Training Checklist for Trainee Solicitors

I. Aim

To enhance consistency in the process of training, the Law Society has prepared a checklist on the basic type of practical training that a trainee solicitor is expected to undergo prior to qualification.

The checklist is aimed at providing general guidance on the basic training and assisting principals and trainees in devising their own training programme. Principals can amend and adapt it to meet the training needs of their own practice.

In handling the tasks set out in specific practice areas, trainees should be closely supervised by experienced practitioners.

II. Requirements in trainee solicitor contract

In the standard form of a Hong Kong trainee solicitor contract (Clause 5(1)), a principal is required to provide his trainee solicitor with the opportunity to learn:

- (a) the principles of professional conduct;
- (b) the basic skills of
 - (i) communication (ii) practice support
 - (iii) legal research (iv) drafting
 - (v) interviewing (vi) negotiation
 - (vii) advocacy;
- (c) at least 3 of the following legal practice areas:
 - (i) banking (ii) civil litigation (iii) commercial (iv) company
 - (ii) commercial (iv) compart (v) criminal litigation (vi) family
 - (vii) insolvency (viii) intellectual property
 - (ix) property (x) trusts, wills and probate

III Training Checklist for Trainee Solicitors

To make the training effective, trainee solicitors should be given regular guidance and feedback on their performance.

Where feedback on performance is expected to be given by the principal, there will be two boxes against the item, each marked with "T" and "P" representing training given to trainee and feedback given by principal respectively.

Trainees can tick in the boxes where appropriate.

	Area	Briefing / Training / Practical Experience	Target Outcome	Duration (with dates)
1.	Induction	(a) Briefing on office procedures	Gain an understanding of	
		Office hours	(i) the work environment	
		Salary payments	(ii) the firm's background	
			(iii) the people to work with	
		Leave application	(iv) the office procedures to follow	
		Liaison with other departments	(v) the requirements to fulfill as a trainee	
		Secretarial support		

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1.	Induction (cont'd)	(b) Briefing on office and IT systems - Filing system - Archiving system - Library - Research facilities - Computer software in use - Use of Internet - Use of E-mail		
		(c) Briefing on structure of training Registration of trainee solicitor contract		
		 Seat rotation Requirement on the completion and maintenance of a training record for the duration of the contract Continuing professional development requirement for trainees Student membership of the Law Society 		

Area	Briefing / Training / Practical Experience	Target Outcome	Duration (with dates)
2. Professional ethics	Experience in applying major ethical principles in real cases: (a) Fiduciary duty T P • Act in client's best interests with honesty, openness and fairness T P • Handle conflict check (between solicitor and client and between clients) T P • Identify any potential or actual conflict T P • Take appropriate action to deal with any actual conflict or to avoid any potential conflict arising in the future (b) Confidentiality T P • Recognise and comply with the duty of confidentiality owed to clients (c) Professional undertakings T P • Draft professional undertakings taking into account the effect and the responsibilities embodied in such undertakings • Follow up on the performance of the professional undertakings		(with dates)

	Area	Briefing / Train	ing / Practical Experience	Target Outcome	Duration (with dates)
2.	Professional ethics (cont'd)	(d) Profession	Draft written advice on cost estimates / availability of legal aid		
		T P	Draft bills of costs (interim and final)		
		T P	Draft written records of agreed fees		
		T P	Follow up on the settlement of the bills / agreed fees		
		TP	Understand the office procedures on issue of receipts and payment of fees into office / client accounts / third parties		
		T P •	Understand the prohibition against profit sharing with unqualified persons		

	Area	Briefing / Training / Practical Experience	Target Outcome	Duration (with dates)
3.	Communication skills	T P (a) Draft letters to clients, internal notes and memos	Ability to (i) identify with respect to a proposed communication:	
		T P (b) Report orally to clients and others by telephone or at meetings	 the purpose; and the most appropriate and effective way of making it; and 	
			(ii) present thoughts, advice and submission orally and in writing in a logical, clear and succinct manner, having regard to the circumstances and the recipient to whom the communication is directed.	

