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
 - (iii) commercial(iv) company(v) criminal litigation(vi) family
 - (vii) insolvency (viii) intellectual property
 - (ix) property (x) trusts, wills and probate
 - (xi) international law

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	
		Sulary payments	(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		

	Area	Briefing / Training / Practical Experience	Target Outcome	Duration (with dates)
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 / Traini	ing / Practical Experience		Target Outcome	Duration (with dates)
2.	Professional ethics	Experience in app	plying major ethical principles in real cases:	Abili	ty to	
		(a) Fiduciary	•	(i)	recognise and resolve ethical dilemmas	
		TP	Act in client's best interests with honesty, openness and fairness	(ii)	identify and discharge duties and obligations as a solicitor in	
		T P •	Handle conflict check (between solicitor and client and between clients)		accordance with rules of professional conduct applicable to Hong Kong solicitors	
		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) Confiden	tiality			
		T P •	Recognise and comply with the duty of confidentiality owed to clients			
	(c) Profession		nal undertakings			
		T P	Draft professional undertakings taking into account the effect and the responsibilities embodied in such undertakings			
		T P •	Follow up on the performance of the professional undertakings			

	Area	Briefing / Training / Practical Experience	Target Outcome	Duration (with dates)
2.	Professional ethics (cont'd)	(d) Professional fees		
		T P • 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		
		Follow up on the settlement of the bills / agreed fees		
		T • 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; andthe 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 / Traini	ng / 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) (ii)	ty to manage personal workload efficiently; work effectively as a team member;	
		T P (b)	Work on larger transactions as a member of a team and gain experience in team work	(iii)	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	ing / Practical Experience		Target Outcome	Duration (with dates)
5.	Legal research skills	T P (a) T P (b)	Research specific legal issues using traditional and computerised research tools and sources Record the results of research and apply them to the facts in question Record orally and in writing the results and application to the supervising solicitor	Abiliti (i) (ii) (iii)	identify and investigate factual and legal issues; select appropriate resources to help find solutions; record, analyse, apply and 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 Understand the proper use of precedents	Abilit (i) (ii) (iii) (iv)	ty to draft documents which are factually and legally accurate; meet the intended purpose; are well organised, clear and precise; form a consistent and coherent	
		T P (c)	Explain legal documents drafted by others Draft general correspondence, advice letters, instructions to Counsel		whole.	

	Area	Briefing / Traini	ng / Practical Experience		Target Outcome	Duration (with dates)
7.	Area Interviewing skills	T P (a) T P (b) T P (d)	Prepare for an interview Attend meetings with clients and witnesses with the supervising solicitor and take notes of meetings Conduct interviews with clients and witnesses under the close supervision of solicitor Take any follow up action after the interview	Abilit (i) (ii) (iii) (iv)		

	Area	Briefing / Training / Pra	actical Experience		Target Outcome	Duration (with dates)
8.	Negotiation skills	T P (b) Observexperion T P (c) Condusupervert T P (d) Takes	are for negotiation on a matter on f of a client (identify the issues, assess esition and plan the strategy) rve negotiations conducted by itenced solicitors uct negotiations under close vision any follow up action including drafting lement agreement	Abilit (i)	negotiate effectively engaging appropriate techniques and strategies a matter on behalf of a client, including a settlement and / or representing or co-representing a client at a mediation; identify possible options to resolve dispute and explain to the client the benefits and disadvantages of each option with respect to the matter.	
9.	Advocacy		rstand the rights of audience for trainee tors and solicitors	Abilit	advocate a case on behalf of a client effectively both orally and in	
		T P (b) Prepar	re for court / tribunal appearances	(ii)	writing; exercise with confidence the rights of audience available to solicitors.	
			rise the rights of audience available to be 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 (k) International law	(i) handle reasonably complex client matters relating to at least 3 practice areas with confidence (ii) display a good working knowledge and understanding of the legal and practice issues that commonly arise in at least 3 practice areas (iii) apply the knowledge and understanding correctly and in manner appropriate to everyday legal practice	

