

Your training contract

The LSC

Your training contract is part-sponsored by the LSC. The Three Way agreement which has been signed by you, your new employer and us sets out what the LSC expects and what the LSC will provide.

If there are any problems or issues relating to the three-way agreement please contact us. We would encourage you to contact us if you have any concerns about your training contract/employment.

The Solicitors Regulation Authority

All training contracts are governed by the Training Regulations 1990. One of your responsibilities under the training contract is to become familiar with the regulations and to check that your organisation follows them. The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) is responsible for monitoring training organisations' performance.

The SRA regulates more than 100,000 solicitors in England. It was established in January 2007, and is the independent regulatory body of the Law Society of England and Wales.

Find out more...

The attached SRA leaflet, 'You and Your training Contract – what you need to know', sets out the obligations trainees and training organisations have towards each other.

It is also recommended that you read 'Training Trainee Solicitors: the SRA requirements', which contains streamlined, must-read information for trainees.

This can be found on the SRA's website

www.sra.org.uk

The SRA are the organisation which authorises organisations to become training establishments. They also set guidelines around recruitment and selection of trainees, performance and development reviews, and inductions. Information about all of these is on the SRA's website under the 'students and trainees' section.

What to do if you have concerns about your training contract

The first step would be to make your supervisor/Training Principal aware of the situation. If you are unable to approach your Training Principal, or your Training Principal is the problem, try to approach other solicitors in the firm if at all possible.

Try talking to other trainees at the firm to see if they are experiencing similar problems.

Make sure that you keep a record of all work undertaken in addition to appraisal records.

If you are worried about getting tongue tied when talking to your Training Principal and or Supervisor, it might be an idea to write down specific situations which you have been in for your reference and to illustrate the difficulties you are facing.

Contact the SRA **on 0870 606 2555** to find out about your options and get clarification of the training contract regulations. A monitoring scheme is in operation and subject to your willingness, the SRA may instigate a monitoring visit.

Every firm that employs trainees is monitored at some stage as part of the monitoring process. A firm that receives a visit from a monitor will not necessarily have had a complaint made against them – it could be a random visit. Nor will the monitor be told why s/he has been sent to a particular firm. Firms will receive notice of a monitoring visit, asked to complete a questionnaire and then interviewed during the visit. The entire process is entirely confidential and if a complaint is made the trainees name will not be disclosed. The firm will not be told that they have had a complaint or who made it

Further support

If you need help or reassurance in tackling a problem with your training contract or supervisor, you could get in touch with the Junior Lawyers Division Helpline (you need to be a member of the JLD to access this) or contact Lawcare, a charity set up to help lawyers combat problems such as stress and depression.

Law Society helplines

Practice Advice Service - 0870 606 2522

Help for solicitors and their staff with issues of legal practice, policy and procedure from our team of experienced solicitors. We can also assist with questions about the anti-money laundering regulations. Lines are open from 0900 to 1700, Monday to Friday.

Pastoral Care Helpline - 020 7320 5795 - new service launched in June 2008

Are you a solicitor who needs help with personal, financial, professional or employment problems? If you don't know where to turn for help, call us and we will refer you to the most suitable helpline for your circumstances. Lines are open from 0900 to 1700, Monday to Friday.

Library - 0870 606 2511

Assistance for solicitors and their staff with all your legal information enquiries - free to members. We can also supply copies of published material by e-mail for a modest charge. Lines are open from 0900 to 1800, Monday to Thursday, Friday 0900 to 1700.

JLD Helpline - 08000 856 131

Freephone helpline for junior lawyers who need to talk to someone about a problem. Lines are open 09:00 to 21:00, Monday to Friday.

Pastoral care helplines the Law Society may refer you to

HLawCareH - 0800 279 6888

Support for members of the legal profession and their families on issues relating to stress, depression, addiction and other health problems. Lines are open from 09:00 to 19:30 weekdays and 10:00 to 16:00 on weekends and bank holidays.

HHSollicitors' Assistance SchemeH - 020 7117 8811

Confidential legal advice for solicitors, trainee solicitors and the staff and family of solicitors, on professional and personal difficulties.

HSollicitors Benevolent AssociationH

The Solicitors Benevolent Association (SBA) is the principal nationwide charity for solicitors in England and Wales. The aim of the Association is to assist solicitors and their dependants who are in need.

HMaternity and Paternity HelplineH - 0870 043 4844

Advice for solicitors, men as well as women, on their rights in relation to childcare issues.

Other helplines

Ethics helpline - 0870 606 2577

Provided by the Solicitors Regulation Authority.

Lawyerline - 0870 606 2588

An advice line for solicitors offering general complaint handling guidance.

Contact Centre - 0870 606 2555

Provided by the Solicitors Regulation Authority to assist solicitors with enquiries relating to practising certificates, continuing professional development (CPD) and other general enquiries.