

Specialist Accreditation Scheme



2026 Children's Law Assessment Requirements



THE LAW SOCIETY
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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Performance Standard

Standard of Accredited Specialist

The standard of an Accredited Specialist in Children's Law is that of a *specialty competent practitioner* in the core skills and practical capabilities in the selected area of practice, as assessed against the spectrum of capability of all practitioners in that area of practice. This standard is to be distinguished from the idea that the Scheme requires the highest technical legal knowledge across all aspects of the selected area of practice.

Knowledge Areas and Core Skills

Solicitors wishing to be accredited in Children's Law should be able to:

- Display knowledge of the law and procedure which underpins the performance of any tasks related to the care or crime jurisdiction; and
- Demonstrate the required skills to the level of the performance standard.

In addition, candidates must select **one** of the relevant Children's Law sub-specialties from the below two options:

- Child Representation in either care and protection or crime; and
- Other Parties Representation in care and protection.

Candidates should be able to demonstrate, to the level of the performance standard, an in-depth knowledge of relevant principles, law and procedures. This knowledge underpins the performance of tasks in a wide range of areas which a Children's Law specialist can be expected to encounter in the ordinary course of a practice, with a particular emphasis on their chosen sub-specialty.

Note: In the remainder of this document, the word 'child' includes 'young person' as defined in the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*.

Important

Candidates are advised to read and familiarise themselves with the [2026 Guide to Application and Assessment](#), which contains important information regarding application, process, resources and special consideration, etc. This document can be found at: lawsociety.com.au/specialists

Timetable

The shaded area below shows the core assessment period including the dates associated with each assessment.

Candidates need to focus on this core assessment timeframe and plan their workload well in advance.

Based on feedback reports from previous years, candidates are encouraged to dedicate and manage their time during this period to optimise their performance across all assessment tasks.

Candidates are reminded that participating in the Specialist Accreditation program requires a considerable level of commitment if candidates are to achieve their desired outcome.

Activity	Date
Question & Answer sessions for potential candidates	Mid - February 2026
Applications for Specialist Accreditation close	Early Bird: Saturday, 28 February 2026 Standard: Tuesday, 31 March 2026
Candidature confirmed	Friday, 24 April 2026
Take Home Assessment	Released: Thursday, 14 May 2026 Due: Thursday, 4 June 2026
Simulated Interview	Saturday, 25 July 2026
Mock Hearing	Saturday, 25 July 2026
Results released to candidates	Early October 2026
Reassessment and/or Appeal applications close	14 days from notification of results
Reassessment results released	Mid November 2026
Appeal results released	Mid November 2026

Knowledge Areas

Candidates should be able to demonstrate special competence in the relevant case and statute law regarding either the care and protection jurisdiction or criminal law relating to children, a general familiarity with the relevant case and statute law relating to family law and civil areas and in particular where and how these areas can overlap with the care and crime jurisdictions. Where either legislation or cases are listed, candidates should not assume that these cases or legislation are exhaustive of all of the principles that relate to the topic.

This material is prepared as of October 2025. In the event that any new legislative reforms become effective before the date of assessment, solicitors are required to be aware of the changes resulting from the legislation.

Note: This section refers to both specific legislation and areas of law with which you should be familiar. To assist candidates, a description of the levels of advanced and general knowledge as used in the Knowledge Areas is set out below.

Advanced Knowledge

The candidate is expected to demonstrate a solid understanding of the law and practice in these areas.

General Knowledge

The candidate is expected to demonstrate a general understanding of the law and practice in these areas to recognise where there is an issue arising and where to refer for further advice/assistance.

All candidates are expected to have a broad, general understanding of the complex legal issues affecting children.

All candidates will be required to demonstrate **advanced** knowledge of the relevant professional standards when solicitors appear for children in the care and protection or criminal jurisdictions, including an **advanced** understanding of:

- Law Society of New South Wales publication – Representation Principles for Children's Lawyers [4 Edition 2014: accessible by following the link under "Children's Legal Issues" at: <http://www.lawsociety.com.au/cs/groups/public/documents/internetcontent/026517.pdf>
- General rights and obligations of child representatives
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CROC).

