

Specialist Accreditation Scheme

Family Law

This guide is for legal practitioners and inhouse counsel who are applying for specialist accreditation in Family Law.

For enquiries relating to the scheme, contact:
Specialist Accreditation Scheme
Singapore Academy of Law
1 Coleman Street
#08-06 The Adelphi
Singapore 179803
Tel: +65 6332 4388
Email: accreditation@sal.org.sg

© Singapore Academy of Law

Except as permitted under the Copyright Act (Cap 63), no part of this publication may be reproduced without the specific written permission of the Singapore Academy of Law.

Version Control Record

Version	Effective date	Changes	Author
1.00	1 April 2026		BL
1.01	19 May 2026	Paragraph 5.1 amended, date for AS examination changed from “First Sat of Sep” to “19 Sep”	BL

Contents

1. Definitions	2
2. What this Guide Covers	2
3. Substantial Involvement.....	3
4. Continuing Professional Development: Family Therapeutic Justice Certification Programme	7
5. Timelines.....	7

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. *Candidate.* A legal professional who has applied to be an Accredited Specialist or a Senior Accredited Specialist and whose candidature has been confirmed by the SAL and is in the process of being assessed by the SAL.

2. What this Guide Covers

- 2.1 The Specialist Accreditation Scheme attempts to apply the same accreditation framework, as set out in the Information for Applicants, across all practice areas.
- 2.2 In cases where there are additions to and/or deviations from the said accreditation 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 additions to and / or deviations from the Eligibility Criteria.

3. Substantial Involvement

Accredited Specialist

3.1 As part of their substantial involvement in this practice area, Accredited Specialist applicants must, in the immediate three years prior to application, have been engaged in full-time practice and have dedicated a minimum of 450 hours to Family Law practice per year.

3.2 “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.

3.3 Applicants must, in the immediate three years prior to application, 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"> i. Family violence matters ii. Maintenance matters iii. Matters under the Probate and Administration Act 1934 iv. Matters under the Mental Capacity Act 2008 v. Matters under the Children and Young Persons Act 1993 vi. Enforcement processes 	2
3.	Contested hearings in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Applications under the Guardianship of Infants Act 1934 ii. Variation of orders of ancillary reliefs iii. Interim custody, care and control applications under the Charter 	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

3.4 For the purposes of showing involvement in the required number of hearings as stipulated within each category as required in 3.3(a) above, a candidate's involvement as lead counsel in a matter will be treated as the equivalent to a candidate'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 candidate 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).

3.5 A candidate'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

3.6 As part of their substantial involvement in this practice area, Senior Accredited Specialist applicants must, in the immediate three years prior to application, have been engaged in full-time practice and have dedicated a minimum of 600 hours to Family Law practice per year.

3.7 “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.

3.8 Applicants must, in the immediate three years prior to application, have been involved in at least:

- d. Four out of six categories of contested hearings / trials as set out in the table below; and
- e. Twenty mediations
as lead counsel or second chair, and
- f. An additional six contested hearings / trials across any of the categories identified in the table below as lead counsel.

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: vii. Family violence matters viii. Maintenance matters ix. Matters under the Probate and Administration Act 1934 x. Matters under the Mental Capacity Act 2008 xi. Matters under the Children and Young Persons Act 1993 xii. Enforcement processes	2
3.	Contested hearings in relation to: iv. Applications under the Guardianship of Infants Act 1934 v. Variation of orders of ancillary reliefs vi. Interim custody, care and control applications under the Charter	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

3.9 For the purposes of showing involvement in the required number of hearings as stipulated within each category as required in 3.3(a) above, a candidate's involvement as lead counsel in a matter will be treated as the equivalent to a candidate'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 candidate 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).

3.10 A candidate'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.

4. Continuing Professional Development: Family Therapeutic Justice Certification Programme

- 4.1. Applicants for both Accredited Specialist and Senior Accredited Specialist must have completed the Family Therapeutic Justice Certification Programme (“FTJCP”).
- 4.2. Applicants who have completed an equivalent course may be considered for exemption on a case-by-case basis. Such courses must demonstrate parity in content, scope, and objectives with the FTJCP.
- 4.3. Applicants who have not completed the FTJCP, but would still like to apply for accreditation in that year, may provide an undertaking to the SAL that they will attend and complete the FTJCP by 30 September of that year.
- 4.4. If a candidate who has given an undertaking as set out in paragraph 4.3 fails to complete and attend the FTJCP by 30 September of that year, their candidacy will be deemed to be revoked.

5. Timelines

5.1 The tentative timeline for the Family Law accreditation programme in 2026 is as follows:

Date	Event
Start-April	Accredited Specialist (“AS”) applications open
End-May	AS applications close 5pm
Start-Jul	AS candidature confirmed
Start-Jul	AS examination registration opens
Start-Jul	Senior Accredited Specialist (“SAS”) applications open
End-Aug	AS examination registration closes
End-Aug	SAS applications close 5pm
End-Sep	SAS candidature confirmed
19 Sep	AS examination
End-Oct / Start-Nov	Selection panel interview
OLY 2027	Results released