

Entry Requirements

1. Introduction

This document outlines the entry requirements and application process for the ACL Training Costs Lawyer Qualification.

2. Age

The minimum age of an applicant to start the Costs Lawyer Qualification is 18, students must be 18 at the date study will commence with ACLT. If requested by ACLT, applicants will need to provide proof of their date of birth before their application is considered.

3. Entry Level Qualifications

Before study can be commenced on the programme students must provide documentary evidence of the required qualifications. The minimum level of qualification for a Trainee Costs Lawyer is as set out below, or equivalent:

1. Four GCSEs at grade C or above, English and Maths being compulsory; or
2. Two A level passes and 1 GCSE level to include English; or
3. Three AS level passes to include either English or Maths; or
4. GNVQ at intermediate or advance level, provided a communications skills element is included; or

In the event that an applicant does not meet these entry requirements entry may be gained by passing an aptitude test set by ACL Training. Documentary evidence of entry level qualifications must be submitted with an application, that evidence must be certified.

4. Certified Documentation

ACL Training will not accept original documents from students, a certified copy should be provided. The person certifying the certificate/documents must be a practising or retired professional that was or is registered with the appropriate professional body (for example, a Chartered Accountant, a Teacher, Policeman, Solicitor or Costs Lawyer). Failure to provide the correct information will result in your application being returned to you.

The document being certified must be signed by the certifier who must state the following wording:

I/We certify that this is a true copy of the (INSERT DOCUMENT) of (INSERT NAME). Details of the certifier must also be stated on the document being certified.

ACL Training will routinely carry out spot checks to check the authenticity of documents.

5. Employment Details And References

Applicants are required to provide information about their work experience starting with their current employment details (or most recent). This information may be used to assess an applicant's suitability to study the Costs Lawyer Qualification. If applicants wish to evidence prior practice as part of (or all of) the three year supervised practice requirement they should include information covering that period.

Applicants are required to provide the name and address, with telephone number, of two referees (one professional and one character) who would be prepared to write in support of their application. The personal referee should be a person who has known the Applicant for at least three years. The professional referee should be a professional person who has worked with the Applicant, preferably as the Applicant's manager/supervisor. Each referee must know the Applicant well enough to vouch for their character and know of any problems the Applicant may have had e.g. convictions, disciplinary issues, plagiarism.

ACL Training may routinely request references where those will assist in determining an applicant's suitability to study the Costs Lawyer Qualification.

6. Applicants From Overseas

If an applicant's first language is not English, or they have not studied secondary education in English, they may need to demonstrate they have achieved a recognised English language qualification. The minimum IELTS score required for entry to the programme is 6.0 overall with a minimum 5.5 in each component. Please note, all applicants must be ordinarily domiciled in England and Wales or working permanently in England and Wales.

7. Guidance For Disabled Students

ACL Training welcomes applications from students with disabilities and makes reasonable adjustments to facilitate their access to courses. Any applications from students with disabilities will be considered on the same academic grounds as those for other candidates. Disabled students are advised to notify ACL Training of any disability that may impact upon their engagement with the programme so that reasonable adjustments can be made.

8. Association of Costs Lawyers Membership

Applicants will be enrolled as a Trainee Costs Lawyer member of the Association of Costs Lawyers (ACL) before being admitted to the Costs Lawyer Training course. This membership will be renewed annually. Subscriptions for membership are paid by ACLT as a benefit of studying with ACLT.

An application for membership of the ACL as a Trainee Costs Lawyer is incorporated into the application form for the Costs Lawyer Training Course. It is not a requirement that ACL Training students are members of ACL and it is open to applicants to opt out when applying for the course. If a student wishes to terminate their membership at any time during the course, they may do so by contacting the ACL Office.

9. Timing of Applications

Applications must be completed and submitted to the ACL Office by midnight on the published deadline date (with study to commence in January the following year). Applications after that date may not be considered until the following academic year. The application form must be completed in full with the correct information and should be accompanied by the following:

- 1 The name, address and phone number of two referees (one professional and one character).
- 2 Documentary evidence of qualifications (certified copies).
- 3 Payment of the current application administration fee.

