



**PPC I**  
**APPLICATION PACK**  
**2020**

**CLOSING DATE 01 JULY 2020**

**Traineeship Section  
Law School  
Law Society of Ireland  
Blackhall Place  
Dublin 7  
DX 79  
01 672 4802  
traineesection@lawsociety.ie**

Dear Applicant

Professional Practice Course I

Thank you for your interest in the Professional Practice Course Part I (PPC I).

We hope you find this guide helpful. Please download, complete and submit the forms below:-

Form 1 – Application for Consent to Enter into Indentures of Apprenticeship  
Form 2A – Certificate of Proposed Training Solicitor  
Form 2B – Certificate of Training Officer (This can be used in place of Form 2A where the training firm has registered a Training Officer with the Law Society.) **You do not need to submit this form if it is not applicable to you.**

In addition please read and submit the Annexes below in addition to the Form 1, Form 2A and Form 2B (if applicable);

Annexe to Form 1;  
Annexe to Form 2A; and  
Annexe to Form 2B (**You do not need to submit this form if it is not applicable to you**).

As the demand for places on the PPC I can at times be intense we would urge you to read this booklet carefully and ensure that you remember to include all necessary enclosures when you submit your application. Incomplete or incorrectly completed application forms cannot be processed and will be returned to you.

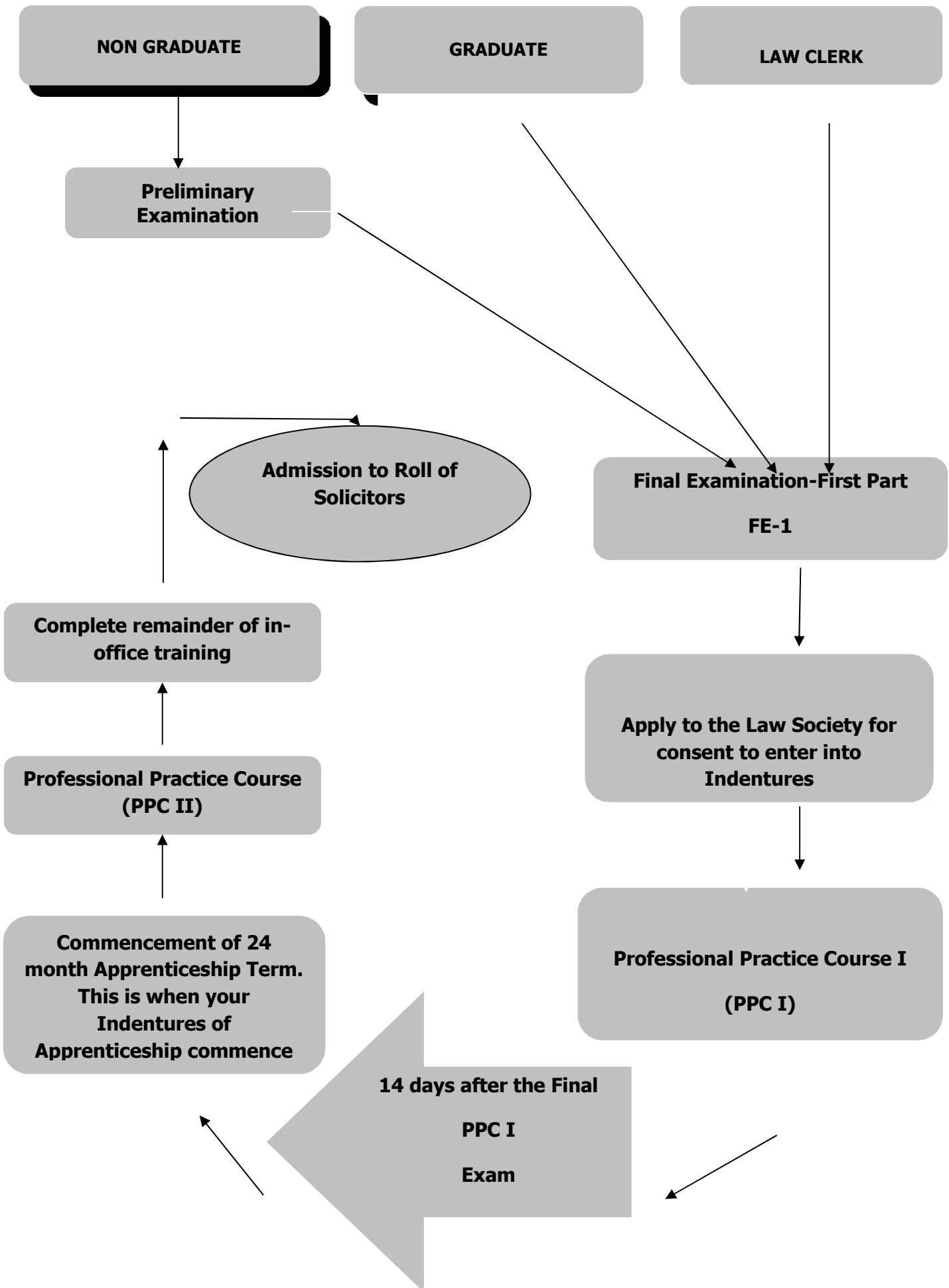
The closing date for applications for the PPC I course is Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020. All applications must be received by 1pm on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020. We will continue to accept late applications as long as there are places available for the 2020 PPC I, however these late applications are subject to a late application fee of €50.00. Around the time of the closing date it is exceptionally busy so applications received around that time normally take longer to process. Applications received before the middle of June take around 2 to 3 weeks to process; applications received around the closing date take about 4 to 5 weeks to process. So if you can, it is best to apply early to ensure your application is dealt with quickly.

