

ILEX PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS LTD

ASSESSMENT OF WORK BASED LEARNING APPLICATIONS

Introduction

1. Work based learning (WBL) as utilised by IPS for the assessment of suitability for admission to CILEx as a Fellow, is a form of assessment in which the applicant is an employee of an organisation and demonstrates meeting the prescribed learning outcomes through engaging in activities in the workplace.
2. The assessment of the WBL outcomes at IPS is a summative assessment of a portfolio of evidence, which considers whether the applicant has demonstrated competence against all of the learning outcomes. An application will be assessed as either competent or not yet competent. Where the applicant is assessed as not yet competent, feedback will be provided.
3. Any assessment strategy should ensure that assessment is:
 - Transparent: providing assessment criteria to students prior to assessment
 - Valid: that the assessment reflects the actual skills gained, ensuring that accurate conclusions about competence can be drawn from completing the assessment
 - Reliable: this ensures that the assessment records similar results for similar applicants over time.
 - Objectivity: does the test avoid subjectivity – *although for the purposes of work based learning some reliance must be placed on the judgement of the achievements of the applicant.*
 - Free from bias
4. Significant development work has been undertaken to ensure that demonstration of the learning outcomes reflects the skills gained through participation in the work based learning assessment and all of the assessment criteria will be provided to the applicants as soon as they register for the scheme. It should be noted that as the assessment process is undertaken in a range of legal environments, the drafting of the outcomes is general to ensure as wide a range of applicants as possible can evidence competence, although examples of appropriately completed log-sheets and portfolios of evidence will be provided as additional guidance. That the assessment mechanism is reliable in delivering similar results for similar applicants over time will be checked through monitoring of the outcome of assessment in relation to area of practice of applicants and through the moderation procedure outlined below. It should be noted however, that there is some qualitative element in this aspect of the assessment as the first assessor is the

employer/supervisor of the applicant and the initial assessment of workplace competence will be based on their judgement.

5. There should be procedures in place to ensure that there is appropriate moderation and scrutiny of assessment. Moderation should assure that the assessment process is both robust and consistent. Therefore, assessment should be consistent as between applicants and over time and should be fair.

Consistency

Between applicants

6. In order to provide consistency in decision making, there should be clear and consistent assessment criteria, against which meeting the learning outcomes will be assessed.
7. Because the assessment of meeting the outcomes will be demonstrated through participation in a range of legal contexts, the assessment guidance is necessarily general rather than subject specific. Testing of the guidance took place during the 2012 WBL pilot and as a result more clarification has been provided to ensure that applicants and assessors understand what should be demonstrated in order to meet each of the learning outcomes.

Initial Assessment - Employer

8. Initial assessment of the applicant and their demonstration of meeting the learning outcomes is carried out by the employer/supervisor of the applicant. The employer is responsible for ensuring that the applicant has demonstrated meeting the outcome competently in the workplace and that the evidence provided in support of meeting the outcome is the work of the applicant. In addition, the employer is asked to provide a reference in support of the application. To assist them with this task, the employers are provided with guidance in the work based learning handbook, which includes the assessment criteria. It is also open to any employer to contact IPS for further guidance.

Second assessment – IPS Officer - Approvals

9. As has been stated already, applicants undertake work based learning in a variety of legal settings and this creates inevitable variability in the initial employer assessment. In order to provide consistency of assessment, all applications will be reviewed by an IPS Officer and a 10% sample of those to be approved will be verified by a second IPS Officer prior to admission as a Fellow. This process should ensure that the decision making as between applicants is consistent.

Second assessment – IPS Officer – Referrals

10. Applications where the IPS Officer is unable to approve an application will be referred to the Admissions and Licensing Committee (ALC) for their consideration. All referred applications will be considered against the assessment criteria. Where the applicant is deemed to not have met some or all of the learning outcomes, they will be provided with appropriate feedback.

Over time

11. As stated above, moderation is designed to ensure that assessment is robust and consistent both between applicants and over time. The above moderation process is designed to assure that the assessment process is consistent between applicants. In order to assure that the assessment process is consistent over time, IPS will put an anonymised sample of approved applications (made by both the Office and the ALC) and a sample of rejected decisions (made by the ALC) to the ALC for their reconsideration. These will be presented to the ALC without the decision. This will assist in ensuring that the assessment criteria are being applied consistently and fairly over time.