

*Professional Skills  
Course  
Programme Handbook  
2024/25*







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## **Welcome by the Head of Law Programmes**

Thank you for choosing BPP Professional Education (“BPP”) to guide you through your Professional Skills Course (“PSC”).

We recognise how valuable you are to your firm and understand the demands on a trainee’s time in and out of the workplace. At BPP we are committed to ensuring that our PSC programme gives you the flexibility to choose when and where to complete your PSC as well as offering a wide variety of electives intended to add value to your training.

We understand your legal training needs and appreciate the nature of the environment within which you work. This is why BPP has a team of dedicated solicitors and barristers from all kinds of practice areas, striving hard to ensure that you receive the highest level of training. Our mission is to ensure that you successfully complete your PSC and take away the necessary skills, practical hints and tips given on our courses so you can implement these in practice. Our unique Skills Portfolio enables you to document your learning journey and demonstrate your achievements to employers.

We are confident that you will be satisfied with the high level of service we provide and welcome your comments and feedback. As trainees of today, we recognise that you are the leaders of tomorrow and we look forward to supporting you through your training needs today and for the future.

We wish you every success in your legal career.

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# **1 INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAMME**

## **Details**

Programme Title	Professional Skills Course (PSC)
Qualification	BPP provides Certificates of Satisfactory Completion of the various modules of the PSC. These need to be presented to the SRA as a preliminary to Admission to the Roll of Solicitors
Awarding Body	The PSC is provided by BPP Professional Education Ltd
Programme Accreditation	Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA)

## **Overview of Programme**

### **PSC modules**

The modules prescribed by the SRA for the PSC are:

### **PSC compulsory Core modules**

- Client Care & Professional Standards (2 days) (CCPS)
- Financial & Business Skills course and Examination (3 days)- (plus a non-examinable online module) (FBS)
- Advocacy & Communication Skills (3 days) (ACS)

Trainees must study all three core modules, and a further 24 hours (four full days) of electives.

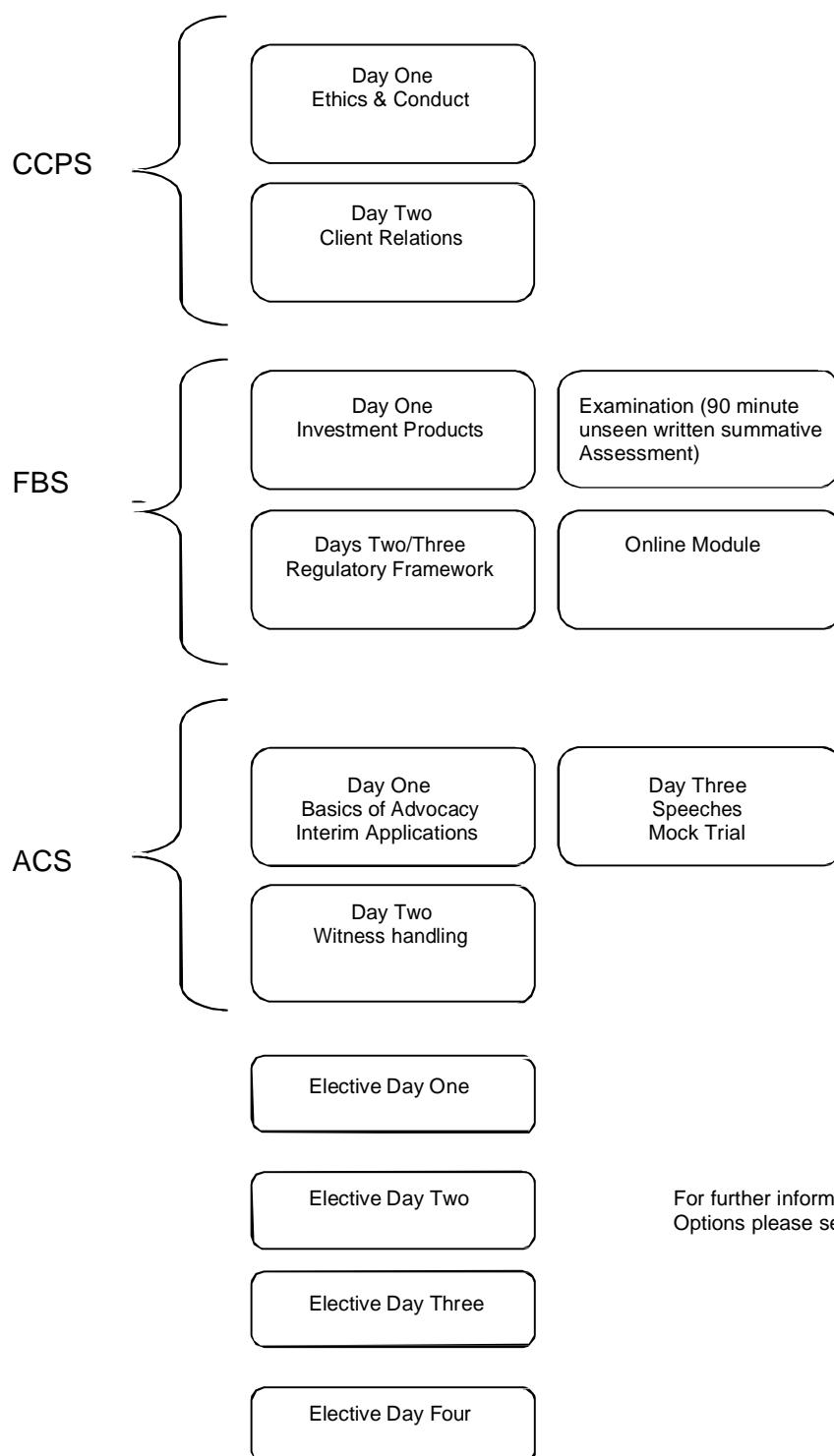
Trainee numbers are restricted by SRA Specifications to 16 in Advocacy, 20 in Client Care and 40 in Financial & Business Skills.

### **PSC Elective module courses**

BPP offers a full range of Elective courses allowing Trainees to match their study modules with their career direction and professional interests. Choose Electives tailored to a particular area of practice or choose from the entire BPP range of topics.