Best wishes,

Traineeship Section  
On behalf of the Law School

1. ELIGIBILITY

ROUTE TO QUALIFICATION AS A SOLICITOR



## **Am I eligible to apply to the Law School to commence PPC I?**

All applicants must have first:

- passed or been exempt from the Preliminary Examination,
- passed the Final Examination – First Part
- found a suitable practising solicitor to act as a training solicitor.
- Applicants must be at least 17 years old.

*It is compulsory before applying to the PPC I that all applicants have secured a training contract with an eligible solicitor to provide training and experience over a two-year period.*

## **Who is eligible to be my training solicitor?**

Not all solicitors are eligible to become a training solicitor. In order to become a training solicitor the solicitor must be a practising solicitor who has been in continuous practice for at least four years.

A practising solicitor is defined as a solicitor who is engaged full time in the provision of legal services as:

- a sole practitioner, or
- a partner in a firm of solicitors, or
- a solicitor in the whole time employment of a body corporate, or
- a solicitor in the full-time service of the State within the meaning of section 54 (as substituted by section 62 of the Solicitors (Amendment) Act, 1994) of the Solicitors Act, 1954.

Any solicitor not sure of their post qualification time should contact the Regulation Department of the Law Society or refer to previous practicing certificates. Alternatively if the proposed training solicitor does not satisfy the eligibility criteria but wishes to engage a trainee they should contact the Traineeship section for further guidance.

A training solicitor must be able to offer you the full range of legal experience required by the regulations. For further information please refer to Section 4 of this guide.

## **How many trainees can a solicitor employ?**

A training solicitor can train two trainees at any one time. For the purposes of this rule the Law Society is concerned with the actual number of trainees in the office. That is the number of trainees who will be training at the same time. The in-office training period starts 14 days after the last examination on the Professional Practice Course Part I or the last day of the course

Additional trainees can be employed if there are assistant solicitors working in your proposed firm. In this instance, one further trainee can be engaged for every two assistant solicitors employed by the firm.

## 2. APPLYING TO THE LAW SCHOOL

In order to apply for consent to enter into Indentures of Apprenticeship you must complete your application forms correctly. This section will go into detail about how to do this and will also answer frequently asked questions about the process.

### A. What do I send in with my application?

- **Checklist** - A checklist is provided at the end of this guide to ensure that you return all required documentation. Please complete, and return this checklist with your completed application.
- **Form 1** – This form is the application for Consent to enter into Indentures of Apprenticeship. Please remember to sign and date this form. Please also remember to include your date of birth, FE1 pass date and reference information.
- **Form 2A** – This form is to be filled in by your proposed training solicitor. If your training solicitor already has a trainee / trainees they must also complete the attached certificate to confirm the details of the other trainees. **A copy of the certificate can be found at the end of this booklet.**
- **Form 2B** – This form can be used instead of Form 2A if your training firm has registered a Training Officer with the Law Society. This form is to be filled in by your Training Officer. If your training solicitor already has a trainee / trainees the training officer must also complete the attached certificate to confirm the details of the other trainees. **A copy of the certificate can be found at the end of this booklet.**
- **Birth Certificate** – A certified copy of the original is required. In order to obtain a certified copy please take your original birth certificate, together with a copy of the certificate, to a Solicitor, who will sign the copy and certify that it is a true copy of the original. Please note that we do not return certified copies of Birth Certificates.
- **Preliminary Examination** – This applies to non-university graduate applicants (or graduates from universities located outside the European Union). Evidence is required of having passed the Society's Preliminary Examination or having been declared exempt there from. Photocopies are acceptable.
- **Law Clerks** - If applicable, evidence of having been recognised as a bona fide Law Clerk by the Education Committee of the Law Society.
- **Final Examination – First Part (FE—1)** – Evidence of having passed this examination. Please submit written evidence from the Society to confirm that you have passed all eight subjects of the Final Examination – First Part.
- **Degree or Transcript** – A certified copy of your University degree (parchment) or transcript of results is required. A letter from your University is also acceptable.
- **Education Record** – This form can be found at the back of the guide. Please complete, and return with your completed application. ***We require details of all schools and colleges attended since and including Primary School. We do not require your results from Primary School. The total points received in your Leaving Certificate is sufficient to include.***
- **Employment Record** – This form can be found at the back of the guide. Please complete, and return with your completed application.
- **Character References** - Often people mistake a character reference for an employment reference. They are not the same thing. Your referee need not be an employer. Your referees must however be known to you, not be a relative, and be a person of some standing. There is no particular wording for the reference. However,

