



Solicitors Act 1974

1974 CHAPTER 47

PART I

RIGHT TO PRACTISE AS SOLICITOR

Practising certificates

9 Applications for practising certificates.

- (1) On receipt of an application for a practising certificate, the Society shall cause to be entered in a register kept for that purpose the applicant's full name, his place or places of business and the date of his admission.
- (2) The register may be kept by means of a computer.
- (3) If the register is kept by means of a computer, the Society shall make any entry available for inspection in legible form during office hours, without payment, by any person who applies to inspect it.
- (4) If the register is not kept by means of a computer, any person may inspect it during office hours without payment.
- (5) If in, or in relation to, an application for a practising certificate or a notice under section 84(1) any person makes any false statement material to the application or notice, a complaint in respect of that statement may be made to the Tribunal by or on behalf of the Society.

10 Issue of practising certificates.

- (1) Subject to sections 11 and 12, the Society shall issue a practising certificate to a person who applies for one, if it is satisfied, within 21 days of receipt of his application,—
 - (a) that his name is on the roll; and
 - (b) that he is not suspended from practice; and
 - (c) that his application complies with any regulations under section 28; and

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Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Solicitors Act 1974, Cross Heading: Practising certificates. (See end of Document for details)

- (d) that he is complying with such training regulations (if any) as apply to him; and
 - (e) that he is complying with any indemnity rules or is exempt from them.
- (2) At any time when regulations under section 28 specify a training condition or training conditions, any practising certificate issued to an applicant by the Society shall be issued subject to that condition or one of those conditions if it appears to the Society that training regulations will apply to him at the end of 21 days from the Society's receipt of his application.
- (3) At any time when regulations under section 28 specify an indemnity condition or indemnity conditions, any practising certificate issued to an applicant by the Society shall be issued subject to that condition or one of those conditions if it appears to the Society that he will be exempt from indemnity rules at the end of 21 days from the Society's receipt of his application.

VALID FROM 01/07/2009

[^{F1}10A Register of holders of practising certificates

- (1) The Society must keep a register of all solicitors who hold practising certificates.
- (2) The register must contain—
 - (a) the full name of each solicitor who holds a practising certificate,
 - (b) in relation to each solicitor who holds a practising certificate, a statement as to whether there is in force a sole solicitor endorsement, and
 - (c) such other information as may be specified in regulations under section 28(1) (d).]

Textual Amendments

F1 S. 10A inserted (1.7.2009) by [Legal Services Act 2007 \(c. 29\)](#), ss. 177, 211, [Sch. 16 para. 10](#) (with ss. 29, 192, 193); S.I. 2009/1365, [art. 2\(a\)\(i\)](#)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C1 S. 10A extended (with modifications) (1.7.2009) by S.I. 2000/1119, [Sch. 4 para. 7\(1\)Table](#) (as substituted by [The Legal Services Act 2007 \(Registered European Lawyers\) Order 2009 \(S.I. 2009/1587\)](#), [art. 3\(7\)\(a\)](#))

11 Fees payable on issue of practising certificates.

- (1) Subject to subsection (2), there shall be paid to the Society in respect of each practising certificate to be issued by it, before the certificate is issued, such fee as the Master of the Rolls, with the concurrence of the [^{F2} Secretary of State] and the Lord Chief Justice, may from time to time by order determine.
- [^{F3}(2) An order under subsection (1) may specify reduced fees for practising certificates in such circumstances as may be so specified.]

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- [^{F3}(2A) Subsection (2B) applies where an order under subsection (1) specifies a reduced fee in the case of a solicitor whose income, from his practice as a solicitor, is, during such period as may be so specified, less than an amount so specified.]
- [^{F3}(2B) The question whether, for the purposes of any such order, the income of a solicitor during the specified period falls below the specified amount shall be determined in accordance with regulations made by the Master of the Rolls with the concurrence of the [^{F2} Secretary of State] and the Lord Chief Justice.]
- (3) All fees received by the Society under subsection (1) shall be applied in such manner as the Society may think fit for the purposes of
- [^{F4}(a) the regulation, accreditation, education and training of solicitors and those wishing to become solicitors, including the maintaining and raising of their professional standards and giving advice on practice management and practical support for solicitors' practices;
 - (b) the participation by the Law Society in law reform and the legislative process;
 - (c) the provision by solicitors and those wishing to become solicitors of free legal services to the public;
 - (d) the promotion of the protection by law of human rights and fundamental freedoms;
 - (e) the promotion by the Law Society of the professional interests of solicitors through discussion with, and participation in the activities of, relevant national and international bodies, governments and the legal professions of other jurisdictions.]
- (4) The Society shall submit annually to the judges mentioned in subsection (1) an account of all such fees and of their application and shall cause a copy of the account to be deposited at the Society'shall for inspection by any solicitor.

Textual Amendments

- F2** Words in s. 11 substituted (19.8.2003) by [The Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs Order 2003 \(S.I. 2003/1887\)](#), art. 9, **Sch. 2 para. 3**
- F3** S. 11(2)(2A)(2B) substituted for S. 11(2)(2A) (which subsection (2A) was inserted by [Prosecution of Offences Act 1985 \(c. 23, SIF 39:1\)](#), s. 4(5)) by [Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 \(c. 41, SIF 76:1\)](#), s. 87
- F4** S. 11(3)(a)-(e) and preceding "—" substituted (19.12.2002) for words by [The Access to Justice Act 1999 \(Solicitors' Practising Certificates\) Order 2002 \(S.I. 2002/3235\)](#), art. 2

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C2** S. 11(3): power to amend conferred (25.5.2001) by [1999 c. 22, s. 47\(1\)](#), (with Sch. 14 para. 7(2)); [S.I. 2001/1655](#), art. 2

12 Discretion of Society with respect to issue of practising certificates in special cases.

- (1) Subject to subsections (2) and (3), this section shall have effect in any case where a solicitor applies for a practising certificate—
- (a) for the first time; or
 - (b) not having held a practising certificate free of conditions since the date of his admission; or

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- (c) [^{F5}when, on what would be the commencement date for the certificate, if it were granted], a period of twelve months or more will have elapsed since he held a practising certificate in force; or
 - (d) after the Tribunal has ordered a penalty or costs to be paid by him or that he be reprimanded; or
 - (e) after he has been invited by the Society to give an explanation in respect of any matter [^{F6}relating to]his conduct and has failed to give an explanation in respect of that matter which the Council regard as sufficient and satisfactory, and has been notified in writing by the Society that he has so failed; or
 - [^{F7}(ee) when, having been required by section 34(1) to deliver an accountant’s report to the Society, he has not delivered that report within the period allowed by section 34(2); or]
 - (f) when, having been suspended from practice, the period of his suspension has expired; or
 - (g) when, having had his name removed from or struck off the roll, his name has been restored to the roll; or
 - (h) while he is an undischarged bankrupt . . . ^{F8}; or
 - (i) after having been adjudged bankrupt [^{F9}and discharged]or after having entered into a composition with his creditors or a deed of arrangement for the benefit of his creditors; or
 - (j) while he is a patient as defined by [^{F10}section 9 of the Mental Health Act 1983](which relates to the judge’s functions in relation to the patient), or while he is a person as to whom powers have been exercised under [^{F10}section 104 of the Mental Health Act 1959 or section 98 of the said Act of 1983](which relates to the judge’s powers in cases of emergency); or
 - (k) after having been committed to prison in civil or criminal proceedings; or
 - (l) after having had given against him any judgment which involves the payment of money, not being a judgment—
 - (i) limited to the payment of costs; or
 - (ii) as to the whole effect of which upon him he is entitled to indemnity or relief from some other person; or
 - (iii) evidence of the satisfaction of which has been produced to the Society.
- (2) Where a practising certificate free of conditions is issued by the Society under subsection (4) to a solicitor in relation to whom this section has effect by reason of any such circumstances as are mentioned in paragraph (d), (e) [^{F11}(ee)], (f), (g), (i), (k), or (l) of subsection (1) [^{F11}then, except in the case of any circumstances of whose existence the Society is unaware at the time the certificate is issued,], this section shall not thereafter have effect in relation to that solicitor by reason of those circumstances.
- (3) Where a solicitor’s practising certificate is suspended by virtue of section 15(1) by reason of his suspension from practice and the suspension of his practising certificate is terminated unconditionally under section 16(4) or (5), then, notwithstanding subsection (1)(f), this section shall not thereafter have effect in relation to that solicitor by reason of that suspension from practice and the expiry of the period of that suspension.
- (4) In any case where this section has effect, the applicant shall, unless the Society or the Master of the Rolls otherwise orders, give to the Society not less than six weeks before he applies for a practising certificate notice of his intention so to apply; and, subject to subsections (6) and (7), the Society may in its discretion—

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- (a) grant or refuse the application, or
- (b) decide to issue a certificate to the applicant subject to such conditions as the Society may think fit.

[^{F12}(4A) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (4)(b)—

- (a) conditions may be imposed under that provision for requiring the applicant to take any specified steps that will, in the opinion of the Society, be conducive to his carrying on an efficient practice as a solicitor; and
- (b) conditions may be so imposed (whether for the purpose mentioned in paragraph (a) or otherwise) notwithstanding that they may result in expenditure being incurred by the applicant.]

(5) Where the Society decides to issue a certificate subject to conditions, it may, if it thinks fit, postpone the issue of the certificate pending the hearing and determination of any appeal under section 13(2)(b).

(6) The Society shall not refuse an application by a solicitor for a practising certificate in a case where this section has effect by reason only—

- (a) that he is applying for the first time; or
- (b) that he has not held a practising certificate free from conditions since the date of his admission;

and, in a case falling within paragraph (b), the certificate shall not be made subject to any conditions binding on the applicant in respect of any period more than three years after the date on which the first practising certificate issued to him had effect.

(7) Where a solicitor applies for a practising certificate in a case where this section has effect by reason only of any such circumstances as are mentioned in paragraph (h), (k) or (l) of subsection (1) and an appeal has been made to the appropriate court against the order or judgment in question, the Society shall not refuse the application before the determination of that appeal, unless in the opinion of the Society the proceedings on that appeal have been unduly protracted by the appellant or are unlikely to be successful.

Textual Amendments

- F5** Words in *S. 12(1)(c)* substituted (1.7.1991) by *Courts and Legal Services Act 1990* (c. 41, SIF 37), s. 125(3), **Sch. 18 para. 9**; S.I. 1991/1364, art. 2, **Sch.**
- F6** Words substituted by *Administration of Justice Act 1985* (c. 61, SIF 34), ss. 4(1), 69(5), **Sch. 9 para. 4(2)(a)**
- F7** *S. 12(ee)* inserted by *Administration of Justice Act 1985* (c. 61, SIF 34), ss. 4(2)(b), 69(5), **Sch. 9 para. 4(a)**
- F8** Words repealed by *Insolvency Act 1985* (c. 65, SIF 66), s. 235, **Sch. 10 Pt. III**
- F9** Words substituted by *Insolvency Act 1985* (c. 65, SIF 66), s. 235, **Sch. 8 para. 25**
- F10** Words substituted by *Mental Health Act 1983* (c. 20, SIF 85), s. 148, **Sch. 4 para. 38(a)**
- F11** Words inserted by *Administration of Justice Act 1985* (c. 61, SIF 34), ss. 4(3), 69(5), **Sch. 9 para. 4(b)**
- F12** *S. 12(4A)* inserted by *Administration of Justice Act 1985* (c. 61, SIF 34), ss. 4(4), 69(5), **Sch. 9 para. 4(b)**

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[^{F13}12A Additional fee payable by certain solicitors on applying for practising certificates.

- (1) Where a solicitor applies for a practising certificate at a time when section 12 has effect in relation to him by reason of the circumstances mentioned in section 12(1)(ee), he shall pay an additional fee to the Society when making his application.
- (2) The amount of that additional fee—
 - (a) shall be fixed by order of the Master of the Rolls made with the concurrence of the [^{F14} Secretary of State] and the Lord Chief Justice; and
 - (b) shall be designed to provide reasonable compensation to the Society for the additional cost of dealing with such applications.]

Textual Amendments

F13 S. 12A inserted by Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 (c. 41, SIF 76:1), s. 88

F14 Words in s. 12A substituted (19.8.2003) by The Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs Order 2003 (S.I. 2003/1887), art. 9, Sch. 2 para. 3

13 Appeals in connection with issue of practising certificates.

- (1) Where an application for a practising certificate is duly made to the Society otherwise than in a case where section 12 has effect and the Society refuses or neglects to issue a certificate, the applicant may apply to the High Court or to any judge of that court, or to the Master of the Rolls, who may make such order in the matter, including an order for the payment of costs by the Society to the applicant or by the applicant to the society, as may be just.
- (2) Where the Society—
 - (a) in the exercise of the powers conferred on it by section 10, [^{F15}decides to issue] a practising certificate subject to a training condition or an indemnity condition; or
 - (b) in the exercise of the powers conferred on it by section 12, refuses to issue a practising certificate or [^{F15}decides to issue] a certificate subject to a condition, the applicant may appeal to the Master of the Rolls against the decision of the Society within one month of being notified of it.
- (3) On an appeal to the Master of the Rolls under subsection (2)(a), he may—
 - (a) affirm the decision of the Society; or
 - (b) direct the Society to issue a certificate to the applicant free from conditions; or
 - (c) if regulations under section 28 specify a number of training conditions or indemnity conditions, direct the Society to issue a certificate to the applicant subject to a training condition or, as the case may be, an indemnity condition, different from that subject to which it was originally issued.
- (4) On an appeal to the Master of the Rolls under subsection (2)(b), he may—
 - (a) affirm the decision of the Society; or
 - (b) direct the Society to issue a certificate to the applicant free from conditions or subject to such conditions other than training conditions or indemnity conditions as the Master of the Rolls may think fit; or
 - (c) direct the Society not to issue a certificate; or

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- (d) if a certificate has been issued, by order suspend it; or
- (d) make such other order as he thinks fit.

Textual Amendments

F15 Words substituted by [Administration of Justice Act 1985 \(c. 61, SIF 34\)](#), s. 8, [Sch. 1 para. 5](#)

VALID FROM 01/07/2009

[^{F16}13ZA] **Application to practise as sole practitioner while practising certificate in force**

- (1) A solicitor whose practising certificate for the time being in force (his “current certificate”) does not have a sole solicitor endorsement, may apply to the Society for such an endorsement.
- (2) For the purposes of subsection (1) a practising certificate with a sole solicitor endorsement which is suspended is to be treated as having such an endorsement.
- (3) A solicitor may not apply under subsection (1) if he is suspended from practice as a sole solicitor.
- (4) An application must be—
 - (a) made in accordance with regulations under section 28, and
 - (b) accompanied by any fee payable under section 13ZB in respect of the endorsement applied for.
- (5) Where a sole solicitor endorsement is granted to an applicant of a prescribed description, the applicant's practising certificate shall have effect subject to any conditions prescribed in relation to applicants of that description.
“Prescribed” means prescribed by regulations under section 28(3B)(f).
- (6) A person who makes an application under this section may appeal to the High Court against—
 - (a) a decision to refuse the application, or
 - (b) a decision to impose a condition on a practising certificate in accordance with subsection (5).
- (7) The Society may by rules make provision, as respects any application under this section that is neither granted nor refused by the Society within such period as may be specified in the rules, for enabling an appeal to be brought under this section in relation to the application as if it had been refused by the Society.
- (8) On an appeal under this section the High Court may—
 - (a) affirm the decision of the Society,
 - (b) direct the Society to grant a sole solicitor endorsement,
 - (c) direct that the applicant's practising certificate is to have effect subject to such conditions (if any) as the High Court thinks fit, or
 - (d) make such other order as the High Court thinks fit.
- (9) In relation to an appeal under this section the High Court may make such order as it thinks fit as to payment of costs.

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(10) The decision of the High Court on an appeal under this section shall be final.

Textual Amendments

F16 Ss. 13ZA, 13ZB inserted (1.7.2009) by [Legal Services Act 2007 \(c. 29\)](#), ss. 177, 211, [Sch. 16 para. 16](#) (with ss. 29, 192, 193); [S.I. 2009/1365](#), [art. 2\(a\)\(iii\)](#) (subject to art. 4)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C3 S. 13ZA extended (with modifications) (1.7.2009) by [S.I. 2000/1119](#), [Sch. 4 para. 7\(1\)Table](#) (as substituted by [The Legal Services Act 2007 \(Registered European Lawyers\) Order 2009 \(S.I. 2009/1587\)](#), [art. 3\(7\)\(a\)](#))

VALID FROM 01/07/2009

13ZB Fee payable on making of sole solicitor endorsement

- (1) Before a sole solicitor endorsement is granted under section 13ZA, there must be paid to the Society in respect of the endorsement a fee of such amount as the Society may from time to time determine.
- (2) Different fees may be specified for different categories of applicant and in different circumstances.
- (3) If a fee payable under this section would not otherwise be a practising fee for the purposes of section 51 of the [Legal Services Act 2007](#), it is to be treated for the purposes of that section as such a fee.
- (4) In subsection (3) “practising fee” has the meaning given by that section.]

Textual Amendments

F16 Ss. 13ZA, 13ZB inserted (1.7.2009) by [Legal Services Act 2007 \(c. 29\)](#), ss. 177, 211, [Sch. 16 para. 16](#) (with ss. 29, 192, 193); [S.I. 2009/1365](#), [art. 2\(a\)\(iii\)](#) (subject to art. 4)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C4 S. 13ZB extended (with modifications) (1.7.2009) by [S.I. 2000/1119](#), [Sch. 4 para. 7\(1\)Table](#) (as substituted by [The Legal Services Act 2007 \(Registered European Lawyers\) Order 2009 \(S.I. 2009/1587\)](#), [art. 3\(7\)\(a\)](#))

[^{F17}13A Imposition of conditions while practising certificates are in force.

- (1) Subject to the provisions of this section, the Society may in the case of any solicitor direct that his practising certificate for the time being in force (his “current certificate”) shall have effect subject to such conditions as the Society may think fit.
- (2) The power to give a direction under this section in the case of any solicitor shall be exercisable by the Society at any time during the period for which his current certificate is in force if—

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- (a) in the event of an application for a practising certificate being made by him at that time, section 12 would have effect in relation to him by reason of any such circumstances as are mentioned in paragraph (d), (e), (ee), (k) or (l) of subsection (1) of that section; or
- (b)^{F18}
- (c) he has entered into a composition with his creditors or a deed of arrangement for the benefit of his creditors [^{F19}; or
- [he has been charged with, or convicted of—
- ^{F19}(d) (i) an offence involving dishonesty or deception; or
(ii) a serious arrestable offence (as defined by section 116 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act ^{M1}1984).].
- (3) Subject to subsection (4), the conditions specified in a direction under this section shall have effect as from the time when the solicitor concerned is notified of the Society's decision to give the direction.
- (4) The Society may, if it thinks fit, provide in a direction under this section that the conditions specified in the direction shall not have effect pending the hearing and determination of any appeal under subsection (6).
- (5) Where there is pending against any judgment or order an appeal by a solicitor which, if successful, would result in subsection (2) no longer being applicable to him, the Society shall not give a direction under this section in his case so long as the appeal is pending, unless in the opinion of the Society the proceedings on that appeal have been unduly protracted by him or are unlikely to be successful.
- [^{F20}This subsection does not apply to the exercise of the Society's powers under this section by virtue of subsection (2)(d).]
- (6) A solicitor in whose case a direction is given under this section may appeal to the Master of the Rolls against the decision of the Society within one month of being notified of it.
- (7) On an appeal under subsection (6), the Master of the Rolls may—
- (a) affirm the decision of the Society; or
- (b) direct that the appellant's current certificate shall have effect subject to such conditions as the Master of the Rolls thinks fit; or
- by order revoke the direction; or
- (d) make such other order as he thinks fit.
- (8) Subsection (4A) of section 12 shall apply for the purposes of subsection (1) of this section as it applies for the purposes of subsection (4)(b) of that section.]

Textual Amendments

- F17** S. 13A added by Administration of Justice Act 1985 (c. 61, SIF 34), s. 5
- F18** S. 13A(2)(b) repealed by Insolvency Act 1985 (c. 65, SIF 66), s. 235, Sch. 10 Pt. III
- F19** Words added by Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 (c. 41, SIF 76:1), s. 94(1)
- F20** Words added by Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 (c. 41, SIF 76:1), s. 94(2)

Marginal Citations

- M1** 1984 c.60. (95).

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[^{F21}13B Suspension of practising certificates where solicitors convicted of fraud or serious crime.

- (1) Where—
 - (a) a solicitor has been convicted of—
 - (i) an offence involving dishonesty or deception; or
 - (ii) a serious arrestable offence (as defined by section 116 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984); and
 - (b) the Society has made an application to the Tribunal under section 47 with respect to him,

the Society may direct that any practising certificate of his which is for the time being in force be suspended.
- (2) Any such suspension shall be for such period, not exceeding six months, as the Society shall specify in the direction.
- (3) If, before the specified period expires—
 - (a) the Tribunal determines the Society’s application;
 - (b) the conviction is quashed or set aside; or
 - (c) the Society withdraws its application to the Tribunal,

the suspension shall cease to have effect.
- (4) Where the specified period comes to an end without any of the events mentioned in subsection (3) having occurred, the Society may direct that the suspension be continued for such period, not exceeding six months, as it shall specify in the direction.
- (5) A suspension under this section may only be extended once under subsection (4).
- (6) Nothing in this section is to be taken as in any way affecting the Tribunal’s power to suspend a solicitor from practice.
- (7) A solicitor in whose case a direction is given under subsection (1) or (4) may appeal to the Master of the Rolls against the direction within one month of being notified of it.
- (8) In an appeal under subsection (7), the Master of the Rolls may—
 - (a) affirm the suspension;
 - (b) direct that the appellant’s certificate shall not be suspended but shall have effect subject to such conditions as the Master of the Rolls thinks fit;
 - (c) by order revoke the direction; or
 - (d) make such other order as he thinks fit.]

Textual Amendments

F21 S. 13B inserted by Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 (c. 41, SIF 76:1), s. 94(3)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C5 S. 13B extended (22.5.2000) by S.I. 2000/1119, regs. 1, 37(3), Sch. 4 para. 7(1) (as substituted (1.7.2009) by The Legal Services Act 2007 (Registered European Lawyers) Order 2009 (S.I. 2009/1587), art. 3(7)(a))

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[^{F22}14 Commencement, expiry and replacement of practising certificates.

- (1) Every practising certificate shall have effect from the beginning of the day (“the commencement date”) on which it is issued.
- (2) The Master of the Rolls may, with the concurrence of the [^{F23} Secretary of State] and the Lord Chief Justice, make regulations—
 - (a) prescribing the date (“the replacement date”) by which each solicitor who has a practising certificate which is for the time being in force must apply for a new practising certificate if he wishes to continue to have one; and
 - (b) requiring every practising certificate to specify its replacement date.
- (3) The Society shall enter the commencement date and replacement date of each practising certificate in the register kept under section 9.
- (4) Without prejudice to section 28(1), any regulations under subsection (2) may—
 - (a) provide for different replacement dates for different categories of solicitor or in different circumstances;
 - (b) provide for the Society to specify different replacement dates to those prescribed by the regulations in respect of individual solicitors;
 - (c) make such transitional, incidental and supplemental provision, in connection with any provision for different replacement dates (including different dates specified by the Society), as the Master of the Rolls considers expedient.
- (5) Where a practising certificate is in force with respect to a solicitor, the Society may withdraw the certificate if—
 - (a) the replacement date for that certificate has passed; but
 - (b) he has not applied for a new practising certificate.
- (6) A practising certificate shall expire—
 - (a) where the solicitor’s name is removed from or struck off the roll, immediately upon the occurrence of that event;
 - (b) where it is withdrawn under subsection (5), immediately upon the occurrence of that event;
 - (c) where a new practising certificate is issued to the solicitor, on the commencement of the new certificate;
 - (d) where the Society refuses to issue the solicitor with a new practising certificate—
 - (i) immediately after the replacement date for the existing certificate has passed; or,
 - (ii) if that date has already passed, immediately upon the Society taking its decision not to issue him with a new certificate.
- (7) Where any practising certificate expires in the circumstances mentioned in subsection (6)(a), (b) or (d) the date of its expiry shall be entered in the register kept under section 9.]

Textual Amendments

F22 S. 14 substituted (1.7.1991) by Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 (c. 41, SIF 76:1), ss. 86, 125(6), **Sch. 19 para. 12**; S.I. 1991/1364, art. 2, **Sch.**

F23 Words in s. 14 substituted (19.8.2003) by The Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs Order 2003 (S.I. 2003/1887), art. 9, **Sch. 2 para. 3**

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Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Solicitors Act 1974, Cross Heading: Practising certificates. (See end of Document for details)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C6 S. 14 modified (1.7.1991) by [Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 \(c. 41, SIF 37, 76:1\)](#), 125(6), Sch. 19 para. 12(1)(2); [S.I. 1991/1364](#), art. 2, Sch.

15 Suspension of practising certificates.

- (1) The making by the Tribunal or by the court of an order suspending a solicitor from practice shall operate, and an adjudication in bankruptcy of a solicitor shall operate immediately, to suspend any practising certificate of that solicitor for the time being in force.

[^{F24}(1A) Where the power conferred by paragraph 6(1) or 9(1) of Schedule 1 has been exercised in relation to a solicitor by virtue of paragraph 1(1)(a)(i), (c) (so far as it applies to rules made by virtue of section 32) or (e) of that Schedule, the exercise of that power shall operate immediately to suspend any practising certificate of that solicitor for the time being in force.

(1B) Subsection (1A) does not apply if, at the time when the power referred to there is exercised, the Society directs that subsection (1A) is not to apply in relation to the solicitor concerned.

(1C) If, at the time when the power referred to in subsection (1A) is exercised, the Society gives a direction to that effect, the solicitor concerned may continue to act in relation to any matter specified in the direction as if his practising certificate had not been suspended by virtue of subsection (1A), but subject to such conditions (if any) as the Society sees fit to impose.]

- (2) For the purposes of this Act, a practising certificate shall be deemed not to be in force at any time while it is suspended.

Textual Amendments

- F24 S. 15(1A)–(1C) inserted by [Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 \(c. 41, SIF 76:1\)](#), s. 91(2)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C7 S. 15(1)(1A)(1B)(1C) extended (22.5.2000) by [S.I. 2000/1119](#), regs. 1, 37(3), Sch. 4 para. 7(1) (as amended (1.7.2009) by [The Legal Services Act 2007 \(Registered European Lawyers\) Order 2009 \(S.I. 2009/1587\)](#), art. 3(7)(a))

16 Duration of suspension of practising certificates.

- (1) Subject to the provisions of this section, the suspension of a practising certificate shall continue until the certificate expires.

[^{F25}(1) Where, on the replacement date for a practising certificate, the certificate is suspended it shall expire on that date.]

(2) The suspension of a practising certificate by virtue of section 15(1) by reason of an adjudication in bankruptcy shall terminate if the adjudication is annulled and an office copy of the order annulling the adjudication is served on the Society.

- (3) Where a solicitor's practising certificate is suspended—
(a) by an order under section 13(4); or

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- (b) by virtue of section 15(1) by reason of his adjudication in bankruptcy; or
 - (c) by virtue of section 15(1) by reason of his suspension from practice and the period of his suspension from practice expires before the [^{F26}replacement date]of the certificate,
 - [^{F27}(d) by virtue of section 15(1A)]
- the solicitor may at any time before the certificate expires (and, in the case of adjudication in bankruptcy, while the adjudication remains unannulled) apply to the Society to terminate the suspension.

- (4) On an application under subsection (3), the Society may in its discretion—
 - (a) by order terminate the suspension either unconditionally or subject to such conditions as the Society may think fit; or
 - (b) refuse the application.
- (5) If on an application by a solicitor under subsection (3) the Society refuses the application or terminates the suspension subject to conditions, the solicitor may appeal against the decision of the Society to the Master of the Rolls, who may—
 - (a) affirm the decision; or
 - (b) terminate the suspension either unconditionally or subject to such conditions as he may think fit.

Textual Amendments

- F25** S. 16(1) substituted (1.7.1991) by Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 (c. 41, SIF 37), s. 125(3), **Sch. 18 para. 10(2)**; S.I. 1991/1364, art. 2, **Sch.**
- F26** Words in S. 16(3)(c) substituted (1.7.1991) by Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 (c. 41, SIF 37), s. 125(3), **Sch. 18 para. 10(3)**; S.I. 1991/1364, art. 2, **Sch.**
- F27** S. 16(3)(d) inserted by Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 (c. 41, SIF 76:1), **s. 91(3)**

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C8** S. 16 extended (22.5.2000) by S.I. 2000/1119, regs. 1, 37(3), **Sch. 4 para. 7(1)**

17 Publicity in relation to suspension of practising certificates.

- (1) Where a solicitor's practising certificate is suspended by an order under section 13(4), or by virtue of section 15(1) by reason of his adjudication in bankruptcy, the Society shall forthwith cause notice of that suspension to be published in the London Gazette and a note of it to be entered against the name of the solicitor on the roll.
- (2) Where any such suspension of a practising certificate as is mentioned in subsection (1) is terminated under section 16(2), (4) or (5), the Society shall forthwith cause a note of that termination to be entered against the name of the solicitor on the roll and, if so requested in writing by the solicitor, a notice of it to be published in the London Gazette.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C9** S. 17 extended (22.5.2000) by S.I. 2000/1119, regs. 1, 37(3), **Sch. 4 para. 7(1)**

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VALID FROM 01/07/2009

[^{F28}17A Suspension of sole solicitor endorsement

- (1) The making by the Tribunal or by the court of an order suspending a solicitor from practice as a sole solicitor shall operate to suspend any sole solicitor endorsement of that solicitor for the time being in force.
- (2) For the purposes of this Act, a sole solicitor endorsement shall be deemed not to be in force at any time while it is suspended.
- (3) Subsection (2) is subject to section 13ZA(2).

Textual Amendments

F28 Ss. 17A, 17B inserted (1.7.2009) by Legal Services Act 2007 (c. 29), ss. 177, 211, Sch. 16 para. 22 (with ss. 29, 192, 193); S.I. 2009/1365, art. 2(a)(i)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C10 S. 17A extended (with modifications) (1.7.2009) by S.I. 2000/1119, Sch. 4 para. 7(1)Table (as substituted by The Legal Services Act 2007 (Registered European Lawyers) Order 2009 (S.I. 2009/1587), art. 3(7)(a))

VALID FROM 01/07/2009

17B Duration and publicity of suspension of sole solicitor endorsement

- (1) Where a sole solicitor endorsement is suspended, it expires on such date as may be prescribed by regulations under section 28.
- (2) Where a solicitor's sole solicitor endorsement is suspended—
 - (a) by an order under section 13(4), or
 - (b) by virtue of section 17A(1) in circumstances where the period of that suspension expires before the date on which his endorsement will expire, the solicitor may at any time before the endorsement expires apply to the Society to terminate the suspension.
- (3) Section 16(4) to (7) apply in relation to an application under subsection (2) as they apply in relation to an application under section 16(3).
- (4) Where a solicitor's sole solicitor endorsement is suspended by an order under section 13(4) or by virtue of section 17A(1), the Society shall forthwith cause notice of that suspension to be published and a note of it to be entered against the name of the solicitor on the roll.
- (5) Where any suspension is terminated by virtue of section 16(4) or (5), as applied by subsection (3) of this section, the Society shall forthwith cause a note of that termination to be entered against the name of the solicitor on the roll and, if so requested in writing by the solicitor, a notice of it to be published.]

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Textual Amendments

F28 Ss. 17A, 17B inserted (1.7.2009) by Legal Services Act 2007 (c. 29), ss. 177, 211, **Sch. 16 para. 22** (with ss. 29, 192, 193); S.I. 2009/1365, **art. 2(a)(i)**

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C11 S. 17B extended (with modifications) (1.7.2009) by S.I. 2000/1119, Sch. 4 para. 7(1)Table (as substituted by The Legal Services Act 2007 (Registered European Lawyers) Order 2009 (S.I. 2009/1587), **art. 3(7)(a)**)

18 Evidence as to holding of practising certificates.

- (1) Any list purporting to be published by authority of the Society and to contain the names of solicitors who have obtained practising certificates for the current year before 2nd January in that year shall, until the contrary is proved, be evidence that the persons so named as solicitors holding practising certificates for the current year are solicitors holding such certificates.
- (2) The absence from any such list of the name of any person shall, until the contrary is proved, be evidence that that person is not qualified to practise as a solicitor under a certificate for the current year, but in the case of any such person an extract from the roll certified as correct by the Society shall be evidence of the facts appearing in the extract.

Status:

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Changes to legislation:

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