



CILEX Certificate in Legal Practice

Qualification(s) Handbook

Version 1.2 (updated July 2026)

Introduction

The CILEX Certificate in Legal Practice suite of qualifications are entry level legal qualifications, benchmarked to level 3, with a clear progression route to the CILEX Professional qualification (CPQ), a route to practice with the same rights as a solicitor in your chosen area of law, as a CILEX Lawyer.

Developed in consultation with employers, the CILEX Certificates provide a practical introduction to the law and working in a chosen area of law (from the options available). The qualification will:

- Support legal assistants, new paralegals, claims handlers or other entry legal roles to have the knowledge of the work relating to the area of practice, including processes, procedures and the law pertinent to being successful in these roles.
- Support an individual with an interest in law or legal practice and who is considering a career within the legal profession, private practice, public law, inhouse or for not-for-profit organisation that provides legal advice to vulnerable groups within society.
- Develop the skills and knowledge necessary to make an immediate impact in the chosen area of practice.
- Provide a progression route to further legal qualifications including CPQ, the Chartered Legal Executive Apprenticeship and Conveyancing and Probate technician routes.
- Support the trainee providers with the on-programme learning requirements of the Paralegal apprenticeship – 2023 standard.

On completion of a CILEX Certificate in Legal Practice a student will:

- Understand the essential law relevant to tasks required of a newly qualified Paralegal in the chosen practice area.
- Work under supervision to perform core tasks relevant to the practice area.
- Develop relationships with internal and external customers, managing information including taking initial instructions.
- Maintain professional standards, adhering to regulatory and compliance requirements, including identifying basic risks.
- Be able to conduct legal research.

This handbook is designed for CILEX accredited training providers, tutors and learners, to provide the essential assessment and delivery information required to undertake the qualification, complete the exams and understand how to progress on with CILEX to achieve CILEX Paralegal, CILEX Advanced stage or CILEX Lawyer Status.

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1. Qualifying as a CILEX Lawyer

The CILEX Certificate in Legal Practice is the entry level qualification in the CILEX Professional Qualification Framework, the route to CILEX Lawyer.

A CILEX Lawyer is a CILEX member who has completed all three qualification stages of the employer led CPQ, which includes compulsory Ethics and Professional Responsibility modules, and gained a minimum of 2,300 hours relevant legal experience in a chosen area of law.

The Professional Experience achieved alongside the set exams and ethics modules will allow a learner to meet the requirements of the CILEX Education Standards and achieve full authorisation from CILEX Regulation, including practice rights.

On completion of each qualification stage of the CPQ, including Professional Experience, learners will achieve a new level of membership grade.

On completion of the CILEX Certificate in Legal Practice, learners have a membership grade CILEX Student.

Learners progressing to CPQ Foundation stage will be eligible for the following exemptions:

- Foundation stage Legal Systems
- Foundation stage Professional and Legal skills

On completion of CPQ Foundation stage exams the CILEX Diploma in Law will be awarded.

On completion of CPQ Foundation stage exams and Professional Experience, the CILEX membership grade CILEX Paralegal will be awarded.

2. Studying with CILEX

2.1 CILEX Membership

To enrol on to the CILEX Certificate in Legal Practice a learner must first be a member of CILEX.

The process for becoming a member is outlined at www.CILEX.org.uk and associated membership key dates and deadlines should be adhered to.

Learners registering for the CILEX Certificate in Legal Practice will be a CILEX Student. On completion of the qualification Student membership will continue until Professional Experience Criteria has been achieved or CPQ Foundation stage.

2.2 Registering for the CILEX Certificate in Legal Practice

Registering for CILEX Certificate in Legal Practice can be done via our website https://www.CILEX.org.uk/membership/apply_online_. There will be a step to select the qualification specialism from those available.

Once registered, CILEX will provide access to the CILEX Certificate in Legal Practice pages on the members myCILEX account, along with learning materials and information about our accredited training providers.

To study the qualification and to book an exam, learners must be enrolled with a CILEX accredited training provider, but the booking should be made directly by the learner.

2.3 Accredited Training Providers

All learners registering for any CILEX Certificate or CPQ module exams must have undertaken and completed an accredited course of study with a training provider.

Accredited courses are offered at Universities, Colleges of Further Education and private training providers throughout England and Wales. Details of course providers are available at "Training Providers (CILEX.org.uk)".

