

Reflect and identify

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Reflecting on and learning from your practice is one of your competence requirements [<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/continuing-competence/cpd/competence-statement/>] .

What reflection means

Reflection is thinking about the challenges and quality of your practice so you can meet your competence requirements. These are to:

- Accurately evaluate your strengths and weaknesses in relation to the demands of your work, and
- Identify the learning and development needs you need to address to maintain your competence and provide high standards of service.

There is a strong public interest in solicitors considering the quality of their practice. It helps them remain competent to carry out their role and provide a high standard of service.

When to reflect

You need to commit an appropriate amount of time to consider the quality of your practice. This can depend on things like:

- the nature of your practice
- developments in the areas of law you work in
- an employer's requirements
- the requirements of a learning and development initiative you are taking part in.

Reflection should also be completed on a regular, ongoing basis so that you can identify learning and development needs as they arise.

This can be important when you have a need that presents an imminent risk to a member of the public. For example, how to effectively advise a client who has a vulnerability that you haven't dealt with before. It would be better to recognise this before meeting them, through a process of ongoing reflection, so that you can take steps to address it.

You should also schedule time to reflect in more detail about specific areas of your practice, or as a whole, for example:



- after completing a case
- before meetings with your team, manager or supervisor
- as part of a formal appraisal or performance management process
- at other regular intervals (eg monthly or quarterly).

Reflection is also important when you evaluate the learning and development activities you have completed. Find out what this means in Record and evaluate [<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/continuing-competence/cpd/continuing-competence/record-evaluate/>] .

Open all [#]

How to reflect

Reflection is a personal process and there is no one way to do it. However, to be effective, your reflection should be focused on the the skills, knowledge and attributes you need to meet the demands of your role and provide high standards of service.

Resources you can use for reflection include:

- Our Competence Statement [<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/continuing-competence/cpd/competence-statement/threshold-standard/>]
- Our learning and development template [<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/continuing-competence/cpd/continuing-competence/templates/>]
- Information about developments in your area(s) of practice (eg journals, blogs, and newsletters)
- Procedural rules and practice directions for your area(s) of practice.
- Competences or good practice guidance for specific areas of practice. Examples include our resources for solicitors who practise in the Coroners' Courts [<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/practising-coroners-court/>] or the youth court [<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/continuing-competence/cpd/youth-court-advocacy/>] .
- Resources about specific skills or issues, such as advocacy and engaging with vulnerable people.
- Guidance or requirements issued by your employer if you have one.
- The findings of any file or case reviews.
- Your own notes about your work and performance.
- Formal or informal feedback about your work which could come from clients, judges, lawyers you have worked with on a case, members of your department, a mentor, a manager or a supervisor.

Questions that could help:

- What are the most significant challenges of my role?
- What are my strengths and weaknesses?
- Do I need to update my knowledge of the law and procedure in my area(s) of practice, for example, because it's changed?
- Do I need to develop or refresh a particular skill, for example, because I haven't used it for a while and need to demonstrate it in an upcoming case? This could be a technical skill (eg legal research) or another type of skill (eg making your clients feel comfortable and understood).
- What steps have I taken to meet my professional goals for the past (eg six months to a year) and how effective have they been?
- What are my professional goals for the next (eg six months to a year) and what can I do to help meet them?
- What have I learnt about my knowledge, skills and attributes in the last (eg three months) of my practice?
- When did I perform well in the last (eg three months) and is there anything I can learn from that and apply to other areas of my practice?
- When could I have performed better in the last (eg three months) and is there anything I can do to improve my knowledge, skills or attributes and help stop it from happening again?
- Could my attributes and behaviours be improved in any way, for example, by learning about a specific area of equality, diversity and inclusion?

Identifying your learning and development needs

Reflecting on the quality of your practice should help identify what learning and development needs you need to address to maintain your competence to carry out your role and provide high standards of service.

Your learning and development needs are personal and can depend on things like:

- the nature of your practice
- your professional goals
- how you reflected on the quality of your practice.

It's important to remember that your learning and development needs can be about building strengths and meeting goals as well as addressing weaknesses. An example could be identifying a need to train for the higher rights of audience qualification, because you received positive feedback

about the quality of your advocacy and want to focus on that area of your practice.

Learning and development template

You can use our template [<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/continuing-competence/cpd/continuing-competence/templates/>] to keep a record of:

- how you have reflected on your practice,
- the learning and development needs you identify as a result of your reflection, and
- how those needs relate to your practice.

The template also includes an example of how a solicitor might keep a record of these things.