10. Character and Suitability

The CLSB is responsible for setting and ensuring standards for all Costs Lawyers practising in England and Wales and the Association of Costs Lawyers is responsible for setting and maintaining standards for Trainee Costs Lawyers. ACL Training has a responsibility to ensure that Trainee Costs Lawyers are of suitable character. Applicants must declare any information that might affect their suitability to be a Trainee Costs Lawyer in accordance to rule 5 of the Costs Lawyer Standards Board Trainee Costs Lawyer Training Rules.

Such information the Applicant must declare will include:

- Any disciplinary action by any professional body.
- Any finding of cheating in exams or plagiarism during the course of study.
- If they are an un-discharged or discharged bankrupt.
- If they have entered into an Individual Voluntary Arrangement or Partnership Voluntary Arrangement under the Insolvency Act 1986, as amended.
- If they have been a director of a company or member of an LLP which has been wound up or the subject of an administration order, administrative receivership or a voluntary arrangement under the Insolvency Act 1986.
- If they have been disqualified from being a company director.
- If they have been committed to prison on civil or criminal proceedings or have been convicted of an indictable offence (subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 2014).
- If they lack capacity within the meaning of the Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- If they have been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by an order within the terms of section 72(1) (d) of the Charities Act 1993.
- If they are or have been the subject of a money judgement outstanding for more than 28 days.
- If they have been the subject of an order under S.43 of the Solicitors Act 1974.

- Any other matter that might reasonably be expected to be disclosed in affecting their fitness to study for the Costs Lawyer qualification or become a Costs Lawyer.

11. Declarations

In the event of any declarations ACL Training will consider the applicant's suitability and whether any conditions should be imposed. ACL Training may make any required checks including criminal records checks to ensure the suitability of an applicant. A failure to disclose, or the provision of misleading information on an application can be taken into account by ACL Training when considering the suitability of an applicant to be a Trainee Costs Lawyer.

ACL Training may require the provision of further information and require the applicant to provide authority for disclosure and release of information by third parties. ACL Training may require attendance of the applicant before it to explain the situation. Trainee Costs Lawyer members may be required to obtain a satisfactory standard disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau. This may include details of any current or spent convictions, Police cautions, reprimands and final warnings. ACL Training may also require production of overseas criminal records information in appropriate. Failure to disclose convictions or any other serious issues may result in refusal of admission.

If matters arise during membership regarding the character and suitability for continued membership the Trainee Costs Lawyer must notify ACL Training of this forthwith to enable consideration to be given. A failure to make such disclosure may result in enrolment as a Trainee Costs Lawyer being suspended or in appropriate cases terminated.

12. Equality And Diversity

ACL Training values and promotes equality and diversity and will seek to ensure that it treats all individuals fairly and with dignity and respect. It is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

13. Consideration of Applications

Once the application has been received, it will be examined by the Head of ACL Operations (or nominee) to ensure the entrance requirements are met. In determining the outcome of the application the Head of ACL Operations (or nominee) will consider whether an applicant has demonstrated they have the:

1. attitude, motivation, and commitment to study the level 6 qualification;
2. skills, achievements and work experience that relate to the course;
3. capacity to undertake independent working and their ability to adapt to new situations and circumstances; and
4. experience of digital working.

Where the Head of ACL Operations (or nominee) needs clarification in determining that an applicant has demonstrated the above they may seek further information from the applicant, a reference from the applicant's named referee and/or advice from the Academic Team at ACLT.

A decision should be made in respect of an application, and communicated to the applicant, by the Head of ACL Operations (or nominee) within four weeks of receipt. Where further information is required these timescales may be extended.

14. Appealing a decision

If you wish to make an appeal against an application decision, please write to the Operations Manager (marking your letter Application Appeal). Where reasonably practicable, your appeal request will be acknowledged within 3 working days and will then be processed in accordance with the appeals policy. In the event an application is refused by ACL Training and an appeal is unsuccessful the Applicant may, within 14 days of notification of the appeal decision, make a written appeal to the CLSB.

14. Review of policy

The ACLT Management Board and Head of Education will review this policy annually.