For further information on Electives' choices, please go to our [PSC webpage](#).

## Outline Programme Structure



For further information regarding the Electives' Options please see PSC Web Page



## **2. AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

### **Programme Aims**

The aims of the programme are to meet the requirements of the SRA's specification for the PSC.

They are:

“To provide a PSC which will:

- build on the LPC to develop the trainee's professional skills
- be of clear benefit and value to the trainee and represent the start of a trainee's continuing professional development
- enable the tailoring of the Course to reflect the range of environments in which trainees work and the increasing specialisation of practice
- be a dynamic course capable of developing to match the changing and diverse needs of the profession
- accommodate both well-developed trainee development programmes provided by many large employers for their own trainees and public courses offered by Local Law Societies and commercial providers.”

## **Programme Learning Outcomes**

The SRA specifies the following learning outcomes:

### **Client Care and Professional Standards MODULE**

#### **Aims and objectives**

On completion of this area of the compulsory core, trainees should be able to:

- identify and understand the significance of client care, ethical and professional conduct issues and be able to respond in an appropriate way within the training context
- apply appropriate professional standards
- understand and apply business awareness
- understand the need to work effectively with others
- initiate and implement appropriate methods of personal work organisation and
- appreciate the importance of and take responsibility for their own personal and professional development

#### **This area of the compulsory core comprises three Elements:**

- Client Care and Communication Skills
- Professional Standards and
- Work and Case Management.

#### **Element 1 Client Care and Communication Skills**

- Communication both orally and in writing
- Interviewing skills
- Taking instructions
- Keeping clients informed
- Discussing costs
- Handling client expectations
- Dealing with difficult clients
- Avoiding complaints
- Identifying potential complaints
- Handling complaints

#### **Element 2 Professional Standards**

- The SRA Standards and Regulations
- Client confidentiality
- Conflicts of interest
- Undertakings
- Negligence warnings

### **Element 3 Work and Case Management**

- Time limits
- Time management
- Identifying and minimising risk
- The risk of professional liability
- Case and file management.

## **Financial and Business Skills MODULE**

### **Aims and objectives**

“On completion of this area of the compulsory core, trainees should:

- have developed improved financial awareness
- be able to undertake exempt regulated activities under Part XX FSMA
- be able to apply the rules of professional conduct relating to financial and accounting matters

### **Element 1      Accounting and financial issues**

Trainees should be able to identify accounting and financial issues in the areas of work in which they or the training establishment are involved, and have an awareness of:

- the potential need to involve other professionals (e.g. accountants, financial services specialists) when advising business and/or private clients
- possible sources of financial information which can be utilised in advising business and/or private clients
- the need to determine whether additional accounting and financial information is required (including in appropriate cases the possibility of employing investigative accounting techniques) to meet the client's needs
- the financial regulatory environment in which clients' businesses operate and the need to identify the appropriate accounting regulatory regime applicable to a client's business

### **Element 2      Introduction to the marketplace**

Trainees should also be able to identify the main investment products on the market, distinguish their main features (e.g. long or short term, safe or speculative) and determine their suitability for different types of client.

Trainees should be able to identify the tax and other advantages or disadvantages of particular types of investment.

### **Element 3      The regulatory framework**

Trainees should have an understanding of the implications of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (FSMA), the SRA Financial Services (Scope) Rules 2019 (Scope Rules), the SRA Financial Services (Conduct of Business) Rules 2019 (Conduct of Business rules) and the Money Laundering Regulations (MLR).

Trainees should have an understanding of the role of the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and the role of the Law Society as a Designated Professional Body (DPB).

Trainees should have an awareness of:

- what is regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority
- the requirements for FCA authorisation
- the consequences of carrying out a 'regulated activity' without FCA authorisation
- the method of obtaining FCA authorisation

Trainees should have an understanding of:

- what constitutes a 'regulated activity' and the principal exclusions in the FSMA (Regulated Activities) Order 2001 (RAO)
- the exemption in 'Part XX' of the FSMA for professional firms not conducting
- 'mainstream regulated activities' but carrying on "exempt regulated activities"
- basic conditions which must be satisfied by firms wishing to undertake 'exempt regulated activities' (S327 FSMA & FSMA (Non-exempt Activities) Order 2001)

Trainees should be able to relate the FSMA, the Scope rules and the Conduct of Business rules to the areas of work in which they or the training establishment are involved.

In the context of the regulatory structure set up by the FSMA and the concepts underpinning it, trainees should have an understanding of:

- the distinction between tied and independent sectors; (to be kept under review)
- the FCA and the major compliance obligations contained in the FCA Handbook
- the appropriate SRA rules and guidance.

Trainees should know what constitutes a financial promotion and the principal exemptions in the FSMA (Financial Promotion) Order 2001

## **Element 4 The Scope Rules**

Trainees should be able to identify the type of regulated activities which may be undertaken under the Scope Rules and be aware of the consequences of a breach of the Scope Rules.

Trainees should be able to identify the steps needed to comply with the Scope Rules, the Conduct of Business Rules and the SRA Codes of Conduct relevant to regulated activities under the FSMA.

Trainees should have an understanding of the role of the solicitor in the financial services industry and should understand the implications of:

- the solicitor's independence
- the employment of investment specialists, the establishment within a practice of a specialist financial services department and the mechanisms for such an establishment
- the inter-relationships of financial services work with other areas of work in the training establishment

Trainees should be able to identify the steps needed to comply with the Conduct of Business rules for exempt regulated activities.

Trainees should be able, under appropriate supervision, to maintain the required records and follow the firm's complaints procedure.

## **Professional Skills Course**

Trainees should understand how the receipt of commission should be dealt with under the Scope rules and should also understand the significance of the receipt of commission in connection with some of the exclusions in the RAO.

Trainees should:

- have a good understanding of when an activity “arises out of or is complementary to” a particular professional service to a particular client
- know who is able to act as an authorised person
- be able to identify the appropriate authorised person for use in any particular situation

### **Element 5      Money laundering**

Trainees should be able to apply the rules of professional conduct in connection with financial dealings and in particular should understand what constitutes money laundering and the steps necessary to comply with any MLR.