1. Child representation

All candidates will be required to demonstrate **advanced** knowledge of the different modes of representation of children of varying ages and when each may be applicable in their nominated jurisdiction, as well as of options available when a child client may not have the capacity to give instructions.

All candidates will be required to demonstrate **advanced** knowledge of the relevant professional standards when solicitors appear for children in the care and protection jurisdiction, including an **advanced** understanding of:

- Law Society of New South Wales publication – Representation Principles for Children's Lawyers [4 Edition 2014: accessible by following the link under "Children's Legal Issues" at: <http://www.lawsociety.com.au/cs/groups/public/documents/internetcontent/026517.pdf>
- General rights and obligations of child representatives
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CROC).

Candidates in the Child Representation sub-specialty will be required to demonstrate practical steps they can take to ensure they are acting in a manner consistent with relevant professional standards in appearing for children.

2. Child welfare law

Candidates in the care stream should demonstrate an **advanced** understanding, and candidates in the crime stream require a general understanding of:

- *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* (NSW)
- *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2022* (NSW)
- *Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act 1997* (NSW)
- *Adoption Act 2000* (NSW)
- *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth), in relation to:
 - Dealing with matters involving child abuse allegations
 - Parental responsibility and parenting orders
 - Recovery and enforcement orders
 - Representation of children
 - Court sanction of medical procedures
 - International child abduction
- *Education Act 1990* (NSW)
- *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* (NSW)
- *Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007* (NSW)
- *Ombudsman Act 1974* (NSW)

- *Status of Children Act 1996* (NSW)
- *Children's Guardian Act 2019* (NSW)
- Law relating to warrants and enforcement
- Relevant case law relating to child welfare
- Role of the Children's Guardian in the administration of the WWCC and the regulation and accreditation of OOHC and adoption services

3. Court practice and procedure relating to child welfare

Candidates in both the care and crime streams require an **advanced** understanding of:

- *Children's Court Act 1987* (NSW)
- *Children's Court Regulation 2014* (NSW)
- *Children's Court Rule 2000* (NSW)
- Children's Court practice and procedure, including Practice Notes, Protocols, and Guidelines
- District Court practice and procedure, including relevant Practice Notes, legislation and case law relating to appeals
- Supreme Court practice and procedure, including relevant Practice Notes, legislation and case law relating to the original, statutory and supervisory jurisdictions of the Supreme Court
- *Civil Procedure Act 2005* (NSW)
- *Uniform Civil Procedure Rules 1995* (NSW)
- *Administrative Decisions Review Act 1997* (NSW)
- *Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2013* (NSW)
- *Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993* (NSW)
- NSW Model Litigant Policy for Civil Litigation
- Memorandums of Understanding
 - The memorandum of understanding between the Family Court of Australia and the NSW Department of Communities and Justice
 - The memorandum of understanding between the Federal Circuit Court of Australia and the NSW Department of Communities and Justice
- The Ombudsman's 'Joint Protocol for Young People in residential Out of Home Care'

4. Children's Criminal law

Candidates in the crime stream require an advanced understanding of the following, and candidates in the care stream must demonstrate a general understanding of the interactions between the criminal and care and protection jurisdictions:

- *Bail Act 2013* (NSW)
- *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW)
- *Young Offenders Act 1997* (NSW)

- *Children (Criminal Proceedings) Act 1987* (NSW)
- *Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act 1997* (NSW)
- *Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence Act) 2007* (NSW)
- *Crimes (Forensic Procedures) Act 2000*
- *Mental Health and Cognitive Impairment Forensic Provisions Act 2020* (NSW)
- *Criminal Procedure Act 1986* (NSW) – especially as applied to children's matters
- *Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002* (NSW) (LEPRA), in relation to:
 - Arrest
 - Detention
 - Questioning
 - Searches
 - Safeguards for children
- *Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999* (NSW) – general sentencing framework operating alongside s 33 CCP Act
- *Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987* (NSW), in relation to:
 - Detention
 - Control orders
 - Parole and release of young offenders
- *Victims Rights and Support Act 2013* (NSW) – victims' rights and the impact of children's sentencing orders

