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HIRING A TRAINEE SOLICITOR





The Law Society of Ireland is the educational, representative and regulatory body of the solicitors' profession in Ireland. It exercises statutory functions under the Solicitors Act 1954 to 2015 in relation to the education, admission, enrolment, discipline and regulation of the solicitors' profession. It is governed by an elected Council, which is supported by a full-time executive led by the Director General.

This publication should at all times be read in conjunction with the Acts and Regulations referred to above.

The Law School is located at the Law Society's headquarters at Blackhall Place, Dublin 7.

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INTRODUCTION

Many of the leading organisations and legal firms in Ireland have recognised the value to their organisations of employing trainee solicitors. The aim of this information guide is to provide a brief overview on the value of employing trainee solicitors..

MORE DETAILED ADVICE CAN BE FOUND AT :

www.lawsociety.ie/member-services/practice-support/Hiring-staff/Hiring-a-Trainee

BENEFITS OF EMPLOYING A TRAINEE SOLICITOR

- 1** Your organisation can grow its legal team whilst moulding the trainee solicitor to suit the relevant organisation's needs.
- 2** Trainee solicitors receive professional training in the law that is both relevant and current and this can aid in bringing important legal knowledge and skills back to your business as various areas of law evolve.
- 3** Trainee solicitors bring enthusiasm and energy.
- 4** Trainee solicitors may help you to grow your organisation and become more profitable.
- 5** Having a trainee solicitor in situ will make delegating important legal work easier.
- 6** The training contract also offers the training solicitor and their staff an opportunity to grow and improve essential management skills whilst making a valuable contribution to the social responsibility of training the next generation of solicitors.
- 7** As the solicitor professional qualification attracts a diverse student population including graduates wishing to switch careers, today's trainee solicitors may bring with them additional valuable skills including IT, second languages and accounting.



WHAT AREAS OF PRACTICE CAN A TRAINEE SOLICITOR COMPLETE?

Every training contract is different. Trainee solicitors work in a diverse range of industries. Some trainee solicitors work in-house or in the public sector whilst others work in private practice.

IN RESPECT OF THE AREAS OF LAW IN WHICH A TRAINEE SOLICITOR MUST ATTAIN EXPERIENCE, THE FOLLOWING RULES APPLY: Trainee solicitors must obtain reasonable and appropriate instruction and experience in any three distinct areas of law to include working on contentious and non-contentious matters.

If it is the case that you cannot provide training in three distinct areas of law, you can always arrange a secondment in order that the trainee solicitor may obtain the missing area.

WORK PLACEMENTS

Offering a period of paid work experience is an ideal way to assess whether a candidate will fit into your organisation. Many trainee solicitors work in a variety of paid temporary work placements prior to obtaining their training contract. It provides these candidates with a valuable opportunity to gain relevant legal work experience whilst broadening their network of legal contacts.



TRAINEE SOLICITORS IN PRIVATE PRACTICE



Our trainee solicitors are an integral part of our firm and we recruit, train and nurture trainee solicitors to become not just technically excellent and well-rounded lawyers, but also future partners and leaders of the firm. All of our trainees share a deep commitment to exceptional service and the provision of high quality legal advice as part of our drive for innovative service delivery in meeting the complex challenges our clients face.

Sinead Corcoran, Partner and Training Solicitor – Ronan Daly Jermyn Solicitors.



IN-HOUSE AND PUBLIC SECTOR TRAINEE SOLICITORS



One of the main advantages of training in-house, particularly in a public sector body such as a local authority, is the exposure to a wide range of areas of law, which allows, trainees develop a solid foundation for their legal careers.

Aoife Hogan, Solicitor who completed her training contract with Dublin City Council



Our experience with our in-house trainees has been extremely positive. We find that upon qualification, our in-house trainees are very advanced in terms of the immediate impact they have as practising solicitors, leveraging the undoubted benefits that come with a deep knowledge of the client organisation and the relationships they have in that organisation.

