

Solicitor apprenticeships

Updated 18 October 2024

Aspiring solicitors can qualify through a [solicitor apprenticeship](https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/solicitor-v1-0/) [\[https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/solicitor-v1-0/\]](https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/solicitor-v1-0/) in England. All apprentices must pass the SQE and meet our suitability requirements to qualify as a solicitor. Solicitor apprenticeships are not currently available in Wales.

There are two different apprenticeship routes: the trailblazer apprentice and the graduate apprentice.

Trailblazer apprenticeship

Key facts

- Typically takes five to six years to complete and can be started post-A level.
- Offers an alternative to going straight to university and may suit if you want to 'earn as you learn'.
- As with all aspiring solicitors, you must pass both parts of the SQE .
- All the SQE training and assessments cost is paid for through the apprenticeship levy fund.
- At least 20% of the training (eg one day a week) such as studying for university undergraduate degree or SQE training takes place away from the office.
- The time spent working as an apprentice counts as the [qualifying work experience](#) [\[#qwe\]](#) you need to become a solicitor.
- You will have gained a level 7 qualification (equivalent to a masters degree) upon completion of the apprenticeship.
- At the end, providing you pass the SQE and meet our [suitability requirements](#) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/assessment-character-suitability-rules/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/assessment-character-suitability-rules/), you can qualify as a solicitor.

Entry requirements

Many employers have their own requirements which will be posted on their apprenticeship advert. However, the recommended entry requirements are:

- 5 GCSEs, including mathematics & English - grade C or above (or equivalent) or grade 4 or above for those attaining qualifications in 2017 or afterwards.
- 3 A Levels (or equivalent) - minimum grade C.

Some employers also offer solicitor apprenticeships to individuals who have already completed some legal training. This could be a law degree, the Legal Practice Course or the Trailblazer level 3 paralegal apprenticeship. These candidates also need to complete all the elements of the SQE. However, depending on their experience and skills they may not take the full 5 to 6 years.

Graduate apprenticeship

Key facts

- This scheme can be used for graduates to complete their training as a solicitor.
- It typically takes two to three years to complete which counts as their [qualifying work experience](#) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/qualifying-work-experience-candidates/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/qualifying-work-experience-candidates/).
- As with all aspiring solicitors, you must pass both parts of the SQE .
- All the SQE training and assessments cost is paid for through the apprenticeship levy fund.
- At least 20% of the training (eg one day a week) such as studying for the SQE takes place away from the office.
- At the end of the graduate solicitor apprenticeship, providing you pass the SQE and meet our [suitability requirements](#) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/assessment-character-suitability-rules/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/assessment-character-suitability-rules/), you can qualify as a solicitor.

Entry requirements

You would need a level 6 undergraduate degree to join a graduate solicitor apprenticeship programme.

More about apprenticeships and where to find them

Go to [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/apprenticeships) [\[https://www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/apprenticeships\]](https://www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/apprenticeships) for more information on apprenticeships. You can also search and apply for apprenticeships available in England.

[Read our Q&As](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/qa/#apprenticeships) [\[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/qa/#apprenticeships\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/qa/#apprenticeships) on the solicitor apprenticeship.

