



Minimum Criteria for Full Membership of the Law Centres Federation

The Law Centres Federation trades as the Law Centres Network, herein referred to as the Law Centres Network (LCN)

A Law Centre® must:

1. Operate as a registered charity.
2. Serve a defined geographical community or community of interest.
3. Employ at least two persons authorised to conduct reserved legal activities as per the LSA 2007.
 - 3.1 One person must be a Senior Solicitor;
 - 3.2 There must be capacity at all times to provide deputised cover for the Senior Solicitor;
 - 3.3 The Senior Solicitor:
 - 3.3.1 Must have a current practising certificate;
 - 3.3.2 Must be a [lawyer](#) and has practised as such for a minimum of three years; and
 - 3.3.3 Supervise the work undertaken by the Law Centre in accordance with the relevant Solicitors Regulation Authority rules from time to time in place.
4. Ensure that the Centre operates in a way which complies (allows all lawyers to comply) with the relevant requirements as set out by the Solicitors Regulation Authority and other appropriate regulatory bodies including CILEX Professional Standards and the Bar Standards Board.
5. Adopt the Law Centre Approach which is:
 - [Value Driven](#) - Law Centres are guided in all we do by our core values of integrity, equality, respect, independence, and justice. These values frame our work and the way we work with others.
 - [Working Within Communities](#) - Law Centres are based in and run by the communities they represent. This community involvement is at the heart of all Law Centre governance and ensures that services are built from the ground up and not the top down. Marginalised communities and those closest to the problems are our partners in finding and implementing solutions.

- [Working with Those Most in Need](#) - Law Centres provide legal services based on need and not on ability to pay. We design legal services with and for the most vulnerable and excluded people in society.
 - [Challenging the Status Quo](#) - Law Centres fight for people's rights, regardless of the political or financial impact of doing so. We are fiercely independent and hold government (central and local) to account for its actions and for the decisions it takes. We never compromise our core values and belief in social justice.
 - [Working Together](#) - Individual Law Centres have impact beyond their size and funding. Working together in collaboration as part of the Law Centres Network achieves even greater impact. We know that long-lasting social change requires systemic thinking, joint investment in outcomes, cross-sector approaches and partnerships.
6. Commit to working in collaboration with other Law Centres and with LCN.
 7. Implement policies, procedures and practices as set out in the Membership Agreement that demonstrate a commitment to Law Centres' [Principles](#) (below) and as amended at General Meetings of Law Centres from time to time.
 8. Law Centres Principles
 - [Human rights and equality before the law](#) are essential to a fair and just society. This is only possible if each person, regardless of their means, can access reliable and independent legal assistance to challenge injustice
 - [People deserve to live with dignity](#). We aim to be empathetic and respectful at all times, and to tailor our assistance according to the specific circumstances of the person
 - [Treating people with respect](#) is essential to our relations with our clients. We are committed to creating an environment where people can understand their rights and options and engage in legal processes concerning them
 - [Independence](#) from external influence or control is key to fostering trusting relationships. It also ensures that we are free to champion the rights of those we serve and the cause of access to justice
 - [Challenge systemic injustices](#). Our users face systemic injustices, we challenge these by raising awareness of rights, intervening early where possible, pursuing cases to just outcomes, campaigning for social justice and influencing social policy.
 9. Not be in breach of the Membership Agreement.
 10. Commit to and comply with the LCN Membership Agreement.