the referee should confirm their occupation or position of responsibility, how you are known to them and for how long, and that you are of good character and suitable to become a trainee solicitor. Two recent original (not copies) character references are required and should be no more than 12 months old. Please note that you may not provide a character reference from your proposed training solicitor.

- **Photograph** – Please include one recent passport photograph signed on the back by you.
- **Code of Conduct form** - for Trainee Solicitors and Training Solicitors during the period of in – office training. Please complete and include all 3 pages of this form signed by both you and your training solicitor or training officer.
- **Application fee** – There is an application fee of €840 to apply for the PPC I. This can be paid by cheque, bank draft or postal order made payable to the Law Society of Ireland. Unfortunately we do not have a facility to accept payments by credit card. The PPCI Application closing date is 1 July 2020. After this date we cannot guarantee you will be offered a place on the course. In any event applications received after 1 July 2020 will incur a late application fee of €50.00  
***Once your application has been processed we cannot refund the application fee. The application fee is not a deposit and the amount of the application fee should not be deducted from the amount of course fees.***

**First Irish Examination - The Legal Practitioners (Irish Language) Bill came into effect on 1st August 2008, which means that you no longer need to have passed the First Irish Exam to be able to apply for the PPC I course.**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>REMEMBER – THE CLOSING DATE FOR ALL PPC I APPLICATIONS IS 1PM ON WEDNESDAY 1 JULY 2020.</b></p>
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## **B. Applicants with a criminal conviction**

The application pack states that:

"Any applicant with a criminal conviction is prohibited from joining the Law School until the following requirements have been satisfied:

- (a) Letter from applicant giving a brief description of the offence
- (b) Letter/Evidence from the Garda Station where the charge was given setting out details of the offence and any court case, penalties or fines resulting from the conviction
- (c) An application to the Education Committee of the Law Society

The Education Committee will then make a decision as to whether or not the applicant will be permitted to join the PPC I. We cannot advise on the outcome of the Committee as every case is considered individually.

Once the Education committee makes its decision we will advise the applicant in writing. If the decision is favourable we will then process the application for the PPCI."

The Education Department, specifically the Traineeship Section has been asked to advise potential applicants that the Society has the ability to grant a practising certificate, grant a practising certificate with conditions or refuse a practising certificate as provided for in Section 49 of the Solicitors Act 1954, as substituted by Section 61 of the Solicitors (Amendment) Act 1994, as amended by section 2 of Solicitors (Amendment) Act 2002. If a solicitor has been sentenced to a term of imprisonment or a criminal conviction, they must inform the Society with their practising certificate application and a determination will be made by the Regulation of Practice Committee whether to issue a practising certificate (PC) to that solicitor - a PC may be issued, a PC with conditions may be issued or the PC may be refused.

In other words trainee solicitors who have met all the requirements to be able to join the Roll of Solicitors are not guaranteed that they will be granted an unlimited practising certificate or a practising certificate at all.

### **C. What happens once I send in my application?**

Once the Law Society receives your application it is then checked to ensure all the necessary documentation is included. Your application will be assessed on the basis that you have disclosed all relevant and material information which might affect the Society's decision to grant you formal consent to enter into Indentures of Apprenticeship. **If you intentionally or negligently withhold any information, the Society may have the right to subsequently withdraw consent.** You may be called for interview by the Society to go through any aspect of your application.

