



THE

LAW SOCIETY
OF HONG KONG

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Law Society: General

CIRCULAR 16-776 (SD)

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LEGAL EXECUTIVE

1. The Society has issued a set of benchmarks for legal executive courses that entitle their graduates to use the title “Legal Executive” in law firms (“Benchmarks”).

Please click [here](#) for the updated Benchmarks.

2. The Benchmarks apply to courses commencing from the academic year 2008/09.
3. The Society is satisfied that the following courses have met the Benchmarks:
 - (a) **Courses commencing from the academic year 2008/09**
 - (i) Higher Diploma in Legal and Administrative Studies from the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (Tuen Mun);
 - (ii) Advanced Diploma in Legal Studies (Professional Stream) from the School of Professional and Continuing Education of The University of Hong Kong (“HKU SPACE”).

- (b) **Courses commencing from the academic year 2009/2010**

- (i) Professional Diploma in Legal Executive Studies from the School of Continuing and Professional Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong and the English Institute of Legal Executives (“ILEX”);
- (ii) Higher Diploma for Legal Executives offered by the College of Humanities and Law and Community College and delivered through the HKU SPACE Po Leung Kuk Stanley Ho Community College, formerly known as the HKU SPACE Po Leung Kuk Community College.

(c) **Courses commencing from the academic year 2010/11**

- (i) Professional Diploma for Legal Executives offered by the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (“IVE”).

(d) **Course commencing from the academic year 2012/13**

- (i) Higher Diploma in Law and Administration offered by IVE.

4. The Benchmarks include admission requirements to a Legal Executive Course. The recognition of the Legal Executive Courses in paragraph 3 above is based on the following:

(a) Students are accepted to the Courses only if they have passed 5 subjects in HKCEE including a minimum grade of D in English language (Syllabus B) (or equivalent) in pre 2007 HKCEE or a minimum level 3 in English language from 2007 HKCEE onwards. For those students who have taken the HKDSE since 2012, they are accepted into a Legal Executive Course only if they have a combination of results in 5 HKDSE subjects. These 5 HKDSE subjects must include the core subject of English Language with a minimum of Level 3. The other 4 subjects can be a combination of other New Senior Secondary (“NSS”) subjects, and Applied Learning (“ApL”) subjects (subject to a maximum of 2 ApL subjects) or Other Language subjects. For the other NSS subjects, a minimum Level 2 is required. For ApL subjects, an “Attained” result is required. For Other Language subjects, a minimum of Grade E is required.

(b) In the event that a provider of a Legal Executive Course is not in a position to stipulate the admission requirements in paragraph 4(a), only those graduates of a Legal Executive Course who have satisfied the following requirements can use the description of “Legal Executive”:

- (i) who have obtained a pass in 5 subjects in HKCEE or a combination of results in 5 HKDSE subjects of Level 2 in NSS subjects, “Attained” in ApL subjects (subject to a maximum of 2 ApL subjects”) and Grade E in Other Language subjects or who have been in law-related employment in Hong Kong for 3 years; and
- (ii) who have obtained a minimum grade of D in English language (Syllabus B) (or equivalent) in pre-2007 HKCEE, or a minimum level 3 in English language from 2007 HKCEE onwards, or a minimum overall score of 6 in IELTS (International English Language Testing System), or a minimum Level 3 in English Language in HKDSE since 2012.

5. The Benchmarks do not apply to courses which commenced prior to the academic year 2008/2009. Graduates of the following recognised Legal Executive Courses which commenced **prior to the academic year 2008/09** or those who became members of

ILEX prior to 2008/09 may continue to use the title “Legal Executive” in law firms provided they also satisfy the conditions in 5(e)(i) and (ii) in the case of graduates of the Course in 5(e) below:

- (a) the Hong Kong Polytechnic Legal Executive Course; or
 - (b) Higher Diploma in Legal Studies from City University of Hong Kong (retitled from September 2000 as the Associate of Legal Studies Degree); or
 - (c) Diploma in Legal Studies from SPACE of The University of Hong Kong; or
 - (d) a member of ILEX; or
 - (e) Higher Diploma in Legal and Administrative Studies from IVE provided that the graduates have:
 - (i) obtained a Level 2 or above in English Language as from the 2007 HKCEE or Grade C (Syllabus A) or Grade E (Syllabus B) or above in English Language in the pre-2007 HKCEE; and
 - (ii) completed and passed the additional modules on “Advocacy” and “Legal Professional Ethics” if they were graduates in 2005.
6. Circular 15-199 (SD) is superseded.
7. Any enquiries in relation to the above should be directed to dsd@hklawsoc.org.hk.