Evidence framework (not child-specific, but essential):

- *Evidence Act 1995* (NSW), in relation to:
 - Competence
 - Credibility
 - Tendency/relationship evidence
 - Vulnerable witnesses
 - Children's evidence
- Regulations:
 - *Bail Regulation 2021* (NSW)
 - *Children (Criminal Proceedings) Regulation 2021* (NSW)
 - *Young Offenders Regulation 2016* (NSW)
 - *Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Regulation 2017* (NSW)

Special presumptions / principles in relation to children:

- Doli incapax – presumption and evidentiary requirements
- Police interview procedures with children, including:
 - Right to support person / responsible adult
 - Cautioning, ERISP, and protections for vulnerable persons

Crime-stream candidates should also be across current and proposed reforms to children's criminal law, including (at a conceptual level):

- Proposed and recent reforms to the Children (Criminal Proceedings) Act 1987 (NSW) – particularly in relation to doli incapax.
- Proposed and recent reforms to the Young Offenders Act 1997 (NSW) – expansion/adjustment of diversion options
- Any announced changes to the minimum age of criminal responsibility and responses to national and NSW reviews of children's criminal responsibility
- Review of the operation of doli incapax in NSW for children under 14, Independent review **led** by the Honourable Geoffrey Bellow SC and Mr Jeffrey Loy APM August 2025.

5. Court practice and procedure relating to Children's criminal law

- Practice and Procedure in the Children's Court including:
 - Sentencing principles
 - Special programs for children
 - Availability of Legal Aid

Crime-stream candidates should be familiar with the criminal-jurisdiction practice notes of the Children's Court of NSW, in particular:

- Crime-stream candidates should be familiar with the criminal-jurisdiction practice notes of the Children's Court of NSW, in particular:
 - Practice Note 12 – Criminal Proceedings in the Children's Court
 - Practice Note 11 – Youth Koori Court
 - Practice Note 20 – Bail Proceedings
 - Practice Note 8 – Apprehended Violence Order Proceedings
 - Practice Note 16 – Mandatory Disease Testing Order
 - Any current local/bail protocols issued by the President of the Children's Court.
- Judicial Commission of NSW – Children's Court Resource Handbook (Guide – Criminal Jurisdiction; bail, sentencing, Youth Koori Court and specialist program chapters).
- ODPP Prosecution Guidelines – particularly parts dealing with young offenders.
- NSW Police Force Codes of Practice and guidelines, especially: Code of Practice for CRIME (arrest, investigation, ERISP).
- Domestic and family violence policing guidelines (where children are defendants and/or protected persons).
- The Ombudsman's 'Joint Protocol for Young People in residential Out of Home Care'

6. Common law and Civil law

All candidates in all practice areas should demonstrate a **general** understanding of:

- *Civil Procedure Act 2005* (NSW)
- *Uniform Civil Procedure Rules 1995* (NSW)
- *Administrative Decisions Review Act 1997* (NSW)
- *Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2013* (NSW)
- *Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993* (NSW)
- *Minors (Property and Contracts) Act 1970* (NSW)
- *Social Security Act 1991* (Cth)
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW)
- *Education Act 1990* (NSW)
- *Evidence Act 1995* (Cth)
- *Victims Rights and Support Act 2013* (NSW)
- Role of a lawyer in using alternative dispute resolution options in civil complaints
- Negligence/civil claims

7. Immigration

A **general** understanding of:

- Framework of the *Migration Act 1958* (Cth) as it relates to residency visas and citizenship
Migration Regulations 1994
- *Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act 1946* (Cth)

Core Skills - Care and Protection

All candidates in the care and protection stream must be aware of the nature and form of the basis upon which solicitors act for child clients in the care and protection jurisdiction and understand the nature and differences involved in each role.

