



## THE INSTITUTE OF LEGAL SECRETARIES AND PAs



### Legal Secretaries Diploma Course Syllabus

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# ILSPA's Legal Secretaries Diploma Course

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## Overview

ILSPA's Legal Secretaries Diploma course provides learners with valuable legal knowledge and the practical skills they need to become competent and qualified Legal Secretaries. The learner will be taught about the day to day tasks of a Legal Secretary, various areas of law, legal terminology, the legal profession and how the court system operates. The course also covers legal document production, how to complete legal forms, how to type professional correspondence, and will also help the learner advance his or her word processing skills. ILSPA's course is equivalent to a level 3 qualification and can either be studied through evening classes in London or online by distance learning.

Our philosophy is that Legal Secretaries should understand not only how to perform certain tasks but also the reason for those tasks and the principles of law behind them. This gives the learner excellent job prospects and the opportunity to advance his or her career.

### **The course includes the following areas:**

- Introduction: General Procedures and Legal Terminology
- Unit 1: The English Legal System
- Unit 2: The Law of Contract and Law of Tort
- Unit 3: Civil Litigation Practice
- Unit 4: Land Law and Conveyancing Practice
- Unit 5: Wills, Probate and Administration Practice
- Unit 6: Family Law and Practice

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# Syllabus

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## Introduction

The aim of this unit is to enable the learner to become familiar with the general tasks performed by Legal Secretaries and how law firms operate. It also provides the learner with an understanding of the legal terms he or she may encounter whilst working in the legal field.

## General Procedures

### Through this section the learner will understand:

- How correspondence and post is dealt with
- How to record information through memos and attendance notes
- The best procedure for taking messages
- How legal forms and documents are produced
- The importance of proofreading
- How financial transactions and charges are made
- How to file documents and keep a reminder system
- How a conflict of interest is dealt with
- The law library
- Court procedures
- The importance of confidentiality and using common sense

## Glossary of Legal Terminology

### Through this section the learner will understand:

- The words and terms commonly used within the legal profession
- Latin words which eliminate the need for long definitions



## Unit 1: The English Legal System

The aim of this unit is to enable the learner to gain an understanding of how English law has developed, the creation of legislation and how law is administered through the court system. It also helps the learner to become familiar with the legal profession.

### Through this unit the learner will understand:

- The nature and function of law
- The classification of law
- The development of the English Legal System
- Present-day sources of English law
- The court structure
- How disputes are settled outside of court
- The legal profession

## Unit 2: The Law of Contract and Law of Tort

The aim of this unit is to enable the learner to gain an understanding of the general legal principles of the law of contract and the law of tort. The learner will also gain knowledge of the different forms of liability under current civil obligations.

### Through the Law of Contract section the learner will understand:

- The definition of a contract
- The requirements for a valid contract
- The terms of a contract
- The discharge of a contract
- Remedies for a breach of contract
- Remedies in equity for a breach of contract

### Through the Law of Tort section the learner will understand:

- Nature and duty in tort
- Damage and liability
- General defences in tort
- Who is liable in tort
- Remedies
- Negligence
- Nuisance

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## Unit 3: Civil Litigation Practice

The aim of this unit is to enable the learner to gain an understanding of the main aspects of civil litigation as well as an understanding of how a litigation problem is dealt with. The learner will also develop his or her word processing skills and be able to apply them to a variety of legal forms and documents.

### Through this unit the learner will understand:

- The litigation procedure
- Procedural steps for a specified amount claim
- Procedural steps for an unspecified amount claim
- Procedural steps for a summary judgment where there is no defence
- Statements of case and the functions of each
- The importance of disclosure and the inspection of documents
- What is required when preparing for trial
- The enforcement of judgment

### Through the practical assessments the learner will be able to produce the following forms and documents:

- Claim form
- Particulars of claim
- Letter of claim
- Letter to the county court for the issue of a claim form
- Request for judgment in default for a specified amount
- Defence
- Letter serving a defence
- Request for further information
- Instructions to Counsel

## Unit 4: Land Law and Conveyancing Practice

The aim of this unit is to enable the learner to gain an understanding of land law and property ownership as well as the key steps in a conveyancing transaction. The learner will also develop his or her word processing skills and be able to apply them to a variety of legal forms and documents.

### Through this unit the learner will understand:

- Origins of land law
- Legal and equitable estates in land
- Interests in land
- Co-ownership
- Registered and unregistered titles
- Mortgages
- Land charges
- Adverse possession
- The conveyancing transaction
- The National Conveyancing Protocol
- Differences in procedures between registered and unregistered conveyancing
- Failure to complete
- A step-by-step guide to the conveyancing transaction
- Conveyancing terminology
- The importance of an exchange of contracts in a sale and a purchase
- The role of completion statements and cash accounts

### Through the practical assessments the learner will be able to produce the following forms and documents:

- Register of local land charges – requisition for search and official certificate of search
- Standard enquiries of local authority
- Coal mining search
- Searches of whole and part
- Land charges search
- Bankruptcy search
- Letter to the client requesting completion of a seller's property information form
- Letter to the solicitor submitting preliminary enquiries
- Draft Deed of Covenant
- Engrossed Deed of Covenant
- Letter to Client enclosing Deed of Covenant
- Transfer of whole
- Engrossed lease
- Draft licence to assign
- Draft assignment





## Unit 5: Wills, Probate and Administration Practice

The aim of this unit is to enable the learner to gain an understanding of the law and practice relating to the estate, rights and charges a person leaves after his or her death. The unit includes matters relating to wills and the administration of an estate. The learner will also develop his or her word processing skills and be able to apply them to a variety of legal forms and documents.