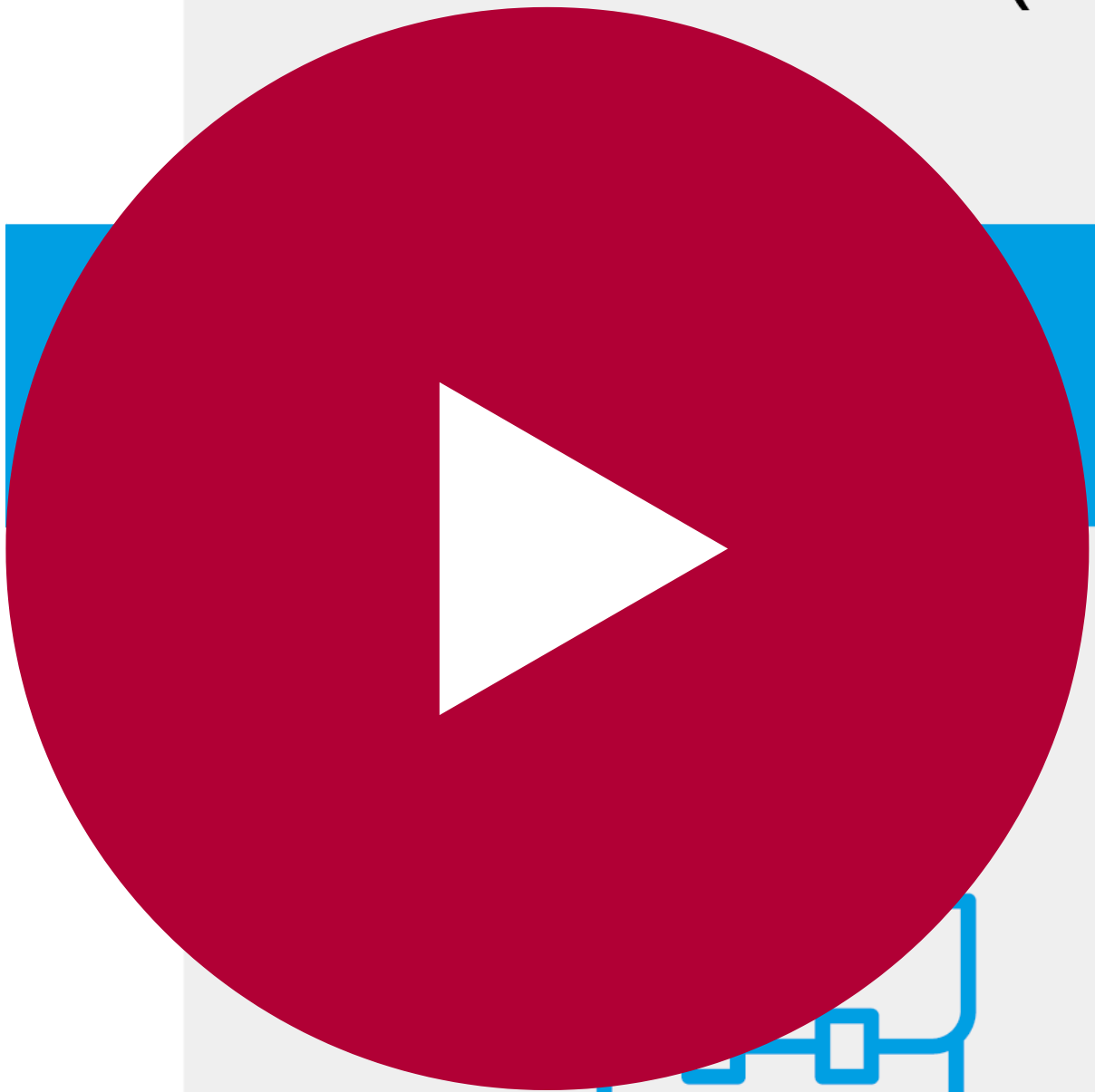
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[Solicitor apprenticeship infographic](#)

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[Solicitor apprenticeships - is it for you?](#)

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Employers taking on apprentices

If your organisation is interested in offering solicitor apprenticeships in England here are some tips and things to think about:

- Any law firm, in-house legal team or legal services provider can offer a solicitor apprenticeship.
- Employers work with a training provider to offer the academic study and learning needed.
- Financial support available from the Government through the apprenticeship levy - amount you get depends on size of your organisation but can cover up to 95% of costs.
- You can take on apprentices for the full six years or graduates for a shorter period (around two and half years).
- Hiring an apprentice can be good way to grow talent and develop your workforce - you can even offer apprenticeships to existing staff.
- Information and useful case studies are on the [Government's apprenticeship website](https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/employers) [<https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/employers>], to support employers and answer queries.

[Apprenticeships: what law firms need to know](#)

6-year 'earn as you learn' programme

Doing an app



Apply for a solicitor apprenticeship



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Qualifying a

Once you've

SQE2:



**Register
your QWE** -
confirmed by
a solicitor**

* Graduate apprentice

** Qualifying work ex|