

Implementation Paper on Changes to SILE CPD Scheme and Consultation Questions

Introduction

1. This paper is prepared by the Singapore Institute of Legal Education (“SILE”). It sets out some of the key implementation plans for the upcoming revisions to the SILE CPD Scheme, which are being made to implement the recommendations of the Working Group for the Reform of Legal Education (“RLE Committee”) and the recommendations of the Ethics and Professional Standards Committee (“Ethics Committee”), as deliberated by multi-agency working groups. The paper will cover the following revisions, which will take effect from CPD Year 2025 (i.e., **1 January 2025**):
 - a. Standardisation of CPD Points requirements
 - b. Changes to CPD Points for teaching
 - c. Mandatory Ethics Component for all lawyers
2. SILE also invites feedback and suggestions on what can be done to help lawyers and law practices adapt to these revisions.

Standardisation of CPD Points Requirements

3. The RLE Committee has recommended that Group 2 Lawyers and Group 3 Lawyers be required to obtain the same number of CPD Points as Group 1 Lawyers, to upskill Singapore lawyers and enable them to meet the national vision for the profession. As learning is a lifelong journey, CPD Points requirements will no longer be based on seniority in recognition of the continuing need to upskill.
4. The RLE Committee has recommended that the CPD Points requirements for Group 2 Lawyers and Group 3 Lawyers be increased in phases to allow lawyers to adapt and to enable training providers to adjust the scale of their events. The phased increments will therefore be as follows:
 - (i) for lawyers with PQE between five to 15 years – from 8 to 10 points, from 10 to 13 points, and from 13 to 16 points, over three years; and
 - (ii) for lawyers with PQE above 15 years – from 4 to 7 points, from 7 to 10 points, from 10 to 13 points, and from 13 to 16 points over four years.
5. As the rationale for the increments would be equally applicable to s36B Foreign Lawyers, SILE will also increase s36B Foreign Lawyers’ CPD Points requirements over three years, from 8 to 10 points, from 10 to 13 points, and from 13 to 16 points.
6. SILE will implement the RLE Committee’s recommendation as follows:

For lawyers who hold a practising certificate/foreign practitioner certificate for more than 8 months in a CPD Year

Category	Current	CPD Year 2025	CPD Year 2026	CPD Year 2027	CPD Year 2028 onwards
Group 2 Lawyers & s36B Foreign Lawyers	8 CPD Points, of which 4 must be Public CPD Points.	10 CPD Points, of which 5 must be Public CPD Points.	13 CPD Points, of which 6.5 must be Public CPD Points.	16 CPD Points, of which 8 must be Public CPD Points.	16 CPD Points, of which 8 must be Public CPD Points.

Category	Current	CPD Year 2025	CPD Year 2026	CPD Year 2027	CPD Year 2028 onwards
Group 3 Lawyers	4 CPD Points, of which 2 must be Public CPD Points.	7 CPD Points, of which 3.5 must be Public CPD Points.	10 CPD Points, of which 5 must be Public CPD Points.	13 CPD Points, of which 6.5 must be Public CPD Points.	16 CPD Points, of which 8 must be Public CPD Points.

For lawyers who hold a practising certificate/foreign practitioner certificate for more than 5 months up to 8 months in a CPD Year

Category	Current	CPD Year 2025	CPD Year 2026	CPD Year 2027	CPD Year 2028 onwards
Group 2 Lawyers & s36B Foreign Lawyers	4 CPD Points, of which 2 must be Public CPD Points.	5 CPD Points, of which 2.5 must be Public CPD Points.	6.5 CPD Points, of which 3.5 must be Public CPD Points.	8 CPD Points, of which 4 must be Public CPD Points.	8 CPD Points, of which 4 must be Public CPD Points.
Group 3 Lawyers	4 CPD Points, of which 2 must be Public CPD Points.	3.5 CPD Points, of which 2 must be Public CPD Points.	5 CPD Points, of which 2.5 must be Public CPD Points.	6.5 CPD Points, of which 3.5 must be Public CPD Points.	8 CPD Points, of which 4 must be Public CPD Points.

Consultation Question (Standardisation of CPD Points Requirements):

Q1: What challenges do you think law practices and lawyers may face in meeting the revised CPD Points requirements? Do you have suggestions on how they can be overcome or mitigated?

Revisions to CPD points by teaching

7. The RLE Committee has recommended that the rate at which lawyers obtain points for teaching (as opposed to participating) will be reduced to 2 CPD Points per hour instead of 3 CPD Points per hour. The RLE Committee has also recommended that, because there should be an emphasis on acquiring skills and competencies for lawyers at an early stage of their career, the number of CPD points which Group 1 Lawyers and Group 2 Lawyers can obtain from teaching be capped at 50% of the required CPD points.
8. Group 3 Lawyers and s36B Foreign Lawyers may continue to obtain all of their CPD Points from teaching.
9. Taking the phased increase in CPD Points requirements into account, the number of CPD Points which Group 1 Lawyers and Group 2 Lawyers may obtain for teaching activities will therefore be capped at:
 - (a) for Group 1 Lawyers: 8 CPD Points per CPD Year;
 - (b) for Group 2 Lawyers: 5 CPD Points in CPD Year 2025, 6.5 CPD Points in CPD Year 2026, and 8 CPD Points from CPD Year 2027 onwards.

10. SILE will apply these limits to all lawyers in the Group 1 Lawyer and Group 2 Lawyer categories even if they have reduced CPD points requirements from holding their practising certificates for 8 months or less in a CPD Year. This is because the reduced duration over which they practice will already make it more challenging to fulfil their CPD requirements.