### **Element 6      Mortgage fraud**

Trainees should be able to apply the rules of professional conduct in connection with financial dealings and understand the need to be alert to the possibility of mortgage fraud.”

## **Advocacy and Communication Skills MODULE**

### **Aims and objectives**

“On completion of this area of the compulsory core, trainees should be able to exercise the rights of audience available on admission in the civil and criminal courts.

#### **Element 1**

Trainees should be able, in the context of a civil and a criminal case, to:

- use language appropriate to the client, witness(es) and triers of fact and law
- listen, observe and interpret the behaviour of triers of fact and law, clients, witness(es) and other advocates and be able to respond to this behaviour as appropriate
- speak and question effectively and thereby competently use appropriate presentation skills to open and close a case
- use a variety of questioning skills to conduct examination in chief, cross examination, and re-examination
- prepare and present a coherent submission based upon facts, general principles and legal authority in a structured, concise and persuasive manner
- present a submission as a series of propositions based on the evidence
- organise and present evidence in a coherent and organised form

#### **Element 2**

Trainees should be able to identify and act upon the ethical problems that arise in the course of a trial.”

### **3. LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGY**

#### **In Client Care & Professional Standards:**

Delegates study and learn in small groups; sessions are based on minor didactic input from facilitator followed by reasoned small-group discussion of case study scenarios with plenary feedback and discussion. This method is designed to assist delegates to offer thoughts and opinions on matters of ethical and practical debate and offer reasoned solutions to problems.

#### **In Financial & Business Skills:**

Approximately 60% of contact time is spent in didactic explanation of rules and concepts; the balance of contact time is spent studying exam-style questions individually and in small groups, discussing solutions and perfecting examination technique. This method is designed to communicate and explain complex concepts in a time-effective manner, but also to give delegates the opportunity to discuss practical scenarios and solutions.

#### **In Advocacy & Communications Skills:**

After brief introductory explanations of theory by the course tutor, the delegates work individually and in small groups to perform practical advocacy exercises. These exercises build from simple applications to isolated exercises of trial advocacy and culminate in the conduct of a mock trial. These exercises are followed by individual self-reflection, formative feedback and plenary review.

#### **In Electives subjects:**

Teaching and Learning strategy will vary from course to course as the subject-matter varies. Soft skills courses will feature more interactivity and experiential learning than technical skills courses, which may be more didactic and discursive.



## **4. DETAILED MODULE INFORMATION**

### **CLIENT CARE & PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

#### **General Information**

School		Professional Development
Contact Hours		12 hours face to face or via Online Classroom Live
Programme(s)		Professional Skills Course
Related Modules	Pre-requisites	Completion of LPC; commencement of training contract
	Co-requisites	Financial & Business Skills; Advocacy & Communication Skills; Electives
	Post-requisites	None
	Excluded Combinations	n/a
External Accrediting Body (if appropriate)		SRA

#### **Introduction**

This module aims to satisfy the SRA's required specification for the PSC Client Care & Professional Standards module.

#### **Educational Aims**

This module aims to repeat, reinforce and review the key professional duties owed by lawyers to their peers, clients and third parties. It does so against the background of what it means to be in a professional legal services marketplace offering services to a range of different clients with differing needs and expectations.

## **Learning Outcomes**

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

Ref	A. Delegates should be able to:
1	identify and understand the significance of client care, ethical and professional conduct issues and be able to respond in an appropriate way within the training context
2	demonstrate an awareness of the key provisions of the SRA codes and associated ethical principles and frameworks

### **Cognitive Skills**

Ref	B. Delegates should be able to:
1	think for themselves and develop and express opinions in a professional peer group
2	listen and question the opinions of others
3	demonstrate respect for differing opinions

### **Professional Skills and Attitudes**

Ref	C. Delegates should be able to:
1	apply appropriate professional standards both within and without the work context
2	reflect on how to build client satisfaction and loyalty
3	appreciate what makes a successful professional services business

### **General Transferable Skills**

Ref	D. Delegates should be able to:
1	initiate and implement appropriate methods of personal work organisation
2	appreciate the importance of and take responsibility for their own personal and professional development

3	understand and apply business awareness
4	understand the need to work effectively with others
5	respect others' opinions and views
6	contribute to discussions
7	appreciate how to manage their time more effectively

### **Mode of Assessment**

This module is not assessed.

### **Key Reading**

Module study materials provided by BPP.

### **Background Reading**

None required or specified.

## **Outline Programme (specific content subject to change)**

### **Day 1**

#### **Session 1: Professional Ethics in the Commercial Context**

Private Practice  
Regulatory reform  
Recent and future developments  
Client perceptions & expectations

#### **Session 2: Accepting Instructions**

Factors to consider – competence, risk, reputation  
SRA Codes  
Money Laundering  
Case Studies

#### **Session 3: Client Relations at the start of the Retainer**

Risk Assessment  
Basic considerations – terms of engagement, costs & other  
CCS/CCF requirements  
Case Studies

#### **Session 4: Obligations during the Retainer**

Conflicts of Interest – I  
Case Study  
Confidentiality - I

**Day 2**

**Session 5:       Obligations during the Retainer**

Conflicts of Interest - II   Confidentiality - II  
Case Study

**Session 6:       Obligations during the Retainer**

Duties to Third Parties Duties to the Court   Case Study  
Undertakings  
Case Study

**Session 7:       Terminating the Retainer**

Complaints  
Case Studies  
Disciplinary machinery – SRA, LeO, SDT Ongoing duties; liens

**Session 8:       Strategic Planning for the future**

Commercial Awareness Personal Effectiveness   Time management & EQ  
Case Studies

## FINANCIAL & BUSINESS SKILLS

### General Information

School		Professional Development
Contact Hours		16 hours face-to face or Online classroom Live; 2 hours online module
Programme(s)		Professional Skills Course
	Pre-requisites	Completion of LPC; commencement of training contract
	Co-requisites	Client Care & Professional Standards; Advocacy & Communications Skills; Electives
	Post-requisites	Online study module to be completed within <b>six</b> months of commencing this module
	Excluded Combinations	n/a
External Accrediting Body (if appropriate)		SRA

### Introduction

This module aims to satisfy the SRA's required specification for the PSC Financial & Business Skills module.

