



## **Legal Services Board – Decision Notice issued under Part 3 of Schedule 4 to the Legal Services Act 2007**

### **The Costs Lawyer Standards Board application for approval of changes to Regulatory Arrangements to its regulatory governance documents.**

The Legal Services Board (“LSB”) has approved the application by the Costs Lawyer Standards Board (“CLSB”) for changes to its regulatory arrangements in respect of its Code of Conduct, Practising Rules, Disciplinary Rules and Procedures and Training and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Rules. This Notice sets out the basis for the LSB approval and the decision taken, including a brief description of the changes.

#### **Introduction**

1. The LSB is required by Part 3 of Schedule 4 of the Legal Services Act 2007 (“the Act”) to review and approve (in whole or part) or reject alterations to the Regulatory Arrangements of the Approved Regulators. The Association of Law Costs Draftsmen, known from 1 January as the Association of Costs Lawyers (“ACL”), is an approved regulator. The ACL has established CLSB to whom it will delegate its regulatory responsibilities.
2. Paragraph 25 of Schedule 4 explains that the LSB must approve a proposed change to the Regulatory Arrangements unless we are “...satisfied that...” the approval would fall within one or more of the criteria specified in sub paragraph 25(3) (and listed in the footnote below<sup>1</sup>). If the LSB is not satisfied that one or more of the criteria are met, then it must approve the application in whole, or at least the parts of it that can be approved when only part of the application meets the criteria.
3. As provided for by paragraphs 20(1) and 23(3) of Schedule 4 to the Act, the LSB has made rules about how the application to alter the Regulatory Arrangements must be made including the contents of that application. The rules highlight the applicant’s obligations under section 28 of the Act to have regard to the Better Regulation Principles. The rules also require that the applicant provides information about the nature and effect of each proposed change and of appropriate consultation

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<sup>1</sup> The Board may refuse the application only if it is satisfied that—(a) granting the application would be prejudicial to the Regulatory Objectives, (b) granting the application would be contrary to any provision made by or by virtue of the Act or any other enactment or would result in any of the designation requirements ceasing to be satisfied in relation to the approved regulator, (c) granting the application would be contrary to the public interest, (d) the alteration would enable the approved regulator to authorise persons to carry on activities which are reserved legal activities in relation to which it is not a relevant approved regulator, (e) the alteration would enable the approved regulator to license persons under Part 5 to carry on activities which are reserved legal activities in relation to which it is not a licensing authority, or (f) the alteration has been or is likely to be made otherwise than in accordance with the procedures (whether statutory or otherwise) which apply in relation to the making of the alteration.

undertaken. Sub paragraph 25(3)(f) requires that each proposed alteration has been made or is likely to be made in accordance with the procedures which apply in relation to making of the alteration. This includes the LSB's rules.

4. The LSB will approve Regulatory Arrangements in so far that they appear to achieve their intended outcome and satisfy the sub paragraph 25(3) criteria. Most notably there must be no adverse impact on the Regulatory Objectives overall and the alterations and the process by which they have been produced must be consistent with Better Regulation Principles.
5. We confirmed receipt of CLSB's application for approval of changes to regulatory arrangements relating to its regulatory governance documents on 12 August 2011. This is the Decision Notice in relation to that application. The chronology for handling of this application can be found towards the end of this Decision Notice.

## **Decision**

6. The CLSB's application was for approval of four new regulatory governance documents
  - Code of Conduct
  - Practising Rules
  - Disciplinary Rules and Procedures
  - Training and CPD Rules

### *Current arrangements*

7. The ACL is in the process of separating its representative and regulatory functions and has established CLSB to undertake the regulatory functions under delegated authority. This is expected to commence by 31 October 2011 at the latest. Presently the rules governing regulation of Costs Lawyers are contained within the Bye Laws and regulatory arrangements of the ACL. This approval will mean that the CLSB has in place appropriate regulatory arrangements from the point that it assumes responsibility for the regulatory functions of ACL.

### *Effect of rule changes*

8. *The Code of Conduct*, which will be mandatory, focuses on seven key principles which reflect Part 1 of the Act. The seven principles in the Code are to:
  - Act with integrity and professionalism
  - Comply with your duty to the court in the administration of justice
  - Act in the best interest of your client
  - Provide a good quality of work and service to each client
  - Deal with the regulators and Legal Ombudsman in an open and co-operative way
  - Treat everyone with dignity and respect
  - Keep your work on behalf of your clients confidential

9. *The Practising Rules* set out the requirements for persons practising as a Costs Lawyer (e.g. being properly qualified, holding a Practising Certificate), the information, conditions and documentation required to make an application for a Practising Certificate and wider administration requirements of the CLSB (e.g. maintenance of the Costs Lawyer Register, revocation of Practising Certificates and appeals). In addition it specifies CPD conditions and requirements for indemnity insurance.
10. *The Disciplinary Rules and Procedures* cover both the disciplinary arrangements and structures. It sets out the conditions for a conduct complaint, the period within which it must be made and the investigation procedures. There are provisions for the administration of and support for a Conduct Committee and Conduct Appeal Committee. The procedures also govern remit and operation of the Conduct Committee and appeals stages including sanctions and costs which may be imposed.
11. *The Training and CPD Rules* detail the conditions for training and the application process. It specifies the training and CPD requirements and post qualifications experience required. Rule 11 prescribes the minimum requirement of 12 CDP points in each CPD year for which Cost Lawyers must maintain records and produce evidence to the CLSB on demand.
12. In assessing the application we identified no major issues. However, the CLSB made a number of drafting amendments as a result of our review, three of which the LSB consider it appropriate to mention in this notice:
  - In the Code of Conduct under Principle 5 ‘other regulators’ have been added to the list of people that Cost Lawyers are expected to cooperate with (on the basis that they may work in firms which may be regulated by bodies other than the CLSB)
  - Rule 1 of the Disciplinary Rules no longer requires that a complaint to the CLSB be made in writing
  - Disciplinary Rule 14.2 has been amended so that warning letters and undertakings will be included on the register (and available for public inspection) until such time as they have expired or the actions have been completed
13. Copies of the final rules agreed with the CLSB are attached.
14. We are satisfied that, having considered the application in the context of Schedule 4 sub paragraph 25(3) criteria, we have no grounds for refusing the application made in relation to the CLSB’s changes to its regulatory governance documents. However, in reviewing the application at its meeting on 14 September 2011, the Board noted that, over time, there was scope for the “Principles” expressed in the code to develop into more broadly framed Outcomes.