Illustration: Riley is a Group 1 Lawyer who holds a practising certificate for 6 months during CPD Year 2025. Based on their practicing certificate duration, Riley would need to obtain 8 CPD Points, of which 4 must be Public CPD Points (rather than 16 CPD Points, of which 8 must be Public CPD Points). The number of points which may be obtained from teaching is still 8 CPD Points for Riley, even though they had lower CPD Points requirements than a lawyer who held their practising certificate for more than 8 months, i.e., in CPD Year 2025, Riley may obtain all 8 CPD Points from teaching.

11. For avoidance of doubt, the cap will apply to the total number of CPD Points required. SILE will not implement further caps on the number of Public CPD Points / Private CPD Points which can be obtained from teaching.

Illustration: Robin is a Group 2 Lawyer who holds a practising certificate throughout CPD Year 2025 and needs to obtain 10 CPD Points, of which 5 must be Public CPD Points, for CPD Year 2025. The cap on teaching points means that Robin can only fulfil up to 5 CPD Points through teaching. These 5 CPD Points may be Public CPD Points or Private CPD Points.

Consultation Question (Revisions to CPD points by teaching):

- Q2. How can lawyers at their earlier stages of their career strike a balance between learning and teaching, in view of the cap on points which can be obtained from teaching?

Mandatory ethics component (“MEC”)

12. The Ethics Committee has recommended that lawyers be required to obtain 3 CPD Points from activities on ethics and professional standards (referred to as the “mandatory ethics component” or “MEC”) from 1 January 2025 and at least until 31 December 2027, after which a review of the mandatory ethics component of CPD may be undertaken. This is to systematically and routinely expose lawyers to training content relating to ethics and professional standards.
13. The Ethics Committee recommends that MEC may be embedded within some longer programmes or accessible in standalone programmes. In other words, the CPD Points a lawyer obtains for undertaking MEC activities (“MEC Points”) may be from activities on ethics only, or from activities which cover ethics as part of the programme. For example, an Accredited CPD Activity may offer 6 Public CPD Points, of which 2 are Public MEC Points.
14. The Calendar of Accredited Learning Activities at <https://www.silecpdcentre.sg/calas/> will be updated with a filter to allow lawyers to easily search for activities which are accredited with Public MEC Points.
15. SILE will implement the mandatory ethics component as follows: Of the 3 CPD Points, at least 1.5 must be Public CPD Points. The remaining 1.5 CPD Points may be fulfilled using Public CPD Points or Private CPD Points. Allowing 1.5 CPD Points to be fulfilled using Public CPD Points or Private CPD Points will help to ease the financial burden of the mandatory ethics component since Private

CPD Points may be obtained through free or low-cost activities such as attending in-house seminars.

16. The mandatory ethics component will only apply to lawyers who hold practising certificates/foreign practitioner certificates for more than 8 months in a CPD Year. This is because it may be more challenging for lawyers who practice for a reduced duration to obtain CPD Points in this specific category of activities.
17. Any CPD Points a lawyer obtains for undertaking MEC activities (“MEC Points”) will count towards the total number of CPD Points he/she is required to obtain for that CPD Year. If a lawyer has not completed his/her MEC requirements for a given CPD Year, he/she will be considered to have not fulfilled his/her CPD Points requirements for that CPD Year, regardless of the total number of CPD Points obtained from other CPD activities.

Illustration: Casey is a Group 3 Lawyer who needs to obtain 7 CPD Points, of which 3.5 must be Public CPD Points, for CPD Year 2025. Casey must also obtain 3 MEC Points, of which 1.5 must be Public MEC Points. Casey fulfils the CPD Points Requirements for CPD Year 2025 in the following scenarios:

	Total Public CPD Points	Of which, X are Public MEC Points	Total Private CPD Points	Of which, Y are Private MEC Points	Total CPD Points	Total MEC Points
i	3.5 ✓ Met minimum 3.5 Public CPD Points	3 ✓ Met minimum 1.5 Public MEC Points	3.5	0	7 ✓ Met minimum of 7 CPD Points	3 ✓ Met minimum of 3 MEC Points
ii	3.5 ✓ Met minimum 3.5 Public CPD Points	1.5 ✓ Met minimum 1.5 Public MEC Points	3.5	1.5	7 ✓ Met minimum of 7 CPD Points	3 ✓ Met minimum of 3 MEC Points

Casey does not fulfil the CPD Points Requirements for CPD Year 2025 in the following scenarios:

	Total Public CPD Points	Of which, X are Public MEC Points	Total Private CPD Points	Of which, Y are Private MEC Points	Total CPD Points	Total MEC Points
i	3.5 ✓ Met minimum 3.5 Public CPD Points	1 X Has not met minimum 1.5 Public MEC Points	10	10	13.5 ✓ Met minimum of 7 CPD Points	11 Met minimum of 3 MEC Points but has not met minimum Public MEC Points
ii	10 ✓ Met minimum 3.5 Public CPD Points	0 X Has not met minimum 1.5 Public MEC Points	10	1	20 ✓ Met minimum of 7 CPD Points	1 X Has not met minimum of 3 MEC Points

Consultation Question (Mandatory Ethics Component):

Q3. What challenges do you think you may face in meeting the MEC Points requirements? Do you have suggestions on how they can be overcome or mitigated?

Conclusion

18. SILE invites members of the legal community and other interested parties to provide feedback on the questions raised above. Queries on the implementation are also welcome. Please give your feedback or send your queries using the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/K6568F2>. The consultation exercise will close on 25 October 2024.

Prepared by
SILE Secretariat
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