

LEGAL PROFESSION ACT 1966
LEGAL PROFESSION (ADMISSION) RULES 2024

PRACTICE TRAINING PERIOD GUIDELINES 2024
(with effect from 1 October 2024)

Pursuant to rule 49 of the Legal Profession (Admission) Rules 2024, the Singapore Institute of Legal Education (“the Institute”) issues the following Guidelines which elaborate on, explain, clarify or provide examples or illustrations to explain or clarify the requirements under Parts 5, 6 and 7 of the Legal Profession (Admission) Rules 2024.

These Guidelines will come into effect on 1 October 2024.

Part 1: Interpretation

1. In these Guidelines, unless the context otherwise requires –

“Advocate Seat” means any of the Seats listed in Schedule 1.

“Core Seat” means a stint of a practice training period which is completed by the fulfilment of the Core Seat requirements in the Practice Area Checklist for a Practice Area.

“Covering Law Practice” means a Singapore law practice to which a practice trainee is rotated for the purpose of completing their Secondary Seat.

“Covering Supervisor” means an advocate and solicitor at the Covering Law Practice who is in charge of the supervision of the practice trainee’s practice training during the practice trainee’s time at the Covering Law Practice.

“General Practice Training Checklist” means the checklist marked “General Practice Training Checklist” published on the Institute’s website at www.sile.edu.sg.

“month” means a calendar month, or if where the period referred to is not a whole calendar month, 30 days.

“Practice Area” means a practice area categorised by the Institute as such and listed at Schedule 3.

“Practice Area Checklist” means a checklist marked “Practice Area Checklist” published on the Institute’s website at www.sile.edu.sg.

“Rules” means the Legal Profession (Admission) Rules 2024.

“Seat” means a stint during a practice training period.

“Secondary Seat” means a stint of a practice training period which is completed by the fulfilment of the Secondary Seat Requirements in the Practice Area Checklist for a Practice Area.

“Solicitor Seat” refers to any of the Seats listed in Schedule 2.

Part 2: Moratorium

2. A moratorium applies in respect of when law students may apply for practice training contracts and when Singapore law practices may offer them.
3. The moratorium applies as follows:
 - (a) A qualified person or eligible person can submit applications for a practice training contract at any time.
 - (b) A person who is not a qualified person or an eligible person can submit applications for a practice training contract no earlier than 1 year before the first day of the month in which the earliest session of the Part B Course which they would be eligible to undertake in the ordinary course of progression starts. Please refer to the SILE website for the dates of the sessions.

Illustration

(Note: The start dates of the Part B Course in these illustrations are examples only.)

Gene is a student graduating with an LLB degree from a local university in mid-2027. In the ordinary course of progression, Gene would take the Part B Course starting on 14 July 2027. Gene can only apply for a practice training contract on or after 1 July 2026. The earliest the practice training period can commence is in January 2028 pending release of the Part B Examinations results.

Shen is a law graduate from a UK overseas scheduled university graduating in July 2027. In the ordinary course of progression, Shen would expect to take the Part B Course on 12 July 2028. This is because between July 2027 and June 2028, Shen would be undertaking the relevant legal training and the Part A Exams. Accordingly, Shen can only apply to a law practice for a practice training contract on or after 1 July 2027. The earliest the practice training period can commence is in January 2029 pending release of the Part B Examinations results.

Joey is a student graduating with a JD degree from a local university in end 2027. In the ordinary course of progression, Joey would take the Part B Course starting on 12 January 2028. Joey can only apply for a practice training contract on or after 1 January 2027. The earliest the practice training period can commence is in July 2028 pending release of the Part B Examinations results.

4. Subject to paragraph 3, a person who is eligible to apply for a practice training contract may agree with the Singapore law practice to start their practice training period at any time after the examinations for the applicable session of the Part B Course.

Illustration

(Note: The start dates of the Part B Course in these illustrations are examples only.)

