



STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS.

S.I. No. 425 of 2024



THE SOLICITORS ACTS 1954 TO 2015 (AWARDS OF MERIT)
REGULATIONS 2024

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The Law Society of Ireland, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by Section 40 (as substituted by Section 49 of the Solicitors (Amendment) Act, 1994) of the Solicitors Act 1954 hereby MAKE the following Regulations:

1. (a) These Regulations may be cited as the Solicitors Acts 1954 to 2015 (Awards of Merit) Regulations 2024.
- (b) These Regulations shall come into operation on 1st September, 2024

2. (a) In these Regulations

“Act” means the Solicitors Act, 1954 (No. 36 of 1954);

“Act of 1960” means the Solicitors (Amendment) Act, 1960 (No. 37 of 1960);

“Act of 1994” means the Solicitors (Amendment) Act, 1994 (No. 27 of 1994);

“application fee” means a fee payable to the Society by an applicant to apply to become a Fellow of the Law Society pursuant to Regulation 8(a)(iv), as fixed by the Education Committee from time to time;

“annual general meeting” means the general meeting of the Society held each year in the month of November;

“Awarding Committee” means a sub-committee of the Education Committee comprising three persons as appointed by the Education Committee from time to time;

“Education Committee” means the education committee appointed pursuant to Regulation 4 of the principal Regulations;

“Council” means the Council of the Society;

“Fellow of the Society” means a person who is a Fellow of the Society (with the post nominal ‘F.L.S.I.’) pursuant to Regulation 8;

“Final Examination” means the examination, comprising three parts, referred to in Regulation 11(a) of the principal Regulations;

“Final Examination – First Part” means the first part of the Final Examination provided for in Regulation 11(a) of the principal Regulations;

“principal Regulations” means the Solicitors Acts, 1954 to 1994 (Apprenticeship and Education) Regulations, 2001 (S.I. No. 546 of 2001);

“member of the Society” means a person who is a member of the Society pursuant to Bye-law 2(1) of the Bye-laws of the Law Society of Ireland and with the postnominal M.L.S.I. pursuant to Regulation 7 following the commencement of that Regulation;

Members' Register means the register of members as maintained by the Society under Bye-law 2(8) of the Bye-laws of the Law Society of Ireland;

“Regulation” means a regulation in these Regulations;

“Register of Scholastic Associates” means the register of Scholastic Associates of the Society maintained by the Director of Education pursuant to Regulation 5(b);

“Register of Trainee Associates” means the register of Trainee Associates of the Society maintained by the Director of Education pursuant to Regulation 6(b);

“Society” means the Law Society of Ireland;

“Scholastic Associate of the Society” means a person who is a Scholastic Associate of the Society (with the post nominal ‘S.A.L.S.I.’) pursuant to Regulation 5(a)

“Trainee Associate of the Society” means a person who is a Trainee Associate of the Society (with the post nominal ‘T.A.L.S.I.’) pursuant to Regulation 6(a);

3. (a) The words and phrases in these Regulations shall have the meanings respectively assigned by the Solicitors Acts 1954 to 2015.
- (b) The Interpretation Act 2005 shall apply for the purposes of the interpretation of these Regulations as it applies for the purposes of the interpretation of an Act of the Oireachtas, except insofar as it may be inconsistent with the provisions of the Solicitors Acts 1954 to 2015.

Awards

4. (a) Pursuant to Section 40 (as substituted by Section 49 of the Act of 1994) of the Act with regard to the Society’s power to make awards of merit, the Society may award a person one of the following designations in accordance with these Regulations:
 - (i) Scholastic Associate of the Law Society of Ireland (with the post-nominal ‘S.A.L.S.I.’)
 - (ii) Trainee Associate of the Law Society of Ireland (with the post-nominal ‘T.A.L.S.I.’)
 - (iii) Fellow of the Law Society of Ireland (with the post-nominal ‘F.L.S.I.’)
 - (iv) Member of the Law Society of Ireland (with the postnominal ‘M.L.S.I.’)

Scholastic Associate of the Law Society of Ireland

5. (a) A person who has been declared by the Education Committee to have passed the Final Examination - First Part shall automatically

be deemed under these Regulations to be a Scholastic Associate of the Society and be entitled to use the post-nominal S.A.L.S.I.

- (b) The Director of Education shall cause to be entered in the Register of Scholastic Associates the names and addresses of every Scholastic Associate, the date thereof and the date of the making of such entry.
- (c) The rights and benefits of Scholastic Associates shall be as prescribed by the Education Committee from time to time.
- (d) No one eligible to be awarded any other designation under these Regulations shall be designated as a Scholastic Associate and if a Scholastic Associate becomes eligible to be awarded any other designation in accordance with these Regulations, his or her designation as a Scholastic Associate shall automatically terminate.
- (e) The designation of Scholastic Associate shall not confer or imply membership of the Society:
 - (i) a Scholastic Associate shall not be entitled to hold himself or herself out in any manner to be a member of the Society, or
 - (ii) be entitled to attend or vote at any annual general meeting of the Society.
- (f) The Awarding Committee may withdraw the designation of Scholastic Associate if for any reason it is deemed the person is no longer a fit and proper person to be a Scholastic Associate, including but not limited to reasons of professional misconduct or conviction.
- (g) In the event that the Awarding Committee for any reason withdraws the designation of Scholastic Associate pursuant to clause (f) of this Regulation, the person may appeal that decision to the Education Committee.
- (h) With regard to any appeals received pursuant to clause (g) of this Regulation, members of the Awarding Committee shall not participate in the Education Committee's deliberations and decision process.
- (i) The Education Committee may at its discretion request any person who has submitted an appeal pursuant to clause (g) of this Regulation to attend for interview before the Education Committee for the purpose of assisting the Education Committee's consideration of the appeal. The Education Committee's decision on all appeals received pursuant to clause (g) of this Regulation shall be final.