- If your application is complete your original Birth Certificate will be returned to you with acknowledgement of receipt of your application and fee. Please note, certified copies of Birth Certificates will **not** be returned. Incomplete or incorrect applications will be returned to you at the address given by you on Form 1. This process takes 2 – 3 weeks.
- If your application is successful a letter giving Consent to enter into Indentures of Apprenticeship will then be sent to you and to your proposed training solicitor. Your Indentures of Apprenticeship deed will be included with the consent letter. This deed **must** be returned to the Law School within 6 months of the consent letter date, duly executed by yourself and the proposed training solicitor. If Consent is issued less than 6 months before the commencement date of PPCI the deed must be returned and registered before the start of the course **It is at this stage you are provisionally assigned a place on the PPC I course.**  
This process takes 2 – 3 weeks.

### **Points to remember when completing your Indentures of Apprenticeship Deed:-**

- **The date at the top of Form 3 should be the same as the date on Form 4 Part 2. These dates should be dated post consent letter date.**
- **On Form 4 Part 3 the second paragraph is not applicable to you and should not be completed. This part can be crossed out.**
- **Anyone, except your training solicitor or a family member, can witness your Indenture deed.**

- We will acknowledge in writing receipt of your correctly executed Indenture deed. Your deed of Indentures will then be forwarded to the registrar of solicitors to be registered. If any part of your Indenture deed is incorrect or incomplete we will return the deed to you for amendment.  
This process takes 6 – 8 weeks.
- Once we have received the registered deed back from the registrar we will return it to you. It is your responsibility to keep your deed in a safe place, as you may need to refer to it from time to time. **Once your deed has been registered and returned to you your place on the PPC I course is confirmed.**
- Once your place is confirmed, you can expect to receive information on how to register at least one month before the commencement of the PPC I.

### **3. FEES AND FINANCIAL HELP**

#### **How much are the fees?**

Fees are subject to change on an annual basis. The PPC I course fee for the 2020 PPC I is €8300.00. The deadline for payment of the course fees is 14 August 2020. If your fees are paid late you will incur a late payment fee of €50.00

#### **Can I receive help with my fees?**

There are a variety of ways you may be able to get help with course fees. You may be eligible to receive a higher education grant or you could apply for a bursary from the Law Society. Course fees may also be subject to tax relief.

#### **How do I apply for a grant?**

The Professional Practice Course I (PPC I) is an approved course for grant purposes. Students wishing to attend the PPC I should apply online to the Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI). The online application facility is available through [www.susi.ie](http://www.susi.ie)

You do not have to wait for confirmation of your place on the PPC I before applying for a grant. This is a new initiative on the part of the Department of Education and it will hopefully result in a greater number of grant applications being processed before the start of the PPC I. Potential candidates for the PPC I who wish to receive grant support are strongly advised to submit an application as early as possible. Early grant applications have a better chance of being processed before the deadline for the payment of the PPC I fees on 14 August 2020.

#### **Tax relief on fees**

The PPC I & II are included on the list of post-graduate courses eligible for tax relief. The relief applies at the standard rate of tax and can be claimed (through your local tax office) regardless of whether or not the course and college is actually included on the list, which issues from the Department to the Revenue Commissioners each year. The maximum amount of fees that can be claimed under the above is €5,000 per annum.

#### **Getting special help otherwise known as a bursary**

The Law Society operates a limited bursary scheme for each course. Any student who considers that his/her own resources or available family resources are inadequate to fund their study can apply for a bursary. If you have a query regarding bursaries please contact Paula Sheedy on [p.sheedy@lawsociety.ie](mailto:p.sheedy@lawsociety.ie) The Traineeship Section does not deal with bursaries.

#### **When will I receive my timetable?**

Every effort is made to ensure that the timetables are made available to you before the course commences although this cannot be guaranteed. As soon as the timetable is ready it will be posted on the Law Society website. As a guide to the 2020 timetable you might find it helpful to view the 2019 timetable which is available on the Law Society website <http://www.lawsociety.ie/Trainees/PPC-Courses/PPC1/>

#### **Are training solicitors under an obligation to pay course fees?**

No. Your training solicitor is under no obligation to pay your course fees. However, the payment of fees can constitute a deductible expense for tax purposes and any training solicitor wishing to know more about this should contact their local tax office. The Law Society does not hold any information on this. The payment of course fees can lead to a reduction in the salary levels payable to the trainee under the NMWA 2000.



## **4. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR PPCI**

### **Courses: PPC1 Stream requests**

Unfortunately we are not in a position to take stream requests this year and there are various reasons for this. We anticipate that we will only be running two streams. This means that the start times are very close together, with only a half an hour difference between the two most days. Also, we are auto-assigning students to tutorial and skills groups. These are generated through our central system and we cannot manually assign a person to a particular stream.

### **Can I have a second job whilst undertaking my in-office training?**

You are expected to attend on a continuous and full-time basis at the office of your training solicitor. The written consent of the Law Society is required for the holding of any other position.