## **Chronology**

- The LSB confirmed receipt of an application from the CLSB on 12 August 2011 for changes to the CLSB's governing regulatory arrangements for Costs Lawyers
- The 28 day initial decision period for considering the application was extended to 3 October 2011 on 8 September 2011.
- This Decision Notice will be issued to the CLSB on 16 September 2011
- This Decision Notice will be published on the LSB's website on 19 September 2011

**Chris Kenny, Chief Executive**  
**Acting under delegated authority granted by the Board of the Legal Services Board**  
**16 September 2011**

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

**COSTS LAWYERS**

**Regulator: Costs Lawyer Standards Board**

**Effective Date: XXXXX**

**Introduction**

This Code of Conduct (“Code”) is made pursuant to the Legal Services Act 2007 (“LSA”). On the effective date above, the Association of Costs Lawyers (“ACL”) as an Approved Regulator delegated its regulatory function to the Costs Lawyer Standards Board (“CLSB”). This Code sets out the principles which you must follow as a Costs Lawyer and replaces any other code of conduct issued by the ACL.

As a Costs Lawyer you are a regulated person authorised to carry on the following reserved legal activities:

- The exercise of a right of audience.
- The conduct of litigation.
- The administration of oaths.

There are seven principles to which Costs Lawyers must conform to ensure public confidence in you and the profession. Adherence to these principles is mandatory.

You must:

1. Act with integrity and professionalism.
2. Comply with your duty to the court in the administration of justice.
3. Act in the best interests of your client.
4. Provide a good quality of work and service to each client.
5. Deal with the regulators and Legal Ombudsman in an open and co-operative way.
6. Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
7. Keep your work on behalf of your clients confidential.

Under section 176(1) of the LSA you must comply with this Code. Breach of the Code may result in disciplinary proceedings being brought against you by CLSB.

**PRINCIPLE 1: Act with integrity and professionalism**

You must act honestly, professionally and with integrity in all your dealings in your professional life and not allow yourself to be compromised.

You must not give false or misleading information to anyone with whom you deal.

You must not be misleading or inaccurate when you publicise yourself as a Costs Lawyer or your business.

You must not enter into any fee arrangements which are unlawful.

You must not act in any way which is likely to diminish the trust the public places in you or in the profession of Costs Lawyers.

**PRINCIPLE 2: Comply with your duty to the court in the administration of justice**

2.1 You must at all times act within the law.

2.2 You must not knowingly or recklessly either mislead the court or allow the court to be misled.

2.3 You must comply with any court order which places an obligation on you and you must not be in contempt of court.

2.4 You must advise clients to comply with court orders made against them.

**PRINCIPLE 3: Act in the best interests of the client**

3.1 You must act at all times to ensure the client's interest is paramount except where this conflicts with your duties to the court or where otherwise permitted by law. You must decline to act if it would not be in the client's best interests or if that client's interests conflict directly with your own or with those of another client.

3.2 You must provide for an effective complaints procedure (first-tier complaints handling procedure) which is simple and transparent and ensures that a complaint can be made by any reasonable means and which takes into account the individual needs of clients (in particular the needs of vulnerable clients).

3.3 You must ensure that complaints are dealt with promptly (within a maximum 8 week period from date of receipt) openly and fairly and that appropriate provisions for redress exist.

3.4 You must advise new clients in writing when instructions are first received of:  
(i) An estimate of fees / details of charging structure and where that estimate subsequently becomes inaccurate or that charging structure changes provide an updated estimate / notice of revised charges.

(ii) The right to complain.

(iii) How to complain i.e. first-tier complaints handling procedure.

- (iv) The period within which you will deal with complaints under first-tier complaints handling procedure.
  - (v) The clients right to refer their complaint to the Legal Ombudsman in the event the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of the client or the matter has not been resolved within 8 weeks of the complaint being made.
  - (vi) Applicable time limits for referring the complaint to the Legal Ombudsman.
  - (vii) Legal Ombudsman contact details.
- 3.5 You must identify and rectify any systemic client complaint issues, taking steps to do so promptly upon discovery.
- 3.6 You must not accept client money save for disbursements and payment of your proper professional fees.
- 3.7 You must provide required documentation and information on an application for a practising certificate and in the event of any complaints investigation conducted by CLSB or the Legal Ombudsman.
- 3.8 You must ensure that you maintain professional indemnity insurance which complies with the requirements of the CLSB prevailing at the time and promptly provide evidence of that insurance cover if requested by a client, CLSB, ACL or Legal Ombudsman.

**PRINCIPLE 4: Provide a good quality of work and service to each client**

- 4.1 You must ensure that you only undertake work for which you are properly qualified.
- 4.2 Work must be undertaken with due skill, care and attention, with proper regard for the technical standard expected of you. If you do not have the knowledge, skills or experience to undertake the work you must decline it.
- 4.3 You must ensure that you carry out your professional work in a timely manner with proper regard for standards of professional service and care.
- 4.4 You must keep your professional knowledge up to date by undertaking relevant training in accordance with current Practising Rules.
- 4.5 You must keep the client regularly informed as to the progress of the work and keep accurate records of that work.
- 4.6 You must ensure that clients are able to make informed decisions about the work being undertaken on their behalf and the cost of that work.

**PRINCIPLE 5: Deal with the regulators & Legal Ombudsman in an open & co-operative way**

- 5.1 You must be open, honest and co-operate in your dealings with the CLSB, ACL, other regulators and the Legal Ombudsman responding to any requests promptly and fully within 14 calendar days.

- 5.2 You must promptly notify the CLSB of any breach of this Code by yourself or other Costs Lawyers.
- 5.3 You must not take any action to prevent anyone from reporting you to the CLSB or Legal Ombudsman.

**PRINCIPLE 6: Treat everyone with dignity and respect**

- 6.1 You must treat all clients, staff or third parties with dignity and respect. You should encourage equality of opportunity and must not unlawfully discriminate against them, either directly or indirectly, victimise or harass them on the grounds of age, disability, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marital status (including civil partnerships), sexual orientation, religion or belief.
- 6.2 You must have / adhere to a written policy which prevents discrimination and harassment and must investigate any allegation of discrimination, victimisation or harassment and take disciplinary action where appropriate.
- 6.3 You must make reasonable adjustments for those with a disability to ensure they are not at a disadvantage in comparison with those without disabilities.

**PRINCIPLE 7: Keep your work on behalf of your clients confidential**

- 7.1 You must keep the affairs of clients or former clients confidential unless disclosure is required or allowed by law or if the client consents in writing to disclosure, having had the consequences of such consent explained to them. You must ensure that your client is able, in your reasonable opinion, to give informed consent to waiving their right to confidentiality.

**PRACTISING RULES**

**COSTS LAWYERS**

**Regulator: Costs Lawyer Standards Board**

**Effective date: XXXXX**

**Introduction**

These Rules (“Rules”) were made pursuant to the Legal Services Act 2007 (“LSA”). On the effective date above, the Association of Costs Lawyers (“ACL”) as an Approved Regulator delegated its regulatory function to the Costs Lawyer Standards Board (“CLSB”). These Rules govern the practice of Costs Lawyers and replace any other practising rules, regulations or bye-laws issued by the ACL.