Alan Daly – Group Head of Legal at ESB



RECRUITMENT

You will need to recruit an individual who has successfully completed the Law Society Final Examination First Part (FE-1). [FE-1 DETAILS](#)

1. You could advertise your vacancy for free on the Law Society Finding Your Training Contract forum. Just email [traineeship](#) with the vacancy details.
2. You could advertise your vacancy on [www.legalvacancies.ie](#)
3. You could add your firm's details to the [register of firms](#) who take on trainee solicitors.

ELIGIBILITY TO BECOME A TRAINING SOLICITOR

1. You must at some stage have held an Irish practising certificate for a period of four years.
2. You must currently hold an Irish practising certificate.
3. If working in private practice, you must be either a partner or principal.
4. A training solicitor may have two trainee solicitors apprenticed to them at any one time and one more trainee solicitor for every two assistant solicitors employed.

REGISTRATION

In order to obtain the Law Society's consent to register a training contract, the important documents to be completed are:

1. FORM 1 – for proposed trainee solicitor to complete
2. FORM 2A or FORM 2B – for proposed training solicitor (Form 2A) or training manager (Form 2B) to complete
3. CODE OF CONDUCT – to be signed by both proposed trainee solicitor and proposed training solicitor / training manager

Once the Law Society has approved the proposed training contract, the Indenture Deed (training contract) will be issued for completion and execution by both the proposed trainee solicitor and the proposed training solicitor. The signed Indenture Deed may then be returned to the Law Society for registration.

[SAMPLE INDENTURE DEED \(TRAINING CONTRACT\)](#)



IN-OFFICE TRAINING PERIOD

The in-office training period is of twenty four months' duration and commences fourteen days after the last Professional Practice Course (PPC) exam. A trainee solicitor is required to obtain experience working in any three distinct areas of law to include working on contentious and non-contentious matters.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE COURSE (PPC)

Trainee solicitors may attend either the full-time PPC which runs from September to April or the Hybrid PPC course (part-time & distance learning) which runs from December to the following December.

Trainee solicitors are required to complete four Advanced Electives after completing the PPC course. The Law Society runs the Advanced Electives in two blocks each year taking place in May and June respectively.

[PPC COURSE INFORMATION](#)

[ADVANCED ELECTIVES INFORMATION](#)

