

# **ADMISSION AS AN ADVOCATE AND SOLICITOR OF THE SUPREME COURT**

## **GUIDANCE NOTE ON**

### **THE PRACTICE TRAINING FRAMEWORK FOR JUDICIAL SERVICE OFFICERS, LEGAL SERVICE OFFICERS, AND LEGAL OFFICERS UNDERGOING SUPERVISED TRAINING IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE**

#### **A. Objective**

1. This training framework applies to all Eligible Persons<sup>1</sup> seeking to fulfil their practice training requirements for admission as an advocate and solicitor of the Supreme Court through working in the public service as a Judicial Service Officer (“**JSO**”) or a Legal Service Officer (“**LSO**”), or under the supervision of a Qualifying Relevant Legal Officer (“**QRLO**”) (hereafter referred to as “**public service trainees**”).
2. This framework seeks to align the practice training requirements in the public service and private sector (i.e. in Singapore law practices and approved in-house legal departments) as far as possible.

#### **B. Duration of Practice Training Period for public service trainees**

3. The Practice Training Period (“**PTP**”) applicable to public service trainees is 12 months<sup>2</sup>.

#### **C. Mandatory Three-Month Attachment for Legal Officers in the Public Service Completing Practice Training Under QRLO Supervision**

4. All public service agencies providing training under QRLO supervision (“**training entities providing QRLO supervision**”) must send their public service trainees for a three-month attachment at either the Attorney-General’s Chambers (“**AGC**”) or a Singapore Law Practice (“**SLP**”) as part of their 12-month PTP. The supervising QRLO retains overall supervisory responsibility even during the public service trainee’s attachment at AGC or with an SLP.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Defined in section 2(1) of the Legal Profession Act 1966 to mean a lawyer (non-practitioner) or a person approved by the Minister for Law as an eligible person under section 14(1) of the Legal Profession Act 1966.

<sup>2</sup> As specified in section 13 of the Legal Profession Act 1966 read with rule 29 of the Legal Profession (Admission) Rules 2024.

<sup>3</sup> This mirrors the requirement in relation to practice training served under a practice training contract that a supervising solicitor remain responsible for the practice trainee’s training even when the trainee is not personally trained by him/her, e.g., during a secondment to a covering law practice or a Qualifying Entity. This may be achieved by the supervising QRLO reviewing the trainee’s progress and training outcomes in consultation with the attachment supervisor.

### **(i) Attorney-General's Chambers**

5. A training entity providing QRLO supervision that chooses to send its public service trainees to AGC for the three-month attachment is subject to the following conditions:
  - a. The training entity providing QRLO supervision will continue to pay the salary of the public service trainee during the attachment.
  - b. AGC will provide an assessment of the public service trainee's performance during the attachment, which will form part of the documentation necessary for the public service trainee's application for admission as an advocate and solicitor of the Supreme Court.
6. The training entity providing QRLO supervision should inform AGC of the estimated number of public service trainees which it would like to send over each year and work out with AGC the relevant administrative arrangements for each public service trainee.

### **(ii) Singapore Law Practice**

7. A training entity providing QRLO supervision that chooses to send its public service trainees to an SLP for the three-month attachment is free to work out the relevant administrative arrangements with the SLP.

## **D. Training Checklists for all public service trainees**

8. The public service trainee must demonstrate that he/she has fulfilled the substantive training requirements by completing the following by the end of his/her 12-month PTP in the public service:
  - a. The requirements and milestones within the General Practice Training Checklist applicable to them<sup>4</sup> (see **ANNEX** below for the checklist for Legal Officers in Prescribed Public Bodies and Law Offices); and
  - b. The requirements and milestones within the Training Entity-Specific Checklist<sup>5</sup> for their training entity.
9. The General Practice Training Checklists for the public service are derived from the General Practice Training Checklist for private sector trainees (i.e. trainees completing their PTP in an SLP or approved in-house legal department) set by the Singapore Institute of Legal Education ("**SILE**") and have been crafted to suit the job scope of public service trainees.

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<sup>4</sup> JSOs and LSOs may reach out to the Judicial Service Commission Secretariat and the Legal Service Commission Secretariat, respectively, for information on the applicable General Practice Training Checklist.

