

## **APIL CORPORATE ACCREDITATION SCHEME**

# CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP FOR SOLICITORS' PRACTICES SUMMARY OF CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION

Name of firm:
Office address:
Firm website:
Name of corporate contact:
Please tick if your firm has been awarded with Lexcel accreditation
Please indicate how many personal injury and clinical negligence fee earners that are employed within your office.
Please enter number (In the case of organisations with a number of offices, each appropriate office at each firm is required to apply for accreditation separately).
ACCREDITED MEMBERS
The organisation or office seeking accreditation must have within it at least one member who is accredited as a Senior Litigator (or higher) for every ten fee earners and who has personal responsibility for personal injury work carried out in the organisation or office.
Please confirm by ticking the box
Please provide the names of those who are APIL Litigators:
Total number of APIL Litigators

Please provide the names of those who are APIL Senior Litigators:
Total number of APIL Senior Litigators
Please provide the names of those who are APIL Fellows:
Total number of APIL Fellows
Please provide the names of those who are APIL Senior Fellows:
Total number of APIL Senior Fellows

#### **CRITERION 1: THE ORGANISATION**

- The accredited organisation must be a solicitors' practice, or an individual office of such a practice.
- The accredited organisation or office must have at least one individual who is accredited as a senior litigator (or higher) for every ten fee earners, and who has personal responsibility for the supervision and management of personal injury work conducted in the organisation.
- The organisation or office submits to monitoring of its performance by APIL.

### **EVIDENCE** Yes No The organisation is listed on the register of firms of solicitors, or other permitted bodies, maintained by the Solicitors Regulation Authority. The organisation or office is listed by the Solicitors Regulation Authority as the practising address of those solicitors or legal executives who are the accredited members named in the application for accreditation. The organisation or office seeking accreditation must have within it at least one person who is accredited as a senior litigator (or higher) for every ten fee earners and who has personal responsibility for the supervision and management of personal injury work carried out in the organisation or office. An undertaking from a duly authorised officer of the organisation or office that it will cooperate fully with APIL monitoring. The use of a standard letter to seek client consent for inspection of their file for the purpose of monitoring by APIL. **CRITERION 2: CASE MANAGEMENT** The accredited organisation or office maintains high standards of client care. The accredited organisation or office has effective arrangements for the supervision of all lawyers undertaking personal injury work. The accredited organisation or office has in place effective arrangements to assure the quality of its legal work. **EVIDENCE** Yes No Every accredited member within the organisation has signed an undertaking to abide by the APIL code of conduct and the APIL consumer charter. Training in customer care is provided to all staff with 'first point of contact' responsibilities, including telephonists and receptionists, and this is recorded in training logs. • Files should demonstrate that, where appropriate, early and effective action has been taken to consider rehabilitation options. • Supervisors are responsible for the direct personal supervision of no more than ten supervisees. Adequate training in supervision and management is provided to all litigators, senior litigators and fellows with supervisory responsibilities. The firm adopts best practice in promoting staff wellbeing and supervisors are effective in recognising and addressing staff stress. There is effective and regular appraisal of staff, making use (where appropriate) of the APIL Standards of Competence as a tool to assist in the planning of training and development. • The senior management of the organisation as a whole is well-informed about and supportive of the personal injury function. The organisation or office has properly documented processes for progressing matters through the stages of litigation, in a timely manner. Case expedition is

reviewed regularly.