	Area	Briefing / Trainin	g / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area - Banking	(a)	Banking	
	Danking	ТР	• Draft simple loan agreements, guarantees, security documents, related board minutes, director's certificates and other ancillary documents	
		ТР	 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 	
		ТР	 Assist in Debt Capital Markets transactions, including drafting, reviewing and commenting on offering materials, placement / subscription agreements and ancillary documents 	
		TP	 Assist in preparing debt sell down and transfer documentation including assignments and sub-participations 	
		TP	• Assist in reviewing derivatives documentation (including swap documentation) and be familiar with market standard documentation (ISDA)	
		TP	• Draft / review legal opinions and liaise with foreign Counsel in relation to legal opinions on foreign law	
		TP	• Draft / review and collate conditions precedent documents and liaise with various parties throughout the process of fulfilling conditions precedent requirements	
		ТР	• Draft / review and comment on commitment letters, fee letters, term sheets and engagement letters	
		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 / Trainir	ng / P	ractical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area – Banking (cont'd)	ТР	•	Arrange for relevant company, court and insolvency searches against companies and review search results	
		ТР	•	Review constitutional documents of companies	
		ТР	•	Prepare Particulars of Charges and Releases	
		TP	•	Arrange for filing and registration of documents at the Companies Registry	
		ТР	•	Be familiar with issues such as security principles, insolvency rules, company law principles, banking regulations, execution formalities, etc.	
		$\boxed{\mathbf{T}} \boxed{\mathbf{P}}$	•	Prepare know-how and articles on new regulations and market developments	
		ТР	•	Prepare transaction bibles	
10.	Practice area –	(b)	Civ	il litigation	
	Civil litigation	ТР	•	Attend client meetings / report to and advise client / take instructions from client	
		ТР	•	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	
				summonseswitness statements	
				- expert reports	
				- instructions to Counsel	
				- dispute resolution clauses	
				- costs schedules	

	Area	Briefing / Training / I	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	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 Observe / conduct settlement negotiations Conduct / observe advocacy Prepare / agree trial bundles Attend court / tribunal hearing	

	Area	Briefing / Trainin	ng / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area - Commercial	(c) T P T P T P T P T P	 Assist in taking instructions from client and researching and selecting a commercial structure that will achieve the client's objectives Assist in drafting related documents required to set up the commercial structures which may include: simple sale and purchase agreement for a business and completion documents and attend completion simple sale and purchase agreement for goods simple joint venture agreements simple powers of attorney Simple franchise agreements Draft all related documents required to set up the commercial structures Draft simple employment contracts Attend to completion Assist in keeping clients informed of any continuing obligations in relation to the commercial structure 	

10. Practice area - (d) Company Company	Area
Incorporate a company in Hong Kong including drafting memorandum and articles of association and all post-incorporation documents. T P	

	Area	Briefing / Trainin	g / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area – Criminal litigation	(e) T P T P T P	 Criminal litigation Ensure compliance with relevant Law Society rules and regulations including those related to Anti-Money Laundering Conduct legal visits to clients in custody / identification parades Locate clients in custody and assist in 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 Make periodic enquiry with the law enforcement case office (usually before the bail 	
		T P T P T P T P	 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 use of the first opportunity to speak Interview clients and take instructions on the charge, the offence and the nature of defence Obtain Prosecution documents to understand the nature and extent of discovery and any unused material 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 / Training /	Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area – Criminal litigation (cont'd)	T P · T P ·	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 Take proofs of instructions and obtain comments on prosecution evidence Conduct site visits Preserve evidence and take witness statements	(with dates)
		T P T P T P T P T P T P T P T P T P T P	Preserve evidence and take witness statements Attend court proceedings and observe the role of solicitors at court Prepare Instructions to Counsel Attend and observe the role of solicitors at conferences with Counsel Prepare for trial and mitigation Assist in assessing a case after the close of the Prosecution's case and in giving advice to client Assist in giving advice on grounds of appeal against conviction and sentence Keep accurate attendance notes / time records Draw up bills of costs Follow up on the recovery of costs	