Trainee Associate of the Law Society of Ireland

6. (a) A person who has met the requirements of section 25 (as substituted by section 41, of the Act of 1994) of the Act and who has subsequently registered indentures of apprenticeship pursuant Section 28 of the Act, shall automatically be deemed under these Regulations to be a Trainee Associate of the Society.
- (b) The Director of Education shall cause to be entered in the Register of Trainee Associates the names and addresses of every Trainee Associate, the date thereof and the date of the making of such entry.
- (c) The rights and benefits of a Trainee Associate shall be as prescribed by the Education Committee from time to time.
- (d) If a Trainee Associate subsequently becomes eligible to be awarded any other designation in accordance with these Regulations, his or her designation as a Trainee Associate shall automatically terminate forthwith.
- (e) The designation of Trainee Associate shall not confer or imply membership of the Society:
 - (i) A Trainee Associate shall not be entitled to hold himself or herself out in any manner to be a member of the Society, or
 - (ii) be entitled to attend or vote at any annual general meeting of the Society.
- (f) The Awarding Committee may withdraw the designation of Trainee Associate if for any reason it is deemed the person is no longer a fit and proper person to be a Trainee Associate, including but not limited to reasons of professional misconduct or conviction.
- (g) In the event that the Awarding Committee for any reason withdraws the designation of Trainee Associate pursuant to clause (f) of this Regulation, the person may appeal that decision to the Education Committee.
- (h) With regard to any appeals received pursuant to clause (g) of this Regulation, members of the Awarding Committee shall not participate in the Education Committee's deliberations and decision process.
- (i) The Education Committee may at its discretion request any person who has submitted an appeal pursuant to clause (g) of this Regulation to attend for interview before the Education Committee for the purpose of assisting the Education Committee's consideration of the appeal. The Education Committee's decision on all appeals received pursuant to clause (g) of this Regulation shall be final.
- (j) If a Trainee Associate does not become a member of the Society pursuant to Bye-law 2 of the Bye-laws of the Law Society of Ireland within five years from the date of entry onto the Register

of Trainee Associates, then that person may, at the Awarding Committee's discretion, cease to be a Trainee Associate. If the Education Committee has for any reason approved an interruption to the period of in-office training, then the period under which that person is automatically entitled to be a Trainee Associate under this Regulation will be extended by the duration of that interruption.

- (k) If a person ceases to be a Trainee Associate of the Society pursuant to clause (j) of this Regulation they will automatically be designated as a Scholastic Associate of the Society unless the Awarding Committee deems otherwise.
- (l) In the event that the Awarding Committee for any reason refuses to designate a person as a Scholastic Associate of the Society pursuant to clause (k) of this Regulation, the person may appeal that decision to the Education Committee.
- (m) With regard to any appeals received pursuant to clause (l) of this Regulation, members of the Awarding Committee shall be excluded from the Education Committee's deliberations and decision process.
- (n) The Education Committee may at its discretion request any person who has submitted an appeal pursuant to clause (l) of this Regulation to attend for interview before the Education Committee for the purpose of assisting the Education Committee's consideration of the appeal. The Education Committee's decision on all appeals received pursuant to clause (l) of this Regulation shall be final.

Member of the Law Society of Ireland

- 7. (a) A person who fulfils the requirements set-out under Bye-law 2 of the Bye-laws of the Law Society of Ireland to be a member of the Society and as such is entered on the Members' Register shall automatically be deemed under these Regulations to be entitled to use the post-nominal M.L.S.I. for the period during which they are entered on the Members' Register.
- (b) A person who ceases to be entered on the Members' Register for any reason, shall also automatically cease to be entitled to use the post-nominal M.L.S.I. under these Regulations.