Jen is a student graduating with an LLB degree from a local university in mid-2026. Jen would be eligible to take the Part B Course starting on 15 July 2026 in the ordinary course of progression. As such, Jen can apply to a law practice on or after 1 July 2025. The earliest the practice training period can commence is in January 2027, pending release of the Part B Examination results. However, Jen intends to pursue an LLM overseas upon graduation. Jen

may agree with the law practice to start their practice training period at a later date e.g., in January 2028, upon completion of the LLM.

5. A person whose ordinary course of progression is disrupted due to a change of circumstances will not breach the moratorium.

Illustration

(Note: The start dates of the Part B Course in these illustrations are examples only.)

Lee is a student graduating with an LLB degree from a local university in mid-2027 and taking the Part B Bar Course starting on 14 July 2027. Lee applies for and obtains a practice training contract in July 2026. The practice training period is due to commence in January 2028. Unfortunately, Lee fails a module in their LLB course and only graduates end 2027. Lee can only take the Part B Course starting in January 2028, and will commence their practice training period in July 2028. This would not breach the moratorium.

6. The moratorium only applies to those who would be eligible to take the Part B Course in July 2027 or later, in the ordinary course of progression, i.e., those who expect to start their practice training in January 2028 or later. Individuals who are eligible to take the Part B Course in July 2027 in the ordinary course of progression may apply for a practice training contract on or after 1 July 2026. Those who have already obtained practice training contracts starting in January 2028 before 1 October 2024 will not be affected by the moratorium.

Part 3: Registration of Practice Training Contract

7. A practice training contract may be registered at any time with the Institute up to 6 weeks before and no later than 14 days before the commencement of the practice training period using the prescribed form.

8. If the practice training contract is not registered at least 14 days before the commencement of the practice training period, then any period served prior to the lodgement of the registration will not be counted towards the practice training period served for the purposes of rule 29 of the Rules.

9. Registration of the practice training contract must be made by the following party or parties:
- (a) in the case of a sole proprietorship, the sole proprietor;
 - (b) in the case of a law corporation or limited liability corporation, a director who is duly authorised to do so;
 - (c) in the case of a partnership or limited liability partnership, a partner who is duly authorised to do so; and
 - (d) in the case of a qualifying entity, the supervisor in the qualifying entity.

Part 4: Responsibilities of supervising solicitors and supervisors in qualifying entities relating to practice training contracts

10. A supervising solicitor must:
- (a) ensure that the practice trainee receives adequate training as set out in these Guidelines;
 - (b) ensure that the practice trainee completes the Core and Secondary Seats in accordance with these Guidelines;

- (c) remain responsible for the practice trainee's training if the practice trainee is not personally trained by them;
- (d) ensure that the practice trainee attends such courses, workshops and programmes during the practice training as specified by the Institute;
- (e) attend any courses specified by the Institute for the purposes of being eligible to serve as a supervising solicitor;
- (f) conduct review sessions in accordance with Part 9 of these Guidelines; and
- (g) certify the accuracy of any Practice Area Checklists and General Practice Training Checklist submitted to the Institute.

11. A supervisor in a qualifying entity must:

- (a) ensure that the practice trainee receives adequate training as set out in these Guidelines;
- (b) if the practice trainee is relying on the period of practice training served under a practice training contract with the qualifying entity as a Secondary Seat, ensure that the practice trainee completes the Secondary Seat in accordance with these Guidelines;
- (c) remain responsible for the practice trainee's training if the practice trainee is not personally trained by them;
- (d) ensure that the practice trainee attends such courses, workshops and programmes during the practice training as specified by the Institute;
- (e) attend any courses specified by the Institute for the purposes of being eligible to serve as a supervisor in a qualifying entity;
- (f) certify the accuracy of any Practice Area Checklist submitted to the Institute; and
- (g) agree to be governed by the dispute resolution mechanism provided for by the Institute in force from time to time.

Part 5: Service of Practice Training Contract

12. A practice trainee must complete at least one Advocate Seat and at least one Solicitor Seat, under at least two different Practice Areas, during the practice training period.