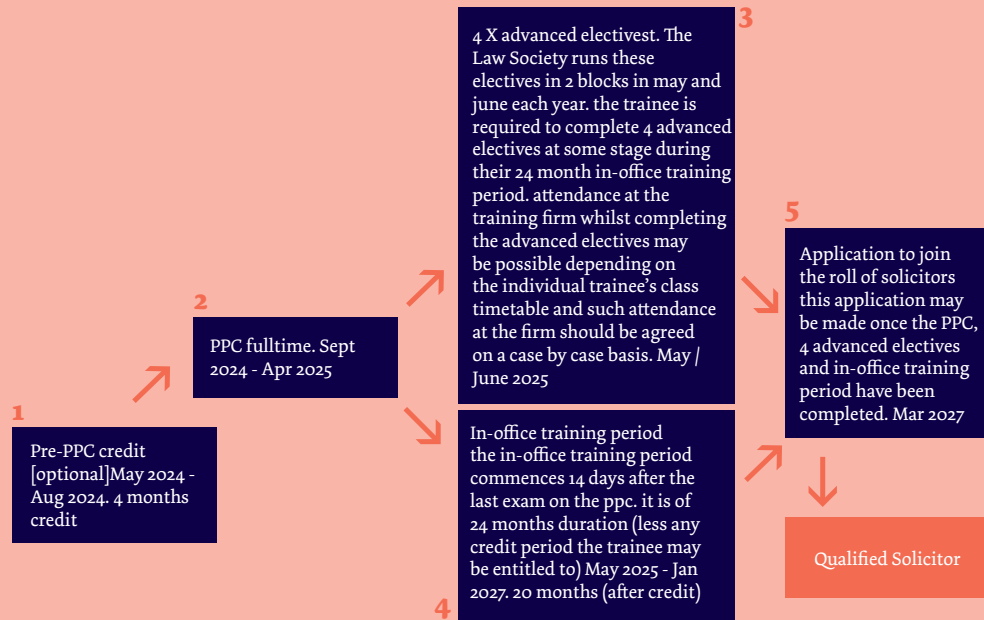
THE QUALIFICATION PROCESS

THE STEPS TO QUALIFY AS A SOLICITOR IN IRELAND ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- 1 Preliminary Examination for non-graduates.
- 2 Final Examination First Part (FE-1) consisting of 8 individual subjects
- 3 Secure a training contract. Apply for consent to enter into indentures of apprenticeship and have the indentures registered with the Law Society.
- 4 Complete the full time Professional Practice Course (PPC) - Runs from September to the end of April [full-time] or December to the following December [PPC Hybrid, part-time, blended learning].
- 5 Complete the In-office Training Period which starts 14 days after PPC and is of 24 months duration.
- 6 Following the PPC course, complete four Advanced Electives. [The Law Society offers the Advanced Electives in two blocks each year, taking place in May and June respectively.
- 7 Trainee solicitors can apply for admission to the roll of solicitors once all exams have been passed, their training period is completed and confirmation of their competence has been received from their training solicitor.



SAMPLE TIMELINE TO QUALIFICATION FOR PPC FULLTIME



COSTS OF EMPLOYING A TRAINEE

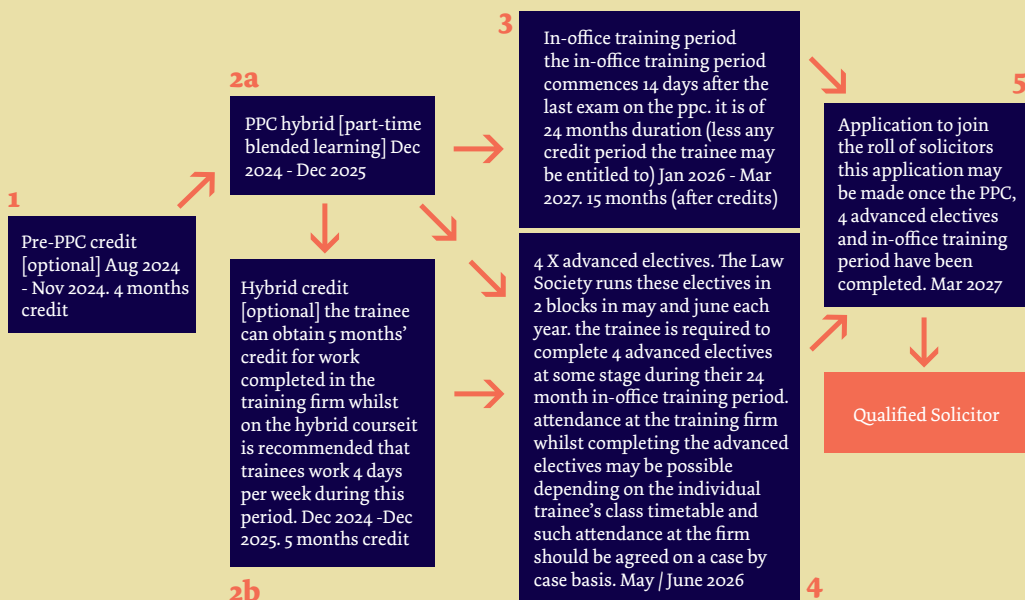
Training solicitors are obliged to pay trainee solicitors at least the minimum wage under the terms of the National Minimum Wage Act 2000. The Law Society Education Committee has issued a non-binding recommendation that training solicitors consider paying their trainee solicitors at least the **“living wage”**.

In order to attract the best legal talent, some organisations offer training contracts with increased salaries and in some cases payment of the Law School Professional Practice Course fees. Training firms are not obliged to pay the course fees.

It may be tax efficient for an organisation to pay the Professional Practice course fees as the payment of same is a deductible business expense for tax purposes. Where the individual trainee solicitor is paying their fees, they can claim a tax refund in respect of same. For further information see the IT31 leaflet which is available on the Revenue Commissioner's website: www.revenue.ie

TRAINING FEES

Registration of Indenture Deed (training contract)	€925
Professional Practice Course	€11,350
Advanced Electives (Four required)	€675 each or €2,160 if four advanced electives completed with the Law Society
Application to join the Roll of Solicitors	€330



SAMPLE TIMELINE TO QUALIFICATION FOR PPC HYBRID

