

## Criteria required for Exemption Applications

1. The Board of Examiners [the Board] of the Law Society of Scotland [the Society] has the responsibility to ensure that a candidate qualifying or requalifying as a solicitor in Scotland meets a minimum level of knowledge, skills and understanding in each prescribed subject for qualification as a solicitor.
2. The benchmark for assessing whether this minimum level of knowledge, skills and understanding has been achieved for any particular subject is a level which would be required to obtain a pass in that subject at Grade D of the Marking Scale for the Society's examinations.
3. The usual manner of satisfying the Board that a candidate has the requisite minimum level of knowledge, skills and understanding is by obtaining a pass in the subject in the current diet of the Society Examinations set by the Board.
4. Exceptionally, a candidate may seek to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Board that the appropriate level of knowledge, skills and understanding can be established by other means. Where a candidate seeks an exemption from the Society's examinations, the onus is upon the candidate to provide the evidence required to allow the Board to determine the matter.
5. An application for exemption (and supporting evidence) must relate to the prescribed subject as a whole. Partial exemptions will not be granted. However in relation to exams which have more than two papers an application may also be made in respect of one or other papers.
6. Evidence of knowledge, skills and understanding submitted by a candidate seeking exemption may take the form of;
  - a) qualifications obtained through examinations other than the Society's own examinations in accordance with paragraph 7 below;
  - or
  - b) evidence of knowledge, skills and understanding obtained through professional experience and gained in accordance with paragraph 8 below.
7. *Qualifications obtained through examinations other than the Society's examinations:*
  - a) No pass in/any such pass from an examination gained more than 7 years before the date of lodging the application for exemption will be considered in itself as evidence of the requisite level of knowledge, skills and understanding in terms of this paragraph. However any such qualification may be submitted as evidence in support of an application under paragraph 8 below.
  - b) Qualifications from an examination gained within 7 years of the date of lodging of the application must be shown to be substantially equivalent to the content of current curriculum, learning hours (or SCOTCAT credits) and level of study

(normally, study at levels 1 or 2 at Bachelor's level or first cycle study) of a course of learning offered as part of a programme [of study] which would lead to the award of a Foundation Programme qualification [degree of Bachelor of Laws (LLB)] or PEAT 1 qualification [the Diploma in Legal Practice] at a Scottish university accredited by the Society.

8. *Evidence of knowledge, etc gained through professional experience;*

- a) If a candidate for admission seeking exemption from the Board's examinations cannot satisfy the requirements of paragraph 7 above, the candidate must provide evidence of a relevant level of competence obtained through professional experience requiring application of knowledge, skills and understanding of the subject matter to the benchmark level in terms of paragraph 2 above.
  - b) The evidence to be provided must be in documentary format, and the Board will not seek to assess its reliability or validity by means of oral examination. The documents must make specific reference to the prescribed content of current curriculum for the subject, and indicate the degree of competence in the subject which the candidate has obtained through professional experience.
  - c) This evidence may include evidence of qualifications gained through examination set by professional bodies or other providers of further or higher education, and evidence of qualifications gained at any time prior to the date of lodging the application for exemption.
9. Applications for exemption must be lodged with an initial Application for an Entrance Certificate. Late applications for exemption will only be considered at the discretion of the Board where good cause for lateness can be established by the applicant. For making applications see page 4 of the Law Society of Scotland syllabus and Reading list.
10. In exercising its discretionary authority in determining whether to grant an exemption or any other matter under these rules, the Board (or the Convenor of the Board acting on behalf of the Board) may delegate the power to determine the application to one or more members of the Board.

**Board of Examiners  
January 2012**