Illustration

The Practice Area "Intellectual Property Practice" may be undertaken as an Advocate Seat or a Solicitor Seat. If the practice trainee undertakes Intellectual Property Practice as an Advocate Seat, he/she may not fulfil his/her Solicitor Seat requirement by undertaking Intellectual Property Practice as a Solicitor Seat.

13. A practice trainee must complete a Core Seat and at least one Secondary Seat during the practice training period.

14. To complete a Core Seat, the Core Seat requirements in the Practice Area Checklist for that Practice Area must be completed. To complete a Secondary Seat, the Secondary Seat requirements in the Practice Area Checklist for that Practice Area must be completed.

15. A practice trainee must also complete the General Practice Training Checklist during the practice training period.

Part 6: Covering Law Practices

16. If a Singapore law practice is unable to expose the practice trainee to a Secondary Seat, it may arrange for the practice trainee to be exposed to a Secondary Seat in a Covering Law Practice. The following requirements apply:

- (a) There must be nominated as the Covering Supervisor a lawyer at the Covering Law Practice who meets the requirements of a supervising solicitor at rule 33 of the Rules; and
- (b) The supervising solicitor must review the Practice Area Checklist for the Secondary Seat in consultation with the Covering Supervisor.

17. The Covering Supervisor's responsibilities are as follows:

- (a) the Covering Supervisor must review the Practice Area Checklist for the Secondary Seat in consultation with the supervising solicitor; and
- (b) the Covering Supervisor must confirm that they have reviewed the practice trainee's Practice Area Checklist for the Secondary Seat and confirm that they are able to expose the practice trainee to the Secondary Seat.

18. The supervising solicitor remains responsible for the practice trainee's training during the period when the practice trainee is rotated to the Covering Law Practice.

Part 7: Calculation of Practice Training Period

19. In calculating the practice training period served, days are counted in full or half days only.

20. The practice training period must not start or end on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday.

21. A day on which a practice trainee is absent from practice training is referred to as a "non-training day". During the 12-month practice training period, a practice trainee may be absent from practice training for up to 18 working days, for any reason such as firm closures, sick leave, annual leave, maternity leave or national service leave. In other words, up to 18 non-training days will count towards a practice trainee's fulfilment of their practice training period.

22. Days on which a practice trainee is recorded as being on leave and non-working days declared by a Singapore law practice (such as firm closures) are considered non-training days regardless of whether the practice trainee was in fact working on that day.

23. Attending any courses, workshops or other activities prescribed by the Institute as a practice training requirement is not considered an absence from practice training. Off-in-lieu taken in lieu of public holidays falling on Saturday or Sunday is not considered an absence from practice training.

24. The start and end dates of the practice training period must span at least one calendar year. A practice trainee may not complete the practice training period in less than one calendar year by not consuming the non-training days.

Illustration 1

Ashley commences their practice training period on 3 January 2025. Ashley is not absent from practice training on any working days during the 12-month period. The earliest date by which Ashley can complete their 12-month practice training period is 2 January 2026.

Illustration 2

Morgan commences their practice training period on 3 January 2025. Morgan takes 14 days of annual leave and the firm closed for 4 days during the 12-month practice training period. The earliest date by which Morgan can complete their 12-month practice training period is 2 January 2026.

25. If the practice trainee is absent from practice training for more than 18 working days in a 12-month period, the practice training period must be extended by the number of days in excess of 18. Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays cannot be used to make up the shortfall of days.

Illustration

Sam commenced their practice training period on 8 May 2026 (Friday) and expected to complete the 12-month practice training period on 7 May 2027 (Friday). However, during the 12 months, they were absent from practice training for a total of 19 days. This is 1 day in excess of the 18 non-training days provided for in the Guidelines. 7 May 2027 is a Friday and 10 May 2027 is a Monday. The earliest date by which Sam can make up the 1 day and complete their 12-month practice training period is on 10 May 2027.

Original end date: 7 May (Friday)
Non-working days: 19
Days in excess of 18 non-training days: 1
New end date: 10 May (Monday)

26. The Institute may require the issuer of any certificate of diligence to certify the number of non-training days taken by the practice trainee.

