

Process for Civil Registration

New firms, or firms wishing to commence providing civil legal assistance, are required to both register with the Scottish Legal Aid Board and obtain a compliance certificate from the Law Society.

In order to register with the Scottish Legal Aid Board, the firm must provide details of how it intends to adhere to the Law Society's Ten Administrative Requirements for Civil Registration. The Scottish Legal Aid Board will provide details of these ten requirements, along with an example of how your response should be set out. You are required to amend this example to reflect the procedures which will be carried out within your firm.

Once this information has been received and deemed satisfactory by the Scottish Legal Aid Board's Compliance dept, they will thereafter contact the Law Society's Quality Assurance Administrator, who will in turn contact your firm with regard to your application for a compliance certificate. The issue of a compliance certificate is a decision taken by the Society's Quality Assurance Committee which determines, based on the information you provide in the Registration Questionnaire, together with information from previous peer reviews of the practitioners in the firm (if available), whether your firm can and will comply with the Solicitors (Scotland) (Civil and Children's Legal Assistance) Practice Rules 2003 and relative guidance to provide civil legal assistance.

Until this process is complete, and you have received confirmation from the Quality Assurance Administrator that your application has been approved, no civil legal assistance work can be carried out within your firm. You must therefore apply well in advance of the date on which you wish to commence providing civil legal assistance to clients. Applications for compliance certificates are dealt with as quickly as possible, but in some cases the Quality Assurance Committee may request further information from you, and in a small number of cases may wish to interview representatives of the firm before reaching a decision.