**Interpretation of terms within these Rules**

ACL	The Association of Law Costs Draftsmen, known with effect from 1 January 2011 as the Association of Costs Lawyers
CLSB	Costs Lawyer Standards Board
Costs Lawyer	A person who holds a current Practising Certificate and is therefore authorised to carry on the following reserved legal activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The exercise of a right of audience</li> <li>• The conduct of litigation</li> <li>• The administration of oaths</li> </ul>
Conduct Committee	The committee established by CLSB to consider Costs Lawyer conduct matters, as defined in the Disciplinary Rules & Procedures
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CPD Year	1 January to 31 December
LSA	Legal Services Act 2007
Practising Certificate	Certificate issued annually allowing a Costs Lawyer to practice under the title of Costs Lawyer and carry on reserved legal activities
Practising Certificate Fee	The annual fee payable to practice as a Costs Lawyer as approved by the Legal Services Board
Register	The Register of Costs Lawyers who hold a current Practising Certificate as defined in Rule 3

**RULE 1: Right to practice as a Costs Lawyer**

- 1.1 No person shall be entitled to practice as a Costs Lawyer unless:
- (a) they have fully qualified as a Costs Lawyer; and
  - (b) they have a current Practising Certificate issued in accordance with the provisions of these Rules; and
  - (c) they have and continue to comply with CPD requirements set out in Rule 8; and
  - (d) they have professional indemnity insurance in accordance with Rule 9.

**RULE 2: Right to a Practising Certificate**

- 2.1 Subject to the powers set out herein to refuse a Practising Certificate a Costs Lawyer is entitled to a Practising Certificate provided:
- (a) they return their applications for a Practising Certificate by the deadline stipulated; and
  - (b) they have paid the Practising Certificate Fee in full within the deadline stipulated; and
  - (c) they have provided evidence that they fulfil the requirements of Rule 1(a)(c) and (d).
- 2.2 CLSB must notify its reasons in writing to the applicant in the event CLSB:
- (a) Refuses an application.
  - (b) Makes a Practising Certificate subject to a condition or conditions.
  - (c) Refuses to remove a condition imposed on a Practising Certificate.

**RULE 3: Register of Costs Lawyers**

- 3.1 The Register may be kept in electronic form.
- 3.2 The name of all Costs Lawyers will be entered onto the Register upon:
- (a) Compliance with Rule 2.1.
  - (b) Production of an order lifting any suspension of their name from the Register.
  - (c) Upon restoration of their name to the Register.
- 3.3 The Register will contain the following information in respect of each Costs Lawyer who holds a Practising Certificate:
- (a) Their full name.
  - (b) Their date of birth.
  - (c) Their registration number.
  - (d) Their date of admission as a Costs Lawyer.
  - (e) Details of their practising address (name and address of firm).
  - (f) Other contact details including telephone number, email address and website address.
  - (g) Any condition on their Practising Certificate.
  - (h) Any other information required by law or deemed appropriate to be held.

- 3.4 A short version of the Register which shows the full names of all Costs Lawyers, the date they were admitted as a Costs Lawyer, the firm in which they work (if applicable) and any conditions on their Practising Certificate will be made available in an electronic format for public inspection through both the ACL and CLSB website. No other information will appear on this public access Register e.g. works address, works telephone numbers unless the Costs Lawyer gives permission that it may so appear.

**RULE 4: Applications for a Practising Certificate**

- 4.1 An application for a Practising Certificate must comprise of the following:
- (a) a fully and correctly completed application form as issued by CLSB; and
  - (b) payment of the full current Practising Certificate Fee; and
  - (c) any additional documentation or information reasonably required e.g. details of first-tier complaints handling procedures, number of complaints received.
- 4.2 The applicant must ensure that all the information given by them is correct and complete.
- 4.3 Every application form must be signed and dated by the applicant.
- 4.4 Every application must be received by the date stipulated.
- 4.5 The following must be disclosed by the applicant to the CLSB on any application for a Practising Certificate. The applicant:
- (a) Is an un-discharged or discharged bankrupt.
  - (b) Has entered into an individual Voluntary Arrangement under the Insolvency Act 1986 as amended.
  - (c) Has entered into a partnership Voluntary Arrangement under the Insolvency Act 1986.
  - (d) Has been a director of a company or a member of an LLP which has been wound up or the subject of an administration order, administrative receivership or a voluntary arrangement under the Insolvency Act 1986.
  - (e) Has been disqualified from being a company director.
  - (f) Has been committed to prison in civil or criminal proceedings or has been convicted of an indictable offence (subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act).
  - (g) Has been charged with an indictable offence.
  - (h) Lacks capacity within the meaning of the Mental Capacity Act 2005.
  - (i) Has been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by an order within the terms of section 72(1) (d) of the Charities Act 1993.
  - (j) Is or has been the subject of a money judgement which has been outstanding for more than 28 days.
  - (k) Has been made the subject of an order under section 43 of the Solicitors Act 1974.

- (l) Any other matter that might reasonably be expected to be disclosed as affecting the applicants' fitness to act as a Costs Lawyer.
- 4.6 If any of the matters in Rule 4.5 apply the CLSB may:
- (a) Refuse the application for a Practising Certificate.
  - (b) Impose a condition or conditions upon the Practising Certificate in accordance with Rule 10.

#### **RULE 5: Issuing of Practising Certificates**

- 5.1 The Practising Certificate will be delivered to the address notified to CLSB as the applicants practising address or to such other address as the applicant shall advise the CLSB in writing and may be delivered either by post or electronically.
- 5.2 The commencement date for the Practising Certificate will be the date on which it is entered on the Register and will also appear on the Practising Certificate.
- 5.3 The Practising Certificate will contain the following details:
- (a) The full name of the Costs Lawyer.
  - (b) The commencement date.
  - (c) The date of expiry.
  - (d) Any condition to which the Practising Certificate is subject.
- 5.4 In the event a condition is imposed on a Practising Certificate a new one will be issued stating the condition and the date it was imposed.
- 5.5 A new Practising Certificate will be issued in the event a condition expires, is varied, is successfully appealed or revoked.

#### **RULE 6: Revocation of a Practising Certificate**

- 6.1 A Practising Certificate will be revoked:
- (a) When it expires.
  - (b) When a replacement Practising Certificate is issued.
  - (c) On the death of the Costs Lawyer.
  - (d) If the Costs Lawyer's name is suspended from the Register.
  - (e) If the Costs Lawyer's name is removed from the Register.
  - (f) Upon the bankruptcy of a Costs Lawyer.
  - (g) Upon the Costs Lawyer entering into an individual Voluntary Arrangement.

#### **RULE 7: Notification requirements**

- 7.1 A Costs Lawyer is required to notify CLSB within 14 calendar days of any of the following events:
- (a) Their committal to prison in either civil or criminal proceedings.
  - (b) Their being charged with or convicted of an indictable offence.
  - (c) Their being made the subject of disciplinary proceedings as a Lawyer of England and Wales other than as a Costs Lawyer.
  - (d) Their being made subject to a bankruptcy order.

