

How to guide and FAQs

Updated 22 November 2023

Admission

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How do I apply for admission ?

Find out what you need for admission on our admission form

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/admission-forms-fees/>] and pathway to qualification [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/pathways-qualification/>] pages.

How do I apply for a practising certificate?

You can apply for a practising certificate once you have chosen your admission date. Log in to mySRA and the application will be under 'Start a new application' and in 'Available applications'. It is called 'Apply for a practising certificate' and will be at the top of the list.

Log in to mySRA now

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/link/93f017776e78490eac32edeb8f5a63e0.aspx>]

How do I book a place at the admissions ceremony?

The Law Society (not the SRA) will invite you to book a place at an admission ceremony. To learn more, visit the Law Society's website [<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/events/admissions-ceremony/>] .

When will my details appear on the Solicitor's Register?

Your details should appear on the Solicitor's Register within 24 hours, as we aim to update this daily.

When will my details appear in the Law Society's online directory?

Your details should appear on Find a Solicitor within 48 hours of your practising certificate being issued.

I haven't received an invitation to my admission ceremony. When will this happen?

The Law Society (not the SRA) will invite you to book a place at an admission ceremony. To learn more, visit the Law Society's website

[<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/events/admissions-ceremony/>] .

When will I receive confirmation that I will be admitted?

If your application is approved, we will send you an email confirming this. You then need to log in to mySRA and select your admission date.

When is the next admission date?

You can choose your own admission date after we have approved your application. It can be on any day but must be within 30 days of our decision. (If you have done a period of recognised training, the date you choose must be at least one day after your training ends.)

How long will my admission application take to be processed?

We aim to make a decision within 30 days unless there is a character and suitability issue. Find out more about our timescales

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/admission-forms-fees/>] .

Background checks and screening

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What is screening?

It is a background check which is completed before admission as a solicitor.

If you have lived in the UK for 12 months or more during the last five years, you must complete an online screening application with Atlantic Data. It includes the following checks:

- identity
- financial, covering bankruptcy, insolvency and county court judgments
- standard criminal records check issued by the Disclosure and Barring Service:
 - spent and current convictions.
 - police cautions.
 - reprimands or final warnings recorded on the police national computer.
 - financial history.

If you have not lived in the UK for 12 months consecutively for more during the last five year period, you do not need to complete these checks.

Instead, we will check your name and current address and you will be required to upload ID documents.

We will also need an original criminal record check from any country you have lived in for 12 months or more during the last five years. The check(s) must be no more than months old and include an official translation if not in English.

Who should complete screening?

Anyone applying for admission as a solicitor or looking to be restored to the roll of solicitors.

If you applying for an early assessment of their character and suitability [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/character-and-suitability/>] , you will also need to do screening.

How do I apply for my background checks and screening?

Legal Practice Course route with a period of recognised training

You will get a notification in your mySRA eight weeks before the end of your training telling you that you need to apply for screening. You will then find the application form in mySRA under 'Start a new application' and 'Available applications'. It is called 'Apply for screening'.

SQE route or Legal Practice Course route and sitting SQE2

You will find the application form in mySRA under 'Start a new application' and 'Available applications'. It is called 'Apply for screening'.

We recommend you do not apply for your background checks until you are ready to apply for admission. This means you know the outcome of any relevant SQE assessments or exemption applications and have completed all qualifying work experience (where applicable). This is because screening results are usually only valid for six months after they are issued.

Find out more about our background checks and screening [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/screening/>] .

How long do the background checks and screening take?

Once you receive a link from us to begin screening please allow four weeks for the application to be processed. Once the screening process is complete, the Disclosure and Barring Service will send you a Standard

Certificate. We will contact you by email should we need this certificate. You will only need to upload this if an issue is disclosed.

What do I do if my country/authority does not provide criminal checks?

We will accept a completed copy of our statutory declaration in place of a criminal check for certain countries/authorities [<https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/screening/#overseas>] . You will receive a link to download our statutory declaration within the screening application.

Applying for admission with character and suitability issues

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How do I provide supporting documents if I am disclosing suitability issues?

It depends on the matter(s) you disclose.

When you log in to mySRA, go to 'Start a new application' and in 'Available applications' you will find the admission application. We will tell you what you need to provide.

You can also find more information in our Assessment of Character and Suitability Rules [<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/assessment-character-suitability-rules/>] .

If I am disclosing suitability issues, who can be my referee?

They need to be independent professional people who know you in a professional capacity. They must be aware of the matter you have disclosed and can attest to your character and suitability. For example an employer or tutor. We will not accept personal references or references from friends or family members.

How do I provide a reference for a person with suitability issues as a referee?

Your reference needs to include:

- your relationship with the applicant
- that you are aware of the matter(s) disclosed
- that in your opinion the applicant is a suitable person to be admitted.
- your contact details

You can provide the reference to the applicant and they can submit this to us, however, we may contact you to validate for further information.

How to provide references in support of my admission application?

References can be uploaded as part of your application in mySRA.

If I am disclosing character and suitability issues, do I need to submit supporting documents with my application?

Yes, as we cannot decide until we have all of the relevant information. You should upload this information with your application.

How long will it take for a decision on my character and suitability application?

We aim to decide within 6 months of your application being submitted. However, this does depend on us receiving all the required information.