1. Develop a relationship with a client and take initial instructions and preferences

All candidates must be aware of the nature and form of the basis upon which solicitors act for child clients in the care and protection jurisdiction and understand the nature and differences involved in each role.

- Candidates who have selected the **Child Representation** sub-specialty will be required to demonstrate:
 - Skill in developing rapport with a child client;
 - An ability to consider the capacity of a child client to give instructions; and
 - Practical steps they can take to ensure they are acting in a manner consistent with relevant law and professional standards when appearing for children.
- Candidates who have selected the **Other Parties Representation** sub-specialty will be required to demonstrate:
 - Skill in developing rapport with an adult client;
 - An ability to consider the capacity of an adult client to give instructions; and
 - Practical steps they can take to ensure they are acting in a manner consistent with relevant law and professional standards when appearing for adults.
- All candidates will demonstrate skill in interviewing a child or adult client, depending on the sub-specialty selected, as well as practical steps that can be taken to assist the client to develop and maintain a solicitor/client relationship and to understand the nature of the proceedings.
- The solicitor should use language appropriate to the age, maturity and emotional needs, level of education, cultural context and degree of language proficiency of the client. The interview should be conducted in such a way that the gathering of knowledge from the client demonstrates preparation, knowledge of the facts of the case and of relevant substantive law, policy and procedure.
- The solicitor should advise the client of all relevant material including but not limited to:
 - The subject matter of the litigation;
 - Their rights and options;

- The purpose of the court attendance;
 - The solicitor's role;
 - The role of the other parties;
 - The limits, if any, of confidentiality;
 - The court system and what to expect in the legal process;
 - Possible outcomes and consequences for the child; and
 - Who else is involved and the nature of their role.
- Following the conclusion of the proceedings, the solicitor must ensure that the client is informed of the outcome of the proceedings and ensure to the fullest extent possible that the effect of any orders made is understood by the client.

2. Obtaining relevant information from sources other than the client

The solicitor will seek out other appropriate sources of information by:

- Conducting appropriate searches or making appropriate requests for documents and information from external bodies;
- Using skilled knowledge of other sources of information that may be available and identifying which experts or external supports may be available to assist the child client in the preparation of their case;
- Using court procedures to gather further evidence; and
- Where appropriate, obtaining corroborative evidence of instructions put by the child client.

The solicitor should demonstrate good organisational skills and a methodical approach to problem solving. The pursuit of information by the solicitor should be:

- Proactive and thorough;
- Make the best use of all available sources of information; and
- Ensure that such information is gathered in a manner which is admissible in the relevant proceedings.

3. Plan and advise the client by:

4.1 Identifying the legal effect/s of the evidence

- The solicitor will develop a strategy and plan of action after analysing the facts in the light of:
 - Relevant law;
 - Policy and procedure;
 - Expert evidence; and

- An assessment of the reliability of witnesses and the competency of experts in the professed area of opinion.

4.2 Understanding the roles, powers, responsibilities and service obligations of:

- Department of Communities and Justice NSW;
- NSW Police
- Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network NSW;
- Juvenile Justice NSW;
- NSW Department of Education and Training NSW;
- NSW Office of the Children's Guardian;
- National Disability Insurance Agency;
- Being broadly familiar with Centrelink policies regarding income support of young people and their carers; and
- Knowledge of the Department of Communities and Justice Permanency Support Program.

4.3 Communicating to the client all available options contained in the plan of action at all stages

- The solicitor will inform the client and/or any other relevant parties of the options available, and will prepare a draft plan offering practical recommendations and alternatives;
- The plan will recognise the client's views, expectations and their special needs;
- The plan of action should include both legal and non-legal alternatives including, where appropriate, intervention by outside bodies and/or support agencies, together with diversion from the legal process by non-court based methods of resolution of the dispute in which the client finds themselves; and
- The solicitor will communicate with the client in a skillful manner ensuring to the fullest extent possible that the client understands the options and gives, where appropriate, firm instructions as to the manner in which to proceed.