### Educational Aims

This module aims to reinforce earlier understanding about financial services regulation in the context of delivering professional legal services to clients. It also seeks to inform delegates about wider financial awareness and acquaint them with broader financial concepts, products and jargon.

### Learning Outcomes

#### Knowledge and Understanding

Ref	A. Delegates should be able to demonstrate:
1	improved financial awareness, particularly around the regulation of financial services and products
2	an ability to undertake exempt regulated activities under FSMA
3	an understanding of financial products and the financial marketplace generally
4	an understanding of the basic principles of financial planning
5	an understanding of the rules and regulations relating to money laundering and mortgage fraud and the steps to take if such is suspected

## **Cognitive Skills**

Ref	B. Delegates should be able to:
1	apply knowledge to case study-based problems and develop acceptable solutions
2	contribute to discussions and develop argument through listening and questioning

## **Professional Skills and Attitudes**

Ref	C. Delegates should be able to:
1	be able to apply the rules of professional conduct relating to financial and accounting matters

## **General Transferable Skills**

Ref	D. Delegates should:
1	have an enhanced financial and mathematical awareness
2	understand what makes a successful business
3	be able to structure arguments and thought processes

## **Mode of Assessment**

This module is assessed through one, unseen, written assessment. The pass mark is 60%. You must achieve a pass in the assessment to pass the module. You will also need to study the online module. The online module is not assessed, nor does it form part of your assessment mark but must be completed within **six** months of commencing this module and in order to receive your certificate of completion

## **Key Reading**

Module study materials provided by BPP.

## **Background Reading**

None required or specified.

## **Outline Programme (specific content subject to change)**

### **Day 1**

Introduction to investments, investing and financial planning  
Investment Products – Income & Growth, including aspects of company accounts and financial interpretation; maximizing tax efficiency  
Consolidation of Day 1  
Evening preparation: Progress Test 1

### **Day 2**

Review of Day 1 homework  
Background and Regulatory framework, including –  
    Investments  
    Activities  
    Exclusions  
    Exempt regime including Scope Rules and COB Rules  
Money Laundering  
Evening Preparation: Progress Test 2

### **Day 3**

Review of Day 2 homework; examination preparation, supervised revision and consolidation of whole course  
  
Examination – 14.00 – 15.30 (administered by BPP)



## **ADVOCACY & COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

### **General Information**

School		Professional Development
Contact Hours		18
Programme(s)		Professional skills Course
	Pre-requisites	Completion of LPC; commencement of training contract
	Co-requisites	Client Care & Professional Standards; Financial & Business Skills; Electives
	Post-requisites	None
	Excluded Combinations	n/a
External Accrediting Body (if appropriate)		SRA

### **Introduction**

This module aims to satisfy the SRA's required specification for the PSC Advocacy & Communication Skills module.

### **Educational Aims**

This module aims to train delegates to be able to conduct and exercise the rights of audience available to solicitors upon admission as Solicitor of the Senior Courts of England & Wales.

## **Learning Outcomes**

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

Ref	A. Delegates should be able to demonstrate a:
1	knowledge and understanding of the appropriate rules of Court
2	understanding of the basics of the law of Evidence

### **Cognitive Skills**

Ref	B. Delegates should be able to:
1	listen, observe and interpret the behaviour of triers of fact and law, clients, witness(es) and other advocates and be able to respond to this behaviour as appropriate
2	speak and question effectively and thereby competently use appropriate presentation skills to open and close a case
3	use a variety of questioning skills to conduct examination in chief, cross examination, and re-examination
4	prepare and present a coherent submission based upon facts, general principles and legal authority in a structured, concise and persuasive manner
5	present a submission as a series of propositions based on the evidence

### **Professional Skills and Attitudes**

Ref	C. Delegates should be able to:
1	identify and act upon the ethical problems that arise in the course of a trial

### **General Transferable Skills**

Ref	D. Delegates should be able to:
1	use language appropriate to the client, witness(es) and triers of fact and law
2	accept responsibility for their own workload and tasks
3	respect others and contribute to debate and discussion
4	develop solutions to complex issues and matters
5	demonstrate structured literacy skills
6	refine listening and questioning skills

## **Mode of Assessment**

This module is not assessed, but delegates will be invited to offer reflection on their own performance and will be offered formative feedback by the course tutor.

## **Key Reading**

Module study materials provided by BPP.

## **Background Reading**

None required or specified.

## **Outline Programme**

### **Day 1**

Introduction to the Course

Case Analysis & Case Theory  
Applications Advocacy

### **Day 2**

Introduction to Day 2

Evidence in Chief  
Cross Examination

### **Day 3**

Opening and closing speeches  
Mock Trial  
Course debrief

## **5 ASSESSMENT INFORMATION**

### **(FINANCIAL & BUSINESS SKILLS (F&BS) MODULE ONLY)**

#### **Assessment Strategy**

The SRA requires that the Financial & Business Skills module is assessed by means of a 90-minute, unseen, summative (i.e. graded) written Examination.

The SRA specification provides: "Examination arrangements

There is no requirement for assessment in relation to Element 1 of the Written Standards.

Elements 2 to 6 must be assessed by means of an unseen written examination:

- of 1½ hours duration
- which is "open book", with candidates being able to take into the examination any materials which the provider considers appropriate
- conducted under usual examination conditions at a suitable venue provided or approved by the provider [...]
- with:
  - an overall pass mark of 60%
  - not less than 33% of the examination marks attributed to Element 2
  - not less than 33% of the examination marks attributed to Elements 3 & 4
  - the remaining 33% attributed to Elements 2-6 as the provider considers appropriate
  - not more than 30% of the marks attributed to multiple choice questions."

#### **Format of the BPP Examination**

The questions in the BPP Examination will be a combination of case studies and multiple-choice questions.