### Through this unit the learner will understand:

- Testate, intestate and partial intestacy
- Grants of Representation
- Entitlement to act as an Administrator under intestacy
- Powers and duties of Personal Representatives
- Procedural steps for obtaining a Grant of Probate
- Procedural steps for obtaining a Grant of Letters of Administration
- An affidavit of due execution and of plight and condition
- Key requirements of a valid Will
- Proper execution of a Will
- Testamentary dispositions
- Revocation
- Rectification of a Will
- Intestacy
- The administration of estates

### Through the practical assessments the learner will be able to produce the following forms and documents:

- Draft Will
- Engrossed Will
- Oath for Executors
- Letter to a client sending an oath for swearing
- Trust Deed
- Various letters in connection with the winding up of an estate

## Unit 6: Family Law and Practice

The aim of this unit is to enable the learner to gain an understanding of marriage and civil partnerships, and the procedures for a divorce or dissolution. The learner will understand how the breakdown of relationships affects children of the union and also the problems ancillary to such a breakdown, such as financial and property disputes. The learner will also develop his or her word processing skills and be able to apply them to a variety of legal forms and documents.

### Through this unit the learner will understand:

- Marriage
- Civil Partnerships
- Divorce
- Dissolution of a Civil Partnership
- Divorce / Civil Partnership Dissolution Procedure
- Financial Remedy Orders
- Pre- Nuptial Agreements and Matrimonial Matters before Magistrates
- Child or Children Orders

### Through the practical assessments the learner will be able to produce the following forms and documents:

- Client Statement
- Client Information Form
- Divorce Petition
- Letter for Certificate regarding Reconciliation
- Letter to lodge Petition
- Application for a Decree Nisi
- Statement in Support of the Divorce

## Help and Support

The learner will be provided with all the help and support that he or she needs to complete the course. Our Course Assessor and the ILSPA team will be happy to answer any queries the learner has.

Whether the learner studies the course through evening classes or distance learning, he or she has access to full support by telephone or email. If the learner is studying through evening classes, he or she can also get help directly from our tutor.



## Course Material

The Student area of our website includes everything the learner needs for the course, whether he or she studies by distance learning or through evening classes.

Once enrolled, the learner will be able to access the course material, achievement tests, practical assessments and Student resources. ILSPA's course is complete in itself and the learner does not need to purchase any textbooks.

## Coursework

There are no examinations for the Legal Secretaries Diploma course. The learner is assessed through coursework which consists of multiple-choice achievement tests and practical assessments.

The multiple-choice achievement tests give the learner the ability to show his or her understanding of the subjects studied. The practical assessments involve the production of legal forms and documents, which can be completed on a computer at home. Full instructions and examples are provided in the course material to enable the learner to complete the coursework. Through completing the assessments, the learner will be able to show how well he or she is able to follow instructions and apply word processing skills to a variety of legal documents. The learner will be required to create a portfolio of his or her assessments for marking.

## Course Results

When the learner passes all the units included in the course, he or she will be awarded ILSPA's Legal Secretaries Diploma Certificate. Our pass rate is very high and 95% of learners who complete their coursework achieve the qualification.

The learner is given a percentage for each achievement test and unit of practical assessments. An average percentage is taken from these results and the following grades are awarded for the overall result:

Pass: 80% to 89%

Merit: 90% to 94%

Distinction: 95% to 100%

If the learner fails any part of the course, he or she will be given the opportunity to redo the coursework once. Upon passing all the units in the course, the learner will be awarded ILSPA's Legal Secretaries Diploma certificate

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## ILSPA's Legal Secretaries Diploma Course

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I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Institute for running such a wonderful course! I am very happy with what I have learned, have found it greatly helpful and hope to take my career to the next level now. The staff at the Institute have been brilliant - I have rung a few times and every time they have been extremely friendly and helpful. I would definitely recommend this course to others.

*Petra Soone, Cumbria*

### Royal Courts of Justice Tour

All learners have the opportunity to attend a tour of the Royal Courts of Justice in London. This tour takes place once a month and is included in the course. We highly recommend this tour to learn how the courts operate and gain some valuable knowledge. Learners will be able to meet our Patron Amanda Hamilton who conducts the tour. Amanda used to teach our Legal Secretaries Diploma course and provides learners with a great insight into the legal world.



### Securing a Legal Secretary Job

We can help people to find work through CV help and guidance to secure employment. A session on how to secure a Legal Secretary job is held during our evening classes and helps learners become confident when looking for work. Our tutor provides useful advice on the importance of preparation, where to look for vacancies, producing an effective CV and attending interviews.

Whether you study the course by evening class or distance learning, you can also receive CV help and guidance to secure employment directly through the Institute by telephoning or emailing us.

**If you have any queries about our syllabus, please telephone us on 0207 1009210 or email us at [info@institutelegalsecretaries.com](mailto:info@institutelegalsecretaries.com).**