



**Circular No 054/2013
Dated 5 Mar 2013**

To Members of the Malaysian Bar

Update on Continuing Professional Development (“CPD”) Scheme

The Continuing Professional Development (“CPD”) Scheme has been implemented since the resolution to adopt it was passed at the 66th Annual General Meeting of the Malaysian Bar on 10 Mar 2012. In light of the feedback received from Members of the Bar, the CPD Department would like to clarify some issues regarding the CPD Scheme.

(1) Is the CPD Scheme mandatory?

The CPD Scheme is mandatory for Members of the Bar and pupils in chambers. A CPD cycle will run for 24 months, with the first cycle from 1 July 2012 until 30 June 2014.

In 2012, Bar Council required Members to complete a CPD record sheet to track their participation in the CPD Scheme. The CPD record sheet formed part of the submission to renew a Member’s Sijil Annual (“SA”) and Practising Certificate (“PC”). From 2013 onwards, the CPD Department has created its own tracking mechanism to track the CPD points accumulated by Members who attend events, Annual General Meetings, and Extraordinary General Meetings that are organised by Bar Council and State Bar Committees. It is only when Members have participated in other activities (eg conducted inquiries, worked as external examiners, etc), that these will have to be reported by them to the CPD Department.

(2) Is there a risk that a Member’s SA and PC will not be renewed if he/she does not accumulate 16 CPD points over the 24-month cycle?

No, unless sanctions are put in place for the enforcement of the CPD Scheme. The idea of sanctions will be visited at the end of the first cycle.

(3) Is it difficult to earn CPD points?

The simple answer is no. Many activities are available for Members to accumulate CPD points, ranging from attending courses, conducting presentations, writing articles, working on legal aid files, etc. However, CPD points can only be accumulated for activities participated in from 1 July 2012 onwards. Kindly refer to the CPD Guidelines for more detailed information about CPD-related activities.

(4) Is there any assistance provided to encourage law firms to participate in the CPD Scheme?

The CPD Department has been proactive in assisting law firms to organise short inhouse courses to ensure that Members have the opportunity to receive continuing education. Besides that, numerous initiatives have been implemented, such as an increase in the number of courses offered by Bar Council and State Bar Committees, and the conduct of free courses. About 50 courses have already been organised in the first quarter of 2013, with some of these available for free. In addition, the CPD Department will offer online courses to allow Members to participate in the CPD Scheme more conveniently. The online courses are expected to be ready for launch by April 2013.

(5) Is there real value in CPD?

To compete domestically, regionally and internationally on a comprehensive platform, Members will need to arm themselves with more knowledge and skills. With the liberalisation of the Malaysian legal sector in specific areas, Members will not only have to compete with the local, but also the international, legal fraternity. It is also important to recognise that the laws in Malaysia are constantly evolving, and participation in the CPD Scheme can help Members keep abreast of the latest information available.

Many other professions such as accountants, engineers and doctors have CPD requirements in place for members of their organisations. Bearing in mind the critical role that lawyers play in society, the development of the law, and upholding justice, it is essential that Members engage in continuing professional development.

CPD Department

With effect from October 2012, Bar Council formed the CPD Department to ensure the effective implementation of the CPD Scheme. Headed by Santhi Latha, who has been involved in legal education and trainings for more than two decades, the CPD Department is dedicated to provide assistance and support to Members by offering a whole range of courses in different practice areas, and this includes the setting up of online and offline training platforms.

The official CPD website will be launched in the near future. This will allow Members to receive the latest updates on CPD-related courses and information about the CPD Scheme.

The Professional Standards and Development Committee has recently reviewed the CPD Guidelines and made amendments to this document with a view to providing greater clarity and flexibility in the implementation of the Scheme. These enhanced Guidelines will be launched and made available on the CPD website.

The CPD Department welcomes any suggestion or feedback regarding the CPD Scheme. For enquiries, please contact Santhi Latha by telephone at 03-2050 2031, or by email at santhi@malaysianbar.org.my.

Thank you.

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