### **What salary am I entitled to?**

A summary of the National Minimum Wage Act can be found at the back of this booklet. Please print out and keep for your own records.

If you have any queries regarding the National Minimum Wage Act (NMWA) please contact the Workplace Commission's Information and Customer Service via Information and Customer Service, O' Brien Road, Carlow R93W7W2.

Tel No: (059) 9178990, Lo call 1890808090

Website: <https://www.workplacereactions.ie>

## **5. THE TRAINING PROGRAMME**

The in-office training period commences 14 days after completion of the final exam on the PPCI and it is the core of the solicitor training programme. During the course of the in-office training period trainees must have the opportunity to receive instruction and obtain experience in a variety of areas of law as well as in practice in skills such as drafting; letter writing; interviewing; legal research; negotiations and oral presentations. This experience and practice must be undertaken under the supervision and guidance of a training solicitor.

### **What areas of law will I cover during the in-office training period?**

Three distinct areas of law.

The period of in-office training is considered to be a vital and essential component of the overall training programme. In-office visits are carried out as a way of ensuring that flexible, interactive and responsive in-office training programmes are in progress.

### **How long is the training contract?**

The training period is two years. Up to four months of relevant work experience obtained in the 1 year immediately preceding the start of the PPC I can count towards the two year training period. This is known as credit.

The in-office training period is organised around the Professional Practice Courses. The training period formally commences 14 days after the last exam or the last day of the PPC I. If you did work in an office before the PPC I your indentures still formally commence on this date – credit works to take off time at the end; it doesn't change the formal start date.

The breakdown of the training period (approximately)

In-office training post-PPC I	12 months
Attendance on PPC II	3 months
In-office training post-PPC II	9 months
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24 Months</b>

### How much credit can I apply for?

A trainee may apply for credit (up to a maximum of four months) for work done Pre-PPC I in the office of a training solicitor or other practising solicitor within the jurisdiction of the State. In-office training Pre-PPC I is optional. The time for which, credit is sought must be completed in one block within a year immediately preceding attendance on the PPC I. The minimum amount of credit time you can claim is one week.

### When can I apply for credit?

You must have completed 18 months of your in-office training before you can apply for credit. (Credit Application forms are available from the Law Society website and a form will also be included when Consent is issued). If you attend the 2020 PPC I the earliest we can process your credit application is October 2022. Please do not submit your credit application form before this time.

<b>Breakdown of training contract with maximum credit time awarded</b>	
In-office training Pre-PPC I	4 months (maximum)
In-office training post PPC I	12 months
Attendance on PPC II	3 months
In-office training post-PPC II	5 months
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24 Months</b>

### When will I qualify?

The expiry date of your training contract is not your qualification date. It simply means that the contract between you and your training solicitor is at an end. You qualify once:

- all statutory and regulatory requirements concerning your education and training have been met, and
- you have been accepted onto the Roll of Solicitors.

### What is a secondment?

A secondment is an opportunity for you, during the course of your training, to work elsewhere other than at your training solicitor's office. With the prior consent of the Law Society and your training solicitor you may spend up to a maximum of six months of the in-office training period working in employment elsewhere. Under the Education and Training Regulations, trainees are allowed to engage in work (in Ireland or abroad) provided it "...would be advantageous to such a trainee in the furtherance of his/her education or training (or both) and his / her preparation for admission to the solicitor's profession".

### Is a secondment compulsory?

A secondment is compulsory if your training solicitor cannot offer you experience three distinct areas of law. Your training solicitor is required to declare this to the Law Society when seeking Consent to enter into Indentures. Please find on the next page the format of the letter that should be included with your application in relation to any in-office training that must be acquired outside of the office of your proposed training solicitor. Please amend with relevant details and include with your application if applicable

**Example Secondment Required Letter**

Traineeship Section  
Law Society of Ireland  
Blackhall Place  
Dublin 7  
DX 79

**Date:**

Re: **(Applicant Name) - Secondment of Indentures of Apprenticeship**

Further to the above named applicants application to enter into Indentures of Apprenticeship we hereby confirm that **(Applicant Name)** will gain experience in the following areas of law during his/her 24 month in-office training programme with the **(Firm Name of Proposed Training Solicitor)**:

**(Applicant Name)** will be released from this office at a later date in his/her 24 month in-office training programme to be seconded for a period of **(number of months of proposed secondment)** (maximum secondment period is six months) in private practice to gain instruction and experience in the following areas of law:

Yours sincerely

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Proposed Training Solicitor Signature)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Applicant Signature)**

## 6. FORMS TO COMPLETE & RETURN WITH APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Please complete this checklist by ticking in the appropriate boxes and include it with all other documentation when submitting your application. Please refer to Section 2 for further information.

