

# Specialist Accreditation Scheme

# Family Law Information for Specialists

This Guide is for specialists on how to maintain their specialist accreditation in Family Law.

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### 1. Definitions

- 1.1. *Family (FAM) legal practice.* This is the practice of law relating to all aspects of issues concerning families. It shall encompass, but is not limited to, all advisory, documentation, and dispute-related work relating to divorce, judicial separation, nullity, ancillary matters, custody, guardianship, wardship, maintenance and enforcement of such maintenance, protection against family violence, adoption, probate and administration, proceedings under the Mental Capacity Act, care and protection orders, family guidance orders, or cases involving youth offenders.
- 1.2. *Singapore Academy of Law (SAL).* The entity that oversees the Specialist Accreditation Scheme.
- 1.3. *Specialist.* A legal practitioner who is either an Accredited Specialist or a Senior Accredited Specialist.

### 2. What this Guide Covers

- 2.1 The Specialist Accreditation Scheme attempts to apply the same reaccreditation framework, as set out in the Information for Specialists - General, across all practice areas.
- 2.2 In cases where there are deviations from the said reaccreditation framework for a particular practice area, a separate Guide for that practice area will state those deviations.
- 2.3 **Applicants should read both the Information Guide for Specialists – General and this Guide.**
- 2.4 This Guide covers the said deviations for reaccreditation as a Senior Accredited Specialist or an Accredited Specialist in Family Law.

### 3. Validity of Accreditation

- 3.1 Both the Accredited Specialist and Senior Accredited Specialist accreditations in Family Law are valid for 3 years as of the date on which the accreditation is conferred.

- 3.2 All Family Law specialists must be reaccredited every 3 years.

#### **4. Maintaining Accreditation: Substantial Involvement**

##### **Accredited Specialist**

- 4.1. Accredited Specialists must confirm that, in the immediate three years prior to reaccreditation, they have been engaged in full-time practice and have dedicated a minimum 450 hours to family law practice per year.
- 4.2. "Family Law practice" refers to practice in the following Core Areas and Other Areas:

##### **Core Areas**

- a. Divorce, judicial separation, nullity and ancillary matters under Part 10 of the Women's Charter 1961 ("**Charter**")
- b. Custody and guardianship under the Guardianship of Infants Act 1934 (2020 Rev Ed) or wardship under s 17(1) of the Supreme Court of Judicature Act 1969 (2020 Rev Ed) read with s 22(1)(a) of the Family Justice Act 2014 (2020 Rev Ed)
- c. Maintenance and enforcement of such maintenance under Parts 8 and 9 of the Charter
- d. Protection against family violence under Part 7 of the Charter

##### **Other Areas**

- e. Adoption under the Adoption of Children Act 2022 (2020 Rev Ed)
- f. Probate and administration under the Probate and Administration Act 1934 (2020 Rev Ed)
- g. Proceedings under the Mental Capacity Act 2008 (2020 Rev Ed)
- h. Care and protection orders, family guidance orders, or cases involving youth offenders under the Children and Young Persons Act 1993 (2020 Rev Ed)

For the avoidance of doubt, Family Law practice must include work done in at least the Core Areas. Work undertaken in Other Areas may also be counted toward the 450-hour requirement, but practice in these areas alone, without corresponding experience in the Core Areas, would not satisfy the requirement.

- 4.3. Accredited specialists must confirm that, in the immediate three years prior to reaccreditation, they have been involved in at least:
- a. Four out of six categories of contested hearings / trials as set out in the table below; and
  - b. Ten mediations
- As lead counsel or second chair.

S/N	Categories	No. required
1.	Contested trial for divorce, judicial separation or nullity under Chapters 1, 2 or 3 of Part 10 of the Charter	1
2.	Contested hearings or trials in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Family violence matters</li> <li>ii. Maintenance matters</li> <li>iii. Matters under the Probate and Administration Act 1934</li> <li>iv. Matters under the Mental Capacity Act 2008</li> <li>v. Matters under the Children and Young Persons Act 1993</li> <li>vi. Enforcement processes</li> </ul>	2
3.	Contested hearings in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Applications under the Guardianship of Infants Act 1934</li> <li>ii. Variation of orders of ancillary reliefs</li> <li>iii. Interim custody, care and control applications under the Charter</li> </ul>	3
4.	Other contested hearings of family matters in the Family Justice Courts / Family Division of the High Court, including interlocutory applications, e.g., hearing of discovery and interrogatories, <i>forum non conveniens</i> applications	5
5.	Appeals in the Family Division of the High Court / Appellate Division of the High Court / Court of Appeal	1
6.	Ancillary matters (Chapter 4 of Part 10 of the Charter) hearings / Financial Relief (Chapter 4A of Part 10 of the Charter) hearings	5