	Area	Briefing / Train	ing / Practical Experience		Target Outcome	Duration (with dates)
4.	Practice support skills	T P (a)	Run small transactions under close supervision and gain experience in case management	Abilit (i)	manage personal workload efficiently;	
		T P (b)	Work on larger transactions as a member of a team and gain experience in team work	(iii)	work effectively as a team member; use information technology competently to improve work efficiency;	
				(iv)	keep appropriate file records in an orderly manner and render timely bills;	
				(v)	keep clients fully informed of all developments in their matter in a professional manner;	
				(vi)	recognise any signs of client dissatisfaction and act appropriately;	
				(vii)	conduct each matter in a way that minimises any risk to client and law firm;	
				(viii)	identify clients' problems and objectives and generate possible solutions for evaluation based on merits and risks;	
				(ix)	plan and review progress of case / transaction and bring matters to a timely and client-satisfactory conclusion.	

	Area	Briefing / Traini	ng / Practical Experience		Target Outcome	Duration (with dates)
5.	Legal research skills	T P (a)	Research specific legal issues using traditional and computerised research tools and sources	Abilit	identify and investigate factual and legal issues;	
		T P (b)	Record the results of research and apply them to the facts in question	(iii)	select appropriate resources to help find solutions; record, analyse, apply and	
		T P (c)	Record orally and in writing the results and application to the supervising solicitor		communicate research results.	
6.	Drafting skills	T P (a)	Draft legal documents (such as leases, agreements and pleadings) both with and without the use of precedents	Abilit (i) (ii)	ty to draft documents which are factually and legally accurate; meet the intended purpose;	
		T P (b)	Understand the proper use of precedents	(iii)	are well organised, clear and precise;	
		T P (c)	Explain legal documents drafted by others	(iv)	form a consistent and coherent whole.	
		T P (d)	Draft general correspondence, advice letters, instructions to Counsel			

	Area	Briefing / Training / F	Practical Experience		Target Outcome	Duration (with dates)
7.	Interviewing skills	T P (b) Atto	tend meetings with clients and witnesses the the supervising solicitor and take notes meetings	Abilit (i) (ii)	identify the client's goals and priorities and use appropriate interviewing techniques to take accurate instructions; explain the legal situation clearly and accurately;	
		with soli	nduct interviews with clients and theses under the close supervision of icitor ke any follow up action after the erview	(iii) (iv) (v)	ensure that there is a mutual understanding with clients on retainers and fees; accurately record the interview, confirming instructions and action that needs to be undertaken following the interview; help the client decide the most appropriate course of action taking into account his goals and priorities.	

	Area	Briefing / Traini	ng / Practical Experience		Target Outcome	Duration (with dates)
8.	Negotiation skills	T P (a)	Prepare for negotiation on a matter on behalf of a client (identify the issues, assess the position and plan the strategy)	Abilit	negotiate effectively engaging appropriate techniques and strategies a matter on behalf of a client, including a settlement and / or	
		T P (b)	Observe negotiations conducted by experienced solicitors	(ii)	representing or co-representing a client at a mediation; identify possible options to resolve	
		T P (c)	Conduct negotiations under close supervision		dispute and explain to the client the benefits and disadvantages of each option with respect to the matter.	
		TP (d)	Takes notes of the negotiation			
		T P (e)	Take any follow up action including drafting a settlement agreement			
9.	Advocacy	T P (a)	Understand the rights of audience for trainee solicitors and solicitors	Abili	ty to advocate a case on behalf of a client effectively both orally and in	
		T P (b)	Prepare for court / tribunal appearances	(ii)	writing; exercise with confidence the rights	
		T P (c)	Exercise the rights of audience available to trainee solicitors	of audience available to solicitors.	of audience available to solicitors.	

