



**CILEX Level 6 Single Subject Certificate/CILEX Level 6 Professional Higher
Diploma in Law and Practice/CILEX Level 6 Graduate Fast-Track Diploma**

Unit 20 – The Practice of Family Law

Case study materials

January 2026

Information for candidates

- You should familiarise yourself with these case study materials before the examination, taking time to consider the themes raised in the materials.
- You should consider the way in which your knowledge and understanding relate to these materials.
- In the examination, you will be presented with a set of questions which will relate to these materials.
- You may discuss these materials with your tutor(s).

Instructions and information to candidates during the examination

- You are allowed to take your own clean/unannotated copy of this document into the examination. Alternatively, you can access the electronic version of this document in the examination.
- You are allowed to take your own unmarked copy of the following designated statute book into the examination – Blackstone’s Statutes on Family Law, 31st edition, Rob George, Oxford University Press, 2023.
- You must comply with the CILEX Exam Regulations – Online Exams at Accredited Centres/CILEX Exam Regulations – Online Exams with Remote Invigilation.

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ADVANCE INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

You are a trainee lawyer employed by the firm Kempstons LLP of The Manor House, Bedford MK42 7AB. The firm's telephone number is (01234) 622964. The email address is admin@kempstons.co.uk and DX address Bedford 3721.

The firm is a high-street practice and one-third of the firm's caseload consists of family work. The family department at Kempstons LLP is headed up by the family partner, Nargis Bhatia. The local family court is in Bedford.

You arrive at work to find the following documents on your desk and a memo from Nargis Bhatia providing you with instructions:

DOCUMENT 1: Memorandum from Nargis Bhatia

DOCUMENT 2: Attendance note with Chandice Williams

DOCUMENT 3: Attendance note with Tina Sussman

DOCUMENT 4: Email from Richard Potter

DOCUMENT 5: Attendance note with Jaya Harris

DOCUMENT 1

MEMORANDUM FROM NARGIS BHATIA

To: Trainee Lawyer

From: Nargis Bhatia

Date: {Today's date}

Re: Matters requiring attention

As previously discussed, I will be out of the office for the next week attending a conference. I should be grateful if you could deal with the following matters during my absence:

1. Chandice Williams file

Mrs Williams is a new client who attended at the office yesterday. I attach a copy of my attendance note of this meeting (**Document 2**). This matter needs to be progressed.

2. Tina Sussman file

I have been dealing with Mrs Sussman's divorce application and I am now ready to work on dealing with financial matters.

Mrs Sussman attended yesterday to discuss her financial position. I attach a copy of my attendance note (**Document 3**). Please progress this as a matter of urgency and keep Mrs Sussman informed.

3. Richard Potter

Mr Potter is a new client who emailed for advice yesterday. I attach a copy of the email (**Document 4**). I have had a brief telephone discussion with Mr Potter who has confirmed that he wishes to instruct us. Please progress this matter during my absence.

4. Jaya Harris file

Ms Harris is a new client who attended at the office yesterday. I attach a copy of my attendance note of this meeting (**Document 5**). Ms Harris needs this matter to be progressed urgently.

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DOCUMENT 2

ATTENDANCE NOTE RE CHANDICE WILLIAMS

Client: Chandice Williams
Date: {Yesterday's date}
Fee earner: Nargis Bhatia
File Ref: NB/01626/MAT/YS
Time taken: 1 hour

Attendance on Chandice Williams, who is a new client. The relevant identity and conflict checks have been completed. No conflicts have been identified.

The client details are:

Full name: Chandice Williams
D.O.B. 16 May 1985
Address: 15 Holly Drive, Bedford, MK11 1ZZ
Contact: 0778662579 (Mob)
Occupation: Midwife

Mrs Williams attended to obtain initial advice following the breakdown of her marriage to Marcus Williams.

Mr and Mrs Williams have lived together in a relationship for 20 years. They have one child, Kayla Williams (DOB 21.5.2011). Kayla has special learning needs.