- 4.4. For the purposes of showing involvement in the required number of hearings as stipulated within each category as required in 4.3(a) above, a specialist's involvement as lead counsel in a matter will be treated as the equivalent to a specialist's involvement as second chair in two matters in the same category. For example, if there is a requirement to be involved in three contested hearings, the specialist may achieve the same by:
- a. Being second chair in three contested hearings;
  - b. Being lead counsel in one contested hearing (which is equivalent to being second chair in two contested hearings), and second chair in one contested hearing; or
  - c. Being lead counsel in two contested hearings (which is equivalent to being second chair in four contested hearings).
- 4.5. A specialist's involvement in his or her appointment as a Mediator, Parenting Coordinator, or Child Representative, or in his or her representation as a Collaborative Family Practitioner, may count toward his or her fulfilment of the required number of mediations.

### **Senior Accredited Specialist**

- 4.6. Senior Accredited Specialists must confirm that, in the immediate three years prior to reaccreditation, they have been engaged in full-time practice and have dedicated a minimum 600 hours to family law practice per year.
- 4.7. “Family Law practice” refers to practice in the following Core Areas and Other Areas:

#### **Core Areas**

- a. Divorce, judicial separation, nullity and ancillary matters under Part 10 of the Women’s Charter 1961 (“**Charter**”)
- b. Custody and guardianship under the Guardianship of Infants Act 1934 (2020 Rev Ed) or wardship under s 17(1) of the Supreme Court of Judicature Act 1969 (2020 Rev Ed) read with s 22(1)(a) of the Family Justice Act 2014 (2020 Rev Ed)
- c. Maintenance and enforcement of such maintenance under Parts 8 and 9 of the Charter
- d. Protection against family violence under Part 7 of the Charter

#### **Other Areas**

- e. Adoption under the Adoption of Children Act 2022 (2020 Rev Ed)
- f. Probate and administration under the Probate and Administration Act 1934 (2020 Rev Ed)
- g. Proceedings under the Mental Capacity Act 2008 (2020 Rev Ed)
- h. Care and protection orders, family guidance orders, or cases involving youth offenders under the Children and Young Persons Act 1993 (2020 Rev Ed)

For the avoidance of doubt, Family Law practice must include work done in at least the Core Areas. Work undertaken in Other Areas may also be counted toward the 600-hour requirement, but practice in these areas alone, without corresponding experience in the Core Areas, would not satisfy the requirement.

- 4.8. Accredited specialists must confirm that, in the immediate three years prior to reaccreditation, they have been involved in at least:
- a. Six contested hearings / trials across any of the categories identified in the table below as lead counsel; and
  - b. Twenty mediations as lead counsel or second chair.

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S/N	Categories	No. required
1.	Contested trial for divorce, judicial separation or nullity under Chapters 1, 2 or 3 of Part 10 of the Charter	1
2.	Contested hearings or trials in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Family violence matters</li> <li>ii. Maintenance matters</li> <li>iii. Matters under the Probate and Administration Act 1934</li> <li>iv. Matters under the Mental Capacity Act 2008</li> <li>v. Matters under the Children and Young Persons Act 1993</li> <li>vi. Enforcement processes</li> </ul>	2
3.	Contested hearings in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Applications under the Guardianship of Infants Act 1934</li> <li>ii. Variation of orders of ancillary reliefs</li> <li>iii. Interim custody, care and control applications under the Charter</li> </ul>	3
4.	Other contested hearings of family matters in the Family Justice Courts / Family Division of the High Court, including interlocutory applications, e.g., hearing of discovery and interrogatories, <i>forum non conveniens</i> applications	5
5.	Appeals in the Family Division of the High Court / Appellate Division of the High Court / Court of Appeal	1
6.	Ancillary matters (Chapter 4 of Part 10 of the Charter) hearings / Financial Relief (Chapter 4A of Part 10 of the Charter) hearings	5

- 4.9. A specialist's involvement in his or her appointment as a Mediator, Parenting Coordinator, or Child Representative, or in his or her representation as a Collaborative Family Practitioner, may count toward his or her fulfilment of the required number of mediations.