



# Disclosing a character and suitability issue

19 December 2024

Whenever you tell us about a suitability issue, it is up to you to provide any evidence needed so we can decide on your application. The nature of the issue will dictate what you need to give us.

You should not submit either your early assessment or [admission application](https://indemnity.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/admission-forms-fees/) [https://indemnity.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/admission/admission-forms-fees/] until you can give us all the required information.

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## **Criminal conduct**

- At least two references:
  - Where possible, these should be written by someone who knows about the matters being disclosed, and this is stated in the reference.
  - They should be from an independent person who knows you well, such as a current or former employer or an academic tutor.
  - They should be on the letterhead, or use the business email, of the referee's employer or academic institution.
  - They should not be from friends or family.

We may contact the referees to verify the content of the reference.

- Evidence of rehabilitation:
  - A statement to show what you have learnt from the matters disclosed and measures are in place to avoid a repeat of the conduct.
  - This can be supported by references and other evidence provided.
  - Where applicable, probation reports.
- Statement of events:
  - Provide a detailed explanation about the events leading up to the matters disclosed.
  - This should include any mitigating circumstances and reflect your attitude towards the events.
- Documentary evidence:
  - Where possible, this should include an independent corroboration of your account of the event.
  - This can include reports from the police, a court or a solicitor.
  - You do not have to complete a Subject Access request or provide a Police National Computer record for our assessment.
- Proof of disclosure to any professional body (where applicable):



- You must show us that you also told any professional bodies about the matters you have disclosed, or that you did not need to.
- If you have been admitted anywhere else, provide a certificate of good standing from that jurisdiction or regulatory body.
- Court documentation:
  - If your offence resulted in a conviction, you should provide:
    - Memorandum of an Entry on the Court Register (for matters heard at a magistrates' court).
    - Sentencing remarks (for matters heard at a Crown Court).
  - These should be requested from the court that heard your case.
- Proof of satisfaction of penalty:
  - Proof you have paid any fine, costs or penalty imposed because of the matters disclosed.
  - This evidence can be obtained from the court where the penalty was paid. Alternatively, you can show the payment has been made, such as a receipt or the relevant entry on a bank statement.
- For motoring offences, your online driving record:
  - This can be accessed and shared via the [UK government website](https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence) [<https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence>].

### **Behaviour which has a bearing on your integrity and independence**

- At least two references:
  - Where possible, these should be written by someone who knows about the matters being disclosed, and this is stated in the reference.
  - They should be provided from an independent person who knows you well, such as a current or former employer or an academic tutor.
  - They should be on the letterhead, or use the business email, of the referee's employer or academic institution.
  - They should not be from friends or family.

We may contact the referees to verify the content of the reference.

- Evidence of rehabilitation:
  - A statement to show what you have learnt from the matters disclosed.
  - This can be supported by references and other evidence provided.
- Statement of events:
  - Provide a detailed explanation about the events leading up to the matters disclosed.
  - This should include any mitigating circumstances and reflect your attitude towards the events.



- Documentary evidence:
  - Where possible, this should include an independent corroboration of your account of the events.
- Proof of disclosure to any professional body (where applicable):
  - You must show us that you also told any professional bodies about the matters you have disclosed, or that you did not need to.
  - If you have been admitted anywhere else, provide a certificate of good standing from that jurisdiction or regulatory body.

### **Education assessment offences**

- At least two references:
  - Where possible, these should be written by someone who knows about the matters being disclosed, and this is stated in the reference.
  - They should be provided from an independent person who knows you well, such as a current or former employer or an academic tutor.
  - They should be on the letterhead, or use the business email, of the referee's employer or academic institution.
  - They should not be from friends or family.

We may contact the referees to verify the content of the reference.