	Area	Briefing / Training / Practical Experience		Target Outcome	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice areas	(a) Banking (b) Civil litigation (c) Commercial (d) Company (e) Criminal litigation (f) Family (g) Insolvency (h) Intellectual property (i) Property (j) Trusts, wills and probate	Abilii (i) (iii)	handle reasonably complex client matters relating to at least 3 practice areas with confidence display a good working knowledge and understanding of the legal and practice issues that commonly arise in at least 3 practice areas apply the knowledge and understanding correctly and in manner appropriate to everyday legal practice	

	Area	Briefing / Traini	ng / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.		Briefing / Training (a) T P T P T P T P T P	 Banking Draft simple loan agreements, guarantees, security documents, related board minutes, director's certificates and other ancillary documents Assist in loan transactions, including drafting, reviewing and commenting on related documents, liaising and coordinating with client, foreign Counsel and opposing Counsel, collating and organising transaction and conditions precedent documents, following up on conditions subsequent requirements Assist in Debt Capital Markets transactions, including drafting, reviewing and commenting on offering materials, placement / subscription agreements and ancillary documents Assist in preparing debt sell down and transfer documentation including assignments and sub-participations Assist in reviewing derivatives documentation (including swap documentation) and be familiar with market standard documentation (ISDA) Draft / review legal opinions and liaise with foreign Counsel in relation to legal opinions on foreign law Draft / review and collate conditions precedent documents and liaise with various parties throughout the process of fulfilling conditions precedent requirements 	
		T P		
			Draft / review and collate conditions precedent documents and liaise with various parties throughout the process of fulfilling conditions precedent requirements	
		ТР	Be familiar with loan market standard form documentation (e.g. APLMA and LMA standard form documents) from both lender and borrower perspective	

	Area	Briefing / Training / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.		 Arrange for relevant company, court and insolvency searches against companies and review search results T P	. To fill the filling of the common policy and the triber to will also with the contribution
		T P • Prepare know-how and articles on new regulations and market developments • Prepare transaction bibles	

	Area	Briefing / Training	ng / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area – Civil litigation	T P T P T P T P T P T P T P T P T P T P	Civil litigation Attend client meetings / report to and advise client / take instructions from client Draft Attendance notes statements of case / memorials affirmation (for summary judgment or setting aside default judgment lists of document / disclosure statements requests for further information summonses witness statements expert reports instructions to Counsel dispute resolution clauses costs schedules Prepare / consider documents for disclosure and prepare disclosure list Inspect other party's documents Consider issues of privilege Instruct Counsel / attend conference with Counsel Research and analyse points of law and issues of business importance Attend case management conference / interim hearing Meet / interview witnesses Meet / instruct experts	(with dates)
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Area	Briefing / Training / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10. Practice area – Civil litigation (cont'd)	T P • Observe / conduct settlement negotiations T P • Conduct / observe advocacy T P • Prepare / agree trial bundles T P • Attend court / tribunal hearing	(with dates)

10. Practice area - (c) Commercial	
Commercial T P	(with dates)

	Area	Briefing / Trainin	ng / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.		T P T P T P T P T P T P T P T P T P T P	Company Incorporate a company in Hong Kong including drafting memorandum and articles of association and all post-incorporation documents. Amend Memorandum and Articles of Association and review the same for particular transactions Register a non-Hong Kong company under Part XI of the Companies Ordinance Form a general partnership Assist in the listing of a company on The Stock Exchange of Hong Kong Limited (including assisting in the due diligence exercise and preparation of verification notes) Draft simple sale and purchase agreement for shares of a private limited company Assist in the due diligence exercise Prepare completion documents Attend completion and attend to stamping of share transfer and related contract notes Assist in the giving of advice on the legal obligations of corporations and their officers Assist in identifying generally the stamp duty implications of corporate transactions Draft simple shareholders' agreement	

