

Q&A for legal practice course designers

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How long must courses last?

That is for the provider to determine, subject to the requirements on notional learning hours, face-to-face contact and the five year period during which all Stage 1 and Stage 2 assessments must be passed.

When must Stage 1 and Stage 2 assessments take place during a combined course?

That is for a provider to address in its assessment strategy. However, any approach will need to be supported by an educational justification.

What happens if a student takes a long break between Stages 1 and 2 such that not all assessments are completed within a five year period?

The student will have to start the whole course again. No assessments can be carried over.

What is the minimum staff: student ratio required?

It is for a provider to set out the nature of the resources that it will allocate to the course and to demonstrate during the validation process and continuing quality assurance arrangements that the resources are adequate.

Must all of the outcomes be assessed?

With the exception of the outcome that requires students to be able to reflect on their learning and identify their learning needs all of the outcomes must potentially be assessed and students must understand that this is the case. However, it is not necessary for each assessment in a subject to cover every outcome for that area.

In a course that combines Stages 1 and 2 can Stage 2 assessments be taken before Stage 1 assessments?

Yes if such an approach is justified and is educationally sound.

Must a student who is taking Stages 1 and 2 separately have passed all Stage 1 assessment before taking

Stage 2 assessments?

No this is not a regulatory requirement – although a student might be told that this is advisable.

Are students able to start a Period of Recognised Training before they have completed Stage 2?

Yes. In fact they can start a Period of Recognised Training before they have completed – or even started – Stage 1.

Can distinctions and commendations be awarded to students?

A provider can decide to make use of a grading or classification system. However, this should not be referred to on the transcripts issued to students.

Can a postgraduate diploma be awarded to students who complete the course?

It is for a provider to determine – within the provisions of the Framework for Higher Educational Qualifications and any credit framework within which it operates – the nature of any academic qualification and title to be awarded to students. The appropriate title will be determined in part by the design of the course - for example whether particular areas are taught and assessed at a higher level. Providers will need to consider how they will deal with students who complete only one of the stages with them.

Does the SRA need to approve a student's request to defer taking assessments for Stage 1 or 2 or both?

No. It is for providers to decide how to deal with requests for deferrals. The SRA does not require that students should be penalised if they wish to defer sitting an assessment – subject only to the requirement that all assessments are passed within five years.

Can a course combine a Graduate Diploma in Law and an LPC?

Yes, this would be an [Integrated Course](https://news.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/resources/legal-practice-course-information-pack/#exempting) [https://news.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/legal-practice-course-route/resources/legal-practice-course-information-pack/#exempting].

Will the SRA need to approve a student's request to move between providers?

Students are free to do Stage 1 and Stage 2 with different providers. A student who wishes to transfer during Stage 1 will need to apply to the provider with which he or she wishes to complete the course. That provider will need to map the course on which the student has started Stage 1 to the course to which they wish to transfer and decide whether to allow the transfer. However, all Stage 1 assessment must be undertaken with one provider.

Can LPC students and other students be taught together?

The requirements do not prohibit this. However, a provider would need to ensure that the quality of LPC students' learning experience was not jeopardised if this took place e.g. by confirming they had equivalent knowledge of academic law. The [SRA Authorisation of Individuals Regulations](https://news.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/authorisation-individuals-regulations/1) [https://news.sra.org.uk/solicitors/standards-regulations/authorisation-individuals-regulations/1] require that only students who have completed the academic stage of training can be admitted on to an LPC. A provider would need to make clear to any other students being taught alongside LPC students that they were not LPC students and that they would not be awarded an LPC.

Can a provider introduce a test to assess applicants aptitude to undertake an LPC as part of its admission policy?

The requirements do not prohibit this.

Can a provider develop a vocational elective in an area of practice that is not obviously covered by the provisional list of elective groups included in the information pack?

Yes. The list is provisional only and it will be revised and evolve over time.

Will newly appointed external examiners receive training from the SRA?

The SRA will provide information for all providers that can be incorporated into their training materials for newly appointed LPC external examiners.

Can a provider just deliver Stage 2 vocational electives?

Yes. They would need to be authorised by the SRA as an LPC provider and each elective would need to be individually validated.