Mrs Williams, who is 15 years younger than her husband, is a midwife. Mr Williams is an IT consultant. The family home, 15 Holly Drive, is held in the couple's joint names as beneficial joint tenants. They both have pensions but Mr Williams' pension pot is significantly more than that of Mrs Williams.

In 2023 Mrs Williams had some serious health problems, which affected their relationship. Mr Williams found it difficult to cope with her ill health and its impact. He confided in a family friend, Precious Jones, whom he found very supportive and this led to an affair between them.

When Mrs Williams learnt of the affair, she was very upset. However, she agreed to have counselling with Mr Williams and as a result agreed to give their relationship another chance. Mrs Williams recovered her health and the relationship appeared to be working well.

Last August, Mr and Mrs Williams decided to take a trip to Jamaica, a country that they had always wanted to visit as they had family connections there. To celebrate their 20 years together they arranged to get married while they were in Jamaica. Prior to leaving for Jamaica they made Wills referring to the planned marriage, each making provision for Kayla and then leaving the remainder of their estate to the other.

They returned from Jamaica two weeks ago. The trip had gone really well until the last day when Mrs Williams inadvertently discovered messages on Mr Williams' phone that indicated that he had not ended the affair with Precious Jones as he had promised. Mrs Williams had copies of the texts, which she had forwarded to her phone.

When Mrs Williams confronted her husband with the texts, he admitted that he had continued the affair with Precious Jones. He said that the trip to Jamaica had made him realise how important his relationship with Mrs Williams was. He said he had planned to end the affair on his return home. He begged Mrs Williams to give the marriage a chance and suggested that they move out to Jamaica so that they really had a fresh start.

Mrs Williams told her husband that she needed time to think and to make a decision. She told her husband that he needed to move out of the family home to give her space and time to think. Mr Williams is currently living with his brother.

Mrs Williams has now decided that the marriage was a mistake. She no longer feels that she can trust her husband. She wants to end the marriage as soon as possible and move on with her life and with caring for Kayla, who has been seriously affected by the situation.

Mrs Williams has informed her husband of her decision and says that he has taken the news badly. He keeps repeating that she is the most important person in his life and that if she would only agree to move to Jamaica, they could be happy. Mrs Williams does not agree.

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DOCUMENT 3

ATTENDANCE NOTE RE TINA SUSSMAN

Client: Tina Sussman
Date: {Yesterday's date}
Fee earner: Nargis Bhatia
File Ref: NB/15725/FIN/YS
Time taken: 1 hour

Following the submission of her divorce application, Mrs Sussman attended to discuss financial arrangements. She provided some initial information regarding the matrimonial assets.

The key matrimonial asset is the family home, 12 Meadow Drive, Kempston, MK00 1ZZ. This is valued at £525,000 and is subject to a mortgage of £100,000. The property is held in joint names as beneficial joint tenants.

Mr and Mrs Sussman both received inheritances several years ago. They planned to use these to buy a holiday home in Devon but the money was invested until they found the right property. Their joint investments are around £380,000. Mr Sussman has shares valued at around £95,000 and Mrs Sussman has shares valued at around £75,000.

Both Mr Sussman, who is an engineer, and Mrs Sussman, who works in a bank, have pensions. Mr Sussman's pension CE is £320,000 and Mrs Sussman's pension CE is £165,000.

The parties' son, Layton who is 13, lives with his mother in the family home. Mr Sussman is currently living in rented accommodation but plans to buy a property once division of the financial assets has finally been agreed.

Mrs Sussman would like to ensure that she and Layton have a home. She would like the family home transferred into her sole name in order to reduce the disruption for Layton. Mr Sussman has agreed that the family home can be transferred into his wife's sole name, provided he receives investments to the net value of the house in return. Mrs Sussman has made initial inquiries about taking on responsibility for the mortgage. She is confident that she can afford the monthly payments and that her application for a mortgage will be approved. She therefore plans to proceed with the transfer into her sole name in due course.