Learners are advised to contact their chosen training provider to obtain further information about the course requirements and structure.

2.4 CILEX Code of Conduct

The following information is of relevance to learners who are working in legal practice

CILEX's regulatory functions have been delegated under the legal services act 2007 to CILEx Regulation Ltd. Everyone who registers as a member with CILEX is bound by its rules and regulations, which include the CILEX Code of Conduct and the CILEx Regulation Enforcement Rules. The Rules establish three panels which are the Professional Conduct Panel (PCP), The Disciplinary Tribunal (DT) and the Appeals Panel (AP).

The PCP has the power to consider the conduct of anyone who wishes to become a member of CILEX and the conduct of anyone who is already an existing member of CILEX. If a person has declared, at membership application stage, a Prior Conduct (for example a bankruptcy judgement or a criminal conviction) the matter may be put to the PCP to consider. The PCP will then decide if that person has the suitable character to become a member. The PCP may refuse or approve a person's application to become a member.

The PCP will also deal with Prior Conduct declarations made by anyone who is an existing member (of any grade) or authorised person of CILEX in addition to any complaints made against them.

The DT considers matters referred to it by the PCP and there is an Appeals Panel which deals with all matters that are being appealed from the PCP and the DT.

The PCP and the DT consider a member's conduct against the standards set out in the CILEX Code of Conduct. They decide if allegations of misconduct are found proved and therefore, breach the CILEX Code of Conduct and is unbecoming to the profession. The PCP and the DT have the power to sanction an existing member for any misconduct that is found proved. If the PCP does not refer the member's conduct matter to the DT, they have the power to require a member to give undertakings as to their future conduct, impose conditions regarding their employment, reprimand and/or warn a member. The DT has the same powers as the PCP, but they also have the power to fine or exclude members from CILEX membership.

The AP will consider any appeals, for example, where a person has been refused membership of CILEX or where a member is fined.

A person may also be ordered to pay the costs of any investigation into their conduct if the matter is found proved.

The standards which all members are required to observe are set out in the CILEX Code of Conduct. It sets out nine principles CILEX members must follow. It is our core guidance on the conduct, practice and professional performance expected of you and is sent to all learners on enrolment and also to newly admitted Fellows. A copy of the Code is available on the CILEX website.

All conduct matters including any that are declared at membership application stage are dealt with by CILEx Regulation Ltd.

3. Overview of the CILEX Certificate in Legal Practice

3.1 CILEX Certificates in Legal Practice Titles.

CILEX Certificates can be achieved in the following areas of law:

- Conveyancing Practice
- Civil Litigation Practice
- Criminal Law Practice
- Family Practice
- Wills and Probate Practice
- Employment Practice

3.2 Assessment Requirements

The CILEX Certificate in Legal Practice has 3 modules.

Module 1. Legal Systems

Module 2. Professional and Legal Skills

Module 3. Working in Legal Practice – select from the specialist modules available

Exams are onscreen.

To book an exam the myCILEX account must be used.

Further Working in Practice modules may be taken but a new qualification should be registered for, following the route outlined in Section 2.2 of this document. Exemptions may be applied for at this point.

3.3 Assessment Design

The table below outlines the format and structure of the CILEX Certificate exams.

Level 3 Certificate in Legal Practice Modules		
Legal Systems	2 hours	Automated exam – 60 questions (80 marks)
Professional and Legal Skills – F5 Succeeding in the Legal Environment	2 hours 30 minutes	Automated and open response examination (60 marks). 15 x 1-mark automated and 45-mark open response questions
Professional and Legal Skills – F6 Legal Research	2 hours 30 minutes	Automated examination 35 questions. 40 marks
Choice of one: F7 Working in Civil Litigation F8 Working in Criminal Law Practice F10 Working in Family Practice F11 Working in Wills and Probate F12 Working in Employment Law	2 hours	Automated and open response examination 30 x 1-mark automated and 1 x 20-mark open response question
F4 Introduction to Property and Private Client	2 hours	44 x 1-mark automated; 12 x 2-mark automated and 4 x 3-mark automated

Sample assessment materials can be found on the Training Provider Hub once registered as a CILEX accredited Training Provider.

F7 – F12 Exams are offered twice a year in January and June.
F4, F5, F6 The Certificates are also offered in September.

Notional Grade Boundaries

CILEX Certificate exams are graded pass/fail.

