

Frequently asked questions for trainees

Period of recognised training

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What is a period of recognised training?

A period of recognised training is structured, work based learning which forms part of the vocational stage in the route to qualifying as a solicitor.

More

It is closely supervised and is usually for a period of two years if undertaken on a full time basis.

A trainee is required to gain experience in at least three distinct areas of English and Welsh law and practice if they commenced their training under the SRA Training Regulations 2014 - Qualification and Provider Regulations.

There is no requirement for three distinct areas of law if the trainee commenced their training from 25 November 2019, under the Authorisation of Individuals Regulations [solicitors/standards-regulations/authorisation-individuals-regulations/]. The training must still meet the practice skills standards so a varied workload is still expected.

A training record [trainees/period-recognised-training.page] must be kept throughout the training.

When can I start a period of recognised training?

You would normally start a period of recognised training after completion of the Legal Practice Course (LPC). More

It is also possible to complete your training while studying a Qualifying Law Degree, Common Professional Examination or LPC.

Further information can be found in our Authorised training provider information pack [trainees/resources/authorised-training-provider-information-pack/].

Can I reduce the length of my period of recognised training?

Possibly, if you have worked in a legal environment and gained equivalent experience in the three years before starting training. More

Your organisation can, at its discretion, recognise relevant prior experience and take this time into account to reduce the period of training.

The time can be recognised on a like-for like basis up to a maximum period of six months (183 calendar days).

Further information may be found in our Authorised Training Provider Pack [trainees/resources/authorised-training-provider-information-pack/].

Can I complete a period of recognised training on a part time basis?

Yes, the total length of the period of recognised training would depend on

the usual number of days worked each week (not including overtime or weekend work). [More](#)

A full-time training period, in which you work five days per week, is for two years (730 calendar days, or 522 working days).

So, as a guide, if you work:

- two and a half days per week, the period is four years (1,460 calendar days)
- three days per week, the period is three years and four months (1,216 calendar days)
- four days per week, the period is two years and six months (913 calendar days)

Further information can be found in our Authorised training provider information pack [[trainees/resources/authorised-training-provider-information-pack](#)].

How much holiday and sickness leave am I allowed during the period of recognised training?

This should be agreed between you and your employer. It should be included in the terms and conditions of your employment. [More](#)

Can my period of recognised training be terminated?

A period of recognised training is an apprenticeship. An apprenticeship can only be brought to an end if certain criteria are met. [More](#)

Further information can be found in our Authorised training provider information pack [[trainees/resources/authorised-training-provider-information-pack](#)].

What happens if my training provider cannot offer three areas of law?

If you commenced a period of recognised training under the SRA Training Regulations 2014, between 1 July 2014 and 24 November 2019, [More](#)

and your training provider cannot provide you with experience in three separate areas of English and Welsh law and practice, or experience in the range of work required by the Practice Skills Standards, they must arrange for you to be seconded. During your secondment you must be:

- adequately supervised
- appraised regularly
- given training in English and Welsh law and practice.

Secondments do not have to be approved by us.

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I am a Chartered Legal Executive. Am I exempt from a period of recognised training?

You may be exempt from a period of training if you have: [More](#)

- satisfied the requirements of the academic stage through study or exemptions granted
- completed the Legal Practice Course (LPC)
- been engaged as a Chartered Legal Executive in the practice of law.

You are automatically exempt from the elective elements of the Professional Skills Course (PSC). The mandatory elements of the PSC must be completed prior to applying for admission to the roll.

When you apply to be admitted as a solicitor you will need to provide us with evidence of your qualification as a Chartered Legal Executive.

Further information can be found in our Equivalent Means guidance [\[students/resources/equivalent-means-information-pack\]](#).

I am an Assistant Justices' Clerk. Am I exempt from a period of recognised training?

You may be exempt from a period of training if you have: [More](#)

- completed the academic stage
- completed the Legal Practice Course (LPC)
- before attending the LPC, you have served for at least five years out of the last 10 years in the Magistrates' Courts Service as an Assistant Justices' Clerk.

