

Police Station Representatives Accreditation Scheme Guidance

Education and Training Unit
Version 1

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The scope of the scheme

The Police Station Representatives Accreditation Scheme (PSRAS) is regulated by the [Legal Services Commission Police Station Register Arrangements 2001](#), as amended 30 April 2005.

Non-solicitors and solicitors without the Criminal Litigation Accreditation Scheme qualification who want to give advice to persons held in a police station for which payment is claimed from the Legal Services Commission (LSC) must successfully complete the PSRAS.

A non-solicitor or solicitor who is training as a police station representative must be registered as a probationary police station representative with the LSC in order to claim payment from public funds.

The accreditation process

Contact an assessment organisation

Your first step must be to contact an assessment organisation (AO) for details of assessment programmes. This is paramount, because you must pass or be exempt from the written test and submit Part A of the portfolio to an AO before you approach the LSC to apply for probationary registration.

The AO will issue you with a pass certificate or letter for the written test and confirm receipt and technical completeness of the Part A portfolio. The Part A portfolio is not fully assessed at this stage and will either be retained by the AO or returned (the AO may charge a postage fee) to you for inclusion with your final portfolio.

The AO will then supply you with the LSC application form for probationary registration.

Register as a probationary representative with the LSC

You should then submit your application for probationary registration to the LSC enclosing your written test pass certificate and Part A portfolio receipt. If you are [exempt](#) from passing the written test, then you must provide appropriate proof of exemption, along with your application, eg a copy of your LPC pass certificate.

Your application for probationary registration must be signed by your supervising solicitor and submitted to the LSC within three months of the date your Part A portfolio was certified by the AO.

You must pass either the full [portfolio](#) (parts A and B) or the [critical incidents test](#) (CIT) within six months of the date of probationary registration with the LSC.

You must pass both assessments within 12 months of the date of probationary registration.

Failure to comply with these time restrictions will result in your suspension from the register.

Assessments

Throughout the assessment process, you must be supervised by a solicitor who complies with the definition of a supervising solicitor set out in Paragraph 1 of the [Legal Services Commission Police Station Register Arrangements 2001](#).

You will be assessed against the [Standards of competence for the accreditation of solicitors and solicitors' representatives advising at the police station](#).

The specific parts of the assessment process are outlined below.

The written test

The written test must be completed before you can apply for probationary registration, unless you are exempt, and will assess your knowledge and understanding of basic criminal law, the law of evidence and police station procedures. It will assess your understanding of the adviser's role in the police station and the skills required of a competent adviser.

Exemptions from the written test

You will be exempt from the written test if

- you are a solicitor or barrister, or
- you have passed the Legal Practice Course (LPC), or
- you have passed the Bar Vocational Course (BVC), or
- you are a fellow or member of the Institute of Legal Executives (ILEX) and have passed the level 4[6] Professional Higher Diploma in Law which must include a pass in the criminal law and the criminal litigation papers

The portfolio

The purpose of the portfolio is to

- encourage you to consider and reflect upon your performance in the police station
- encourage your supervising solicitor to review your competence and assist you to identify and rectify any deficiencies
- enable an AO to assess your competence against the standards

For comprehensive and detailed guidance on the portfolio, please read [portfolio guidance](#).

Part A

- Stage 1 – two cases in which you observed a solicitor giving advice in a police station
- Stage 2 – two other cases in which you were observed giving advice at a police station by your supervising solicitor

Cases must not be more than three months old on the date that you submit your Part A portfolio to an AO.

Part B

The remaining five reports must be on cases where you have attended on a client at the police station unaccompanied. Part B cases must not precede your date of probationary registration, and no case may be more than 12 months old on the date of submission of the portfolio.

You must ensure that the portfolio is completed in all respects before it is submitted for marking.

All cases used in the portfolio must be identified by the Criminal Defence Service (CDS)'s unique file number, which is allocated to cases under the general criminal contract.

Failed portfolios

If your portfolio does not pass the assessment, it will be returned to you. Failed case reports will be identified and appropriate feedback given.

You may resubmit your portfolio for re-marking in accordance with the AO's requirements. A resubmitted portfolio may contain previously passed case reports, but failed case reports must be replaced with fresh case reports based on other cases.

The critical incidents test (CIT)

The purpose of this test is to assess your effectiveness in the police station by simulating police station situations on audiocassette. You will listen to extracts from typical police station situations and record appropriate responses on another audio tape.

The purpose of the CIT is to assess

- the appropriateness of your responses
- your oral communication skills
- your assertiveness

There are no exemptions from the CIT.

Annex A

Assessment organisations (AOs)

Authorisation and monitoring

The Solicitors Regulation Authority authorises and monitors organisations that provide the police station assessments. The authorised assessment organisations have satisfied the SRA that they have the necessary expertise and administrative support to provide fair assessment of candidates.

The SRA carries out regular monitoring of AOs to ensure the maintenance of appropriate assessment standards.

Training

Organisations, including the AOs, may provide training programmes to assist you in completing the PSRAS assessments. Attendance at such training is not a compulsory part of the assessment process. It is up to you to consider the benefits of training and to decide whether to undertake a training course. The SRA recommends that you and your supervisor carefully consider your training needs throughout the assessment process.

Assessment organisations – contact details

Cardiff University Centre for Professional Legal Studies

Nationwide duty solicitor testing available

CPLS
PO Box 294
Cardiff
CF10 3UX

Tel +44 (0) 29 2087 6948
Fax +44 (0) 29 2087 4984

E-mail Devereux@cardiff.ac.uk

DaviesDC@cardiff.ac.uk

Website www.law.cf.ac.uk/cpls/

Central Law Training

Nationwide training and testing programme available

Police Station Accreditation Department
Wren's Court
52/54 Victoria Road
Sutton Coldfield
Birmingham
B72 1SX

or DX 708700
Sutton Coldfield

E-mail hjones@centlaw.com

Tel +44 (0) 121 362 7703

Website www.clt.co.uk

Fax +44 (0) 121 240 1088

Datalaw

Nationwide training and testing programme available

Dale House
27 Dale Street
Liverpool
L2 2HD

Tel +44 (0) 151 227 4439
Fax +44 (0) 151 236 5678

E-mail info@datalaw.co.uk

Website www.datalaw.co.uk

Swansea University

Director of Continuing Education
Swansea University
Singleton Park
Swansea
SA2 8PP

Tel +44 (0) 1792 205678

Contact Andrew Clemes

E-mail A.J.Clemes@Swansea.ac.uk

Website www.swan.ac.uk

Annex B

Other contact details

Enquiries about the operation of the LSC's police station register should be directed to

The Police Station Representative Service

First Assist
32 High Street
Purley
Surrey
CR8 2PP

or

E-mail
Tel
Fax

policestationreps@firstassist.co.uk
0845 600 1022
0208 763 3191

Enquiries about the assessment process, police station standards and assessment organisations should be directed to

The Solicitors Regulation Authority

Information Services
Ipsley Court
Berrington Close
Redditch
Worcestershire
B98 0TD

or

E-mail
Tel

info.services@sra.org.uk
0870 606 2555