	Area	Briefing / Trainin	g / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area – Criminal litigation	(e) T P	Ensure compliance with relevant Law Society rules and regulations including those related to Anti-Money Laundering	
		ТР	 Conduct legal visits to clients in custody / identification parades Locate clients in custody and assist in 	
		ТР	 advising clients the availability of bail negotiating the bail terms advising clients the availability of bail review procedure advising clients the possible requirement of a surety so that they may identify the likely candidate advising clients the possible requirement for available funds for bail contacting family members of clients to update the bail arrangement advising clients of appropriate behavior in custody e.g. not to talk about their case with other persons in custody 	
		T P	 Make periodic enquiry with the law enforcement case office (usually before the bail reporting) to find out the progress of the investigation and the release / charge date Assist in advising clients their right of silence – when to exercise it, and when to make 	
		TP	 use of the first opportunity to speak Interview clients and take instructions on the charge, the offence and the nature of defence 	
		ТР	• Obtain Prosecution documents to understand the nature and extent of discovery and any unused material	
		ТР	• Familiarise with the admissibility of evidence, prosecution and defence evidence and pre-trial procedures relating to evidential issues e.g. alibi and expert evidence notices	

	Area	Briefing / Trainin	g / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area – Criminal litigation (cont'd)	ТР	Assist in assessing a case taking into account the alleged role of the client in the crime and the evidence against the client available to the investigation authorities	
		$oxed{T} oxed{P}$	Take proofs of instructions and obtain comments on prosecution evidence	
		$oxed{T}$	Conduct site visits	
		$oxed{T}$	Preserve evidence and take witness statements	
		TP	Attend court proceedings and observe the role of solicitors at court	
		$\begin{array}{ c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c$	Prepare Instructions to Counsel	
		TP	Attend and observe the role of solicitors at conferences with Counsel	
		TP	Prepare for trial and mitigation	
		TP	Assist in assessing a case after the close of the Prosecution's case and in giving advice to client	
		T P	Assist in giving advice on grounds of appeal against conviction and sentence	
		TP	Keep accurate attendance notes / time records	
		TP	Draw up bills of costs	
		TP	Follow up on the recovery of costs	

	Area	Briefing / Trainii	ng / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area - Family	(f) T P T P	 Attend clients for instructions in family matters of dispute, divorce, ancillary relief and custody, and access Be aware of relevant practice directions major ordinances and rules for matrimonial practice FDR process mediation process Draft Petition and Answer and all related statutory documents all forms of Notices Affidavits / Affirmations Form E Summonses / consent summonses Basic Orders letters to parties and own clients instructions to Counsel 	
		ТР	 Prepare bundles for hearing the First Appointment Bundle including preparing the Estimate of Costs. meeting notes hearings 	
		ТР	 Handle clients Counsel accounts documentary evidence 	

	Area	Briefing / Training	ng / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.		T P T P T P T P	Insolvency • Draft - statutory demand - Winding up and Bankruptcy Petitions • Obtain Certificate of Compliance from Master • Attend - the first hearing of the Petition - the creditors' meeting - the election of Committee of Inspection - adjudication of Proof and file Objection if necessary • Prepare Proof of Debt • Assist in the paper work for	
		ТР	 the appointment of Provisional Liquidators the formation and administration of scheme of arrangement Understand the present arrangement of the Official Receivers' Office to appoint outside insolvency practitioners as receivers / liquidators 	

	Area	Briefing / Trainin	ng / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area – Intellectual	(h)	Intellectual property	
	property		Contentious	
		ТР	 Conduct and/or arrange for company, business, domain name and IP registration searches against infringers 	
		ТР	• Search the Internet for evidence of infringement and/or contact details of potential infringers	
		TP	Draft warning and chasing letters to infringers	
		TP	Negotiate with infringers with a view to obtaining an undertaking and compensation	
		$ \boxed{ T } \boxed{ P } $	Prepare letters of undertaking and attend infringers to execute letters of undertaking	
		ТР	 Report cases to Customs and attend examination of counterfeit merchandise seized by Customs 	
		ТР	• Visit the places of business of infringers to check for counterfeit merchandise and assess the use of confusingly similar marks and/or reproduction of copyrighted works and report	
		TP	Draft instructions to investigators	
		T P	Attend Trade Marks Registry hearings	
		T P	Draft Writ with a generally endorsed Claim	
		TP	Prepare Timetabling Questionnaires	
		TP	Advise client on the possibility of mediation / other ADR methods	