You are automatically exempt from the elective elements of the Professional Skills Course (PSC). The mandatory elements of the PSC must be completed prior to applying for admission to the roll.

Further information can be found in our Equivalent Means guidance [\[students/resources/equivalent-means-information-pack\]](#).

I have worked as a paralegal. Can I be exempt from a period of recognised training?

It is possible to be exempt from a period of recognised training. [More](#)

You need to demonstrate you have achieved the outcomes that would have been gained by completing a period of recognised training.

We call this 'Equivalent Means'.

To apply for the exemption you must submit an Equivalent Means - Period of Recognised Training [\[globalassets/documents/students/application-form-equivalent-means-recognised-training.docx?version=496a28\]](#) application.

The fee is £600.

Chartered Legal Executives and Assistant Justices' Clerks may automatically be exempt from a period of recognised training.

Further information can be found in our Equivalent Means guidance [\[students/resources/equivalent-means-information-pack\]](#).

Trainee character and suitability

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What is a character and suitability issue?

Details can be found in [More](#)

our SRA Assessment of Character and Suitability Rules 2019 [\[solicitors/standards-regulations/assessment-character-suitability-rules/\]](#) .

What will happen if my application is refused?

Our decision on your early assessment of character and suitability is not binding. [More](#)

However, providing you have no other issues to disclose, we usually uphold this decision when you apply for admission.

Do I have to inform my training principal of any character and suitability issues?

You are advised to inform your training principal. [More](#)

You may wish to do an early assessment and complete an Assessment of your Character and Suitability [\[trainees/period-recognised-training/character-and-suitability/\]](#) .

Professional Skills Course (PSC)

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What is the Professional Skills Course (PSC)?

The PSC builds on the knowledge and skills acquired during the Legal Practice Course (LPC). [More](#)

It consists of three compulsory subject areas and electives. Further information can be found in our Professional Skills Course information pack [\[trainees/resources/professional-skills-course-information-pack/\]](#) .

Do I need to complete the PSC before I finish my period of recognised training?

If you commence a period of recognised training, the PSC would normally be completed during the period of recognised training [More](#)

If this does not happen, the training would not have to be extended but you would be unable to apply for admission until the PSC was completed.

Who pays for the PSC?

The training provider pays for a trainee's first attempt and expenses [More](#)

as set out in regulation 3.1(b) of the SRA Education, Training and Assessment Provider Regulations 2019 [\[solicitors/standards-regulations/education-training-assessment-provider-regulations/#reg-3\]](#)

Can I have any exemptions from the PSC?

You may be granted exemptions from one or more of the core elements if you have the relevant experience and/or training which covers the same ground as the PSC's Written Standards. [More](#)

The PSC is designed to build on the Legal Practice Course (LPC), so completion of the LPC cannot be used as a basis to apply for exemptions from the core elements of the PSC.

If you wish to seek exemption you must submit an Equivalent Means - Professional Skills Course (not CILEX) [[globalassets/documents/students/application-form-equivalent-means-psc.docx?version=496a9b](#)] application.

The fee is £210.

Those not required to enter into a period of recognised training, for example Chartered Legal Executives and Justices' Clerks' Assistants, are automatically exempt from the electives.

Equivalent means

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What is Equivalent Means?

SRA Authorisation of Individuals Regulations 2019 allows us to recognise some assessed learning and supervised work based learning as 'Equivalent Means'. [More](#)

To be admitted as a solicitor you must have completed:

- the academic stage, and
- the vocational stage.

Applications for exemptions from any of the stages must be made on the relevant Equivalent Means form

Further information can be found in our Equivalent Means guidance [[students/resources/equivalent-means-information-pack](#)].

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The fee is £600.

Chartered Legal Executives and Assistant Justices' Clerks may automatically be exempt from a period of recognised training.

Further information can be found in our Equivalent Means guidance [[students/resources/equivalent-means-information-pack](#)].

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