#### **Structure:**

##### **Part A: multiple choice questions**

10 MCQs [Elements 2-6] (3 marks each)

##### **Part B: Case Study questions**

Q1 Legal Rules and Regulations [Elements 3 & 4] (25-30 marks)

Q2 Miscellaneous topics from the syllabus [Elements 5 & 6] (15-20 marks)

Q3: Investments and investment strategy [Element 2] (25 marks)

#### **Assessment Administration**

The F&BS Examination is generally timetabled to take place on the third day of the taught programme. It will be administered and invigilated by BPP.

## **Professional Skills Course**

### **Online assessment**

- If you attend an online live course, the Examination will take place online via Inspira proctored exam software.
- The Inspira software must be downloaded prior to the start of the assessment using links that will be provided in advance. Login details will also be provided in advance, but these will not allow candidates to enter the exam until 10:00 on the Examination Date.
- The time allowed for the assessment is 90 minutes with an additional 5 minutes to take into account the online nature of the Examination and to account for any issues that arise.
- Candidates with an entitlement to extra time under a learning support agreement in respect of the Professional Skills Course will have the extra time added via the software.
- Candidates with an entitlement to an in-person sitting under a learning support agreement in respect of the Professional Skills Course will receive information about the arrangements for their Examination separately.

### **In-person assessment**

- If you attend an in-person course, the Examination will generally take place in-person at the same venue as the course itself. It is not possible to alter the venue of public course examinations to suit the needs of individual candidates.
- For security reasons a BPP ID number and an item with photographic ID should be taken to the F&BS Examination. This can either be a driving licence or a passport.
- The time allowed for the assessment is 90 minutes with no additional reading time.
- Candidates with an entitlement to additional time under a learning support agreement in respect of the Professional Skills Course will be allowed that extra time on the day.

### **Permitted materials**

It is an open book examination. You may take into it the following permitted materials in hard copy:

- the BPP course material
- any further notes that you have made
- any further material distributed during the course
- SRA Standards and Regulations
- a calculator.

### **Deferrals, Learning Support and Concessions**

BPP operates a 'fit to sit' policy. Attendance at an examination confirms a candidate is fit and able to attempt the exam they have attended. If this is incorrect, candidates should not attend the examination and instead seek evidence to confirm why they were not able to attend. If a candidate believes beforehand that their performance will be adversely affected by illness or other circumstance BPP would advise that they consider withdrawing from the examination.

### **Deferrals**

A deferral is when a candidate requests to sit a scheduled examination at a later date. BPP ask that a deferral is put in writing to at the earliest opportunity. Email requests sent to [cpdenquiries@bpp.com](mailto:cpdenquiries@bpp.com) are acceptable.

Candidates must submit a deferral request in writing and stipulate the date of the subsequent examination they wish to sit. A deferral fee may be applicable - please visit our website to review our terms and conditions.

## **Learning Support**

BPP has a policy of providing the widest possible access to those who wish to benefit from its educational activities.

### **Identifying needs & requests for special facilities**

It is important that candidates with learning support requirements arising from disability, illness or any other problem are identified as early as possible so that necessary arrangements may be made to meet and support these needs.

Candidates are therefore asked to identify any learning support requirements that they may have, or other facilities or adjustments they feel they require, ***in writing to [learningsupport@bpp.com](mailto:learningsupport@bpp.com) and at the time of their application to sit the Assessment.*** Such application must be accompanied by appropriate written medical evidence, which must not be more than 12 months old at the date of the application.

Learning support arrangements for previous studies at BPP will not automatically be applied to the Professional Skills Course and candidates must contact [learningsupport@bpp.com](mailto:learningsupport@bpp.com) to discuss and agree a learning support agreement in respect of the Professional Skills Course.

Candidates are requested to notify BPP by contacting [learningsupport@bpp.com](mailto:learningsupport@bpp.com) at least ***one month*** prior to the Assessment sitting. BPP cannot guarantee that any applications received later than this will be considered in time for the Assessment.

Upon receipt of a request for special facilities or other reasonable adjustment, BPP will endeavour to provide all and any appropriate support, including giving clear and accurate information about the physical environment at each of the BPP Assessment venues and the facilities that BPP can provide to support candidates.

By attending the Assessment, you will be confirming that you are eligible and fit to sit the Assessment at that time, and that there are no circumstances which might lead you to submit a subsequent application for concession and that you have notified BPP, in advance of the Assessment, that you have submitted any requests for special facilities or reasonable adjustments to take account of any learning support requirements or disabilities.

## **Support**

BPP may be able to provide a range of special facilities to assist candidates with learning support requirements in sitting the Assessments.

Such provision is at BPP's discretion and where appropriate, may include:

- separate Assessment accommodation
- individual invigilation
- computer use in Assessments
- services of readers/amanuenses
- additional time
- any other appropriate adjustments or facilities.

## **Disclaimer**

BPP will make every reasonable effort to provide the candidate with services that meet that candidate's needs. However, there may be occasions where such needs cannot be met due to financial, logistical and other constraints outside BPP's control.

This disclaimer is an express condition of any contract or agreement that the candidate may have with BPP for the provision of services. BPP will give the candidate as much notice as possible of any limitation that has to be put on the provision of facilities or support.

## **Results**

The results of the F&BS examination will be sent to candidates via their work postal or email address. Results are released approximately **eight to ten weeks** after the exam sitting.

Please note that BPP is unable to release results over the telephone.

## **Unsuccessful Attempts & Feedback**

Under SRA regulations, candidates may resit the F&BS Examination as often as required. However, after a third unsuccessful attempt, candidates will be required to re-take the taught course.

BPP do not charge for the first re-sit, however a charge will be levied to sit a second re-sit (a third attempt) or subsequent attempts, and should a candidate need to re-take the taught course they will be charged at the standard rate as advertised at the time of the re-take booking.

If a candidate is unwell, BPP advise withdrawal from the Examination and deferral of the sitting.

BPP will provide feedback to unsuccessful candidates in accordance with its Assessment Feedback Policy (see Annex 2).



