



Threshold standard for competencies

About the threshold standard

Because the [competence statement](https://indemnity.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/continuing-competence/competence-statement/) (<https://indemnity.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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