



Threshold standard for competencies

About the threshold standard

Because the [competence statement](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/continuing-competence/competence-statement/) is generic and applies to all solicitors, a threshold standard was developed to set out the level at which the competences in the competence statement should be performed upon qualification as a solicitor.

Level three is the threshold standard required at the point of qualification; the other levels are provided for the purpose of context.

Threshold standard

Level	Functioning knowledge	Standard of work	Autonomy	Complexity	Perception of context	Innovation and originality
1	Recognises some of the standard legal issues relevant to the particular case or transaction area of practice	Unlikely to be satisfactory unless closely supervised on a task by task basis	Needs close supervision or instruction	Unable to do more than simple routine tasks	Tends to see actions in isolation	Works within given procedures or instructions
2	Recognises some of the standard legal issues relevant to the area of practice, and begins to see how they apply to a particular case or transaction	Straightforward tasks likely to be completed to an acceptable standard	Achieves some steps using own judgment, but supervision needed for overall case or transaction	Able to deal effectively with straightforward cases and transactions	Sees actions as a series of steps	Uses experience to check information provided
3	Identifies the legal principles relevant to the area of practice, and applies them appropriately and effectively to individual cases'.	Acceptable standard achieved routinely for straightforward tasks. Complex tasks may lack refinement.	Achieves most tasks and able to progress legal matters using own judgment, recognising when support is needed.	Able to deal with straightforward transactions, including occasional, unfamiliar tasks which present a range of problems and choices.	Understands the significance of individual actions in the context of the objectives of the transaction/strategy for the case.	Uses experience to check information provided and to form judgments about possible courses of action and ways forward.
4	Applies a depth of understanding of the area of practice and a broad background awareness of legal principles to solve problems and progress the case.	Full acceptable standard achieved routinely	Takes full responsibility for progressing the case or transaction	Deals with complex transactions through deliberate analysis and planning	Develops a strategy for the case/transaction to deliver the overall objective and uses it to analyse individual steps.	Produces innovative solutions and ways forward
5	Uses mastery of the area of practice and a broad background awareness of legal principles to develop and	Excellence achieved with ease	Takes full responsibility for outcomes of case or transaction	Deals with complex transactions intuitively and with ease; confident decision-maker	Understands clearly the strategy for the case/transaction and alternative approaches to deliver it within a vision of what may be possible.	Develops innovative solutions and ways forward in complex and unpredictable situations

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