The notional grade boundaries offer tutors and learners the opportunity to understand the approximate level of achievement necessary to achieve a pass grade for an assessment. Notional grade boundaries, however, are not fixed boundaries, and, as a part of its ongoing quality assurance of the assessment process, CILEX reserves the right to amend its notional grade boundaries. The notional pass grade boundary is 60%.

CILEX takes every precaution to ensure that the level and quality of each of its exam papers is appropriate for learners. As a part of its commitment to robust quality assurance at every stage of the examination, CILEX also scrutinises learner performance before final results are determined. In this way, CILEX can identify and address issues that are known to have affected candidate performance adversely and reflect this in the way in which the final pass boundary for the examination results are set.

3.4 Qualification time

CILEX gives an indication of reasonable Total Qualification Time (TQT) - the number of notional hours that could reasonably be expected for a learner to achieve the learning and assessment outcomes, and Guided Learning Hours (GLH) – the number of taught delivery hours or under supervision, but these form a guide as CPQ should focus on outcomes.

Examples of activities included in TQT are:

- independent and unsupervised research/learning
- unsupervised compilation of a portfolio of work experience
- unsupervised e-learning
- unsupervised e-assessment
- unsupervised set tasks
- watching a pre-recorded podcast or webinar
- unsupervised work-based learning

Estimating TQT and GLH is subjective and is influenced by the delivery structure of the training provider, the profile of the candidate and the work experience they have.

These hours breakdown as follows:

Qualification Time		
Legal Systems	75 TQT	25 GLH
Professional and Legal Skills	90 TQT	30 GLH
Working in Legal Practice - [Insert Specialism]	130 TQT	55 GLH
	295 TQT	110 GLH

3.5 Entry requirements

There are no formal entry requirements for these qualifications. However, CILEX recommends that learners considering a CILEX qualification should have an appropriate level of English in order to access the learning materials and exams.

Approved exemptions

Approved exemptions can be found in the Exemptions Policy

3.6 Requesting exemptions

To apply for a module exemption, the application must be made when the qualification is being purchased. Full details of the exemption process are available on our website and in the CILEX exemptions Policy and Procedure.

It is not possible to award the CILEX Certificate based on three module exemptions.

4 Qualification administration

4.1 Exam timetables

Exam timetables are published each year and can be found on MyCILEX. Once bookings are available, these will also be bookable via MyCILEX.

4.2 How to book an exam

Candidate Booking Guidance

Step 1 - Log on to MyCILEX

Candidates must have registered for the qualification before being able to book module exams.

The information below is designed to guide a learner through the exam booking process.

- To book an exam, visit CILEX online www.CILEX.org.uk and log in to your MyCILEX account. The Key Dates and Deadlines are also available on this account.
- Select the correct accredited training provider
- You will receive confirmation of your booking immediately.
- Administration fees will apply to amendments requested for an exam booking. Amendments can be made up to 14 days after the exam closing date after which, refunds and deferrals will not be available.

Step 2 – Online system preparation

- You must check your booking confirmation details carefully.
- IMPORTANT. When you have made your booking, approximately 4 weeks before your exam date you will receive an email from TestReach, our online system, with a username, password and instructions for the exam, inviting you to login to the system. You may also receive an SMS alert on your phone once your account is created.
- You should follow the instructions and log on to the online system to ensure this will work on your computer. Minimum system requirements are set out in the 'Candidate Guide to TestReach.
- IMPORTANT. At this stage, you will also be asked to select and book your remote invigilation time slot. These are offered up to 15-minute intervals. The last interval, where set by CILEX, will be 1 hour past the advertised exam start time on the MyCILEX account. Remote invigilated slots are offered on a first come first served basis.

Step 3 – Choosing your exam venue

- Exams are sat using remote invigilation. This means you can sit your assessment in a location which is convenient and appropriate for you. We suggest a quiet home office space or a closed office space with your employer or training provider.
- Our live remote invigilation means you mean will monitored via webcam and microphone and it is essential that these are in working order . Please be aware that attempting to use a laptop or device that is intended for work purposes may have security settings that prevent the TestReach application from connecting to components such as the webcam and screenshare and therefore it is recommended to use a personal laptop/desktop.

- It is your responsibility as a candidate to ensure that
 - a) you will not be disturbed, and the exam will be taken under exam conditions
 - b) you can meet the minimum system requirements outlined above.