27. Where it is necessary to aggregate the practice training period served across different periods, a practice trainee will be deemed to have completed 12 months of practice training if they complete 365 calendar days of practice training within a continuous period of 16 months, subject to paragraphs 19 to 25.

Illustration

The practice trainee was at Firm A from 3 January 2025 (Friday) until 31 January 2025 (Friday) and at Firm B from 3 March 2025 (Monday) to 2 February 2026 (Monday). The practice trainee is deemed to have completed 12 months of practice training as the two periods add up to 365 calendar days, and the practice training has been completed within a continuous period of 16 months from 3 January 2025.

Period 1 (Firm A): 29 calendar days
Period 2 (Firm B): 336 calendar days

Part 8: Partial service of practice training period in public service

28. Where a practice trainee commences their practice training period through working as a Judicial Service Officer or a Legal Service Officer or through working under the supervision of a qualifying relevant legal officer (“in public service”) but does not complete the full 12-month practice training period in public service, the following will apply when they continue practice training under a practice training contract:

- (a) Where the period in public service was less than 3 months: the practice trainee must complete a Core Seat and a Secondary Seat covering an Advocate Seat and a Solicitor Seat when they continue practice training under a practice training contract.
- (b) Where the period in public service was at least 3 months but less than 6 months: the practice trainee must complete at least a Core Seat which may be either an Advocate Seat or a Solicitor Seat when they continue practice training under a practice training contract.
- (c) Where the period in public service was at least 6 months: the practice trainee must complete at least one Secondary Seat which may be either an Advocate Seat or a Solicitor Seat when they continue practice training under a practice training contract.

29. Where a practice trainee commences their practice training period under a practice training contract but does not complete the full 12-month practice training period under a practice training contract, and continues the remainder of the practice training through working as a Judicial Service Officer or a Legal Service Officer or through working under the supervision of a qualifying relevant legal officer, the following will apply:

- (a) Where less than 3 months of the practice training period was served under a practice training contract with a Singapore law practice, or where not more than 3 months of the practice training period was served under a practice training contract with a qualifying entity: the practice trainee need not complete the requirements under Part 5 and paragraph 41 of these Guidelines.
- (b) Where at least 3 months but less than 9 months of the practice training period was served under a practice training contract with a Singapore law practice: the practice trainee must complete the General Practice Training Checklist. The practice trainee need not complete the requirements under paragraph 41 of these Guidelines.
- (c) Where 9 or more months of the practice training period was served under a practice training contract with a Singapore law practice: the practice trainee must complete the General Practice Training Checklist and the requirements at paragraph 41.
- (d) The respective public agencies may take into consideration the training received by a practice trainee under the practice training contract(s) in determining the appropriate training to be undertaken by the practice trainee during the period of practice training to be served through working as a Judicial Service Officer or a Legal Service Officer or through working under the supervision of a qualifying relevant legal officer. The requirements specified for completing practice training in the public service continue to apply and practice trainees should seek confirmation from the relevant training bodies as necessary.

Part 9: Training Reviews

30. Subject to paragraphs 31 and 32, at the end of every 3 calendar months of the practice training period at the same Singapore law practice, the supervising solicitor must conduct a training review with the practice trainee. At this training review, the supervising solicitor must:

- (a) complete a form issued by the Institute for these purposes (a "Review Form");
- (b) tick the items in the Practice Area Checklists which have been completed; and
- (c) tick the items in the General Practice Training Checklist which have been completed.

31. No training review needs to be conducted for the last set of 3 calendar months within the 12 months of the practice training period. If a practice trainee serves 12 months at a single Singapore law practice, there should be 3 Review Forms in total.

32. If the practice training contract with the Singapore law practice is for 4 months or less and the practice trainee is concluding their 12-month practice training period with this practice training contract, no training review needs to be conducted for this period.

33. Where a practice trainee is undergoing a third training review with the same Singapore law practice, the supervising solicitor must discuss the matter of retention with the practice trainee during that training review and record this in the Review Form. The supervising solicitor must confirm that the practice trainee has been informed if they will be retained.