Fellow of the Law Society of Ireland

- 8. (a) Subject to the provisions of this Regulation, a member of the Society may apply to be designated as a Fellow of the Society. All applicants to be a Fellow of the Society must:
 - (i) have been entered on the Members' Register for a continuous period of at least twelve years prior to the date of the applicant's application;

- (ii) complete and return to the Awarding Committee an application in the form as prescribed by the Education Committee from time to time which shall be signed by the applicant and by one proposer and one seconder, each of whom shall have been entered on the Members' Register for a continuous period of at least twelve years prior to the date of the applicant's application;
 - (iii) satisfy the Awarding Committee that they are a fit and proper person to become a Fellow of the Society;
 - (iv) have paid, or given a binding undertaking to the Society to pay, the applicable application fee.
- (b) The applicant's details shall be circulated to the Awarding Committee for review.
- (c) The Awarding Committee may at its discretion request the applicant to attend for interview before the Awarding Committee for the purpose of determining if the applicant is a fit and proper person to be designated as a Fellow of the Society.
- (d) If the Awarding Committee is satisfied as to the suitability and fitness of the applicant to be a Fellow of the Society, it shall grant that designation to the applicant.
- (e) Should the Awarding Committee reach the decision that the applicant is for any reason unsuitable for admission as a Fellow of the Society, the Awarding Committee shall inform the applicant in writing that the application has been refused. Any application fee paid by the applicant shall be refunded without interest.
- (f) In the event that the Awarding Committee for any reason refuses an applicant's application pursuant to clause (e) of this Regulation, the applicant may appeal that decision to the Education Committee.
- (g) With regard to any fellowship application appeals received pursuant to clause (f) of this Regulation, members of the Awarding Committee shall be excluded from the Education Committee's deliberations and decision process.
- (h) The Education Committee may at its discretion request any person who has submitted an appeal pursuant to clause (f) of this Regulation to attend for interview before the Education Committee for the purpose of assisting the Education Committee's consideration of the appeal. The Education Committee's decision on all appeals received pursuant to clause (f) of this Regulation shall be final.
- (i) The Director of Education shall cause to be entered in the Register of Fellows the names and addresses of every Fellow of the Society, the date thereof and the date of the making of such entry.

- (j) The rights and benefits of a Fellow of the Society shall be as prescribed by the Education Committee from time to time.
- (k) The Awarding Committee may withdraw the designation of Fellow of the Society if it is deemed that the person is bringing or has brought the designation of Fellow of the Society into disrepute and/or is no longer a fit and proper person to be a Fellow of the Society, including but not limited to reasons of conviction for a criminal offence or adverse findings from the Regulation of Practice Committee of the Society, the Complaints Committee of the Legal Services Regulatory Authority, the Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal, or the courts in respect of professional conduct. If the Awarding Committee after inviting a submission from the person and/or requesting the person to attend for an interview and having given the matter due consideration, finds that the person is bringing or has brought the designation of Fellow of the Society into disrepute and/or is no longer considered to be a fit and proper person to be a Fellow of the Society, the Awarding Committee will inform the person in writing of its decision, setting out the reasons for its decision.
- (l) If the Awarding Committee for any reason withdraws the designation of Fellow of the Society under clause (k) of this Regulation, that person may appeal the decision of the Awarding Committee to the Education Committee.
- (m) With regard to any appeals received pursuant to clause (l) of this Regulation, members of the Awarding Committee shall not participate in the Education Committee's deliberations and decision process.
- (n) The Education Committee may at its discretion request any person who has submitted an appeal pursuant to clause (l) of this Regulation to attend for interview before the Education Committee for the purpose of assisting the Education Committee's consideration of the appeal. The Education Committee's decision on all withdrawal appeals received pursuant to clause (l) of this Regulation shall be final.
- (o) A person who ceases to be a member of the Society and as such ceases to be entered on the Members' Register for any reason shall also automatically cease to be a Fellow of the Society under this Regulation.

SIGNED on behalf of the pursuant to section 79 of the Solicitors Act 1954.

Dated the 17th day of May 2024.

BARRY MacCARTHY
President of the Law Society of Ireland.

Pursuant to the provisions of section 40 of the Solicitors Act 1954 (as amended by section 49(e) of the Solicitors (Amendment) Act 1994) I concur in the making of the within Regulations.

Dated the 27 day of August 2024.

HELEN McENTEE T.D.
Minister for Justice

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This document is provided for guidance only and does not purport to be a legal interpretation)

The principal purpose of these Regulations is to provide for awards of merit to be awarded at stages within the pre-qualification process to become a solicitor, and upon becoming a solicitor.

These Regulations do not replace any pre-existing Regulations.

Regulation 1 – Citation and commencement

This Regulation provides that these Regulations come into operation on the first day of September 2024.

Regulation 2 – Definitions

This Regulation provides for a number of definitions relevant to these Regulations.

Regulation 3 – Interpretation

This Regulation incorporates definitions from the Solicitors Act 1954 to 2015 and provides for the application of the Interpretation Act 2005.

Regulation 4 – Awards

This Regulation sets out the awards of merit and the respective post-nominals to be awarded under these Regulations.

Regulation 5 – Scholastic Associate of the Law Society of Ireland

This Regulation sets out criteria and processes relating to the award of Scholastic Associate of the Law Society of Ireland.

Regulation 6 – Trainee Associate of the Law Society of Ireland

This Regulation sets out criteria and processes relating to the award of Trainee Associate of the Law Society of Ireland.

Regulation 7 – Member of the Law Society of Ireland

This Regulation sets out criteria and processes relating to the award of Member of the Law Society of Ireland.

Regulation 8 – Fellow of the Law Society of Ireland

This Regulation sets out criteria and processes relating to the award of Fellow of the Law Society of Ireland.

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