



Law Society
of Ireland

Guidance for Training Solicitors

Supporting trainees on the Hybrid and Modular courses

TRAINEE WORKING HOURS & NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE

Trainees employed in their training firm while completing the PPC Hybrid or PPC Modular should note that, if Friday is part of their normal working week they may need to be paid for the hours spent training on that day.

Under section 8 of the National Minimum Wage Act 2000, trainees who are paid close to the minimum wage must be compensated for any training hours that fall within their usual working hours. This ensures that, when training time is included in the total hours for a reference period (up to one month), the trainee's average hourly pay remains at or above the national minimum wage of €14.15 per hour.

SUPPORTING A PPC HYBRID TRAINEE

Trainees are generally working in the firm throughout the programme with a regular weekly study commitment.

- **Recommended four-day working week**
During the core PPC Hybrid it is recommended that trainees work a 4 day week. While not every weekend involves Hybrid sessions, allowing one day off each week will greatly support a trainee's learning and well being.
- **Provide study leave**
Before PPC examinations.
- **Recognise that trainees will be balancing employment and study**
All trainees will have to deal with increased obligations from taking on substantial course work and will need sufficient time to work through their materials.
- **Avoid excessive evening and weekend work**
The course is intensive and trainees are expected to engage in evening and weekend study. Where possible, adjust workloads so trainees can leave the office on time and avoid additional evening or weekend work.
- **Expect increased attendance requirements**
During Advanced Electives (May, June & July). If trainees take all Advanced Electives in the Law Society, there would be increased attendance and assessment obligations during these months.

SUPPORTING A PPC MODULAR TRAINEE

Learning is delivered in intensive blocks. The key is planning ahead for trainee absence and assessment periods.

- **Recommended 4 day working week**
During the core PPC Modular it is recommended that trainees work a 4 day week while completing a module of the course. While not every weekend involves Modular sessions, allowing one day off each week will greatly support a trainee's learning and well being.
- **Ensure trainees can fully engage**
With teaching periods without competing work commitments. The course is intensive and trainees are expected to engage in evening and weekend study.
- **Provide study leave**
Before PPC examinations.
- **Allow a reasonable transition period**
Back into office work following intensive teaching blocks.
- **Anticipate increased attendance requirements**
During Advanced Electives (May, June & July). If trainees take all Advanced Electives in the Law Society, there would be increased attendance and assessment obligations during these months.

Do I need to pay trainees for training hours on a Friday if they are working a 4 day week for the duration of the course?

Yes. If Friday is part of their normal working week, training hours that fall within their usual working hours must be paid.

How much study leave is recommended?

This will vary depending on how many exams the trainee is undertaking. A letter will issue from the Trainee Section to training solicitors ahead of exams reminding them of the fact and advising on a recommended number of days leave which might be granted to the trainee.

What are the attendance obligations for the Advanced Electives?

If trainees take all Advanced Electives with the Law Society in May and June, increased onsite attendance should be expected. While parts of the course will be delivered online each elective will have a certain amount of onsite attendance requirements. Assessments will be due in July.

Do trainees have course sessions every weekend?

No. Not every weekend involves sessions, however trainees are obliged to work through a lot of e-lectures and prepares for weekend tutorials and workshops in their own time. Allowing one day off each week will greatly support their learning and wellbeing.