34. The Review Form, Practice Area Checklists and General Practice Training Checklist must be lodged with the Institute no earlier than 2 weeks before and no later than 2 weeks after the end of the 3 calendar months to which the training review relates.

Illustration

If practice training period is served with a single Singapore law practice:

Period served with single Singapore law practice	Total no. of training reviews to be conducted	Timing of submission of Review Form, Practice Area Checklists and General Practice Training Checklist
12 months	3 (3 rd must cover retention)	After 3 rd calendar month, 6 th calendar month and 9 th calendar month

If practice training period is served with more than one Singapore law practice, then at the second or subsequent Singapore law practice:

Remaining portion of practice training period served with the second or subsequent Singapore law practice	Total no. of training reviews to be conducted	Timing of submission of Review Form, Practice Area Checklists and General Practice Training Checklist
More than 10 months	3 (3 rd must cover retention)	After 3 rd calendar month, 6 th calendar month and 9 th calendar month
More than 7 months up to 10 months	2	After 3 rd calendar month and 6 th calendar month
More than 4 months up to 7 months	1	After 3 rd calendar month
Up to 4 months	No training review required	NA

35. No training review needs to be conducted in respect of any portion of the practice training period served under a practice training contract with a qualifying entity.

Part 10: Changes to Manner of Serving Practice Training Period

36. A practice trainee must notify the Institute of any changes to the manner of serving the practice training period, including changes to the:

- (a) Singapore law practice;
- (b) supervising solicitor, supervisor in qualifying entity or Covering Supervisor;
- (c) Core Seat or Secondary Seat(s);
- (d) Practice Area(s); and
- (e) Covering Law Practice

as soon as possible and no later than 2 weeks after the change.

37. If a change which needs to be notified to the Institute under paragraph 36 is not so notified, the period served under the unregistered manner of service will not be counted towards the practice training period.

38. Practice trainees are encouraged to serve their practice training period with a single Singapore law practice. Reasons must be furnished for a change in supervising solicitor or Singapore law practice.

39. Where a practice training contract with a Singapore law practice is terminated:

- (a) the supervising solicitor must tick the items in the Practice Area Checklists and the General Practice Training Checklist which have been completed;
- (b) the Practice Area Checklists and the General Practice Training Checklist must be signed by the supervising solicitor and the practice trainee;
- (c) the Singapore law practice must:
 - (i) issue a Certificate of Diligence in respect of the practice training period served;
 - (ii) inform the Institute of the number of non-training days taken by the practice trainee; and
 - (iii) submit the Practice Area Checklists and the General Practice Training Checklist to the Institute

within 2 weeks of the practice trainee's last day at the Singapore law practice.

40. Where a practice training contract with a qualifying entity is terminated:

- (a) the supervisor in the qualifying entity must tick the items in the In-House Practice Area Checklist which have been completed;
- (b) the In-House Practice Area Checklist must be signed by the supervisor in the qualifying entity and the practice trainee;
- (c) the supervisor in the qualifying entity must:
 - (i) issue a Certificate of Diligence in respect of the practice training period served;
 - (ii) inform the Institute of the number of non-training days taken by the practice trainee; and
 - (iii) submit the In-House Practice Area Checklist to the Institute

within 2 weeks of the practice trainee's last day at the qualifying entity.

Part 11: Other courses, workshops and programmes

41. For the purposes of rule 34(b) of the Rules, supervising solicitors must ensure that each practice trainee under their supervision attends the following courses conducted by the Law Society of Singapore:

- (a) a course on the Legal Profession (Solicitors' Accounts) Rules;
- (b) a course on professional ethics; and
- (c) an Advocacy Workshop.

Part 12: Requirements where the practice training period is abridged by the Minister for Law

42. Where the practice training period applicable to a practice trainee has been abridged by the Minister for Law under section 14(5) of the Legal Profession Act 1966, the Dean may vary the requirements under Part 5, Part 9 and Part 11 of these Guidelines that are applicable to the practice trainee, or any other Parts hereunder as may be updated from time to time, taking into account the length of the abridged practice training period to be served by the practice trainee.