- (e) Their entering into an individual voluntary arrangement under the Insolvency Act 1986.
- (f) Any change of practising address.
- (g) Their ceasing to practice (in which event the Costs Lawyer is required to supply the CLSB with a new contact address).
- (h) Any other matter that might reasonably be expected to be disclosed as affecting their fitness to act as a Costs Lawyer.

**RULE 8: Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

- 8.1 A Costs Lawyer must complete a minimum of 12 CPD points in each CPD Year in accordance with current Training & CPD Rules.
- 8.2 A Costs Lawyer must inform the CLSB in such form and at such time as shall be prescribed by the CLSB of whether or not they have complied with CPD requirements.
- 8.3 A Costs Lawyer must keep a record of CPD undertaken and must produce it to the CLSB on demand.
- 8.4 CLSB may refuse to renew a Practising Certificate or may issue the Practising Certificate subject to conditions where the Costs Lawyer has failed to provide satisfactory evidence of compliance with current rules in the Training & CPD Rules.

**RULE 9: Indemnity insurance**

- 9.1 With the exception of those who are employees of a Solicitors firm, Costs Lawyer firm, Insurance firm or other alternative business structure on a PAYE basis, a Costs Lawyer shall ensure that:
  - (a) professional indemnity insurance is in place at all times with minimum cover of £100,000 together with loss of documents cover;
  - (b) there are no gaps between policies;
  - (c) policy fees are paid in accordance with payment terms set out by the insurer to ensure cover is in place.
- 9.2 A Costs Lawyer will provide a copy of their professional indemnity insurance policy or declaration from the insurer or broker upon request from a client, CLSB or the Legal Ombudsman within 14 calendar days of the request being made.

**RULE 10: Conditions on Practising Certificates**

- 10.1 CLSB may impose on a Practising Certificate any condition it thinks fit including conditions imposed as a result of a disclosure under Rules 4 & 7 or as a result of any findings under the Disciplinary Rules & Procedures.
- 10.2 CLSB may remove a condition on a Practising Certificate should it consider it appropriate to do so, on written application of the Costs Lawyer e.g. change of circumstances.

- 10.3 If CLSB decides to impose a condition during the currency of a Practising Certificate it must, unless it is satisfied on reasonable grounds that it is not in the public interest to do so, give 21 calendar days written notice with reasons to the Cost Lawyer in question.

**RULE 11: Lapsed Practising Certificate / Retired Costs Lawyers**

- 11.1 A Costs Lawyer is encouraged, during a career break for whatever reason, to retain their Practising Certificate therefore keeping up to date with CPD requirements. However, in the event a Costs Lawyer has not done so, then they may re-apply by completing the required reinstatement form and paying an administrative fee of £30.00 together with the Practising Certificate Fee on a pro-rata basis.
- 11.2 On re-issue of a Practising Certificate, the Costs Lawyer will be required to undertake CPD on a pro-rata basis for what remains of the practising year.
- 11.3 A Costs Lawyer who has retired may continue to receive the Costs Lawyer Journal, diary and may attend the National Conference (but not the AGM) on payment of an administrative fee of £50.00 a year to the ACL. They may not however title themselves a Costs Lawyer or Retired Costs Lawyer.

**RULE 12: Appeals**

- 12.1 There is a right of appeal under this Rule in respect of:
- (a) Refusal of CLSB to issue a Practising Certificate.
  - (b) Imposition of a condition or conditions upon a Practising Certificate.
  - (c) Refusal of CLSB to remove a condition or conditions imposed on a Practising Certificate.
- 12.2 An appeal must be made within 21 calendar days of the date of the letter notifying the decision which the Costs Lawyer intends to appeal.
- 12.3 The appeal must be in writing to the CLSB and must set out the grounds on which the appeal is being made.
- 12.4 The only grounds for making an appeal are that the decision was flawed because:
- (a) There was a material error in law.
  - (b) There was a failure to take into account material information.
  - (c) The decision was irrational.
  - (d) The decision was one which could not be made.
  - (e) New evidence has been obtained which could not have been made available when the decision was made.
- 12.5 An appeal shall be by way of review by the Conduct Committee and the decision on the appeal shall be made on paper alone.
- 12.6 The Conduct Committee may not impose any decision or condition that is harsher than the original, it may only uphold the decision or lessen it.
- 12.7 There is no right of appeal beyond the Conduct Committee.

**RULE 13: Notification of decisions**

13.1 If it is considered in the public interest the CLSB may notify the following of decisions made under these Rules to:

- (a) the ACL; and/or
- (b) an approved regulator; and/or,
- (c) the Legal Services Board; and/or
- (d) a law enforcement agency; and/or
- (e) the Legal Ombudsman.

**DISCIPLINARY RULES & PROCEDURES**  
**COSTS LAWYERS**

**Regulator: Costs Lawyer Standards Board**

**Effective date: XXXXX**

**Introduction**

These rules (“Rules”) were made pursuant to the Legal Services Act 2007 (“LSA”). On the effective date above, the Association of Costs Lawyers (“ACL”) as an Approved Regulator delegated its regulatory function to the Costs Lawyer Standards Board (“CLSB”). These Rules govern the disciplinary procedures to regulate the conduct of Costs Lawyers and replace any other disciplinary rules and procedures issued by the ACL.

**Interpretation of terms within these Rules**

ACL	The Association of Law Costs Draftsmen, known with effect from 1 January 2011 as the Association of Costs Lawyers
CLSB	Costs Lawyer Standards Board
Costs Lawyer	A person who holds a current Practising Certificate and is therefore authorised to carry on the following reserved legal activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The exercise of a right of audience</li> <li>• The conduct of litigation</li> <li>• The administration of oaths</li> </ul>
Complainant	A CLSB concern or a person (natural, legal or commercial) who makes a conduct complaint to CLSB or through the Legal Ombudsman
Complaint Documents	The complaint, as formalised in writing and any documentation submitted or to be used in support of the complaint
Finding	Determination against a Costs Lawyers by the Chief Executive, Conduct Committee or Conduct Appeal Committee following investigation and consideration of the complaint
Lay Person	As defined in Schedule 1 Section 2(4) of the Legal Services Act 2007
Hybrid Complaint	Complaint which has both service and conduct elements to it
Non-Lay Person	A person who is not a Lay Person
Panel Member	Individual appointed by CLSB to be called upon as required to serve on a Conduct Committee or Conduct Appeal Committee.

