

CREDIT, COMPULSORY SECONDMENTS AND JOINING THE ROLL OF SOLICITORS

Traineeship Section Update

21 September 2018

Dear Trainee

I hope you have settled back in to the office after the PPC II, and I particularly hope you are finding your traineeship valuable both in terms of experience and supervision.

This Traineeship Section Update hopes to answer any questions you might have at this stage of your training in respect of credit and joining the roll. This update also contains specific information for any trainee who is currently working in an office where there may not be opportunities to gain experience in the compulsory areas of practice. It can be devastating for a trainee to get this far in their legal education only to find that their application to join the Roll of Solicitors is deferred due to a failure to gain sufficient experience in one or more of the Blocks of Experience contained in the Indenture Deed. Trainees who are working in specialist practices and or who are working on an in-house basis should pay particular attention to this, as it is those who have been most affected by this regulation in the past.

This guide may not answer all your questions. You can also refer to the Law Society Website using this link for more information <http://www.lawsociety.ie/Trainees/In-office-Training/>. The website has information on secondments, transfers, salary, recruitment registers and credits. Alternatively please contact the Traineeship Section by telephoning the Law School 01 672 4802 or by email traineesection@lawsociety.ie.

Kind regards
Traineeship Section

CREDIT

If you worked in a solicitor's office before starting the PPC I you can claim for some of that time to form part of the two year training period. There are a few rules that apply to claiming credit.

- The maximum time for which you can apply credit for is 4 months.
- The work must have been undertaken in the six months before the start of the Professional Practice Course I.
- The work experience must have been obtained in the office of your training solicitor or the office of another practicing solicitor within the Republic of Ireland.
- If you applying for work undertaken with a different solicitor from your training firm the solicitor that you worked with during the credit period should sign the form
- Applications for credit can only be accepted from trainees who have completed 18 months of their training; therefore the earliest date you can apply for credit is 1 October 2018.

You can apply for credit by completing the form that is available on the Law Society website using this link <http://www.lawsociety.ie/Trainees/In-office-Training/Credit-Applications>. Please provide as much information as possible when completing the credit application form.

If you attended the 2016 PPC I you can apply for four months credit for work experience gained during the period 6 March 2016 to 6 September 2016. If you are awarded the maximum amount of credit your Indentures will expire on 28 November 2018. Without credit your Indenture Expiry Date is 28 March 2019.

Your Indenture Expiry Date is not your qualification date. Your Indenture Expiry date is the earliest date that you can apply to join the Roll.

BLOCKS OF EXPERIENCE

All trainees are required to gain experience in four of the five Blocks of Experience set out in the Indenture Deed. Blocks 1 and 2 are compulsory. If for any reason your training solicitor is unable to provide you with the appropriate range of experience including Block 1 and 2 they must facilitate you in order for you to be seconded to an alternative office for up to a maximum of 8 months. We recommend a period of three months for each of the two compulsory areas. For example if your office is unable to provide you with experience in Block 1 and Block 2 the recommended secondment period is six month months. The requirements may vary depending on your previous work experience, exactly how much work in a given area you have been exposed to and what other experience can your firm offer and whether or not the deficiency in your work experience is for a compulsory or non-compulsory area. Whilst all trainees must gain experience of four of the five blocks particular emphasis is placed on the compulsory areas of practice. If you are at all unclear as to whether or not you are required to undertake a secondment and if so for how long please contact the Traineeship Section. We will ask you to confirm what experience you have gained so far and what other experience your firm may be able to offer before the indentures experience.

We have been asked by the Education Committee to stress to all trainees that they should not presume to know how much time will be sufficient to gain experience in the key places and trainees are asked to contact the Traineeship Section for confirmation. We wish to avoid the situation of any trainee's application to join the Roll being delayed as a result of this regulation. Unfortunately this does happen every year. Please bear in mind that you may be required to undertake a secondment for as long as six so contact us now if you have any questions as to whether you might be affected by this regulation.

Blocks of Experience

Block 1

Conveyancing and Landlord and Tenant Law

Block 2

Litigation

Block 3

Wills, Probate and Administration of Estates

Block 4

Commercial Law

Company Law

Insolvency Law

Block 5

Criminal Law and Procedure

Employment Law

European Union Law

Family Law

Intellectual Property Law

Pensions Law

Planning and Environmental Law

Revenue Law and Taxation

Other specialised area(s) of legal practice

JOINING THE ROLL OF SOLICITORS

Your name will only be placed on the Roll of Solicitors once the Certificate of Admission (or Parchment) has been signed by the President of the High Court. Applications for admission to the Roll of Solicitors will be accepted only when the Indentures of Apprenticeship have expired. The application can take up to 2 - 3 weeks to process. Therefore, it is not possible to give a date of qualification until your application to join the Roll has been received and processed. To join the Roll there is a separate application to be made and for more information contact the Admissions Officer, Philomena Whyte, p.whYTE@lawSOCIETY.ie

Before applying to join the Roll make sure that the following regulations have been complied with.

1. Compliance with the Indentures of Apprenticeship

A successful application to join the Roll of Solicitors is grounded upon complying with all the terms of the Indentures. This means for example gaining training and experience in the areas of legal

practice or “blocks”. It also means spending the full two years training in a solicitor’s office. It is really important that you take this opportunity to read the Indentures so you can ensure you are in full compliance.

2. Obtain prior consent for a move or change of training solicitor

If during your training solicitor retires or moves to another firm you will have to obtain the consent of the Law Society to become indentured to another solicitor. Often trainees forget to obtain this consent and their application to join the Roll is subsequently delayed.

3. Obtain prior permission for a secondment placement

As above applications to go on secondment will have to be approved and confirmation from the secondment placement that it was completed successful will have to be on file.

4. Deal with any absences during the training period e.g. maternity leave or sick leave

Isolated periods of short illness are not likely to affect your eligibility but any extended period of absence could. In some circumstances, depending on the shortfall, it may be necessary for you to make an application to the Education Committee. All applications to the Education committee incur a charge of €75.00

You can anticipate receiving an application form to join the Roll of Solicitors a weeks before your Indentures are due to expire or in the case of particular concerns contact Philomena Whyte.

Finally any questions about the Parchment Ceremonies should also be directed to Philomena Whyte. But we can say that once your application is processed and you are placed on the Roll you will be invited to attend the next available ceremony. There are a number of ceremonies taking place throughout the year to facilitate everyone.

CAREERS ADVICE

The Law Society has a dedicated Careers Advisory Service that is available to Post PPC II trainees. The Careers Service usually organise events for potential job seekers or trainees or wish to get some advice to redraft an old CV. You can expect to receive notice of such events in the autumn, possibly mid-September. At that stage you will be invited to workshops in career management/job seeking skills and to other similar type training. Alternatively contact the Careers Service by telephone 01 672 4800 or by email careers@lawsociety.ie. We are asked from time to time about salary information for newly qualified solicitors. There is no set minimum salary for newly qualified solicitors. But you may find it helpful to review the annual salary surveys <http://www.brightwater.ie/candidates/salary-survey>. Alternatively contact the Careers Service

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information about your requirements under the Indentures of Apprenticeship and a Credit Application Form, go to <http://www.lawsociety.ie/Trainees/In-office-Training/> if have a question about changing training solicitor, secondments or any matter in relation to the Indentures contact the Traineeship Section at traineesection@lawsociety.ie

For queries in relation to examinations please contact the Course Examinations section on courseexaminations@lawsociety.ie

For any other query in relation to applying to join the Roll of Solicitors contact Philomena Whyte, Admissions Officer at p.whyte@lawsociety.ie