Mrs Sussman mentioned in passing that shortly after the breakdown of her marriage she started a relationship with a work colleague, Alex North. Alex has just received notice that the lease on his flat will not be renewed. Mrs Sussman is considering inviting him to live with her in the family home as she has the space and Alex has indicated that he would be happy to make a contribution towards the mortgage and household expenses.

Layton, who stays with his father every Saturday night, has told his father about Mrs Sussman's plans regarding Alex. Mr Sussman, who was not the instigator of the divorce, is not happy about this. To date he has voluntarily paid child maintenance for Layton as agreed with his wife but he is now threatening to stop these payments.

Mrs Sussman is concerned that the divorce is having an impact on Layton. She wants to come to an agreement with her husband on financial matters and to do this in as amicable a way as possible. She is also aware that they need to manage the costs that will be incurred. Mr Sussman has indicated to his wife that he plans to seek legal advice.

DOCUMENT 4

EMAIL FROM RICHARD POTTER

To: Nargis Bhatia
From: Richard Potter
Date: {Yesterday's date}
Subject : Bella and Flora Potter

I am contacting you on the advice of my friend, David Gent, who you helped a couple of years ago.

I have two daughters, Bella, aged 13, and Flora, aged 9, and I am named as their father on their birth certificates. Their mother is Emma Walters. Emma and I were in a relationship from June 2011 until May 2023 when we both recognised that our relationship wasn't working and decided to separate. I agreed that it would be best for the girls to live with Emma who is a very good mother. I have continued to provide financial support for the girls. Emma and I agreed that the girls would stay alternate weekends and spend half of the school holidays with me. These arrangements worked well for the first year or so. The girls settled into the new routine and were happy. Emma and I seemed to have managed the separation well.

In the summer of 2024, I met Yolanda. We got on really well and were engaged in July 2025. I was very careful in how I introduced Yolanda to the girls. She has been brilliant with them and they really love her. They are looking forward to being bridesmaids when we get married.

Four months ago, Yolanda gave birth to our son, Sam. And then the problems started.

When Yolanda first moved in with me, Emma seemed to accept that I had moved on and raised no concerns about the girls continuing to visit. However, since Sam's birth it has been increasingly difficult to get Emma to honour the arrangements for Bella and Flora to visit.

I was expecting to see the girls during the school October half term but Emma cancelled at very short notice, saying that she was taking the girls to visit her parents. Bella texted me every day she was at her grandparents and repeatedly told me that she and Flora were missing me and wanted to see Sam. In the end, the girls did visit us for one afternoon to meet their new baby brother but Emma would not agree to them staying overnight as she said they were very tired and needed a quiet couple of days with her before returning to school.

Since then, Emma has cancelled weekend visits on a number of occasions and for a variety of reasons, including illness and invitations to friends' birthday parties. I know that on the couple of occasions when illness has been given by Emma as the reason that it is not true as I always text Bella to ask how she is and she has replied that she and Flora are fine. Emma also says that as the girls are growing older their friends are becoming more important to them but Bella regularly texts to say she and Flora are missing their visits and to ask when they can visit again and see Sam.

I saw the girls for only one day at Christmas. They weren't able to stay overnight because Emma wanted them back as her sister, Gaynor, was coming to stay and wanted to see them. However, according to Bella, Gaynor stayed for a week! I haven't seen the girls since Christmas.

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I have tried to discuss matters with Emma to resolve things but she refuses to do this. If I ring, she hangs up on me. And she ignores my texts. I had hoped that she would eventually recognise the importance of the visits. But there is no sign of a change of mind. In fact, she texted last week suggesting that the visits were unsettling for the girls and that it would be a good idea to give them a rest for the time being. But Bella's texts do not support this.

I need advice on how to ensure that the girls are able to visit.

Kind regards

Richard Potter

DOCUMENT 5

ATTENDANCE NOTE RE JAYA HARRIS

Client: Jaya Harris
Date: {Yesterday's date}
Fee earner: Nargis Bhatia
File Ref: NB/01226/DA/YS
Time taken: 1 hour

Attendance on Jaya Harris, who is a new client. The relevant identity and conflict checks have been completed. No conflicts have been identified.