### **RULE 1: Jurisdiction**

- 1.1 Subject to Rules 1.2 and 1.4 these Rules apply when:
  - (a) a complaint about the conduct of a Costs Lawyer has been referred to CLSB by a Complainant or the Legal Ombudsman; or
  - (b) CLSB has reasonable grounds to consider that its rules and codes have not been complied with by the Costs Lawyer.
- 1.2 To be considered under these Rules, a complaint must be received by CLSB:
  - (a) within a 12 month period from the date on which the matters giving rise to the complaint occurred; or
  - (b) within a 12 month period from the date on which the Complainant first became aware that they had grounds for the complaint; or
  - (c) the Complainant can provide sufficient and justifiable reasons as to why the complaint could not have been brought earlier.
- 1.3 These Rules apply to complaints relating to the conduct of Costs Lawyers only.
- 1.4 These Rules do not apply to complaints about the service provided by a Costs Lawyer, which fall within the jurisdiction of the Legal Ombudsman.
- 1.5 In accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding reached with the Legal Ombudsman, all complaints received by CLSB will first be directed to the Legal Ombudsman for them to evaluate whether it falls within their jurisdiction in whole or part.
- 1.6 In the event the Legal Ombudsman establishes the complaint is one of conduct in whole or part, CLSB will be notified by the Legal Ombudsman.
- 1.7 In the event of a Hybrid Complaint, the CLSB will allow the Legal Ombudsman to conclude the service element of the complaint before CLSB considers the conduct element of the complaint, unless CLSB deems the conduct element of the complaint the more serious in nature.

### **RULE 2: Administration**

- 2.1 CLSB will provide administrative support and other necessary support services to the Conduct Committee and Conduct Appeal Committee, to include:
  - (a) Initiating an investigation into a complaint.
  - (b) Making the necessary administrative arrangements.
  - (c) Preparing the notices and papers.
  - (d) Securing a suitable venue for the hearing or review.
  - (e) Attending to minute any hearing or review.
  - (f) Securing any independent legal or other advice as may be required by the Conduct Committee or Conduct Appeal Committee.
  - (g) Drawing up decision document and orders and sending the same to the Costs Lawyer and Complainant.
  - (h) The publication of decisions in the Costs Lawyer Journal and/or on the CLSB /ACL website.

**RULE 3: Investigation (level one)**

- 3.1 CLSB may initiate investigation of a Costs Lawyer at any time in the event of circumstances defined under Rule 1.1.
- 3.2 CLSB will use all reasonable endeavours to ensure a complaint is fully investigated within 36 calendar days of receipt of the complaint.
- 3.3 Any investigation will be carried out by the Chief Executive of the CLSB or an appointed investigator who will undertake an investigation in accordance with the following prescribed standards at all times:
  - They will act independently.
  - They will act in the strictest confidence.
  - They will comply with the CLSB Confidentiality & Information Security Policy.
  - They will fully investigate and gather all required evidence to support their recommendation e.g. documents, witness statements.
- 3.4 The Chief Executive or investigator will send a copy of the Complaint Documents to the Costs Lawyer inviting them to provide, within a period of 14 calendar days from the date of the request, brief and concise observations (which may include admissions) in order for the complaint to be fully considered. The Costs Lawyer may seek an extension to this 14 calendar day period by a request in writing to the Chief Executive stating the reasons. Only one extension (not exceeding 14 days) will be permitted.
- 3.5 The investigative report will be in writing in a format prescribed by CLSB and will include detail of the allegation and any relevant facts of evidence. It will include the explanation provided by the Costs Lawyer and will attach such documents as required to support the explanation and findings therein.
- 3.6 The report will conclude with one of the following recommendations:
  - (a) No case to answer.
  - (b) Minor disciplinary finding.
  - (c) Referral to Conduct Committee for consideration.
- 3.7 In reaching the recommendation as set out in 3.6 the investigator will further consider, without limitation:
  - (i) Whether the complaint is minor in nature.
  - (ii) The extent of any prejudice or loss caused or likely to be caused because of that complained of.
  - (iii) Whether the complaint involved the integrity or honesty of the Costs Lawyer.
  - (iv) The Costs Lawyers standard of care and conduct leading up to that complained of.
  - (v) Whether the Costs Lawyers handling of the matter under their first-tier complaints handling procedure was reasonable, and what steps, if any, the Costs Lawyer had taken to terminate or prevent repetition of that complained of.

- (vi) Whether any material harm has been caused to the standing of the Costs Lawyer profession.
  - (vii) The past disciplinary record of the Costs Lawyer.
  - (viii) Whether it is a case which involves a matter of public interest.
- 3.8 The Chief Executive will consider and evaluate any external investigative report to ensure it is thorough and fair. It is at the discretion of the Chief Executive as to whether further investigation is carried out before the recommendation is considered by the Chief Executive and acted upon.
- 3.9 Any Finding at level one will be on the balance of probabilities.
- 3.10 All evidence which is fair and relevant will be admissible.
- 3.11 The Chief Executive will notify both parties in writing of the outcome.

**RULE 4: Investigation recommends: No case to answer**

- 4.1 In the event the Chief Executive finds or concurs with the investigators recommendation of “no case to answer” the Chief Executive will write to both the Complainant and the Costs Lawyer advising them of that conclusion.
- 4.2 There will be no cost order in such circumstances.

**RULE 5: Investigation recommends: Minor disciplinary finding**

- 5.1 In the event the Chief Executive finds or concurs with the recommendation of “a minor disciplinary finding” then the Chief Executive may issue one of the following to the Costs Lawyer, with a copy being sent to the Complainant:
- (a) a warning letter, which may also include a request that the cause of the complaint be remedied and evidence provided to CLSB within a defined time period, failing which the matter will be referred by CLSB to the Conduct Committee, and/or;
  - (b) a proposed undertaking to be signed by the Costs Lawyer to effect changes within a defined time period to avoid the complaint arising again.
- 5.2 Any warning letter or undertaking issued will set out in brief the findings of the investigation on which it has been issued.
- 5.3 The warning letter or undertaking will state that should a complaint of the same nature be received within 2 years of its date then the warning letter or undertaking and report on that complaint will be used in evidence when the second complaint is considered.
- 5.4 The Costs Lawyer will be asked to sign their acceptance to the terms of any warning letter or undertaking. CLSB will monitor to ensure accepted terms and undertakings are complied with. In the event the Costs Lawyer does not accept the warning letter or proposed undertaking issued then they may within 10 days of the letter communicating the warning or proposed undertaking appeal to the Conduct Committee in accordance with the appeal Rules set out herein.
- 5.5 A Finding at level one will attract an order for costs in the fixed sum of £250.00 payable within 21 days.

**RULE 6: Investigation recommends: Referral to Conduct Committee/appeal against warning letter or undertaking**

- 6.1 In the event the Chief Executive concurs with the recommendation of “referral to Conduct Committee” CLSB will convene a Conduct Committee in accordance with Rule 7.
- 6.2 In the event a Costs Lawyer does not accept the Findings at level one then CLSB will convene a Conduct Committee in accordance with Rule 7.
- 6.3 CLSB will disclose the investigative report, information and documentation (provided that CLSB is not prevented for any reason by law) to:
  - The Costs Lawyer or their representatives (if appointed).
  - The Complainant.
  - Anyone else in the public interest.
- 6.4 The Costs Lawyer will provide a written explanation for the basis of the appeal, including any new facts or evidence not originally considered within 14 calendar days from the date the appeal was filed.