- Evidence of rehabilitation:
  - A statement to show what you have learnt from the matters disclosed.
  - This can be supported by references and other evidence provided.
- Statement of events:
  - Provide a detailed explanation about the events leading up to the matters disclosed.
  - Include an explanation of the extent of your awareness that the offence may have amounted to academic misconduct.
  - This should include any mitigating circumstances and reflect your attitude towards the events.
- Proof of disclosure to any professional body (if applicable):
  - You must show us that you also told any professional bodies about the matters you have disclosed, or that you did not need to.
  - If you have been admitted anywhere else, provide a certificate of good standing from that jurisdiction or regulatory body.
- Documentation from the education provider investigation:
  - Evidence from the provider detailing the offence.
  - Minutes of meetings or transcripts of hearings relating to the offence.
- Outcome of the education establishment investigation:



- A copy of any decision or sanction imposed relating to the offence.
  - Where possible, proof that any sanctions were satisfied.
  - If you appealed the decision, a copy of the first decision, your appeal and the final decision.
  - We may contact your education provider to confirm the events disclosed.
- Copies of transcripts and certificates:
  - For the course the offence(s) related to, and any courses completed since.

## **Financial conduct and events**

- At least two credible references:
  - Where possible, these should be written by someone who knows about the matters being disclosed, and this is stated in the reference.
  - They should be provided from an independent person who knows you well, such as a current or former employer or an academic tutor.
  - They should be on the letterhead, or use the business email, of the referee's employer or academic institution.
  - They should not be from friends or family.

We may contact the referees to verify the content of the reference.

- Evidence of rehabilitation:
  - A statement to show what you have learnt from the matters disclosed.
  - This can be supported by references and other evidence provided.
- Statement of events:
  - Provide a detailed explanation about the events leading up to the matters disclosed.
  - This should include any mitigating circumstances and reflect your attitude towards the events.
- A credit report (available from organisations such as Experian or Equifax) which is no more than one month old.
- Documentary evidence:
  - Where possible, this should include an independent corroboration of your account of the events.
  - This could include copies of correspondence with your creditors.
- Proof of disclosure to any professional body (where applicable):
  - You must show us that you also told any professional bodies about the matters you have disclosed, or that you did not need to.
  - If you have been admitted anywhere else, provide a certificate of good standing from that jurisdiction or regulatory body.



- Details of any actions you have taken to clear any debts, satisfy any County Court Judgments and manage your finances.
- In relation to County Court Judgments:
  - A copy of any judgment or order.
  - Proof that you have met the judgment or order in full or that it continues to be met.
  - A certificate of satisfaction from the court or a Registry Trust Limited report (available from [Trust Online](https://www.trustonline.org.uk/) [<https://www.trustonline.org.uk/>]).
- If you have entered into an Individual Voluntary Arrangement (IVA):
  - A copy of the agreement set up by the insolvency practitioner.
  - Proof that you have met the IVA in full or that it continues to be met.
- In relation to any Debt Management Plan (DMP):
  - A copy of the DMP.
  - Proof that you have completed the DMP in full or that it continues to be met.
- In relation to bankruptcy (including discharged bankruptcy):
  - A copy of the bankruptcy petition (available from the court or trustee in bankruptcy).
  - Where applicable, a copy of the Certificate of Discharge.
  - A credit report (available from [Experian](https://www.experian.co.uk/) [<https://www.experian.co.uk/>] or [Equifax](https://www.equifax.co.uk/) [<https://www.equifax.co.uk/>]) which is no more than one month old.

## **Regulatory or disciplinary findings**

- At least two references:
  - Where possible, these should be written by someone who knows about the matters being disclosed, and this is stated in the reference.
  - They should be provided from an independent person who knows you well, such as a current or former employer or an academic tutor.
  - They should be on the letterhead, or use the business email, of the referee's employer or academic institution.
  - They should not be from friends or family.

We may contact the referees to verify the content of the reference.

- Evidence of rehabilitation:
  - A statement to show what you have learnt from the matters disclosed.
  - This can be supported by references and other evidence provided.
- Statement of events:
  - Provide a detailed explanation about the events leading up to the matters disclosed.

- This should include any mitigating circumstances and reflect your attitude towards the events.
- Documentary evidence:
  - Where possible, this should include an independent corroboration of your account of the events.
  - Documents considered at the hearing.
  - Findings from the investigation of the professional body.
  - Details of any appeal.
  - The final outcome and sanction imposed.

[Read our FAQs](https://indemnity.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/character-and-suitability/character-suitability-faqs/) (<https://indemnity.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/character-and-suitability/character-suitability-faqs/>) for helpful answers to common questions about character and suitability issues, background checks and our assessment process.