Part 13: Request for Institute's certificate under rule 42(4)(a) of the Rules

43. Upon completion of the 12-month practice training period under one or more practice training contracts, the practice trainee may request that the Institute issue its certificate under rule 42(4)(a) of the Rules by submitting to the Institute:

- (a) the completed and signed Practice Area Checklist for the Core Seat;
- (b) the completed and signed Practice Area Checklist(s) for the Secondary Seat(s);
- (c) the completed and signed General Practice Training Checklist;
- (d) the Certificate(s) of Diligence;
- (e) the certificates in respect of completion of the courses referred to in paragraph 41; and
- (f) copies of the practising certificate(s) of the supervising solicitor(s) covering the duration of the practice training period.

44. Upon completion of the 12-month practice training period through working as a Judicial Service Officer or a Legal Service Officer, or through working under the supervision of a qualifying relevant legal officer, the practice trainee may request that the Institute issue its certificate under rule 42(4)(a) of the Rules by submitting to the Institute the Certificate(s) of Diligence.

45. Upon completion of the 12-month practice training period through a combination of working as a Judicial Service Officer or a Legal Service Officer, or under the supervision of a qualifying relevant legal officer, and under one or more practice training contracts, the practice trainee may request that the Institute issue its certificate under rule 42(4)(a) of the Rules by submitting to the Institute the following:

- (a) the completed and signed Practice Area Checklist for any Core Seat required to be completed under paragraph 28;
- (b) the completed and signed Practice Area Checklist for any Secondary Seat required to be completed under paragraph 28;
- (c) the completed and signed General Practice Training Checklist, if 3 or more months of the practice training period was served under a practice training contract with a Singapore law practice;
- (d) the Certificate(s) of Diligence;

- (e) the certificates in respect of completion of the courses referred to in paragraph 41, if 9 or more months of the practice training period was served under a practice training contract with a Singapore law practice; and
- (f) copies of the practising certificate(s) of the supervising solicitor(s) covering the duration of the practice training period served under a practice training contract, if any part of the practice training period was served under a practice training contract with a Singapore law practice.

Schedule 1 – Advocate Seats

1. Civil Litigation
2. Criminal Litigation
3. Arbitration
4. Family Practice
5. Intellectual Property Practice

Schedule 2 – Solicitor Seats

1. General Corporate & Commercial Practice
2. Corporate & Commercial – Merger & Acquisitions
3. Corporate & Commercial – Real Estate Investment Trusts
4. Corporate & Commercial – Tax
5. Corporate & Commercial – Banking
6. Corporate & Commercial – Corporate Regulatory & Compliance
7. Corporate & Commercial – Finance Regulatory & Compliance
8. Corporate & Commercial – Debt Capital Markets
9. Corporate & Commercial – Equity Capital Markets
10. Corporate & Commercial – Energy, Infrastructure & Projects
11. Corporate & Commercial – Investment Funds
12. Real Estate Practice
13. Technology & Data
14. Probate & Succession Planning
15. Family Practice
16. Intellectual Property Practice
17. Working in an in-house legal department in a Qualifying Entity (“In-House Practice”)

Schedule 3 – Practice Areas

1. Civil Litigation
2. Criminal Litigation
3. Arbitration
4. Family Practice
5. Intellectual Property Practice
6. General Corporate & Commercial Practice
7. Corporate & Commercial – Merger & Acquisitions
8. Corporate & Commercial – Real Estate Investment Trusts
9. Corporate & Commercial – Tax
10. Corporate & Commercial – Banking
11. Corporate & Commercial – Corporate Regulatory & Compliance
12. Corporate & Commercial – Finance Regulatory & Compliance
13. Corporate & Commercial – Debt Capital Markets
14. Corporate & Commercial – Equity Capital Markets
15. Corporate & Commercial – Energy, Infrastructure & Projects
16. Corporate & Commercial – Investment Funds
17. Real Estate Practice
18. Technology & Data
19. Probate & Succession Planning
20. Working in an in-house legal department in a Qualifying Entity (“In-House Practice”)