**RULE 7: Conduct Committee (level two)**

- 7.1 The Conduct Committee shall comprise of three members including its chair. It shall be chaired by one of the Lay Person Non-Executive Directors on the CLSB board (not the CLSB board chair). The further two members shall be one Lay Person and one Non-Lay Person drawn from the panel of Conduct Committee Members who have no conflict of interest in the matter.
- 7.2 The Costs Lawyer will be given a minimum of 14 calendar days’ notice of a Conduct Committee hearing. The notice will contain the allegation to be considered, the date, time and venue of the hearing and the names of the Conduct Committee members. A copy of these Rules will also be attached to the notice.
- 7.3 The Costs Lawyer is entitled to attend and be accompanied at the hearing. Should the Costs Lawyer wish to be professionally represented they may do so at their own expense. The Costs Lawyer is required to notify CLSB not less than 5 days before the hearing as to whether they will be attending, if they will be accompanied, professionally represented or calling any witnesses (names also required).
- 7.4 Both the Complainant or Costs Lawyer are entitled to make further written representations but these must be received by the CLSB not less than 7 calendar days before the hearing. CLSB will ensure such representations are made available to the other party before the hearing.
- 7.5 The Complainant will not attend the Conduct Committee hearing unless requested to do so by the Conduct Committee as a witness. In such circumstances, their attendance will be limited to their witness evidence only.
- 7.6 The Conduct Committee will notify the Complainant and Costs Lawyer of its decision in writing within 14 calendar days of the hearing.
- 7.7 The decision of the Conduct Committee may be appealed by the Costs Lawyer only.

- 7.8 The decision and the reasons for the decision will be sent to the Costs Lawyer who shall be advised of the right of appeal.
- 7.9 There will be no right of appeal from the decision of the Conduct Committee of an appeal against a warning letter or undertaking at level one.
- 7.10 If deemed appropriate in the circumstances the Conduct Committee may take legal advice from an independent Lawyer, adjourning any hearing if so required.
- 7.11 Any Finding at level two will be on the balance of probabilities.
- 7.12 All evidence which is fair and reasonable will be admissible.
- 7.13 A Finding at level two will attract an order for costs in the fixed sum of £1,000 payable within 21 days.

**RULE 8: Conduct Appeal Committee (level three)**

- 8.1 The Costs Lawyer may, within 14 calendar days of notification of a Conduct Committee decision, file an appeal against that decision setting out the grounds for the appeal in accordance with Rule 9. Any such appeal received by the CLSB will be referred to a Conduct Appeal Committee for review.
- 8.2 The Costs Lawyer and Complainant will be given 14 calendar days' notice of a Conduct Appeal Committee review although the decision on the appeal will be made on paper alone, there will be no hearing of the Costs Lawyer, Complainant or otherwise.
- 8.3 Both the Costs Lawyer and Complainant are entitled to make further written representations but these must be received by CLSB no less than 7 calendar days before the appeal date. CLSB will ensure such representations are made available to the other party before the review.
- 8.4 The Conduct Appeal Committee can impose a greater penalty than the Conduct Committee.
- 8.5 The Conduct Appeal Committee shall comprise of three members including its chair. It shall be chaired by the Lay-Person Non-Executive Director Chair or Vice Chair of the CLSB board. The further two members shall be one Lay Person and one Non-Lay Person drawn from the panel of Conduct Committee Members who were not involved in the original Conduct Committee hearing.
- 8.6 The Conduct Appeal Committee will notify the Complainant and Costs Lawyer of its decision in writing within 14 calendar days of meeting to review the case.
- 8.7 If deemed appropriate in the circumstances the Conduct Appeal Committee may take legal advice from an independent Lawyer, adjourning any review if so required.
- 8.8 Any Finding at level three will be on the balance of probabilities.
- 8.9 All evidence which is fair and relevant will be admissible.
- 8.10 A Finding at level three will attract an order for costs in the fixed sum of £1,500 payable within 21 days.

**RULE 9: Appeals**

- 9.1 The following applies in relation to both an appeal on a minor disciplinary Finding to the Conduct Committee and an appeal against a Conduct Committee decision to Conduct Appeal Committee.
- 9.2 The appeal must be made in writing and must set out the grounds on which the appeal is being made.
- 9.3 The only grounds for making an appeal are that the decision was flawed because:
  - (a) there was a material error in law; and/or
  - (b) there was a failure to take into account material information; and/or
  - (c) the decision was irrational; and/or
  - (d) the decision was one which could not be made; and/or
  - (e) new evidence has been obtained which could not have been made available when the decision was made.
- 9.4 An appeal shall be by way of a review and the appeal decision will be made on consideration of written evidence alone, there will be no hearing of the Costs Lawyer, Complainant or otherwise.

**RULE 10: Panel Members for Conduct Committee and Conduct Appeal Committee**

- 10.1 CLSB shall advertise for and appoint lay and non-lay Panel Members to be called upon as required to serve on a Conduct Committee hearing or Conduct Appeal Committee review.
- 10.2 A Panel Member must not be a serving member of the ACL Council or have served in such a capacity for 2 years before applying to become a Panel Member.
- 10.3 A Panel Member who has served on the Conduct Committee may not then sit on the Conduct Appeal Committee in relation to the same complaint.
- 10.4 A Panel Member must only agree to serve in that capacity on a complaint on which they have no conflict of interest.
- 10.5 A Panel Member will be reimbursed for their time and disbursements incurred in attendance at a Conduct Committee hearing or Conduct Appeal Committee review at a rate agreed by the CLSB board and prevailing at the time.
- 10.6 A Panel Member will not be an employee of CLSB and will hold no term of office, they will put themselves forward to be called upon, on a needs be basis.
- 10.7 Panel Members will comply with the Panel Member Code of Conduct.
- 10.8 CLSB will review the suitability of the panel every two years and will advertise to replace any Panel Member who indicates they no longer wish to serve in that capacity.

**RULE 11: Penalties which may be imposed by Conduct Committee**

- 11.1 In the event a complaint is substantiated and further to any costs order under Rule 13, the Conduct Committee may also impose sanction(s) on the Costs Lawyer by way of:

- (a) a warning letter to be signed by the Costs Lawyer which may also include a requirement that the cause of the complaint be remedied within a defined time period, and/or;
- (b) a proposed undertaking to be signed by the Costs Lawyer to effect changes within a defined time period, and/or;
- (c) payment of a penalty up to £2,000; and/or;
- (d) suspension of the Costs Lawyer's Practising Certificate and name from the Register of Costs Lawyer for a fixed term not exceeding 2 years, and/or;
- (e) permanent removal of the Costs Lawyer's Practising Certificate and name from the Register of Costs Lawyers.

11.2 Where the Conduct Committee directs a penalty to be paid it shall also direct the time in which it is to be paid and the manner of payment.

