

Police Station Representatives Accreditation Scheme

Portfolio completion guidance

Education and Training Unit
Version 2

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These notes should help you to complete your [portfolio](#) for the Police Station Representatives Accreditation Scheme (PSRAS).

They are intended to supplement any guidance provided by the [assessment organisations](#) and should be read in conjunction with any such information received or training you may choose to attend. You should not rely wholly on these guidance notes as you prepare your portfolio – nor should you assume that if you have followed the recommendations here you will automatically pass.

General help for PSRAS portfolios

Issues to include

Always include the cases' Unique File Number (UFN) at the top of each report.

Do not name your clients in the reports – if you do so, you will fail on this alone. Instead use initials; Mr A, Mrs X; or simply refer to 'my client'.

One of the purposes of the portfolio is to allow you to reflect on your performance. If there is something you feel you did which you could have done better, highlight this and explain what you learned from the situation.

In addition if your supervising solicitor identifies issues and offers guidance for use in similar cases in the future you should record this and how you would intend to address similar issues in the future.

Word count

The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) does not set specific word limits for the portfolio, but we can give you a guide. You should aim for between 1500 and 3000 words for each of the case reports.

Don't, however, be tempted to drastically edit a case report if you find that you've exceeded the word count – assessment organisations will not fail you for providing too much information, but may fail you if you leave out something important.

Format

You should adhere to the format specified in the attachment to this document, which has been agreed with the assessment organisations.

Age of cases

For first submissions, cases must be no older than 12 months at the date of submission. Cases within a resubmitted portfolio that have previously been passed should be no more than 24 months old at the date of resubmission. Cases that were previously failed cannot be re-submitted and must be replaced by fresh cases not more than 12 months at the date of resubmission.

Areas to cover

Using the case report format attached you should, for every case study

- provide a brief description of the case, setting out what the case was about, describing what you had to do, and what the result was

- state the relevant information that was obtained from the police, the client and any relevant third party
- describe and analyse how you assessed the information obtained, how you formulated your advice, and what the advice given to the client was
- describe and analyse how you dealt with the police and third parties, including representations made, and how they dealt with any issues or problems that arose
- demonstrate that you complied with relevant professional and ethical rules
- demonstrate that you have received feedback on your performance from your supervising solicitor, and that the supervisor has adequately reflected on your performance, including consideration of training needs where appropriate

NB: Each report should involve a separate client. The same client can appear more than once in different case reports, as long as different issues are dealt with.

Further guidance

The portfolio consists of two parts and a total of nine case reports

Part A – made up of two stages with two case reports each

Stage 1 – two cases where you have observed a solicitor giving advice to a client in the police station.

Stage 2 – two cases where you have personally advised a client in the police station under the supervision of your supervising solicitor. It should be noted that if your supervisor had to interject during the course of the police interview and takes over the advice to the client that case will not be valid for inclusion in the portfolio.

Stage 1 and stage 2 cases should be written up using the report format attached and must cover the areas outlined above. Your supervisor is required to discuss with you each of the Part A cases and any training or personal study needs that may have been identified by you or your supervisor.

Part B – made up of five reports on cases on which you personally advised a client at the police station. At least one police station interview must have been attended for each case.

All cases must be no more than 12 months old at the date of submission of the portfolio (subject to the provisions on re-submission and permissible breaks in service e.g. maternity leave, illness etc.). There is no minimum time over which the cases must have occurred.

Case reports

The purpose of the portfolio is to encourage you to constructively reflect upon your police station practice and to enable an assessment organisation to assess your competence to advise clients at the police station by reference to the Standards of Competence published by the SRA.

When completing the case reports, including Part A, consider the questions and points set out below. This will help you to include all the information required to enable the assessor to mark the report effectively.

Case description

- What offence(s) was alleged?
- What were the issues raised?
- What happened at the police station?

- What was the outcome?

Obtaining information

- What information did you obtain from the police and how did you obtain it?
- Did you obtain any information from a third party or any documents e.g. custody record; and if so what did this reveal?
- What information/instructions did you receive from the client and at what stage?

Assessing information gathered and your advice to client

- Include your assessment of the information that you received addressing, where relevant
 - the strength of the case
 - issues of admissibility
 - whether or not there was a prima facie case
- Include your assessment of the law relating to the offence(s) and state how you explained this to your client.
- Describe how the law in relation to each offence related to the information you obtained. In particular, give your assessment of the instructions you received from the client, and consider
 - whether the client had a defence and if so what it was
 - whether the client's account was realistic and how you probed it
 - the client's demeanour/condition and its possible affect on his/her performance in the interview
- Describe and explain what advice you gave your client, including, where appropriate
 - the caution and the circumstances in which inferences may be drawn
 - what constitutes an inference
 - whether or not to answer questions at interview
 - police interview procedures and technique
 - other matters or police procedures to which your client could be subject
- Also explain any alternative courses of action you considered and why you rejected them.

Dealing with the police and third parties, and making representations

- Describe and explain how you dealt with the interview including
 - any issues that arose during the interview and how you dealt with them
 - any issues that arose outside of the interview on which you needed you to make representations

Professional ethics

- Describe and explain
 - Any professional or ethical issues that arose and how you dealt with them

Feedback and reflection

- Describe what you discussed with your supervisor and the outcome of your discussions.

- Consider whether there were any issues that you felt would have been better dealt with differently. If so, describe them and state what you would do differently if similar issues arose in the future.

Remember

Do be analytical – have in mind at all times the elements of the offence(s) and how the evidence and your instructions fit into them.

Do be professional – be honest as you record your handling of the situation and do not name or include in your case studies any information that could enable your client to be identified.

Do say clearly why you advised the client in a particular way.

Do not use standard formulae of words – for example when indicating how you have explained the caution say what you actually did and how this was tailored to the need of the particular client and their situation.

PSRAS case report form

Case number	UFN	Date of police station attendance

1. Case description
2. Obtaining information
3. Assessment of information and advice to client
4. Dealing with the police and third parties, and representations made
5. Professional ethics
6. Reflection by candidate
7. Feedback by the supervising solicitor (to be completed by the supervisor)

[Note that you should write up your case following the above headings. This page shows what must be in each case report, but the space left between the headings is not an indication of how much you should write. You should aim for 1,500 words – but you should not adhere to this amount at the expense of relevant detail.]

Training and personal study

In this section you should set out personal study and training that you have undertaken that is relevant to police station work. In particular, set out any study or training that you have undertaken during the period covered by the portfolio. You will not be assessed on this section, but the information you include may be used to give you feedback on your portfolio.

Certification

When you submit the portfolio, you will also be required to certify that

- all sections have been completed
- the five cases are presented in chronological order
- the reports are real cases of which you had personal conduct, are separate cases involving separate clients in respect of which you personally attended at a police interview with your client, in which (other than in the case of a re-submission or in circumstances where an interval is permitted) the police station attendance took place within the 12 months up to the date of submission of the portfolio
- you completed the portfolio yourself
- all the information you have given in the portfolio is true to the best of your knowledge and belief

Each case should be signed by your supervisor. **The supervisor must also give detailed feedback on your performance and the advice given at the time for each case.**