Documents	Not Included	Applicable	Not Applicable	Evidence Of Exemption Included
1. Form 1- Application for Consent				
2. Annexe to Form 1				
3. Form 2A – Certificate of Proposed Training Solicitor OR Form 2B – Certificate of Training Officer				
4. Annexe to Form 2A OR Annexe to Form 2B				
5. <u>Certified copy</u> of Birth Certificate				
6. Evidence of having passed the Preliminary Exam (or evidence of exemption)				
7. Evidence of being recognised as a bona fide Law Clerk				
8. Evidence of having passed the Final Examination – First Part (FE-1) (or evidence of exemption)				
9. Certified copy of University Degree or transcripts or letter from University				
10. Certificate of Education record				
11. Certificate of Employment record				
12. Two recent character references (originals not copies)				
13. Recent passport size photo – signed at the back				
14. Code of Conduct Form				
15. Application fee of €840 cheque or postal order made payable to the Law Society of Ireland. This fee is not applicable to Access Students				
Please tick box if you are an Access student The application fee is not applicable to Access Students				

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ PPS No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Tel. No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Next of Kin's Name & Contact Tel. No.: \_\_\_\_\_

**Educational Record**

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

The Educational Record is required as you are applying to the Law Society for consent to enter into Indentures of Apprenticeship. Attendance on the Professional Practice Courses and your in-office training programme is conditional on educational qualifications. As part of your application for Consent to enter into Indentures of Apprenticeship you are required to provide a complete educational record of all educational qualifications that you have achieved to date starting with your primary school details. Final points received in your Leaving Certificate is sufficient for secondary school results



College/Institution	Date From	Date To	Results Achieved	Name of Degree i.e. LLB, BCL

**PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS BELOW**

**Have you been granted exemption from any Final Examination subjects? YES / NO**

If your answer to the question above was **YES** please provide evidence of having been declared exempt therefrom. **Are you a university graduate? YES / NO**

**Are you a non-university graduate? YES / NO** If your answer to the question above was **YES** please provide evidence of having passed the Preliminary Examination

**Are you a non-university graduate and exempt from sitting the Preliminary Examination? YES / NO** If your answer to the question above was **YES** please provide evidence of having been declared exempt therefrom.

**Are you a bona fide Law Clerk? YES / NO**

If your answer to the question above was **YES** please provide evidence of having been recognised as such by the Education Committee of the Law Society.

**Applicant's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

***Please include this completed form and any requested documentation attached with your application for Consent to enter into Indentures of Apprenticeship. Applications for Consent to enter into Indentures of Apprenticeship with incomplete Educational Records will be returned***

**EMPLOYMENT RECORD**

**Applicant Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

The Employment Record is required as you are applying to the Law Society for Consent to enter into Indentures of Apprenticeship. The Professional Practice Courses and your in-office training programme are full time. As part of your application for Consent to enter into Indentures of Apprenticeship you must provide a complete employment record of all positions of employment that you have held to date starting with the most recent.



Organisation	Position Held	Date From	Date To

**PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS BELOW**

**Is the office of your proposed training solicitor a state body or body corporate?  
YES / NO**

If your answer to the question above was **YES** please provide an undertaking signed by you and your proposed training solicitor that you will be seconded to another solicitors practice during your 24 month in-office training programme to gain practical experience in areas of law that are not provided for within the office of your proposed training solicitor. **Please see section 4 regarding the requirements of your in-office training and proposed format of the secondment required letter.**

**Will your training solicitor offer the range of experience as set out in the Indenture Deed?**

**Applicant's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Please include this completed form and any requested documentation attached with your application for Consent to enter into Indentures of Apprenticeship. Applications for Consent to enter into Indentures of Apprenticeship with incomplete Employment Records will be returned*



**Certificate to accompany *Form 2 - Certificate of proposed Training Solicitor*, if Training Solicitor has additional trainees.**

Name of additional trainees	Date of their Indentures of Apprenticeship	Commencement Date of in – office training

Name of Training Solicitor / Training Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Training Solicitor/ Training Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Code of Conduct for**  
**Trainee Solicitors and Training Solicitors during**  
**the Period of In- Office Training**