	Area	Briefing / Trainin	ng / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area - Family	(f) T P T P	 Family 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 	
		ТР	 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 / Trainin	ng / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area - Insolvency	(g) T P	 Insolvency Draft statutory demand Winding up and Bankruptcy Petitions 	
		T P T P	 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 	
		T P T P	 Prepare Proof of Debt Assist in the paper work for the appointment of Provisional Liquidators the formation and administration of scheme of arrangement 	
		ТР	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 property	(h)	Intellectual property Contentious	
	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	
		TP	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 	
		ТР	Draft instructions to investigators	
		TP	Attend Trade Marks Registry hearings	
		TP	Draft Writ with a generally endorsed Claim	
		TP	Prepare Timetabling Questionnaires	
		TP	Advise client on the possibility of mediation / other ADR methods	

	Area	Briefing / Training	g / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area – Intellectual property (cont'd)	T P	 Assist the preparation for an interim injunction including preparing a summons and supporting affidavit 	
		TP	 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	
		ТР	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	
		TP	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	

Area	Briefing / Training / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10. Practice area – Intellectual property (cont'd)	 T P	
10. Practice area - Property	(i) Property • Draft and approve - agreements for Sale and Purchase - assignments - tenancy agreement T P • Attend to stamping and registration T P • Assist in execution T P • Attend to filing and registration of documents at Companies Registry and Land Registry Peruse Memorandum and Articles of Association of companies and prepare Board Shareholders' Resolution	and

	Area	Briefing / Trainin	ng / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area – Property (cont'd)	ТР	 Prepare Mortgages, Equitable Mortgages, Guarantees and reporting letters to banks and engaging in completion procedures 	
		TP	Assist in loan transactions	
		TP	Prepare Releases	
		TP	Manage general file maintenance	
		TP	Assist in dealing with clients	
		ТР	 Ensure compliance with Law Society's rules, regulations and guidelines including those on Anti-Money Laundering 	
10.	Practice area – Trusts, wills and	(j)	Trusts, wills and probate	
	probate	TP	• Familiarise with the laws of Wills, Wills Drafting and Testate and Intestate Succession	
		ТР	 Understand the procedures relating to obtaining estate duty clearance, application for grant of representation and administration of estate 	
		ТР	• Ensure compliance with the Law Society rules and regulations and guidelines including those on Anti-Money Laundering	

	Area	Briefing / Training /	Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area – Trusts, wills and probate (cont'd)	T P	 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 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 	

	Area	Briefing / Training / Practical Experience	Duration (with dates)
10.	Practice area – Trusts, wills and probate (cont'd)	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 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	(with dates)

	Area	Briefing / Trainin	Duration (with dates)	
11.	Practice area – International law	(k) T P T P T P T P T P T P	 Assist in advising on international matters such as international trade and investment law, international environmental and energy law, privileges and immunities of States and international organizations, international human rights law, State recognition, secession and succession, international sanctions and export control matters, the law of war, the Law of the Sea. Assist in the drafting, interpreting and advising on and enforcing international treaties and conventions. Assist in bringing or defending claims on international disputes and international law violations such as maritime and territorial and boundary disputes. Assist in advising on international criminal law and international criminal matters. Attend hearings in international courts or tribunals or hearings on public international law issues arising in domestic courts, or investment treaty arbitrations. Liaise with sovereign governments, multinational corporations, international non-governmental organizations such as the United Nations, the European Union and the World Trade Organization. Attend international meetings and conferences which discuss multilateral agreements and treaties amongst different countries such as meetings organized by the World Trade Organization, the Hague Conference on Private International Law, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law or the International Civil Aviation Organization. 	