4. Implement the plan of action

The solicitor, following confirmation of the plan of action with the client, will:

- Organise all types of witnesses, documents and other evidence;
- Where appropriate, brief counsel. Such brief should include observations on procedural, evidentiary and substantive issues;
- Actively participate in the preparation of the case and take an active role in conferences and in the presentation of the case;

- Provide good administrative support including supervision of witnesses and material; and
- Ensure that counsel acts in an appropriate and effective manner with the child client, and that the child client understands the information and advice provided to them by counsel.

5. Review and modify the plan in the light of changes

Throughout the course of the matter, the solicitor will:

- Review the objectives of the plan of action in the light of changed circumstances resulting from further instructions, other party's materials, expert opinion or information gathered during the course of investigations or court procedures;
- Present options responding to the changed circumstances to the child client; and
- Advise and seek appropriate instructions in the light of changed circumstances including, in criminal matters, the entry of admissions in criminal matters or, appropriate settlement negotiations in civil matters.

6. Appear as an advocate

- When appearing as an advocate, the solicitor will identify the crucial issues of the case and seek to expose the weaknesses of the opponent's case;
- The solicitor will employ their knowledge of procedural, evidentiary and substantive law to present the case;
- The manner of the solicitor will reveal an understanding of hearing etiquette, tolerance to adverse comment and ability to work effectively under pressure; and
- Candidates who select the Child Representation sub-specialty will also ensure that any risk to the safety of their child client, when the child is required to attend interviews, hearings or other proceedings, is minimised as far as is possible within the control of the solicitor.

7. Demonstrate professional responsibility

The solicitor will maintain the highest standards of the profession and demonstrate a willingness to advise junior members of the profession, to educate others in legal issues and advise on improvements for the participation of children in the legal process and ensure that the rights and best interests of children are paramount.

Core Skills – Crime (Children's Criminal Jurisdiction)

All candidates in the crime stream will be required to demonstrate, in addition to the above child representation core skills, the following core skills specific to the representation of children and young people in criminal matters in the Children's Court of New South Wales.

1. Screening, capacity and doli incapax

- Skill in identifying when a child or young person may have impaired capacity to give proper instructions or to participate meaningfully in criminal proceedings, including due to cognitive impairment, mental illness, neurodevelopmental disability, trauma, language or cultural barriers.
- Ability to take appropriate practical steps where there are concerns about capacity or fitness (including referral for expert assessment, raising fitness issues, and considering the operation of the Mental Health and Cognitive Impairment Forensic Provisions Act 2020 (NSW)).
- A detailed understanding of the operation of doli incapax, including the relevant evidentiary requirements, and the ability to obtain, test and marshal evidence for or against rebuttal of the presumption.
- An understanding of how the doli incapax presumption interacts with police practice, prosecutorial decision-making and diversionary options, and the capacity to make appropriate written and oral representations to police and prosecutors on that basis.

2. Advising on charges, pleas and police processes

- Skill in explaining to a child or young person, in age-appropriate and culturally safe language, the nature and elements of the charges, maximum penalties, the stages of proceedings and the likely progression of their matter.
- Ability to advise a child young person in relation to police investigative procedures, including records of interview (ERISP), forensic procedures, identification procedures and searches, and to identify and challenge unlawfully or unfairly obtained evidence.
- Ability to take clear, detailed and structured instructions about the alleged offending, including instructions regarding the facts, any proposed agreed facts, and instructions about entering a plea of guilty or not guilty.
- Skill in providing balanced and realistic advice about the strengths and weaknesses of the prosecution case, the child's options in relation to case conferencing and charge negotiation, and the legal and practical consequences of different plea options.