	Area	Briefing / Trainin	g / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Intellectual	ТР	 Assist the preparation for an interim injunction including preparing a summons and supporting affidavit 	
	property (cont'd)	ТР	 Draft Statements of Claim, Defences, Further and Better Particulars of Pleadings and/or Answer to Requests and List of Documents and organise the documents generally 	
		TP	Appear before a Master and subsequently draft the order made	
		TP	Attend to discovery generally	
		TP	Attend to the preparation and proofing of witness statements	
		TP	Prepare court bundles and attend court at both interlocutory and trial stages	
		TP	Draft instructions to Counsel and attend meetings with Counsel and clients	
		TP	Attend meetings with clients only	
		$\boxed{T} \boxed{P}$	Prepare trade mark oppositions or cancellation actions	
		ТР	 Draft domain name complaints (including ADNDRC complaints and HKIAC complaints) 	
		ТР	Draft company name complaints to the Companies Registry	
			Non-contentious	
		TP	Draft / review IP licences / assignments	
		ТР	Prepare trade mark applications	
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Area	Briefing / Training / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10. Practice area – Intellectual property (cont'd)	T P • Advise on registrability of trade marks T P • Draft deficiencies reports to client T P • Report official actions to client T P • Prepare arguments to overcome citations T P • Handle domain name registrations	

	Area	Briefing / Traini	ng / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.		T P T P T P T P T P T P T P T P T P T P	Property Draft and approve agreements for Sale and Purchase assignments tenancy agreement Attend to stamping and registration Approve title Assist in execution Attend to filing and registration of documents at Companies Registry and Land Registry Peruse Memorandum and Articles of Association of companies and prepare Board and Shareholders' Resolution Prepare Mortgages, Equitable Mortgages, Guarantees and reporting letters to banks and engaging in completion procedures Assist in loan transactions Prepare Releases Manage general file maintenance Assist in dealing with clients	
		ТР	Ensure compliance with Law Society's rules, regulations and guidelines including those on Anti-Money Laundering	

Area	Briefing / Train	ng / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10. Practice are Trusts, will probate	1 9/	Trusts, wills and probate Familiarise with the laws of Wills, Wills Drafting and Testate and Intestate Succession Understand the procedures relating to obtaining estate duty clearance, application for grant of representation and administration of estate Ensure compliance with the Law Society rules and regulations and guidelines including those on Anti-Money Laundering Draft Wills Understand client's instructions and identify client's goals Identify and analyze relevant legal and factual issues Advise clients on matters to consider on Wills drafting before taking instructions on Wills drafting Critically use precedents to facilitate drafting Explain the contents of the Will to clients Attend to attestation of Will	(with dates)

	Area	Briefing / Train	ning / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area – Trusts, wills and probate (cont'd)	TP	 Obtain estate duty clearance for persons who died before 11 February 2006: Understand key charging and exemption provisions in the Estate Duty Ordinance and case laws Understand the significance of compliance under the Estate Duty Ordinance to applications for grant of representation Elicit relevant facts and information for the purpose of obtaining estate duty clearance for the estate Complete Estate Duty Forms in order to obtain clearance Attend with representatives of the Home Affairs Department for the opening of Safe Deposit Box and inventory taking Obtain Grants of Representation to a Deceased estate including: Understand formalities and procedures to be followed in obtaining a Grant of Representation Prepare the Schedule of Properties Draft the necessary affirmations / affidavits to obtain a Grant Identify the supporting documents required for the application 	

	Area	Briefing / Training / Practical Experience		
10.	Practice area – Trusts, wills and probate (cont'd)	 Practise the Administration of Estates Identify and apply legal principles in explaining to clients how an estate is distributed Collect, secure and manage assets Pay debts and other liabilities Distribute the estate to the beneficiaries 		

⁹ November 2009