<ul> <li>The organisation or office has arrangements in place which enable a second opinion to be brought to bear on a matter, where this is appropriate.</li> <li>The organisation or office has arrangements in place for files to be reviewed at key stages, and for a random sample of all files to be reviewed periodically.</li> <li>Properly documented procedures are in place for the authorisation of key steps in litigation.</li> <li>Procedures are in place for a review, by a person other than the fee earner, of files on which there has been no movement within a specified period.</li> </ul>	
Please provide the name of client care representative:	
CRITERION 3: TRAINING AND DEVLOPMENT	
The accredited organisation or office makes use of the APIL standards of in developing its fee earning staff. It ensures that all of its accredited men other staff are provided with training and development opportunities to er keep up-to-date, to develop their skills and knowledge, and to meet the ne	nbers and nable them to
EVIDENCE	Yes No
• The personal development of all fee earners is based upon the achievement of the competences in the relevant APIL standards. For those in general PI these are the Litigator and Senior Litigator standards. For paralegals and others processing claims through the Portal, the Portal Claims Handler standard is relevant. Those undertaking specialist work in areas such as Clinical Negligence should have personal development based upon the relevant specialist standard. The relevant Candidate Portfolio may be used for these purposes, even if it is not intended to submit an individual for personal accreditation.	
<ul> <li>All accredited members undertake a minimum of 16 hours APIL accredited personal injury training annually, including attendance on at least one APIL accredited personal injury update course lasting six hours or the equivalent in individual sessions. Personal injury update training must cover the current</li> </ul>	
developments in the four key areas of procedure, quantum, liability and funding.	
<ul> <li>All accredited members devote a minimum of three hours per month to reading current and relevant case reports and keep a record of this in their personal training logs.</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>All accredited members should attend a training course, or take part in developmental activity, designed to maintain and enhance client care, at least once every five years.</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>All APIL accredited members keep a record of their personal injury training, which includes course attendance, reading, writing and delivering.</li> <li>The organisation subscribes to recognise PI publications and makes these</li> </ul>	
publications available to all fee earning staff.	

#### **CRITERION 4: PERSONAL COMPETENCE**

• All fee earning staff within the accredited organisation or office provide advice to clients that is complete and of good quality, take appropriate decisions at key stages of litigation, and maintain their files in good order.

E	VIDENCE		
		Yes	No
•	The files of all fee earners are subject to review which addresses the quality of the legal work undertaken.		
•	Through regular file reviews, the accredited organisation or office satisfies itself as to:		
	<ul> <li>The quality and completeness of advice given to the client.</li> <li>The adequacy of the range of options considered at key stages of litigation, and the appropriateness of the option selected.</li> <li>Whether the decisions taken by the fee earner lie within the range of reasonable decisions, having regard to the applicable law, and the facts and merits of the case.</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>Whether the file has been maintained in good order and in accordance with the policies of the firm, such that it could be taken over without difficulty, if necessary, by another fee earner.</li> </ul>		
•	Appropriate action is taken to identify training and development opportunities and to address any shortcomings, both to protect the interests of the client and to remedy any inadequacies of performance by the fee earner.		

## ACCREDITATION FEES

Annual fees for corporate accreditation:				
Standard rate for each office of each firm - £225.00 + VAT				
Concessionary rate for sole practitioners - £150.00 + VAT (Sole fee earner at firm)				
Fees for in-house accreditation (optional): To accrue APIL accredited hours through personal injury training delivered within your organisation or office				
Annual assessment per office - £225.00 + VAT				
Each office of each organisation must apply separately for the above accreditation schemes				
Please make cheques payable to APIL				
DECLARATION				
Corporate accreditation				
I confirm that we wish to apply for corporate accreditation in accordance with the above criteria and will notify APIL if our circumstances change.				
Being authorised by my firm so to do, I hereby confirm that we are in compliance with those criteria that place obligations upon the firm with respect to supervision, training, client care, and the maintenance of procedures, and I undertake that the firm will remain in compliance with the same.				
I acknowledge that APIL may monitor our compliance with these criteria.				
I agree to be bound by the rules relating to use of the APIL accredited logo.				
I agree that the firm will offer a free initial consultation to members of the public.				
Sole Practitioners only				
I am a sole practitioner and the only fee earner at this firm.				
In-house accreditation				
I wish to apply for in-house accreditation and agree to be bound by the rules relating to in-house accreditation.  Please tick applicable boxes				
Name of applicant Date				
Signature of applicant				