3. Bail, risk and safety planning

- Skill in taking instructions, preparing and arguing bail applications, bail variations and bail reviews in the Children's Court, including urgent applications, with a clear understanding of the Bail Act 2013 (NSW) as it applies to children and young people.
- Ability to obtain and present relevant information concerning the child's living arrangements, school and training, support services, health needs, family and community supports, and risk factors in order to construct realistic and child-centred bail proposals.
- Ability to identify and address risks to the safety of the child or young person, to victims and to the community, and to develop safety and support plans in collaboration with the child, their family, Youth Justice NSW and relevant services
- Skill in drafting/articulating in court and explaining bail conditions in a way that is understandable to the child or young person and which minimises, so far as possible, the risk of technical breach and further criminalisation.

4. Diversion, restorative and culturally responsive options

- A thorough understanding of diversionary options under the Young Offenders Act 1997 (NSW), including warnings, cautions and youth justice conferences, and the practical ability to identify when such options are appropriate and to advocate for their use with police and prosecutors.
- Skill in preparing a child or young people and their families for participation in diversionary processes, including youth justice conferences and restorative processes, and in advising on the legal implications of accepting cautions, warnings or conference outcomes.
- Ability to recognise when an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander young person may be suitable for referral to the Youth Koori Court and to prepare the young person, their family and relevant supports for participation in that jurisdiction.
- Awareness of the impact of systemic and structural factors on the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the criminal justice system, and the capacity to incorporate this awareness into submissions, planning and advocacy.

5. Sentencing advocacy and preparation

- Ability to obtain, identify and organise relevant subjective material for sentencing, including the child's personal, family, educational, health, cultural and care background, and the impact of trauma, disability and disadvantage.
- Skill in identifying when expert reports (for example, psychological, psychiatric, neuropsychological, cultural or pre-sentence reports) are required, in briefing experts appropriately, and in using such material effectively in negotiations and in submissions.
- Ability to structure submissions by reference to the principles in the Children (Criminal Proceedings) Act 1987 (NSW), the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 (NSW) and

relevant case law, with a focus on rehabilitation, proportionality and the avoidance of unnecessary detention.

- Skill in explaining to a child or young person, in clear and age-appropriate language, the range of available sentencing options (including dismissals, conditional discharges, good behaviour bonds, community-based orders and control orders) and the practical consequences of each.

6. Inter-agency collaboration in the crime context

- Ability to work constructively and independently with Youth Justice NSW, the Department of Communities and Justice, education providers, health and mental health services, drug and alcohol services and other support agencies to design and implement realistic bail and sentencing plans.
- Skill in using inter-agency information and reports to support diversion, bail, sentencing and supervision proposals while maintaining appropriate confidentiality and acting in accordance with the child's or young persons instructions.
- Capacity to recognise when care and protection or other jurisdictions intersect with the child's criminal matter and, where appropriate, to coordinate with other representatives to minimise duplication and ensure coherent planning for the child.

7. Client communication and participation in hearings

- Ability to explain legal profession privilege.
- Skill in preparing a child or young person for attendance at court, for giving evidence where required, and for participation in conferences and hearings, in a way that is trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate.
- Ability to explain to a child or young person their rights and obligations as an defendant, including the privilege against self-incrimination, the right to silence, and the importance of complying with court orders and bail conditions.
- Skill in supporting a child or young person to participate effectively in their matter, including by managing expectations, assisting them to regulate their emotions during court events and ensuring that their voice is appropriately heard within the legal process.

8. Ethical and professional responsibilities in children's crime practice

- A detailed understanding of professional conduct obligations as they apply to the representation of children and young people accused of crime, including confidentiality, legal professions privilege, conflicts of interest, competence and duties to the court and understanding and up to date knowledge of the law, case law and practice directions of the court.
- Ability to identify and manage conflicts of interest that may arise in multi-party or multi-accused matters, including where co-accused are siblings, peers or family members, or where there are concurrent care, family law or AVO proceedings.

