

Recognising prior experience

September 2021

Candidates can only qualify through this route if they meet our [transitional requirements](https://guidance.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/becoming-solicitor-legal-practice-course-transitional-requirements/) [https://guidance.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/becoming-solicitor-legal-practice-course-transitional-requirements/].

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

Some trainees may have worked in a legal environment and gained equivalent experience before starting training. Your organisation may recognise relevant prior experience and take this time into account to reduce the length of the period of recognised training.

You can recognise previous work-based experience a trainee has done for up to six months of the required period of recognised training, if:

- the experience was gained in the three years preceding the commencement of the period of recognised training
- the experience enabled the trainee to apply and develop one or more of the skills as set out in the Practice Skills Standards
- the trainee was supervised and was subject to an appraisal of their performance and development, during the period of work-based experience.

When considering work-based experience done during a sandwich placement during the academic stage of training, you may also want to take into account:

- the placement should be at level 3 of the national qualification's framework or above, and for at least three months
- whether the placement was with an authorised training provider
- whether the trainee satisfactorily completed the placement and was awarded the academic stage qualification.

Your organisation has entire discretion whether to recognise a trainee's relevant prior experience. You can tell us of any reductions when you inform us that a period of recognised training has started, or at any time before completion and pre-admission.