

Supervision of registered Swiss lawyers

23 January 2025

Swiss lawyers using the [adaptation period route](https://consultations.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/pathways-qualification/swiss-lawyers/adaptation-period-route/) [https://consultations.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/pathways-qualification/swiss-lawyers/adaptation-period-route/] to qualify as a solicitor of England and Wales must register with us as a registered Swiss lawyer (RSL). They must also tell us the organisation where they will be working and the solicitor who will supervise them.

This supervising solicitor must make sure the RSL's work meets the necessary standards at the end of the period for them to be admitted as a solicitor as detailed below.

Requirements of the adaptation period

An adaptation period does not have to be done in an SRA-regulated firm. It can be done anywhere that the RSL will:

- engage in the effective and regular practise of the law of England and Wales under their Swiss legal title, and
- be supervised for the duration by a supervisor that meets the requirements.

The requirements to be a supervisor of an RSL are that:

- they must be a solicitor of England and Wales with at least three years post-qualification experience
- they must have a current practising certificate
- their practising certificate cannot have conditions preventing them from being a manager, compliance officer and / or supervising the work of others.

The adaptation period is for three years, and it can be done in up to four organisations. The RSL will need to tell us their initial organisation and supervisor when they register, and then update us if / when the organisation or supervisor changes. They can do this by [contacting us](https://consultations.sra.org.uk/contactus/) [https://consultations.sra.org.uk/contactus/].

It is important that changes are notified to us. We will ask for details of all organisations and supervisors at the end of the adaptation period and we will expect this to match their records. Any differences may delay or prevent admission. We will need confirmation that, for all parts of the period, the RSL was engaging in the required practice, and that they were supervised by someone who met the requirements.

What does the supervisor have to do

The supervisor solicitor is responsible for overseeing the RSL in their provision of legal services under the laws of England and Wales.

They will need to make sure that, under their supervision, the RSL applies and develops the skills set out in the [Professional Skills Standards \(PSS\) for registered Swiss lawyers](https://consultations.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/pathways-qualification/swiss-lawyers/adaptation-period-route/professional-skills-standards-swiss-lawyers/) [https://consultations.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/pathways-qualification/swiss-lawyers/adaptation-period-route/professional-skills-standards-swiss-lawyers/]. It is important that both the supervisor and the RSL familiarise themselves with these standards.

To facilitate this supervision, it is expected that:

- The RSL will maintain a record of their supervised practice during the adaptation period. This should cover:
 - details and nature of their responsibilities during the adaptation period
 - the areas of law and professional activities they gained experience in
 - their experience appearing before courts, tribunals or arbiters (where applicable)
 - their progress in applying and developing the PSS.
- Supervisors must make sure that, during the period of supervised practice, the amount and type of work an RSL undertakes:
 - adequately covers each of the skills under the PSS, exercised in relation to the law of England and Wales, and
 - is of an appropriate level and complexity for a qualified lawyer.
- Supervisors must give regular feedback on the RSL's performance through appraisals of their performance and development.
- Where an RSL has more than one supervisor, it will be the final supervisor who is responsible for signing off the entire three-year period. Any supervisor replacing another should make sure they see all records up to the point they take over and they are satisfied the requirements have been met.

What need to be evidenced for admission?

At the end of the adaptation period, both the RSL and their supervisor (or final supervisor, where there are multiple) will be responsible for the contents of the admission application.

That application will require the RSL to:

- Provide a certificate of good standing, or equivalent, from their home regulator dated within three months of the application.
- Provide details of all organisations and supervisors for the duration of their adaptation period with beginning and end dates.
- Provide a supporting statement that contains:
 - full details and nature of their responsibilities during the adaptation period



- the areas of law and professional activities they gained experience in
- their experience appearing before courts, tribunals or arbiters (where applicable)
- whether the experience was gained full or part time
- whether their activities were 'effective and regular' over the last three years.
- Answer questions relating to their suitability under the [SRA Assessment of Character and Suitability Rules](https://consultations.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/assessment-character-suitability-rules/) [<https://consultations.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/assessment-character-suitability-rules/>].
- Make a declaration regarding the contents of the application.

That application will also require the supervisor (or final supervisor) to:

- Read the application as completed by the RSL and their supporting statement and complete a declaration that:
 - they are a solicitor of England and Wales with a current practising certificate who has at least three years post-qualification experience
 - they have supervised or overseen the supervision of the RSL in the provision of legal services under the laws of England and Wales
 - they were responsible for making sure the RSL had the opportunity to apply and develop all the skills set out in the PSS
 - they carried out regular appraisals of the RSL's performance and development
 - they are satisfied the RSL maintained a record to demonstrate the application and development of the PSS and explored these records during appraisals
 - to the best of their knowledge and belief, the information provided in the RSL's supporting statement is correct
 - they are satisfied the RSL has met the PSS
 - they understand they are signing-off the entire three-year adaptation period the RSL has undertaken.

It should be noted that this application forms part of a suite of checks common to all applicants, such as external screening checks etc.

We do not require the training record maintained by the RSL or copies of appraisals maintained by their supervisor to be provided with the application. However, we may request these if we consider it necessary. It is important these are maintained throughout the adaptation period and available on request.