**RULE 12: Penalties which may be imposed by Conduct Appeal Committee**

12.1 The Conduct Appeal Committee may:

- (i) Dismiss the original decision, sanction and costs order.
- (ii) Uphold the original decision, sanction and costs order.
- (iii) Uphold the original decision, but reduce the sanction.
- (iv) Uphold the original decisions and revise the original sanction by way of:
  - (a) payment of a revised penalty up to £4,000, and/or;
  - (b) suspension of the Costs Lawyer's Practising Certificate and name from the Register of Costs Lawyer for a period of time at the discretion of the Conduct Appeal Committee, and/or;
  - (c) permanent removal of the Costs Lawyer's Practising Certificate and name from the Register of Costs Lawyers.

12.2 Where the Conduct Appeal Committee upholds or finds in favour of a revised penalty it shall state the time in which that penalty is to be paid.

**RULE 13: Costs**

13.1 A costs order will be payable to CLSB within 21 days of the order being made.

13.2 A costs order will be for a fixed sum dependent on the disciplinary level Finding:

Level one: £250

Level two: £1,000

Level three: £1,500

13.3 The costs set out in Rule 13.2 reflect a contribution towards the actual costs of the process at that level and will not therefore be subject to appeal.

13.4 There will be no costs order in the event an investigation concludes there is no case to answer.

13.5 Should a Costs Lawyer successfully appeal to the Conduct Committee or the Conduct Appeal Committee with the original decision being dismissed, any costs order attached to that decisions will be cancelled.

- 13.6 A costs order will be recoverable by the CLSB as a debt and failure by the Costs Lawyer to pay the costs may lead to a further investigation or referral to the Conduct Appeal Committee
- 13.7 CLSB will have no right to order a Complainant to pay costs in the event a complaint is unsubstantiated or dismissed.

**RULE 14: Publication of sanctions and costs orders**

- 14.1 CLSB may publish the findings of any Conduct Committee or Conduct Appeal Committee decision at its discretion in the Costs Lawyer Journal and/or on the ACL/CLSB websites unless publication would:
- (a) prejudice legal proceedings or investigations whether of a legal or regulatory nature; or
  - (b) disclose legally privileged information; or
  - (c) involve a significant risk of a breach of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
- 14.2 In the event a warning letter or undertaking is issued and accepted by the Costs Lawyer it shall be recorded against the Costs Lawyers name on the Register of Costs Lawyers (available for public inspection) and will be removed on expiry / completion in accordance with terms stated therein.
- 14.3 In the event a sanction is issued by the Conduct Committee or Conduct Appeal Committee it shall be recorded against the Costs Lawyers name on the Register of Costs Lawyers (available for public inspection) for the period stipulated in the sanction.

**RULE 15: Delivery of documents**

- 15.1 The Complainant and Costs Lawyer shall send all documents to the CLSB marked and addressed as follows:

Strictly private & confidential (addressee only)

Chief Executive

CLSB

Centurion House

129 Deansgate

Manchester

M3 3WR

- 15.2 Alternatively, documents can be sent to the CLSB by email headed private and confidential to: [ceo@clsb.info](mailto:ceo@clsb.info)
- 15.3 In the event of using postal delivery, the Complainant and Costs Lawyer are advised to use a method of post in which delivery is recorded as the CLSB cannot accept responsibility for any failure by a postal service provider, to safely deliver documents.
- 15.4 CLSB will use a method of post in which delivery is recorded when issuing any documents, notices or otherwise as required under these Rules.

**TRAINING & CPD RULES**

**COSTS LAWYERS**

**Regulator: Costs Lawyer Standards Board**

**Effective date: XXXXXXXX**

**Introduction**

These rules (“Rules”) were made pursuant to the Legal Services Act 2007 (“LSA”). On the effective date above, the Association of Costs Lawyers (“ACL”) as an Approved Regulator delegated its regulatory function to the Costs Lawyer Standards Board (“CLSB”). These Rules govern the training and development of Costs Lawyers and replace all other training and CPD rules issued by ACL.

There are two levels of membership of ACL namely Trainee Costs Lawyer and Costs Lawyer. These Rules set out the principles which must be followed by:

- A Trainee Costs Lawyer, to qualify as a Costs Lawyer.
- A Costs Lawyer seeking to retain a Practising Certificate.
- A Costs Lawyer seeking to reinstate a lapsed Practising Certificate.

**Trainee Costs Lawyer: Qualifying employment**

There is no requirement that Trainee Costs Lawyers are predominantly employed in costs law and practice. They are however encouraged to obtain such relevant employment or work in costs to attain the highest standards of practical skills. Three years of relevant experience in costs law and practice achieved before, during or after study for the Costs Lawyer qualification will be required to achieve Costs Lawyer status (see Rule 9.2)

**Trainee Costs Lawyer: Learning support**

If a Trainee Costs Lawyer has any additional needs that may affect their learning then the Trainee Costs Lawyer should notify the ACL of this on submitting their application.

**Trainee Costs Lawyer: Study provider (Accreditation)**

Study may only be undertaken with a study provider duly accredited by CLSB.

### **Trainee Costs Lawyer: Student study**

- 1.1 Rules 1-9 inclusive are applicable to those seeking to qualify as a Costs Lawyer. The aims and objectives are to enable Trainee Costs Lawyers to:
- a) Obtain general knowledge of each area of law studied.
  - b) Achieve detailed knowledge of the law and procedures relating to the costs subject studied.
  - c) Develop skills of legal analysis particularly in relation to costs law and practice.
  - d) Reach a high level of competency and performance.
  - e) Learn valuable transferable skills.

### **RULE 16: Trainee Costs Lawyers: Age requirement**

- 16.1 The minimum age for a Trainee Costs Lawyer is 16.

### **RULE 17: Trainee Costs Lawyers: Entry level qualifications**

- 17.1 Documentary evidence of required qualifications must be provided before study can be commenced. The minimum level of qualification for a Trainee Costs Lawyer is as set out below, or equivalent:
- (a) four GCSEs at grade C or above, English and Maths being compulsory; or
  - (b) two A level passes and 1 GCSE level to include English; or
  - (c) three AS level passes to include either English or Maths; or
  - (d) GNVQ at intermediate or advance level, provided a communications skills element is included; or
  - (e) passing a written aptitude test set by the ACL.

### **RULE 18: Trainee Costs Lawyers: Application requirements**

- 18.1 An application for membership of the ACL as a Trainee Costs Lawyer must be completed and submitted to the Administrative Secretary of the ACL by 30 June in the year of intended study (with study to commence in September of that year). Applications after 30 June may not be considered until the following year. The application form must be completed in full with correct information and should be accompanied by the following:
- (a) The name, address and phone number of two referees (as set out in Rule 5).
  - (b) Documentary evidence of qualifications as required by Rule 2 including certificates (photocopies will be acceptable).
  - (c) The applicant's curriculum vitae.
  - (d) Payment of the current ACL Trainee Costs Lawyer application administration fee.
  - (e) Payment of the current membership fee of ACL as a Trainee Costs Lawyer.

