



10 Questions Every Newly Qualified Solicitor Should Ask at Interview

Your interview isn't just about getting the job it's about deciding whether the role, the team and the firm are the right fit for your career.

Preparing thoughtful questions shows confidence, commercial awareness and genuine interest in the opportunity. More importantly, it helps you gather the information you need to make one of the most important decisions at the start of your legal career.

At eNL Legal Recruitment, we encourage every Newly Qualified Solicitor to prepare a selection of questions before attending an interview. Here are ten that we believe provide valuable insight into both the role and the firm.

Question 1

What does success look like for an NQ in the first 12 months?

This question helps you understand what the firm expects from its newly qualified solicitors and how success will be measured.

Listen for:

- Clear objectives
- Realistic expectations
- Support during your transition
- Regular performance reviews

Question 2

How is work allocated within the team?

Understanding how work is distributed will give you a clearer picture of your day-to-day responsibilities.

You may discover whether work is:

- Allocated by partners
- Shared across the team
- Self-managed
- Based on specialisms

Question 3

What type of work will I be involved in initially?

Ask about the matters you'll be working on and the level of responsibility you can expect. This helps you assess whether the role aligns with your career ambitions and whether you'll have the opportunity to develop your technical skills.

Question 4

What training and mentoring is available after qualification?

Qualification is only the beginning of your career.

Ask about:

- Formal mentoring
- Internal training programmes
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Partner supervision
- Career development plans

A firm that invests in its people is often a firm where you'll continue to grow.

Question 5

How much client contact can I expect?

Client exposure is an important part of becoming a confident solicitor.

Ask whether you'll have opportunities to:

- Attend client meetings
- Manage your own files
- Build client relationships
- Participate in business development activities

Question 6

How would you describe the culture within the team?

Culture can have a significant impact on your job satisfaction.

Consider asking about:

- Team collaboration
- Flexible or hybrid working
- Social activities
- Wellbeing initiatives
- How new team members are supported

Remember, you're looking for a place where you'll thrive not just somewhere that offers the highest salary.

Question 7

What progression opportunities are available?

Understanding the firm's approach to career progression demonstrates ambition and long-term thinking.

You might ask:

- What does progression typically look like?
- How are promotions assessed?
- Are there opportunities to specialise further?

Question 8

What challenges is the team currently facing?

This question demonstrates commercial awareness and gives you valuable insight into the firm's priorities. It may also help you understand where you could add value if you join the team.

Question 9

What qualities do your most successful NQ Solicitors have in common?

This is one of the most valuable questions you can ask. The answer will provide insight into the behaviours, skills and attitudes the firm values most and help you determine whether you're a good fit.

Question 10

Is there anything we've discussed today that you'd like me to expand on?

This is an excellent closing question.

It gives you an opportunity to address any concerns, reinforce your strengths and leave the interview on a positive, confident note.

Questions to Avoid

While it's important to ask questions, avoid those that can easily be answered by looking at the firm's website.

For example:

- ✗ What areas of law do you specialise in?
- ✗ How many offices do you have?
- ✗ What services do you offer?

Instead, focus on questions that demonstrate you've done your research and are genuinely interested in the opportunity.

Top Tips Before Your Interview

- ✓ Research the firm and the team you'll be meeting.
- ✓ Read the job description carefully.
- ✓ Prepare examples that demonstrate your skills and experience.
- ✓ Think about why you're interested in the role.
- ✓ Bring copies of your CV if appropriate.
- ✓ Arrive on time and dress professionally.
- ✓ Be yourself confidence comes from preparation.

Need More Interview Advice?

For further guidance on preparing for interviews, making a positive first impression and performing at your best, download our [Candidate Interview Guidance](#)

About eNL Legal Recruitment

For over 25 years, eNL Legal Recruitment has been helping solicitors across England and Wales take the next step in their legal careers.

Whether you're approaching qualification or actively searching for your first NQ role, our specialist consultants are here to provide confidential advice, market insight and access to opportunities with leading law firms.

Explore our latest [NQ opportunities here](#).