<sup>5</sup> Public service trainees may reach out to their respective training entities in the public service for information on the Training Entity-Specific Checklist that applies to them individually.

10. These checklists will form part of the documentation necessary for a public service trainee's application for admission as an advocate and solicitor of the Supreme Court to SILE.<sup>6</sup>
11. It is the joint responsibility of the training entity and the public service trainee seeking admission to ensure that the requirements within these checklists are fulfilled.

### **E. Implementation**

12. The practice training framework applies to all public service trainees who commence their practice training within the public service from **1 January 2026** onwards. Public service trainees are reminded of the requirement to obtain the SILE's approval for the manner of service for their PTP at least 14 days before the commencement of their PTP<sup>7</sup>. Any PTP served without such approval may be disregarded and may not count towards the public service trainee's 12-month PTP.

**Ministry of Law, Judicial Service Commission Secretariat, Legal Service Commission Secretariat, & the Singapore Institute of Legal Education**

**1 December 2025**

**Note: This guidance note replaces and supersedes any earlier guidance notes issued.**

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<sup>6</sup> Public service trainees completing their PTP under QRLO supervision are required to submit one General Practice Training Checklist applicable to them and one Training Entity-Specific Checklist. These checklists may be signed off by the supervising QRLO.

<sup>7</sup> Rule 41(1) of the Legal Profession (Admission) Rules 2024.

**ANNEX**

**GENERAL PRACTICE TRAINING CHECKLIST**

**FOR LEGAL OFFICERS UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF**

**QUALIFYING RELEVANT LEGAL OFFICERS IN PRESCRIBED PUBLIC BODIES**

**AND LAW OFFICES IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE <sup>8</sup>**

**Introduction**

This general checklist sets out the aspects of professional conduct, care, or etiquette that all Legal Trainees under the supervision of Qualifying Relevant Legal Officers (“QRLOs”) serving their practice training period in the public service should be familiar with in any practice area.

The supervising QRLO must ensure that the Legal Trainee completes **all** the tasks below and must highlight which tasks the Legal Trainee is expected to complete during their 3-month attachment to the Attorney-General’s Chambers or the Singapore Law Practice, as the case may be.

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<sup>8</sup> Under the Legal Profession (Prescribed Statutory Bodies and Law Offices in Public Service) Rules 2009.

## SECTION A – Client<sup>9</sup> Care and Management<sup>10</sup>

A Legal Trainee should adhere to the following standards in respect of client care and management:

No.	Task	Done (Please tick accordingly)
A1	Attend client meetings promptly and punctually and take accurate attendance notes	
A2	Prepare draft matter updates in a timely manner, for review by the supervising QRLO or any other officer as directed by the supervising QRLO	
A3	Prepare draft responses to client queries promptly, for review by the supervising QRLO or any other officer as directed by the supervising QRLO	

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<sup>9</sup> References to “client” is to be read to include any other public service officer, member of public, party, or interdepartmental and external government agencies requesting legal advice / legal representation/ legal policy assistance as well as case discussions with other public service or law enforcement agencies.

<sup>10</sup> **Note to supervising QRLO:** Legal Trainees should be instructed on key matters related to client meetings, including matters before, during and after meetings. In relation to matters before meetings, Legal Trainees should be instructed on meeting preparation, including sufficient anticipation of needs and issues, background checks and research if relevant on the client, the matter, and the area of law. In relation to matters during meetings, Legal Trainees should be apprised of etiquette, seating position and notetaking. In relation to matters after meetings, Legal Trainees should be instructed on matter follow-up, tidying attendance notes, organising documents and organising plans for action.

## SECTION B – Legal Research and Knowledge<sup>11</sup>

A Legal Trainee should be able to perform the following tasks in respect of legal research and knowledge:

No.	Task	Done (Please tick accordingly)
B1	Conduct legal research involving primary and secondary legislation, case law, articles using LawNet and other legal databases	
B2	Communicate research results concisely, effectively and accurately <sup>12</sup> through written memos or any other medium	
B3	Keep up-to-date with the latest legal developments relevant to the Legal Trainee's practice area(s)	

## SECTION C – Conduct and Etiquette

A Legal Trainee should adhere to the following standards in respect of conduct and etiquette:

No.	Task	Done (Please tick accordingly)
C1	Adhere to basic norms of etiquette, including being punctual, neat in attire, being properly groomed, using appropriate greetings, being respectful, and being considerate	
C2	Observe appropriate formalities for Court or meetings, and appropriate workplace etiquette in language, conduct and manner	

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<sup>11</sup> **Note to supervising QRLO:** Any research task should be geared towards producing a practical and concise work product, and constructive feedback should generally be provided on the quality of the Legal Trainee's research, depth and scope of research, whether all appropriate avenues are followed up, and whether the product is up to date.