**1. General**

- (a) (i) A trainee solicitor is expected to undergo his or her education and training to be a practicing solicitor in a diligent and responsible manner.
- (ii) While in attendance at the Society's Law School, the trainee solicitor should apply himself or herself diligently and responsibly to attending the designated lectures and seminars and completing the designated independent work projects. While in the course of undergoing his or her in-office training, a trainee solicitor should act diligently and responsibly under the direction of his or her training solicitor or other designated solicitor(s) working with in the training solicitor's office and conduct himself or herself in a manner consistent with the trust and confidence placed in him or her by the training solicitor. A trainee solicitor should never represent himself or herself as a qualified solicitor.
- (b) While the standards expected of a trainee solicitor are not as onerous as those expected of a qualified solicitor, the trainee solicitor should familiarise himself or herself with the contents of the current edition (2013) of *A Guide to Good Professional Conduct for Solicitors*, which are derived both from statutory and non-statutory sources. The Solicitors Acts 1954 to 2011 and the regulations made under these Acts are the legislative framework for the regulation of solicitors and trainee solicitors, with which the trainee solicitor should also be familiar; and the trainee solicitor should also be mindful of additional statutory duties, such as those necessitated and imposed by Data Protection legislation and Anti-Money Laundering legislation.

**2. Specific Obligations and Values**

- (a) (i) A trainee solicitor should at all times act in accordance with the terms of his or her indentures of apprenticeship.
- (ii) A trainee solicitor should at all times act so as to maintain the trust and confidence of his or her training solicitor.
- (iii) A trainee solicitor should at all times act in the best interests of his or her training solicitor's clients.
- (b) (i) A trainee solicitor should at all times act consistently with the core values of the solicitors' profession, which include-
- acting with honesty and integrity
  - upholding confidentiality
  - avoiding conflicts of interest
- (ii) A trainee solicitor should at all times act with honesty and integrity in his or her dealings with others.
- (iii) The duty of confidentiality required of a trainee solicitor in relation to the handling of client-related matters applies to all communications (written and oral) arising within the training solicitor's office relating to a particular client, including the fact of the existence of the solicitor/client



relationship between the training solicitor's office and that client. Any matter relating to a client's business can only be disclosed with the consent of the training solicitor and the client or by order of a court or statutory body exercising its designated powers.

- (iv) Where the trainee solicitor perceives that a conflict of interest arises in a particular matter between the interests of the trainee solicitor and those of the training solicitor and/or those of a particular client of the training solicitor, the trainee solicitor should immediately inform the training solicitor of the nature of this perceived conflict and should abide by any appropriate and reasonable instruction of the training solicitor as to how to proceed.
- (v) Where a trainee solicitor has a concern or query in relation to any aspect of the foregoing provisions of this Code the trainee solicitor may communicate with the Society's Training Executive Officer.

### **3. Ensuring Proper Training**

- (a) A trainee solicitor is entitled to a reasonable standard of training and should work together with his or her training solicitor to ensure a positive outcome in this regard.
- (b) Both a trainee solicitor and his or her training solicitor should together ensure that an up – to – date training record of work undertaken by the trainee solicitor is kept and that good working practices are learned and applied by the trainee solicitor.
- (c) A trainee solicitor should address with the training solicitor, as appropriate and reasonable, any concerns that the trainee solicitor may have as to the volume of work, whether too much or too little, he or she is asked to undertake or the level of guidance being received by the trainee solicitor in relation to such work.
- (d) Where a trainee solicitor perceives that he or she has made a mistake he or she should immediately inform the training solicitor. A mistake can and does occur and, if made, the trainee solicitor should so report it with honesty and integrity, irrespective of the potential consequences of doing so.
- (e) A trainee solicitor is expected to self-motivate and to consider what is needed for his or her own professional development. The trainee solicitor should, as far as practicable, keep up to date with legal developments relevant to the work he or she is asked to undertake.
- (f) A trainee solicitor should seek to develop his or her own social and interpersonal skills and to propose solutions to client-related problems for consideration and discussion within the training solicitor's office.

**4. Obligations of the Training Solicitor**

- (a) A training solicitor should be familiar with the rights and obligations of the trainee solicitor under the terms of the Indentures of Apprenticeship between them and of this Code of Conduct and should facilitate and ensure, as appropriate and reasonable, compliance with them.
  
- (b) A training solicitor should ensure that his or her trainee solicitor is duly instructed on ethical matters appropriate to the practice of law and the practice of the profession of a solicitor.

The undersigned Trainee Solicitor.....and the undersigned Training Solicitor / Training Officer ..... each agree to facilitate and ensure compliance with the provisions of this Code of Conduct during the period of in-office training of the trainee solicitor.