## **6. ONLINE LIVE TRAINING**

BPP delivers Professional Skills Course\* and all 24 hours of Electives both face-in-person and through an Online Live platform.

**Delegates must attend ALL sessions live for completion of the programme.**

**Failure to attend all sessions live will result in non-completion to be reported.**

**The recordings are intended for recap of live sessions only.**

## **7. IMPORTANT CONTACTS**

### **Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA)**

All queries regarding the PSC itself must be addressed to the Solicitors Regulation Authority (Information Services), The Cube, 199 Wharfside St, Birmingham, B1 1RN Tel: 0370 606 2555; DX720293 BIRMINGHAM 47. Their website address is [www.sra.org.uk](http://www.sra.org.uk)

### **BPP**

Telephone: **03300 603 100**  
Web: **[bpp.com/courses/professional-development](http://bpp.com/courses/professional-development)**  
**[bpp.com/request-support](http://bpp.com/request-support)**

## **Annex 1**

### **Examination Regulations- Financial & Business Skills**

## **Annex 1**

### **The Financial and Business Skills (F&BS) Examination Regulations**

These Examination Regulations ('the Regulations') govern the conduct of the F&BS Examination by BPP Professional Education (BPP).

#### **1. Board of Examiners ("The Board")**

- 1.1 The Board will comprise:  
A Chair (independent of the programme and approved by the Academic Council.)

Ex Officio Members (Voting)

The Dean or Deputy Dean of the Law School (or his/her nominee)

The Internal Examiners

The External Examiner(s)

Nominee of the Solicitors Regulation Authority

Attending Members (Non-Voting)

The Head of Law Programmes (or his/her nominee)

The Programme Manager (PSC)

Academic Registrar or representative (ex officio)

Any other person approved by the Chair of the Board of Examiners

- 1.2 A quorum for a meeting of the Board shall be half of the members of the Board, of whom no fewer than two shall be Voting Members and shall include at least one External Examiner.
- 1.3 Where necessary a meeting of the Board of Examiners may be held using video conferencing or telephone conferencing facilities.
- 1.4 The terms of reference of the Board are:
- (i) to scrutinize and, if satisfied, endorse recommendations made to it in respect of candidates' fulfilment of assessment requirements by the internal and external examiners, and to pass the recommendations to the Solicitors Regulation Authority.
  - (ii) to monitor the conduct of assessment procedures and academic standards.

#### **Voting and Recommendations**

- 1.5 It is expected that decisions of the Boards of Examiners will normally be reached by consensus and after due debate but if a vote is required then decisions shall be made on the basis of a majority of those attending and voting at a quorate meeting. In the event of an equality of votes being cast, the Chair shall have a casting vote.

## **2. Method and Principles of Assessment**

- 2.1 The assessment comprises one 90-minute unseen written assessment and is conducted in English.
- 2.2 In order to satisfy the Board, a candidate must demonstrate competence by achieving a pass. Illegible scripts or parts of scripts shall receive no marks.
- 2.3 The pass mark shall be 60%.
- 2.4 A candidate who passes the Examination shall receive a certificate issued by BPP certifying that he/she has so passed.

## **3. Grading of Results**

There shall no grading of results.

## **4. Resits**

- 4.1 A candidate who fails an assessment may resit that assessment at any available assessment date.
- 4.2 These Regulations apply to resits.
- 4.3 A candidate may only resit a failed Examination on 2 further occasions, before being required to restudy the whole Module. Thereafter, they may resit the Examination a further 3 times. There is no overall limit on the number of times a candidate may resit the Examination.

## **5. Impaired Performance in Assessments.**

There is generally no discretion to modify a mark or grade in response to extenuating circumstances (including learning support requirements, medical conditions, adverse personal circumstances, or factors concerning the conduct or administration of the test) or otherwise. However, the Board may, in its discretion, decide to disregard the sitting on the grounds of extenuating circumstances, and treat any re-sit attempt as a first attempt.

## **6. Unfair practice**

Please refer to the General Academic Regulations Part H/16-23

## **7. Verification and Appeal**

Please refer to the General Academic Regulations and in particular Part K.

## **Annex 2**

### **Assessment Feedback Policy**

## **ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK POLICY**

BPP has a policy of giving feedback to candidates who are unsuccessful in their attempts at the Financial & Business Skills Assessments conducted by BPP.

The aims of this policy are to enable candidates to:

- know how marks/grades were determined
- improve their performance in a forthcoming assessment
- identify errors.

Feedback will be provided in written form and will comprise holistic written feedback on a feedback sheet or form designed for the purpose. This will normally include:

- Assessment details
- summary of the nature of the question(s)
- overall summary of the candidate's performance
- indicators of areas for improvement.
- the total raw mark/grade and how this was arrived at.

Original scripts will not be released to or discussed with candidates.

## **Annex 3**

### **BPP Complaints Procedure**



## **Complaints procedure**

### **Our complaints policy**

At BPP we are committed to providing a high-quality service to all our customers on our courses, programmes of study and Assessments. When something goes wrong we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards.

### **Our complaints procedure**

If you have a complaint about any aspect of our service, please contact us via email on [PDQA@bpp.com](mailto:PDQA@bpp.com). This will reach a member of the team which has been dealing with your matter, who will then endeavour to resolve matters to your satisfaction.

### **What will happen next?**

1. After receiving your complaint we will contact you (usually within 3 working days) acknowledging your complaint and asking you to confirm or explain any details. If appropriate, we may suggest a meeting at this stage. We will also let you know the name of the person who will be dealing with your complaint.
2. We will then investigate your complaint by examining the relevant issues and discussing the matter with the people most closely involved with the matter. We will also notify BPP's Programme and Module Leaders for the relevant Programme.
3. We would hope to be in a position to have concluded our investigations no more than 10 working days after first receiving your complaint. If appropriate we will then invite you to meet with us to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. If you would prefer not to meet, or if we cannot arrange this within an agreeable timescale, we will write fully to you (by post or email) setting out our views on the situation and any redress that we would feel to be appropriate.
4. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, please let us know. We will then arrange to review our decision. We would generally aim to do this within a further 10 working days. We will arrange for someone within BPP who has not been involved in your complaint to review it. We will let you know how long this process will take.
5. We will let you know the result of the review within 5 working days of the end of the review. At this time we will write to you confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.

