

Specialist Accreditation Scheme

Marketing Your Accreditation

This Guide is for Specialists on how to promote their specialist accreditation.

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Version Control Record

Version	Effective date	Changes	Author
1.00	01 January 2017		GC
2.00	11 December 2018	Paragraphs 4.4. and 4.5 amended to account for Shipping and Maritime specialist accreditation. Paragraph 5 on marketing collateral inserted.	GC

Contents

1. Definitions.....	2
2. Introduction.....	2
3. Statutory Obligations	2
4. General Rules	3

1. Definitions

- 1.1. *Singapore Academy of Law (SAL)*. The entity that administers the Specialist Accreditation Scheme (the “Scheme”).
- 1.2. *Specialist*. A legal practitioner who has been accredited as an Accredited Specialist or Senior Accredited Specialist by the Singapore Academy of Law (SAL).

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Specialist accreditation is a significant achievement and valuable asset to recognise and promote a specialist’s expertise in a specialisation, and thus enhance his or her reputation.
- 2.2 Specialist accreditation also allows a specialist to be identified by the users of legal services as possessing the requisite skills and knowledge in his or her chosen area of specialisation.
- 2.3 Specialists are encouraged to promote or market their specialist accreditation in a manner as prescribed in the proceeding paragraphs.

3. Statutory Obligations

- 3.1 Specialists must adhere to the obligations in the relevant legal profession legislation when publicising their practice including, but not limited to, the Legal Profession (Professional Conduct) Rules 2015 rr 43 and 44:

Responsibilities relating to publicity within Singapore

43. (1) When a legal practitioner publicises the legal practitioner’s practice or the practice of a law practice of which the legal practitioner is a director, a partner or an employee, the legal practitioner must ensure that –
 - (a) any claim to expertise or specialisation can be justified;
 - ...
 - (2) For the purposes of paragraph (1)(a), the following factors may be taken into account in justifying any claim to expertise or specialisation:
 - (a) academic qualifications;
 - (b) experience;
 - (c) proportion of working time involved;
 - (d) level of success achieved;
 - (e) complexity of law and practice;
 - (f) significance of the matters involving the legal practitioner or the law practice of which the legal practitioner is a director, a partner or an employee;
 - (g) assessment by peers.

Misleading, deceptive, inaccurate or false, etc., publicity

44. (1) A legal practitioner must not publicise the legal practitioner’s practice, or the practice of the law practice of which the legal practitioner is a director, a partner or an employee, in a manner which –
 - (a) is likely to diminish public confidence in the legal profession or to otherwise bring the legal profession into disrepute;
 - (b) may reasonably be regarded as being misleading, deceptive, inaccurate, false or unbecoming the dignity of the legal profession; or

- (c) the Council may determine to be an undesirable manner of publicising the practice of a legal practitioner or law practice.
- (2) For the purpose of these Rules, publicity is misleading, deceptive, inaccurate or false if –
 - (a) it contains a material misrepresentation;
 - (b) it omits to state a material fact;
 - (c) it contains any information which cannot be verified; or
 - (d) it is likely to create an unjustified expectation about the results that can be achieved by the legal practitioner or the law practice of which the legal practitioner is a director, a partner or an employee.

4. General Rules

- 4.1. Because specialist accreditation is an individual attainment, such accreditation must be identified with the specialist only and not with his or her law firm.
- 4.2. As such, the specialist should not authorise, and his or her law firm should refrain from, using phrases such as: “We are an accredited specialist law firm” or a derivative of the same.
- 4.3. Specialists may promote or market their accreditation in connection with their legal practice only and not with any other undertaking or endeavour.
- 4.4. Specialists must be reaccredited to promote themselves as such and to use the specialist accreditation post-nominals.
- 4.5. Where possible, the following post-nominals should be used by specialists in their own communications:
 - Acc. Spec. (Building & Construction), Singapore Academy of Law
 - Snr. Acc. Spec. (Building & Construction), Singapore Academy of Law
 - Acc. Spec. (Maritime & Shipping), Singapore Academy of Law
 - Snr. Acc. Spec. (Maritime & Shipping), Singapore Academy of Law
- 4.6. Where there is limited space, such as on business cards, the post-nominals may be shortened to:
 - Acc. Spec. (Building & Construction), SAL
 - Snr. Acc. Spec. (Building & Construction), SAL
 - Acc. Spec. (Maritime & Shipping), SAL
 - Snr. Acc. Spec. (Maritime & Shipping), SAL
- 4.7. In communications such as biographies on a specialist’s law firm’s website, the words “Accredited Specialist” or “Senior Accredited Specialist” should appear together and in title case, such that these should NOT appear as “an Accredited Building and Construction Law Specialist” or “an accredited specialist in building and construction law” but as “an Accredited Specialist in Building and Construction Law”.

Business Card

<p>XYZ Law Firm</p> <hr/> <p>The Building #01-01 Street Road Singapore 000000</p> <p>John Doe Partner LLB (Hons); LLM (ABC University) Acc. Spec. (Maritime & Shipping), SAL</p>

Letterhead

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Mr John Doe is an Accredited Specialist in Maritime and Shipping Law.

5. Marketing Collateral

- 5.1 On being accredited, each specialist will receive 15 complimentary copies of the Specialist Accreditation Scheme brochure for the purpose of marketing their accreditation.
- 5.2 Additional copies may be purchased from the SAL at a price set by the SAL.
- 5.3 If a specialist's accreditation is suspended, cancelled or revoked, he or she must return all remaining complimentary copies of the brochure or other related complimentary marketing collateral in his or her possession to the SAL. He or she should also refrain from utilising the said brochures or marketing collateral purchased by him or her.