The client details are:

Full name: Jaya Harris
D.O.B. 14 September 2000
Address: Flat 28, Fleming Tower, Butchers Row, Bedford, MK22 7ZZ
Contact: 0777652848 (Mob)
Occupation: None – currently caring for young child

Ms Harris attended the office for advice regarding concerns for her safety as a result of the behaviour of her partner, Paul Roberts.

Ms Harris and Mr Roberts had been in a relationship for six months when she became pregnant with their son, Matthew. Our client moved into the small flat that Mr Roberts rented. Mr Roberts works as an engineer installing and servicing security systems. He earns a good salary and receives generous annual bonuses. His job requires him to travel throughout the UK. Ms Harris trained to be a veterinary nurse but has not worked since Matthew, who is now 18 months old, was born.

Living in a small flat with a baby was not easy. Matthew was an active baby and slept for only short periods of time. Ms Harris found caring for him challenging. Her sleep was frequently interrupted and she became very tired. When asked to look after Matthew to allow Ms Harris to get some sleep, Mr Roberts refused, saying that the travelling that his job required was challenging and when he was at home he needed to rest and relax. His main relaxation at home was watching sporting programmes with the volume turned up, which regularly disturbed Matthew.

Ms Harris admits that the lack of sleep affected her energy levels and so she found it hard to keep Matthew happy and keep the flat tidy, and cook meals and other household tasks. When Matthew did sleep, she was so exhausted that she fell asleep too. Mr Roberts often returned from work to find Ms Harris asleep, the flat very untidy and no cooked meal ready for him.

This led to arguments between Ms Harris and Mr Roberts, who had a short temper. The arguments were initially verbal but gradually Mr Roberts became more and more angry. He started simply smashing whatever he could lay his hands on – mugs and glasses. However, his anger progressed into physical violence when he would grab Ms Harris and shake her violently or slap her hard. She has a number of pictures of the bruises on her phone.

Yesterday, Ms Harris had had a particularly bad day with Matthew. She was exhausted. When Mr Roberts, who had had an early start and who had driven nearly 200 miles, returned home he was tired and hungry. When he found that there was no meal for him, he exploded in anger. He slapped Ms Harris hard and threw her against the wall causing her to fall and hit a glass coffee table. This caused a bad cut to her cheek. Mr Roberts then yelled that he'd had enough and was going to buy fish and chips, and then he was going to the pub.

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Ms Harris had never seen Mr Roberts so angry. She was too frightened to stay in the flat and went to spend the night with her mother. However, her mother lives in a one-bedroomed retirement flat and Ms Harris cannot stay there with Matthew. Ms Harris has no other relatives in the area. She visited the local Accident and Emergency department this morning as her cheek was swollen and very painful, and needed stitches.

Mr Roberts did ring Ms Harris to apologise. He promised that there would be no repetition. But our client told him that it was one show of anger too many. He has apologised before but despite his promises to improve his behaviour, he has constantly failed. Ms Harris suggested that they needed a bit of space. She suggested that Mr Roberts could go and stay with his parents who live nearby in a three-bedroomed house, but he refused.

Mr Roberts has continued to ring Ms Harris, leaving messages, but they are becoming increasingly angry and threatening. He is also leaving text messages. The last message read:

“You need to go and take that brat, your son, not mine, with you. If you don’t, I’m going to get my mates to come and sort you out. And if you think that I’m angry, you haven’t seen how angry my mates can get!!!!”.

Ms Harris is very frightened for the safety of herself and Matthew. She says that several of Mr Roberts’ mates are well known in the neighbourhood as troublemakers who regularly get into fights.

Ms Harris wishes to return to the flat with Matthew. She currently has no income. All her and Matthew’s belongings, clothes, and toys are in the flat and it is the only home Matthew has known. But she does not feel that she would be safe there if Mr Roberts was also there. Mr Roberts does have another option – he could stay with his parents for the time being.

End of the case study materials