

Jargon

Jargon and legalese

The legal world is complex. We want to make it easy to look up solicitors and law firms, but sometimes we have to use technical terms. Our plan is to put explanations where you need them, in the pages themselves. Until we get that done, here is a list of the terms that may cause trouble.

Solicitors Regulation Authority

We are the Solicitors Regulation Authority. This is our service. Learn more about the SRA [sra].

SRA-regulated firm

We regulate this law firm and it must follow our rules. It is allowed to provide all legal services.

SRA-regulated freelance

We allow this person to practise as an individual, outside a law firm.

SRA-regulated firm (Conditions apply)

We regulate this law firm. It is allowed to offer legal services but 'conditions apply' means we restrict what it can do. You can read these restrictions in the record of the firm, under disciplinary decisions.

Not an SRA-regulated firm

We do not regulate this organisation. It is in our register if it is solely owned by an SRA-regulated person, or if there are SRA-regulated people, like solicitors, working there. Some of these organisations may offer legal services to the public. Check their records to read what they can and cannot do.

Closed down by the SRA

We have removed permission for this firm to provide legal services, and shut it down. This happens when something has gone wrong and we need to close the firm down to protect the public. You can read about our decision in the record of this firm, under disciplinary decisions.

Firm is closing

This law firm has stopped providing legal services. We still regulate it and it is still allowed to provide legal services under our rules, but it has told us that it plans to stop. It will not be taking on new clients.

Firm has closed

This law firm has decided to stop providing legal services, and it is no longer regulated.

SRA-regulated solicitor

This person is allowed to practise as a solicitor.

SRA-regulated solicitor, not practising

This person is a solicitor but we have not issued a practising certificate this year, so they are not allowed to practise as a solicitor*. This might be because they are doing something else at the moment or they are on a career break.

*There is a small group of exceptions where solicitors do not need practising certificates, such as solicitors working in government departments.

SRA-regulated lawyer

We regulate this person as a Registered European Lawyer or a Registered Foreign Lawyer and they are allowed to practise law in England and Wales.

Not an SRA-regulated lawyer

This person is not a solicitor. They are on this register because they have a special job in a firm we regulate. For example, they could oversee financial compliance.

SRA-regulated solicitor (Conditions apply)

This person is allowed to practise as a solicitor, but 'conditions apply' means we restrict what they can do. You can read these restrictions in their disciplinary record.

Prohibited

This person is prohibited from practising as a solicitor or working in an SRA-regulated law firm. This happens when something has gone wrong and we need to stop someone practising to protect the public. Read more under regulatory decisions.