**RULE 19: Trainee Costs Lawyers: Character & suitability**

- 19.1 On an application for Trainee Costs Lawyer status the applicant must declare any information that might affect their suitability to be a Trainee Costs Lawyer/Costs Lawyer which includes:
- (a) Any disciplinary action by any professional body.
  - (b) Any finding of cheating in exams or plagiarism during the course of study.
  - (c) If they are an un-discharged or discharged bankrupt.
  - (d) If they have entered into an individual Voluntary Arrangement under the Insolvency Act 1986, as amended.
  - (e) If they have entered into a partnership Voluntary Arrangement under the Insolvency Act 1986.
  - (f) If they have been a director of a company or member of an LLP which has been wound up or the subject of an administration order, administrative receivership or a voluntary arrangement under the Insolvency Act 1986.
  - (g) If they have been disqualified from being a company director.
  - (h) If they have been committed to prison on civil or criminal proceedings or have been convicted of an indictable offence (subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act).
  - (i) If they Lack capacity within the meaning of the Mental Capacity Act 2005.
  - (j) If they have been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by an order within the terms of section 72(1)(d) of the Charities Act 1993.
  - (k) If they are or have been the subject of a money judgement which has been outstanding for more than 28 days.
  - (l) If they have been the subject of an order under section 43 of the Solicitors Act 1974.
  - (m) Any other matter that might reasonably be expected to be disclosed in affecting their fitness to study for the Costs Lawyer professional qualification.
- 19.2 In the event of any declarations of the above, the ACL will consider the applicant's suitability and whether any conditions should be imposed. On application, the ACL may make any required checks including criminal records checks to ensure the suitability of an applicant. A failure to disclose, or the provision of misleading information on an application can be taken into account by the ACL when considering the suitability of an applicant to be a Trainee Costs Lawyer.

**RULE 20: Trainee Costs Lawyers: References**

- 20.1 An applicant will be required to submit the name, address, phone numbers and email address of two referees (one character, one professional). Those referees should be:
- (a) People who know the applicant well enough to vouch for the applicant character.

- (b) Preferably professional people.
- (c) People who are likely to know of any problems the applicant may have had such as convictions, incidents of plagiarism.

**RULE 21: Trainee Costs Lawyers: Acceptance as a Trainee Costs Lawyer**

21.1 The ACL will confirm in writing whether the application has been approved. If so, the ACL will issue the Trainee Costs Lawyer with a unique identity number and request they attend ACL induction. Attendance at ACL induction is mandatory. In the event an application is refused, ACL will provide reasons why.

**RULE 22: Trainee Costs Lawyers: Three year modular training course**

- 22.1 The Trainee Costs Lawyer course is divided into three separate modules providing a structured learning programme. Each module includes self-assessment assignments, examiner marked assignments and a compulsory practical seminar and workshop.
- (a) General & civil costs.
  - (b) Solicitors and client costs, specialist courts and tribunals.
  - (c) Public funding/legal aid.
- 22.2 A Trainee Costs Lawyer must complete each module (pass standard 65% or above on each module) and attend any compulsory seminars and workshops before the ACL will issue a Certificate of Completion for that module.
- 22.3 After successfully completing the modules trainees must then take and pass the Costs Lawyer examination.
- 22.4 The course is designed as a three year course and cannot be fully completed in less than that time.

**RULE 23: Trainee Costs Lawyers: Exemptions**

- 23.1 Exemptions may be considered by the ACL for individual subjects within the course modules for Trainee Costs Lawyers who have successfully attained, within the previous seven years, the following qualifications:
- A Law Degree.
  - Certificate of completion of the Law Society Legal Practice Course.
  - The Bar Vocational Course.
  - ILEX qualifications.
- 23.2 Eligibility for exemptions can be checked with the ACL Educational Development Officer.
- 23.3 Where exemptions are granted there will be no reductions in the fees payable for each module or the three year period of study under Rule 7.

**RULE 24: Trainee Costs Lawyers: Qualifying experience**

24.1 In addition to successfully passing the modular course and final examination 3 years relevant work experience in costs law and practice are required before a Trainee Costs Lawyer can apply to become a Costs Lawyer. The 3 years can be acquired before, during or after the period of study and need not be continuous. ACL/CLSB may audit alleged relevant experience to ensure it was achieved and was indeed relevant.

**RULE 25: Costs Lawyers: Continued Professional Development**

- 25.1 A CPD year runs from 1 January to 31 December (“CPD Year”).
- 25.2 A Costs Lawyer must complete a minimum of 12 CPD points in each CPD Year.
- 25.3 In the event a Costs Lawyer is admitted during the course of a CPD Year they must complete a minimum of 1 CPD point for each month worked during the CPD Year.
- 25.4 A Costs Lawyer must inform the CLSB in such form and at such time as shall be prescribed by the CLSB of whether or not they have complied with CPD requirements.
- 25.5 A Costs Lawyer must keep a record of CPD undertaken and must produce it to the CLSB on demand.
- 25.6 In accordance with the Practising Rules, CLSB may refuse to renew a Practising Certificate or may issue the Practising Certificate subject to conditions where the Costs Lawyer has failed to comply with CPD training requirements.
- 25.7 CLSB shall have the power to approve, for the purpose of these Regulations, courses provided by educational institutions and other bodies.
- 25.8 CLSB shall have the power to require a Costs Lawyer to attend a CPD course at the expense of the Costs Lawyer irrespective of whether they have complied with the twelve point requirement e.g. as a sanction on a disciplinary finding.

**RULE 26: Costs Lawyers: Earning CPD points**

A minimum of 6 CPD points must be earned from Table 1, the balance can be earned from either Table 1 or Table 2 during a CPD Year.

It should be noted that a reciprocal agreement exists with the ACL/Law Society/SRA/ILEX in that the parties accept the others CPD training.

<b>TABLE 1</b>	<b><i>Minimum of 6 points to be earned from this table</i></b>
<b>Action</b>	<b>CPD point earnings</b>
Attending ACL National Conference	1 point per hour attended (excluding breaks)

Attending ACL update training course	1 point per hour attended (excluding breaks)
Attending Law Society/SRA/Counsel/ILEX update seminar on cost related subject matter	1 point per hour attended (excluding breaks)
Attending ACL accredited update training course (see ACL website)	1 point per hour attended (excluding breaks)
Delivery of a training course on costs	1 point per hour the course presentation lasts

<b>TABLE 2</b>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>CPD Points attributed</b>
Marking of Costs Lawyer examination papers	1 point for each assignment marked and assessed
Attending in-house training by employer on any legal subject matter	1 point per hour attended (excluding breaks) Max 3 points per CPD Year
Writing articles relating to costs law for Costs Lawyer Journal or other accredited legal publication	2 points per article published
Coaching & mentoring of Trainee Costs Lawyers	1 point per three months Max 4 points per CPD Year
Reading and completing ACL tutorial updates	1 point for each tutorial completed
Reading all Costs Lawyer Journals throughout the CPD Year	2 points for all 12 read during CPD Year