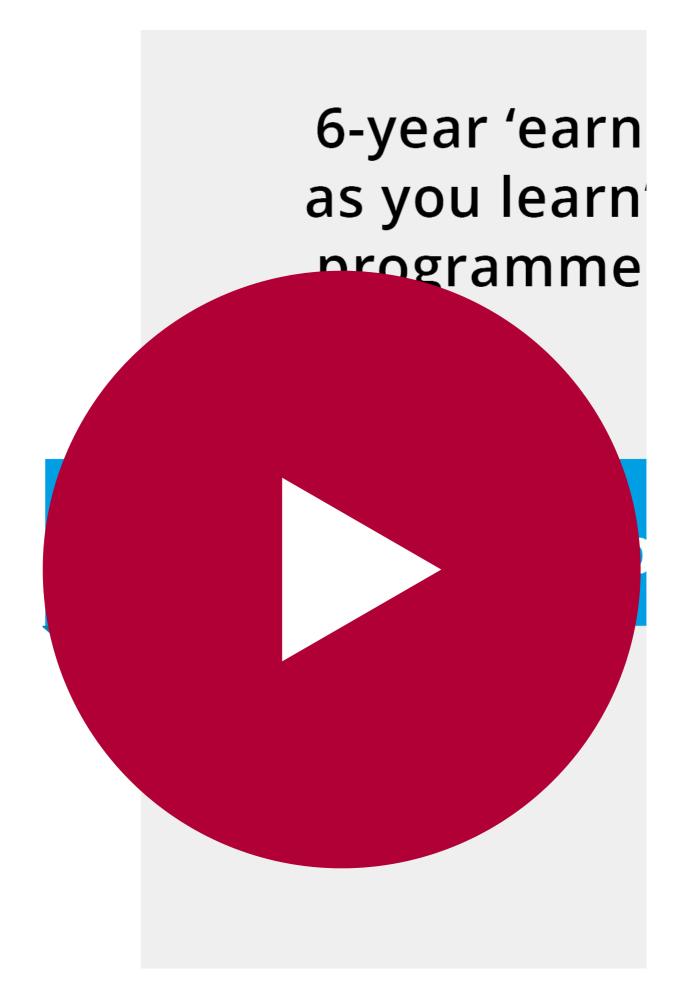
If your organisation is interested in offering solicitor apprenticeships in England, here are some tips and things to think about:

- Any law firm, in-house legal team or legal services provider can offer a solicitor apprenticeship.
 Employers work with a training provider to offer the academic study and learning needed.
 From January 2026, the new Apprenticeship Funding Rules for learning registration of the provider to the provider to the provider to the provider of the provider to th
 - o candidates 21 and under
 - o those starting an apprenticeship aged 16 to 25 who have an Education, Health and Care Plan or are a care leaver
 - existing apprentices.
- it is for a short You can take on apprentices for the full st years or gradu r Jeri d (arzui
- Hiring an apprentice can be good way to grow talent and develop your workforce you can even apprenticeships to existing staff.
- Information and useful case studies [https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/emp

Apprenticeships: what law firms need to know

What is it?





Apply for a sol apprenticeship

Pass SQE1 dur apprenticeship

Qualifiying a

Once you've



SQE2:



Register
your QWE** confirmed by
a solicitor

* Graduate apprentice



** Qualifying work ex