- Awareness of, and adherence to, trauma-informed and culturally safe practice standards when working with children and young people, including those who have experienced significant adversity, discrimination or state intervention.
- A demonstrated willingness to contribute to the development of good practice in children's crime work, including by mentoring less experienced practitioners, participating in training and contributing to law reform and policy discussions relevant to children and young people in the criminal justice system.

Methods of Assessment

Take Home Assessment

Release date: Thursday, 14 May 2026

Due date: Thursday, 4 June 2026

Candidates will be required to complete a Take Home Assessment which will be subject to a strict time limit. This assessment component will assess the candidate's ability to handle matters in practice and will also assess a variety of performance criteria, which may include preparation of documents, knowledge of procedures, and the identification and application of legal principles. There will be general core questions and optional questions for each sub-specialty.

Assessment Criteria

In your response you will be assessed on the following performance criteria. You will be required to perform each criterion to the level of the performance standard.

- a. Ability to identify relevant legal and ethical issues from a given fact situation, including any need to obtain additional information from sources other than the client;
- b. Capacity to apply the law to the facts;
- c. Depth of knowledge of the law and procedural rules/practices, and skill in applying that knowledge to the given fact situation, including skill in developing and implementing a plan of action and reviewing/modifying the plan in light of changes;
- d. Ability to write clearly, succinctly and in plain English; and
- e. Ability to provide practical, clear and accurate advice to the child client.

Simulated Interview

Interview date: Saturday, 25 July 2026

Venue: In-Person – To be advised

*All candidates will be notified of the interview time and venue in advance of the interview date.

Child Representation

Candidates will be required to conduct a simulated first interview with a young person acting in the role of a child client. The candidate will then appear for the client in a short mock hearing.

The Simulated Interview is intended to assess a wide range of criteria (as below), including those relating to interaction between the solicitor and the child client, the taking of instructions and the giving of advice.

The interview will be recorded for assessment purposes.

Assessment Criteria

In your response you will be assessed on the following performance criteria. You will be required to perform each criterion to the level of the performance standard.

- a. Ability to develop a relationship with the child client;
- b. Depth of knowledge of Representation Principles for Children's Lawyers, understanding of legal ethics applicable to child representation and skill in applying that knowledge and understanding to a given fact situation; and
- c. Ability to provide practical, clear and accurate advice to the child client.

Other Parties Representation

Candidates will be required to conduct a simulated first interview with either a parent, departmental representative or other client. The candidate will then appear for the client in a short mock hearing.

This exercise is intended to assess a wide range of criteria which are outlined below.

The interview will be recorded for assessment purposes.

Assessment Criteria

In your response you will be assessed on the following performance criteria. You will be required to perform each criterion to the level of the performance standard.

- a. Ability to develop a relationship with the client; and
- b. Ability to provide practical, clear and accurate advice to the client.

Mock Hearing

Interview date: Saturday, 25 July 2026

Venue: In-Person – To be advised

**All candidates will be notified of the Mock Hearing time and venue in advance of the mock hearing date.*

The Mock Hearing will cover the presentation of the client's case and involve the identification of crucial issues of the case, knowledge of procedure and skilful presentation.

Assessment Criteria

Advocacy skills including:

- a. Observation of appropriate etiquette, procedure and protocol, including court attire;
- b. Effective organisational skills at the bar table;
- c. Presentation of the facts in a clear and methodical manner;
- d. Appropriate presentation of the evidence;
- e. Effective use of external sources of information;
- f. Depth of knowledge of Representation Principles for Children's Lawyers, understanding of legal ethics applicable to child representation and skill in applying that knowledge and understanding to a given fact situation;
- g. Ability to develop a relationship with a child or other client;
- h. Depth of knowledge of the law and procedural rules/practices and skill in applying that knowledge to a given fact situation, including skill in developing and implementing a plan of action and reviewing/modifying the plan in light of changes; and
- i. Ability to provide practical, clear and accurate advice and to demonstrate high level advocacy skills.
- j. Demonstration of relevant ethical principles and professional standards.

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