## **Annex 4**

### **BPP Skills Portfolio**

# *Professional Skills Course*

## *Skills Portfolio*

## **Making the Most of your Training Contract – you, BPP and the Professional Skills Course (PSC)**

### **SRA Prescribed Skills**

The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) sets the standards that must be met by both trainees and the training principal during the training contract. Any organisation that provides training must adhere to the mandatory standards set out by the SRA. With this in mind, our PSC Core and Elective programme has been devised to ensure that the key taught skills are covered to help you fulfil the skills standards.

BPP has worked with all the major law firms and is sanctioned by the SRA to provide training, through which you can refine and develop your professional knowledge and skills so as to enable you to complete the final stage of the process to qualification as a solicitor.

The key SRA Skills Standards required from trainees are described on the following pages.

### **Employability Skills**

In addition, our PSC programme seeks to ensure that delegates have the opportunity to enhance their 'Employability Skills', as set out by the Confederation of British Industry (CBI).

In a competitive jobs market, these skills are highly regarded by employers seeking to recruit the appropriate employees for their organisation. This portfolio indicates how you will have enhanced your skills by studying with BPP and could be presented to potential employers as evidence of the skills gained during the training contract.

The portfolio is already completed on the basis of your study of the programme of compulsory Core modules, and further enables you to describe the skills that you feel you have developed as part of your study of BPP's PSC Electives.

## **SRA Skills Specification**

### **Self-development**

As part of your training contract experience, you should:

- Plan your own programme of development, which could include, for example, ways in which you can achieve the skills standards
- Read and research journals and keep up to date with new statutes and regulations
- Build up a personal file, which could include your training record, precedents and your reflections on what you have learnt - as well as this completed portfolio
- Conduct self-appraisals, thinking about your strengths and weaknesses, and ways in which you can develop your strengths and eliminate your weaknesses.
- You can then discuss this with your supervisor at your performance reviews
- Develop your social and interpersonal skills
- Suggest solutions to problems, even if you are not certain that they are correct
- If you make a mistake, admit it, and face up to any consequences

## **SRA Practice Skills Standards for Trainee Solicitors**

### **Advocacy and oral presentation**

On completion of their training contract, trainee solicitors should be competent to exercise the rights of audience available to solicitors on admission.

This experience will enable trainees to understand: -

- The communication skills of the advocate
- The techniques and tactics of examination, cross-examination and re-examination
- The need to act in accordance with the ethics, etiquette and conventions of the professional advocate

The tasks trainees perform must enable them to grasp the principal skills required to prepare, conduct and present a case:

- Identifying the client's goals
- Identifying and analysing relevant factual and legal issues, and relating them to one another
- Summarising the strengths and weaknesses of the case
- Planning how to present the case
- Outlining the facts in simple narrative form
- Formulating a coherent submission based on the facts, general principles and legal authority in a structured, concise and persuasive manner

### **Case and transaction management**

Trainee solicitors must begin to acquire skills in managing and running a case or transaction.

Trainees must be given work to enable them to understand the importance of:

- Producing a schedule for a case/transaction, broken up – where necessary – into phases
- Planning out phases of work to include time, cost and risk management
- Developing techniques to diarise, follow up and revisit matters at the appropriate time
- Keeping accurate records and attendance notes
- Effectively managing files
- Regularly and fully reporting back to clients
- Co-ordinating teams to review progress and revise options
- Bringing matters to a timely, client-satisfactory conclusion
- Wrapping up the matter, closing the file, and recovering costs and disbursements

## **Client care and practice support**

To enable trainees to work effectively in an efficient practice, they must develop the skills required to manage time, effort and resources.

They should be given work that will enable them to:

- Prioritise tasks
- Set and meet deadlines
- Review and report progress on matters
- Balance immediate and long-term objectives
- Keep appropriate records
- Understand the processes of setting fees and billing clients

## **Communication skills**

Trainees should understand the need to refine their communication skills so that they can present oral and written communication in a way that achieves its purpose and is appropriate to the recipient.

They should be given work that will help them to:

- Select appropriate methods of communication
- Express ideas concisely, clearly and logically
- Use appropriate language
- Use correct grammar, syntax and punctuation
- Pay attention to detail by proof-reading, checking the format and numbering of documents, cross-referencing and using consistent terminology
- Listen actively and speak effectively

## **Dispute resolution**

Trainees should become familiar with contentious work and gain a full understanding of the skills and practice of resolving disputes, including settling, mediation and adjudication, in a fair, cost-effective and timely way that meets client needs.

Trainees should be given opportunities to observe and/or assist in resolving disputes so that they will understand the need to:

- Take careful instructions
- Identify the client's purpose and advise on the possible outcomes and costs
- Thoroughly research the parties' liabilities
- Gather evidence from witnesses or elsewhere
- Consider all the options for resolving a dispute
- Meet deadlines and keep clients informed of progress
- Draft or prepare papers to assist in resolving a contentious matter
- Control information central to the dispute throughout the proceeding
- Represent the client and the client's interests through meetings, conferences and hearings
- Ensure that settlements and judgements are secure and enforceable

## **Drafting**

Trainees should recognise the need for and be able to produce documents that are clear, precise and achieve their purpose.

They should be given work that enables them to:

- Maintain a standard of care that protects client interests and meets client objectives
- Address all relevant and factual legal issues
- Identify relevant options
- Demonstrate a critical use of standard forms and precedents
- Draft documents that are consistent and coherent, are clear and precise and meet any requirements of form and style

## **Interviewing and advising**

Trainees should understand the importance of identifying the client's goals along with the need to take accurate instructions. They should be given opportunities to observe and to conduct interviews with clients, experts, witnesses and others.

