



What is a period of recognised training?

Updated 25 October 2023

You can only qualify through this route if you meet our [transitional requirements](https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/becoming-solicitor-legal-practice-course-transitional-requirements/). [<https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/becoming-solicitor-legal-practice-course-transitional-requirements/>]

If you do not meet these, you will need to qualify under the [SQE](https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/) [<https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/>].

A period of recognised training (often known as a training contract) gives you supervised experience in legal practice. It is part of qualification as a solicitor through the [Legal Practice Course route](https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/period-recognised-training/managing-trainees/period-recognised-training/) [<https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/period-recognised-training/managing-trainees/period-recognised-training/>].

It must be for [two years](https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/period-recognised-training/managing-trainees/period-recognised-training/) [<https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/period-recognised-training/managing-trainees/period-recognised-training/>] and is where you will refine and develop the professional skills needed to practice, including:

- advocacy
- client care
- commercial and financial awareness
- drafting
- legal

Each organisation we [authorise](https://referral.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/education-training-assessment-provider-regulations/) [<https://referral.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/education-training-assessment-provider-regulations/>] to provide training will have a training principal and one or more supervisors. You will need to talk with them to understand how your learning during this time will be structured and supported.

What PRT must include

Your period of recognised training must:

- make sure that you apply and develop the skills set out in the [Practice Skills Standards](https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/period-recognised-training/managing-trainees/) [<https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/period-recognised-training/managing-trainees/>]
- provide you with appropriate supervision by solicitors and other individuals who have adequate legal knowledge and experience in the practice area they are supervising. And the necessary skills to effectively supervise you
- include regular appraisal of your performance and development, and review of your [record of training](https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/period-recognised-training/your-period-recognised-training/your-responsibilities/) [<https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/period-recognised-training/your-period-recognised-training/your-responsibilities/>].



We also require your training provider to pay for your first attempt at the [Professional Skills Course](https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/equivalent-means-information-pack/exemptions/professional-skills-course/) [https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/equivalent-means-information-pack/exemptions/professional-skills-course/].

Learn more about what we expect from [training providers](https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/period-recognised-training/managing-trainees/) [https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/period-recognised-training/managing-trainees/].

Before you start

You need to register your period of recognised training before you start. Your training principal will have to approve your training before it goes ahead.

[Find out how to register your training](https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/period-recognised-training/your-period-recognised-training/register-my-training/) [https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/period-recognised-training/your-period-recognised-training/register-my-training/]

Keeping a record of your training

You also should be proactive and take responsibility for your own personal and professional development and the direction of your training. For example, during your training you need to keep a record of:

- the work you have done
- the skills you have gained
- your reflections on what you have learnt.

The record also needs to be verified by your supervisor(s). It is important that you keep a clear record, as we may ask to review it to make sure you have met our standards. There is not a prescribed format for the training record but you can [use our sample training record form](https://referral.sra.org.uk/globalassets/documents/students/training-contract/recordform.pdf?version=48de4f) [https://referral.sra.org.uk/globalassets/documents/students/training-contract/recordform.pdf?version=48de4f].

[Open all](#) [#]

Time off work during your period of recognised training

When you return to work after extended time off your employer should discuss with you whether your period of recognised training needs to be extended. This could be, for example, after any form of parental leave or long term sickness.

It is up to your training principal to decide if it needs extending and by how long and would depend on:

- the amount of time you have been off for
- whether you returned to your training on a full-time or part-time basis



- whether they can confirm to us that you have met our requirements for a period of recognised training by the time you apply for admission. This includes the Practice Skills Standards.

Individual circumstances may also impact on whether your training should be extended. For example, if you have had any [previous relevant work-based experience](https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/period-recognised-training/your-period-recognised-training/recognising-prior-work-experience/) [https://referral.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/period-recognised-training/your-period-recognised-training/recognising-prior-work-experience/] that could count towards a period of recognised training.

If your training principal is not confident that you meet our requirements due to your time off, they should extend your training.

If your period of recognised training needs to be extended your employer will need to tell us. They can do this through their mySRA, in the 'managing trainees' section, by amending the end date of your training.

Terms and conditions of employment

As a trainee you should be provided with a statement of the terms and conditions of your employment. This should cover:

- hours
- your starting salary
- your place of work
- the length of your training
- any requirements your employer may have about training.

Whether or not a period of recognised training can be cancelled is a matter of law and not a regulatory issue. This means that we cannot advise on this matter and recommend that you seek independent legal advice if you are in this situation.

You should also be aware that periods of recognised training are viewed as apprenticeships.

Performance reviews during your training

Under our regulations your training provider must undertake regular reviews and appraisals of your performance and development during training, including a review of your record of training. This is an opportunity for you to reflect upon your development and progress and identify further learning and professional development needs.

We don't specify how many times they must take place. However good practice suggests three formal appraisals during the two-year period: one in the first year, one in the second year and one at the end of the contract.

Informal reviews can be more frequent and you should always approach your supervisor for guidance and support as and when you need it.

Monitoring

During your training you may be asked to complete a questionnaire from us about your training and your firm may receive a visit from one of our monitors.

The purpose of this is to focus on the overall adequacy of the training that your firm provides. It is not designed to assess your personal performance or knowledge of substantive areas of law.