Step 4 - Preparing for your remote invigilated exam

- Once you have received the email from TestReach inviting you to log in and access the resources available, you will also be asked to download and install the TestReach desktop application and carry out a short system check, which ensures your computer is all set for the exam day.
- You do not need any special equipment for exam day, but you must ensure your laptop or computer meets the minimum system requirements.
- As you work through a system checking process, any systems issues will be flagged so that you can work to resolve these prior to your exam day.
- TestReach technical support is also available to assist if required and can be accessed by emailing support@testreach.com

Step 5 – The exam day

- You should launch your exam 20 - 30 minutes before your exam start time and be aware it can take up to 15 minutes to complete this process. It's important to be ready to start your exam on time, as you will not be able to start the launch process 15 minutes after your scheduled exam start time.
- Fully close all applications using your task manager to avoid exam disruption (using Ctrl-Alt-Del for PC users, or Command-Option-Esc for Mac users).
- Be prepared for identity checks. You will need either
 - a current valid passport (any nationality)
 - Current Full or Provisional UK Photo Card Driving Licence
 - UK Residence card
- Queries about the identity checks should contact the Membership Team

4.3 Exam Regulations

The Examination Regulations are found on the myCILEX portal. All candidates are required to comply with the Examination Regulations. Alleged breaches of the examination regulations may result in a malpractice investigation.

5 Exam support

5.1 Reasonable Adjustments

CILEX recognises that reasonable adjustments allow trainees to show what they know and can do without changing the validity or demands of the assessment. Reasonable adjustments are offered within the scope of the Equality Act 2010. The Act requires awarding organisations to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment.

Trainees, who require reasonable adjustments should apply when they commence each stage of the CPQ. An application for reasonable adjustments will apply to all examinations required for the relevant stage of the CPQ ie Foundation, Advanced or Professional Stage.

The Reasonable Adjustments Policy – CILEX Professional Qualification and Reasonable Adjustments Procedure – CILEX Professional Qualification is available on myCILEX and the Training Provider Hub. Trainees apply for reasonable adjustments using the online application in myCILEX.

5.2 Access Arrangements

CILEX recognises that access arrangements allow trainees to show what they know and can do without changing the validity or demands of the assessment. Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment takes place to enable trainees, who have temporary injuries, temporary illness or other temporary indisposition which present a barrier to accessing the assessment, to access the assessment. Examples of arrangements include extra time for breaks, providing a scribe for a learner with a recently broken arm.

Trainees, who require access arrangements should apply as soon as possible after they experience the temporary illness, injury, or indisposition which will adversely impact their examination performance. The deadline for applications is set out in the CPQ Key Dates and Deadlines.

The Access Arrangements Policy – CILEX Professional Qualification and Access Arrangements Procedure – CILEX Professional Qualification is available on myCILEX and the Training Provider Hub. Trainees apply for access arrangements using the online application in myCILEX.

5.3 Technical Support for your online exam

Issues on exam day are addressed by TestReach, CILEX' online assessment provider.

TestReach can be contacted on:

Phone: +44 (0)20 34758685

Phone: +353 (0)1 6991385

Phone (US): +1 833-202-2819

Email: support@testreach.com

- It is your responsibility to ensure your computer meets the system requirements that are set out in the 'Candidate Guide to TestReach' and that it:
 - is in good order
 - has sufficient memory
 - has up-to-date software, drivers etc
 - has good internet connection speeds
 - is plugged into a power source so you have enough power for the duration of the exam

If your equipment fails on exam day then there are troubleshooting steps that the TestReach Support team can work through as follows:

Poor internet connection at the time of their exam

You may have your exam resumed up to a maximum of 3 times. After this you will be asked to contact CILEX to rebook your exam¹.

You experience an issue local to your device i.e. issues with your webcam, sound card, graphics card. The TestReach Support team will spend up to a maximum of 15 mins on a telephone helping you to resolve issues local to your device.

After this, the TestReach Support team will end the call and advise you to contact CILEX to rebook your exam¹.

You experience problems logging on to the TestReach app

If you call the TestReach customer support line within 30 mins of your exam start time, the customer support team will help you to resolve the issue.

If you call after 30 minutes, you will be advised to contact CILEX to rebook your exam¹.

For major or critical incidents with the TestReach platform you should go to <https://status.testreach.com>

This website will keep you up to date on any actions you should take and when TestReach expect the service to resume.