**Dated this..... day of..... 2020/21.**

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**Signature of Trainee Solicitor.....**

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**Signature of Training Solicitor / Training Officer .....**

## THE “LIVING WAGE”

The Education Committee of the Law Society of Ireland, whilst recognising that it exceeds the minimum statutory wage under the National Minimum Wage Act 2000 (“NMWA 2000”, see below), recommends that a training solicitor gives consideration to paying his or her trainee solicitor the higher non-statutory “living wage” published from time to time by the Vincentian Partnership, as found and defined on its website ([www.livingwage.ie](http://www.livingwage.ie)).<sup>1</sup>

The current “living wage” hourly rate is €12.30 per hour and therefore, based on the recommended 36 hour work week, represents a weekly salary of €442.80.

### STATUTORY MINIMUM WAGE / SALARY

A training solicitor is obliged to pay his/her trainee solicitor a minimum salary under the terms of the NMWA 2000. From 1 February 2020, the statutory national minimum wage for an experienced adult employee is €10.10 per hour (the “Statutory Wage”). An experienced adult employee, for the purposes of the NMWA 2000 is an employee who has had employment of any kind in any two years over the age of 18.

#### **(i) Pre-Professional Practice Course I (“PPC I”)**

A trainee solicitor who works in his/her training solicitor’s office prior to starting the PPC I must be paid a salary of at least the Statutory Wage. This is €363.60 per week based on the Education Committee’s recommendation of a 36 hour work week. Four months can be credited against the duration of the two-year training period for a trainee who works in the training solicitor’s (or another practicing solicitor’s) office before commencing on the PPC I.

#### **(ii) During the PPC I**

A trainee solicitor who works in his/her training solicitor’s office before commencing on the PPC I, is, in accordance with the NWMA 2000, entitled to be paid a salary while on the PPC I. The salary for such a trainee while on the PPC I is €303.00 per week based on a course week of 30 hours.

However, where a training solicitor agrees to pay the PPC I course fees on behalf of the trainee solicitor, a reduction may be applied, as per the table below:

Where the PPC I course fees are paid by the training solicitor

75% of minimum wage (€7.58 per hour) for first third of the course (9 weeks)	€7.58 x 30 hours = €227.40 per week
80% of minimum wage (€8.08 per hour) for the second third of the course (10 weeks)	€8.08 x 30 hours = €242.40 per week
90% of minimum wage (€9.09 per hour) for the final portion of the course (10 weeks)	€9.09 x 30 hours = €272.70 per week

#### **(iii) During the two year in-office training period**

A trainee solicitor must be paid a salary of at least the Statutory Wage during his/her two year in-office training period. This is €363.60 per week based on the Education Committee’s recommendation of a 36 hour work week. This is €1,575.60 per month or €18,907.20 per annum. Hours worked in excess of 36 hours per week must also be paid at least the Statutory Wage.

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<sup>1</sup> Proposed by the Education Committee (6<sup>th</sup> December 2018)

#### (iv) During the Professional Practice Course II (“PPC II”)

A trainee solicitor, while on the PPC II, is entitled to be paid €262.60 per week based on a course week of 26 hours.

However, where a training solicitor agrees to pay the PPC II course fees on behalf of the trainee solicitor, a reduction may be applied, as per the table below:

Where the PPC II course fees are paid by the training solicitor

75% of minimum wage (€7.58 per hour) for first third of the course ( 4 weeks )	€7.58 x 26 hours = €197.08 per week
80% of minimum wage (€8.08 per hour) for the second third of the course (4 weeks)	€8.08 x 26 hours = €210.08 per week
90% of minimum wage (€9.09 per hour) for the final portion of the course (4 weeks)	€9.09 x 26 hours = €236.34 per week

#### (v) Post-PPC II

After completion of the PPC II, the entitlement of the trainee solicitor continues to be that he/she must be paid the Statutory Wage.

#### (vi) Enforcement

A trainee solicitor, who is not satisfied that he/she is being paid the Statutory Wage is entitled to make a complaint<sup>2</sup> to the Workplace Relations Commission.

The NWMA 2000 provides for the imposition of criminal sanctions on an employer who is found to have failed to pay an employee the Statutory Wage.

For further information on the statutory national minimum wage see the [detailed guide to the National Minimum Wage Act 2000 \(pdf\)](#) or contact the Workplace Relations Commission - Customer Services.

Workplace Relations Commission - Customer Services, Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, O'Brien Road, Carlow. Opening Hours: Mon. to Fri. 9.30am to 5pm  
Tel: (059) 917 8990. Locall: 1890 80 80 90.  
Homepage: <http://www.workplacerelements.ie/>

#### Useful contact

Workplace Relations Commission, O'Brien Road, Carlow. R93 W7W2 Ph: (059) 91 78990 Lo-Call 1890 80 80 90 Fax: (059) 91 78909
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<sup>2</sup> Where a complaint is contemplated, reference should be made to the detailed provisions of the NMWA 2000 (as amended by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2010) and relevant statutory regulations.