They should be given work that helps them understand the need to:

- Prepare for an interview
- Allow clients or professional advisers to explain their concerns
- Identify the client's goals and priorities
- Use appropriate questioning techniques
- Determine what further information is required
- Identify possible courses of action and their consequences
- Help the client decide the best course of action
- Agree the action to be taken
- Accurately record the interview, confirming the instructions and the action that needs to be taken
- Establish a professional relationship with the client, and deal with any ethical problems that may arise

## **Legal research**

Trainees should learn to find solutions by investigating the factual and legal issues, analysing problems and communicating the results of their research. They should be given work that makes use of traditional and computerized research tools and sources, business information and other relevant sources.

## **Negotiation**

Trainees should understand the processes involved in contentious and non-contentious negotiations and appreciate the importance to the client of reaching agreement or resolving a dispute. They should be given opportunities to observe negotiations conducted by experienced practitioners and/or to conduct negotiations under close supervision.



They should be given work that will help them understand the process of negotiation including: Identifying the central issues and explaining them to the client

- Assessing the bargaining-positions of each party
- Planning a negotiation
- Establishing an agenda at the start
- Listening actively
- Using appropriate questioning techniques
- Generating alternative solutions to resolve the issues using an appropriate negotiating style
- Identifying the strategy and tactics used by the other side
- Documenting the agreement or settlement
- Explaining the benefits and disadvantages of the agreement or settlements

## CBI Employability Skills

### Skills descriptors

CBI Employability Skill	BPP Descriptor	
<b>Self-Management</b>		
	Flexible working	Ability to work alone as well as part of a team; organising self to ensure that tasks are completed in a timely and efficient manner.
	Accepting responsibility	Taking ownership for own learning as well as tasks and responsibilities allocated; where mistakes are made, admitting them and dealing with the consequences.
	Time management	Ensuring effective file management; planning, organising and prioritising daily and weekly tasks to ensure prompt execution of important and urgent matters.
<b>Teamwork</b>		
	Respecting others	Adhering to work ethics and professional ethics; displaying social and interpersonal skills so as to accept differing viewpoints and demonstrate empathy towards others; respecting diversity; embedding an equality culture in professional dealings.
	Contributing to discussions	Developing confidence to contribute to debate and discussion; suggesting solutions to problems whether they are correct or not; having the courage to express an opinion and to be wrong.
<b>Business and client awareness</b>		
	What makes a successful Business	Understanding how a law firm works; adhering to the firm's policies; recognising costs and risk benefits of taking on clients; understanding and developing the attitudes and qualities clients expect of professional advisors.
	Building client satisfaction and loyalty	Identify the client's goals and priorities; managing clients' expectations from outset and as matter progresses by regularly and fully reporting back; establishing a professional relationship with the client and dealing with any ethical problems that may arise; bringing matters to a timely, client-satisfactory conclusion and recovering costs and disbursements.

<b>Problem-Solving</b>		
	Developing Solutions	Identifying goals and analysing relevant factual and legal issues; devising and suggesting options to meet clients' objectives taking into account commercial and professional conduct issues; developing lateral-thinking skills to identify holistic solutions to multi-issue matters.
<b>Communication</b>		
	Structured literacy	
	Listening and questioning	Developing active listening and questioning techniques so as to allow clients and professional advisors to explain their concerns; using appropriate questioning techniques to determine what further information is required; adopting appropriate language to express ideas clearly and concisely.
<b>Numeracy</b>		
	Financial and mathematical awareness	Refining basic numeracy skills; developing fluency with financial concepts and jargon; understanding key financial indicators and benchmarks to assess the strengths and weaknesses of a business' financial position; understanding the practical importance of cash, cashflow, profit, price and pricing in developing and maintaining a successful business.

**PSC compulsory Core modules**

The BPP PSC Core modules cover the CBI Skills in the following respects:

<b>CBI Employability Skill</b>				
		<b>CCPS Module</b>	<b>FBS Module</b>	<b>ACS Module</b>
<b>Self-management</b>				
	Flexible working	✓		✓
	Accepting responsibility	✓		✓
	Time management	✓		
<b>Teamwork</b>				
	Respecting others	✓	✓	✓
	Contributing to discussions	✓	✓	✓
<b>Business and client Awareness</b>				
	What makes a successful business	✓	✓	
	Building client satisfaction and loyalty	✓		✓
<b>Problem-solving</b>				
	Developing solutions	✓	✓	✓
<b>Communication</b>				
	Structured literacy		✓	✓
	Listening and questioning	✓	✓	✓
<b>Numeracy</b>				
	Financial and mathematical awareness		✓	

**Name:**

**DoB:**

**Year of completion of LPC:**

**PSC Course Portfolio**

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Studied with</b>	<b>Date completed</b>	<b>Certificate received</b>
Client Care & Professional Standards			
Financial & Business Skills*			
Advocacy & Communication Skills			
Elective 1 (specify subject)			
Elective 2 (specify subject)			
Elective 3 (specify subject)			
Elective 4 (specify subject)			
Online Component*			

### Professional Skills Course

As a result of my studies and training experience, I believe that I have enhanced my skills in the following areas:

<b>CBI Employability Skill</b>				
		<b>Attained</b>	<b>Module(s) studied</b>	<b>Date(s) of completion</b>
<b>Self-management</b>				
	Flexible working			
	Accepting responsibility			
	Time management			
<b>Teamwork</b>				
	Respecting others			
	Contributing to discussions			
<b>Business and client awareness</b>				
	What makes a successful business			
	Building client satisfaction and loyalty			
<b>Problem-solving</b>				
	Developing solutions			
<b>Communication</b>				
	Structured literacy			
	Listening and questioning			
<b>Numeracy</b>				
	Financial & mathematical awareness			

Personal reflections on training and learning		
<b>CBI Employability Skills</b>		
<b>Self-management</b>		
	Flexible working	
	Accepting responsibility	
	Time management	
<b>Teamwork</b>		
	Respecting others	
	Contributing to discussions	
<b>Business and client awareness</b>		
	What makes a successful business	
	Building client satisfaction and loyalty	

**Professional Skills Course**

<b>Problem-solving</b>		
	Developing solutions	
<b>Communication</b>		
	Structured literacy	
	Listening and questioning	
<b>Numeracy</b>		
	Financial & mathematical awareness	

Signed:

Dated: