



INSTITUTE OF
PARALEGALS

Setting Standards. Promoting Professionalism.

IOP APPLICATION FORM GUIDANCE NOTES

OVERVIEW

Our role as the leading professional body for paralegals is to set standards and promote our members as professional paralegals.

We identify our members' qualifications and experience so that they can receive recognition on the Professional Paralegal Register (PPR) and apply for Paralegal Practising Certificates where appropriate.

Institute's membership grades are designed to give your clients, other legal practitioners and the judiciary an indication of how experienced you are as a legal professional. Therefore, our membership grades are based upon how much legal practice experience (LPE) you have and what legal qualifications you have.

BENEFITS OF IOP MEMBERSHIP

- Free webinars to count towards your CPD – coming soon
- Discounts on numerous goods and services
- IoP Professional Designation
- Annual Hallmarked Membership Certificate.
- Free daily e-news legal updates from Lexology
- Free monthly paralegal publication in collaboration with the New Law Journal
- Access to our paralegal forum on LinkedIn
- Eligibility to become a registered and/or regulated member of the Professional Paralegal Register
- Free affiliate membership with the New York City Paralegal Association
- Discounted membership with the Royal Over-Seas League
- Confirmed right to countersign passports
- LawCare
- IoP Training platform – coming soon
- Smart badge in partnership with Yoshki

Process

1. Send in an application form
2. Completing the application form- supported by copies of relevant documents
3. Assessment stage- the Head of Membership will assess your application - the extent to which it aligns to IoP standards
4. May be approved or amendments required. If rejected - you can re-submit or appeal

5. Annual renewal - on the renewal date, each year, you will be sent a renewal notice and invoice and asked to confirm that the standards have been maintained. You will have to fill in a renewal form and submit it back to us.
 6. Upgrade – if you believe you are eligible for this, you have the possibility to apply by filling in an upgrade form and submitting it to us.
-

APPLICATION PROCESS

Stage 1 – Completing your application

To complete your application, you should answer the questions on the form as fully and truthfully as possible. The member of the team allocated to review your submission will look for alignment with the IoP Standards. Your application has to be supported by copies of relevant documents.

Stage 2 – The Assessment

- a) Your completed application form will be sent to the Head of Membership who will assess your application by conducting the necessary due-diligence.
- b) A follow-up email will be sent if necessary to enable the Head of Membership to clarify any outstanding issues or to request more information where necessary.

Stage 3 – Assessment decision

Once the Head of Membership has reviewed your application they will be in a position to confirm your approval or to ask for further information.

Should your application be deemed by the Head of Membership not to meet the standards of IoP, you will be provided with feedback.

If your application is rejected, you may make a re-submission which will be treated in all respects as a new submission.

An applicant may appeal against a decision regarding his or her eligibility for membership of the Institute, in writing, to the Chief Executive, within thirty days of being notified of a decision on his or her application. The appeal will be dealt with in accordance with the Institute's approved procedure.

Stage 4 – Annual renewal

On your renewal date each year, you will be sent a renewal notice and an invoice and will be asked to confirm that the standards recognised through your initial assessment have been maintained by completing a renewal form.

Assessment Criteria

The Head of Membership is looking to see the extent to which your legal practice experience and/or qualifications have a significant paralegal practice component which can be mapped to the IoP Standards. The nature of the evidence provided by each individual in support of his application and the way in which it is presented is likely to be different in each application, but as well as alignment to the IoP Standards, the Head of Membership will be looking that you are of good standing and will have regard to an applicant's antecedents and character.

For a summary of the IoP Standards, please request a copy of the Competency Standards, e mailing us at office@theiop.org.

GUIDANCE IN COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION

Section 1 – Your personal details

Please complete all parts of this section. It is essential that we hold these details on record so that we can communicate with you. Please make sure you update us on any changes relating to your personal details as soon as these happen.

Section 2 – Your Professional Details

Same as Section 1. Your professional details are those relevant to this application. If you practice law at work, then give us your work details. If you are applying because, for example, you are a part-time volunteer adviser, then please give us information about your advice work. If you are a student studying law, please use this section to tell us about what and where you are studying.

Section 3 – Your work/Practise Experience

In your own words, please give details of the actual practical experience you have (if any) which is relevant to your application.

You are required to give us as much information as possible about your LPE and to provide evidence to support your application. Suitable evidence might be one of the

following: testimonials from clients or employer, reference letters from clients and/or employer, evidence of all qualifications with a legal element, a copy of your CV etc.

N.B. WE WILL NOT START PROCESSING THE APPLICATION UNTIL WE HAVE RECEIVED SOME OR ALL OF THE ABOVE-MENTIONED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS. Copies are not returned so please do not send originals. Copies do not have to be certified or in colour.

Section 4 - Your Legal Qualifications

Please list all legal qualifications that you have, or qualifications with a legal element and provide evidence of them.

Section 5 - Other Professional Membership

Please list any other professional memberships/qualifications you have that you believe are relevant to this application.

Section 6 – Fees and method of payment

Please see our list of prices and indicate your method of payment.

Section 7 – Additional questions

Please answer the questions in this section.

Section 8 – Professional Paralegal Register

As a member of the Institute you will be eligible to appear on the PPR. This is a valuable benefit for our members who for just £25.00 pa can be seen by prospective clients and be contacted directly. For those members that are Tier 2 or above, you will also be able to apply for a PPR Practising Certificate and be fully regulated by the PPR, to include access to a compensation fund for your clients should things go wrong.

You can see more about the PPR at www.ppr.org.uk.

Our membership fees include the £25.00 fee for the PPR. You will receive a separate membership Tier Certificate from the PPR.

Section 9 - Your Character and Standing

Please provide information on the above if any is applicable to you.

Declaration as to conduct

Please sign this and submit to us.

PRICING

IoP Membership will last for one year. An initial, non-refundable assessment fee (administration fee) is paid when your assessment begins. The membership fee is paid annually on the anniversary of your initial approval. The renewal is subject to signed confirmation that you have maintained the standards of your initial approval. If, for any reason, IoP has reason to believe these standards have not been maintained, it reserves the right to re-assess your application.

Should your initial assessment not meet the criteria, subsequent applications will be treated as new submissions in each case.

Members based outside the UK seeking membership will be required to pay additional postage costs for us to send over a membership certificate.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

	United Kingdom	International	Hong Kong
*Registration fee	£20	£30	£30
Affiliate member	£59	£49	£49
Associate Paralegal	£89	£89	£79
Qualified Paralegal	£119	£129	£119
Fellow of the IoP	£149	£149	£139

Corporate members**	£250<25 employees £400>25 employees	£250<25 employees £400>25 employees	£250<25 employees £400>25 employees
Certificate of good standing	£20	£20	£20
Certificate-duplicate	£25	£25	£25
Postage	N/A	£12	£12
Professional Paralegal Register (PPR) fee	£25	£25	£25

* Non-refundable registration fee

**Corporate Membership Fees are calculated depending on how many employees your company has.

Please note: you can cancel your application within 14 days of the application being received by the IOP. The annual subscription fee will not be refunded or credited after the cancellation period.

Prices are correct at the time of print and are for one year. IoP reserves the right to increase its fees.

MEMBERSHIP GRADES AVAILABLE

The IoP offers four levels of membership and Corporate membership for companies:

Affiliate - This grade is for new and aspiring paralegals who do not yet have a legal qualification and has no or very little work experience, or for anyone else who has an interest in a career in law.

Associate Paralegal (A.Inst.Pa) - Requires a level 3 qualification and/or has a minimum of one year's legal practice experience.

Qualified Paralegal (Q.Inst.Pa)- Requires a Level 6 qualification (Degree Level) AND has a minimum of 2 years legal practice experience (or experiential route).

Fellow of the IOP (F.Inst.Pa) - Requires a Level 6 qualification or above(Degree Level) AND has a minimum of 4 years legal practice experience (or experiential route)

Corporate Membership

Many organisations wish to demonstrate to their customers, suppliers and employees that they are committed to the highest standards of professional development. Corporate membership assesses an organisation's level of professionalism, providing confidence to all stakeholders of its dedication to offering the best services to consumers.

FURTHER DETAILS

If you have any questions that these guidance notes have not addressed, please contact: office@theiop.org