In the event of a disruption to the TestReach service, the TestReach support lines would naturally see a spike in activity, and it is unlikely that you will be able to speak to a TestReach agent. The <https://status.testreach.com> page is TestReach's main and sole source of communication to you during this time.

6. Following a CILEX exam

6.1 Accessing exam results

Exam results will be available via myCILEX on results day.

The key dates, outlining the results day are available on myCILEX. Training providers can access this information via the training provider hub.

6.2 Special consideration

Special Consideration may be applied in circumstances where a trainee is materially affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control at the time of an assessment. The adverse circumstances may include temporary injury, illness, other indisposition or event outside of the trainee's control.

Special consideration will be dependent on the nature of the assessment and the adverse circumstances encountered and may include:

- a small post-assessment adjustment to a trainee's mark;
- rearranging an assessment for a future session at no extra charge.

The Special Consideration Policy – CILEX Professional Qualification and the Special Consideration Procedure – CILEX Professional Qualification are available on myCILEX and the Training Provider Hub. Trainees apply for special consideration using the online application in myCILEX.

6.3 Enquiries about results

CILEX has in place a wide range of checks and quality assurance procedures to ensure that every trainee who takes an assessment receives a result which accurately reflects their performance in the assessment. However, on occasion, a trainee may consider that their assessment result is not an accurate reflection of their performance. In such cases a trainee may challenge the mark/grade they have received.

There are two types of enquiries about results: Clerical Check and Review of Marking (which includes a clerical check). A review of marking is not available for multiple choice/auto-marked questions.

The Enquiries about Results Policy – CILEX Professional Qualification and the Enquiries about Results Procedure – CILEX Professional Qualification are available on myCILEX and the training provider hub. Trainees apply for enquiries about results using the online application in myCILEX.

The fees for Enquiries About Results are available on myCILEX and the training provider hub.

6.4 Appeals

An appeal is a formal request for the review of a decision. An appeal considers whether CILEX followed the correct policies and procedures and applied these policies and procedures fairly.

Subject to the principles set out in the Appeals Policy – CILEX Professional Qualification and the associated procedure CILEX allows appeals of:

- enquiries about assessment results (EARs);
- decisions regarding reasonable adjustments, access arrangements and special consideration;
- decisions relating to sanctions imposed on a trainee or CILEX training provider, following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration;
- other administrative decisions, for example, exemption application decisions

The Appeals Policy – CILEX Professional Qualification and Appeals Procedure – CILEX Professional Qualification are available on myCILEX and the training provider hub. Trainees should download and complete the CILEX CPQ Appeals Form in myCILEX to request an appeal. The form should be submitted via the Contact Us function in myCILEX.

6.5 Malpractice

Candidates must comply with the Exam Regulations.

CILEX has in place policies and procedures for dealing with cases of alleged candidate malpractice.

The CILEX Malpractice and Maladministration Policy – CILEX Professional Qualification and the Malpractice and Maladministration Procedure – CILEX Professional Qualification are available on myCILEX and the Training Provider Hub.

6.6 Release of exam papers and scripts

CILEX will not release exam papers after each exam series. Stage Chair of Examiners' reports will be available for feedback on the session. Further support materials will be provided to accredited training providers at various intervals.

Trainees' examination scripts are the property of CILEX and are not released to trainees or tutors.

6.7 Transcripts and Certification

On completion of an exam, a transcript of the results will be available on myCILEX and a digital credential.

On completion of all three components on the CPQ stage, ethics, Professional Experience and the exams, a stage completion certificate/digital credential will be awarded.

6.8 Resitting Exams

Re-sits are available for all CPQ exams and are not limited.

Re-sits are payable via myCILEX on booking. The re-sit fees are available on myCILEX.

7. Complaints

We welcome and value feedback from members and other stakeholders. Your feedback helps us to develop and improve our services and ensure that our Customer Service Standards are appropriate for your needs.

CILEX has a Complaints Policy. If you would like to give feedback, or make a complaint, please refer to this document in the first instance, available on our website, which clearly outlines the steps you need to take, and who you need to contact. Any feedback that you provide about our services is valued and provides us with an opportunity to learn and improve.

8. Summary of key changes and updates

Section	Summary of updates in V.1.2
3.3	Addition of F11-12
3.4	Removal of details of exemptions
8	Inclusion of summary of key changes and updates