<sup>12</sup> **Note to supervising QRLO:** This includes ensuring that the legal position stated in advice to the client or submissions to management are accurate (for example, ensuring that case citations/legislative references are accurate or that the legislation cited is the applicable version of the legislation relevant to the matter). This pertains to the quality of research rather than its communication.

## SECTION D – Ethics and Professional Responsibility

A Legal Trainee should be familiar with the following principles in respect of ethics and professional responsibilities:

No.	Task	Done (Please tick accordingly)
D1	Understand the core values of the legal profession:  a. “Integrity” which incorporates the principle that a legal practitioner must always act with uncompromising honesty;  b. “Professionalism” which requires legal practitioners to maintain the highest standards in discharging the duties they owe towards the Court, any tribunal, clients, other legal practitioners and the public; and  c. “Justice” which reflects the legal practitioner’s commitment to serve the ends of justice, and conducting himself or herself, and all aspects of his or her work, as a member of an honourable profession	
D2	Understand that a legal practitioner’s duties to the Court are paramount and override his/her duties to the client	
D3	Understand that subject to the core values and duties to the Court, a legal practitioner should act in the client’s interests and in accordance with the client’s instructions	
D4	Ensure that there is no misrepresentation or misleading statement made in communications with the Court, and understand the duty to conduct proceedings before any Court or tribunal with integrity	
D5	Understand the rules relating to conflicts of interests in various circumstances, such as when representing multiple clients in the same matter, taking a position that is adverse to a former client, or representing the government against a party that is personally known / affiliated to the Legal Trainee	

D6	Ensure the rules relating to the maintenance of confidentiality in respect of client and AGC matters are observed	
D7	Understand that a legal practitioner must always treat other legal practitioners with respect, courtesy and fairness	
D8	Understand the duties that a legal practitioner owes to non-legal practitioners. This includes the need to be fair, honest and courteous towards every person in respect of the legal practitioner's professional conduct, and to behave in a manner befitting of the legal practitioner's professional standing	



## SECTION E – Professional Skills

A Legal Trainee should be trained on the following standards in respect of professional skills:

No.	Task	Done (Please tick accordingly)
E1	Understand the processes involved in opening a new project / matter / file	
E2	Ensure familiarity with all key aspects of a project /matter / file and that all materials are well-organised	
E3	Ensure sufficient preparation in advance of key events such as Court hearings, negotiations or key meetings with clients or management	
E4	Be proactive in respect of follow-ups after key events such as Court hearings, negotiations or key meetings with clients or management	
E5	Adopt effective written and verbal communication skills in different professional settings, including advocacy before a Court or tribunal, internal communications and email drafting	

## **SECTION F – Continuing Professional Development Requirements as a Legal Trainee**

A Legal Trainee should be familiar with the following principles:

<b>No.</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Done</b> (Please tick accordingly)
F1	Aware of the training requirements for officers of the Legal Trainee's training entity	
F2	Understand that professional development can expand beyond legal skills, and external skillsets can be helpful in the professional development of a legal practitioner	
F3	Understand that developing physical health and mental well-being resiliency is important for professional development. Mental well-being encompasses overall mental health, personal growth, stress management, coping mechanisms and emotional resilience	
F4	Discuss with the supervising QRLO an approach and strategy towards continuous professional development	

## **SECTION G – Community**

A Legal Trainee should be familiar with engagements within the wider legal community:

<b>No.</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Done</b> (Please tick accordingly)
G1	Understand the roles and functions of the different stakeholders, in particular the Judiciary, the Attorney-General's Chambers, the Ministry of Law, the Legal Services Regulatory Authority, the Law Society of Singapore, the Singapore Academy of Law, the Singapore Institute of Legal Education and Pro Bono SG	
G2	Be familiar with key events in the legal calendar, such as the Opening of the Legal Year	