SAL SINGAPORE ACADEMY OF LAW

Specialist Accreditation Scheme

Data and Digital Economy Law

This guide is for legal professionals who are applying for specialist accreditation in Data and Digital Economy Law.

Version Control Record

Version	Effective date	Changes	Author
1.00	1 January 2022		GC
1.01	23 March 2022	Paragraph 5.3 inserted. Lists the examinable topics for 2022 specialist accreditation programme.	GC
		Paragraph 5.4 inserted. Specifies the number of examination questions for 2022 specialist accreditation programme.	
1.02	4 April 2022	Paragraphs 3.4 and 3.8 amended: While the Scheme is aware that inhouse counsel are not required to formally accumulate SILE CPD points, for the purpose of the Scheme, they are required to show some form of continuing learning involvement.	GC
1.03	8 July 2022	Paragraph 5.5 amended: For the 2022 specialist accreditation programme, there will be 4, not 3, Core questions and 3 Specialism questions. Candidates are to answer 3, not all, Core questions and 2 Specialism questions.	GC
		Paragraph 5.6 inserted: Examination date	
		Paragraph 6.3 inserted: Selection Panel interview dates inserted	
2.01	12 January 2023	Paragraph 5.6 amended to reflect 2023 examination date: Saturday, 2 September 2023	GC
2.02		Paragraph 6.3 deleted:	GC
		6.3 For 2022, the dates for the Selection Panel interviews are:	
		a. Tuesday 25 October b. Wednesday 26 October c. Thursday 27 October d. Friday 28 October	
2.03	14 August 2023	Paragraph 6.3 inserted:	GC
		6.3 For 2023, the dates for the Selection Panel interviews are:	
		a. Monday 30 October b. Tuesday 31 October c. Friday 3 November	
2.04	24 September 2024	Paragraphs 3.2 and 3.6 amended by inserting "Markets and Platforms" after "Digital Trade" to now read "Digital Trade Markets and Platforms (e-commerce, payment systems and electronic contracting)".	GC

		Paragraphs 5.2b. and 5.3b amended by inserting "Markets and Platforms" after "Digital Trade".	
		Paragraph 5.2b amend by deleting "Markets and Platforms" from the list. Paragraph 5.2b list previously read:	
		b. Digital Trade Markets and Platforms Payment systems Electronic contracting	
		Paragraph 5.6 amended to reflect 2025 examination date: Saturday, 6 September 2025	GC
2.05	13 November 2024	Paragraphs 3.2 and 3.6 amended by combining "Data Privacy and Protection" and "Cybersecurity" under Core Areas and moving "Digital Trade Markets and Platforms" under Specialisms.	GC
		"Digital Trade Markets and Platforms (e-commerce, payment systems and electronic contracting)" amended by inserting: • "e-" before "payment systems" • comma after "payment systems" • "and fulfilment [logistics]" after "electronic contracting" and deleting: • "and" after "payment systems".	
		Paragraphs 3.2 and 3.6 previously read: **Core areas** Data Privacy and Protection Digital Trade Markets and Platforms (e-commerce, payment systems and electronic contracting) Intellectual Property Technology Procurement (technology contracting and vendor legal risk management) **Specialisms** Artificial Intelligence Cybersecurity Digital Asset Management and Protection Fintech and Regtech Regulation Internet-of-Things and Computing Media Telecommunications	
2.06	3 December 2024	New Paragraph 2.3 inserted.	GC
		Paragraphs 3.2 and 3.6 amended by replacing "Digital Trade Markets and Platforms (e-commerce, e-payment systems, electronic contracting and fulfilment [logistics])" with "e-Commerce (e-payment systems, electronic contracting and fulfilment [logistics])"	GC

2.07	Paragraph 5.2 amended by deleting:

Core areas
a. **Data Privacy and Protection**
Digital consumer protection

b. **Digital Trade Markets and Platforms**
Payment systems
Electronic contracting

c. **Intellectual Property**

d. **Technology Procurement**
Technology contracting
Vendor legal risk management

Specialisms (structured around interconnectedness of the various areas)
e. **Artificial Intelligence**
Liability and negligence

f. **Cybersecurity**
Computer misuse
Technology risk management

g. **Digital Asset Management and Protection**

h. **Fintech and Regtech Regulation**
Blockchain and cryptocurrency
Distributed ledger technology

i. **Internet-of-Things and Computing**
Platforms and systems including cloud computing
Quantum computing

j. **Media**
Mainstream and social media
Online gaming
Content regulation

k. **Telecommunications**
Connectivity technologies
Software layer
Regulatory issues

Paragraph 5.3 amended by deleting "The following topics will be examined:" and replacing "Digital Trade Markets and by replacing "Platforms (e-commerce, payment systems and electronic contracting)" with "e-Commerce (e-payment systems, electronic contracting and fulfilment [logistics])".

Paragraph 5.3 renumbered to 5.2.

2.08	Paragraphs 5.2 to 5.4 amended and/or deleted to reflect Version Control 2.05 and amalgamation of examinable topics.	
	Paragraph 5.3 deleted.	
	Paragraphs 5.2 to 5.4 previously read:	
	5.2 Candidates who have applied to be Accredited Specialists will be examined on the following topics:	
	Core areas	
	a. Data Privacy and Protection b. Digital Trade Markets and Platforms c. Intellectual Property d. Technology Procurement	
	Specialisms	
	e. Artificial Intelligence f. Cybersecurity g. Digital Asset Management and Protection h. Fintech and Regtech Regulation	
	5.3 Specialisms g. and h. will be merged and treated as one topic.	
	5.4 There will be 3 Core questions and 3 Specialism questions. Candidates are to answer all Core questions and 2 Specialism questions.	
2.09	New paragraphs 5.4 and 5.5 inserted.	GC
2.10	Paragraph 5.6 amended.	GC
	Paragraph 5.6 previously read:	
	The exam will be conducted on Saturday, 6 September 2025.	
2.11	To clarify that the Selection Panel Interviews apply to both Accredited Specialist and Senior Accredited Specialist candidates, Paragraph 6.1 has been amended by deleting "Similar to the examination," at the start of the sentence, and replacing "interview" with "interviews".	GC
	Paragraph 6.3 amended by replacing:	
	"For 2023, the dates for the Selection Panel interviews are:	
	a. Monday 30 October b. Tuesday 31 October c. Friday 3 November"	
	with	
	"Candidates will be informed of the dates for the Selection Panel interviews in due course."	

Contents

1. Definitions

1.1. *Data and Digital Economy (D2E) legal practice.* This is the practice of law relating to "online platforms, and activities that owe their existence to such platforms", including "all activities that use digitised data"[1] and "economic activities that include using digitized information and knowledge as the key factor of production, modern information networks as an important activity space, and the effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) as an important driver of productivity growth and economic structural optimization".[2]

1.2. *Candidate.* A legal professional who has applied to be an Accredited Specialist or a Senior Accredited Specialist and whose candidature has been confirmed by the SAL and is in the process of being assessed by the SAL.

1.3. *Inhouse counsel.* A lawyer who is employed by corporations, associations, non-profits and other public- and private-sector entities located in Singapore to work in-house on their legal matters.

1.4. *Legal practitioner.* Advocate and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Singapore with a currently valid practising certificate.

1.5. *Legal professional.* Refers collectively to both legal practitioners and in-house counsel.

2. What this Guide Covers

2.1 The Specialist Accreditation Scheme attempts to apply the same accreditation framework, as set out in the Information for Applicants - General, across all practice areas.

2.2 In cases where there are additions to and/or deviations from the said accreditation framework for a particular practice area, a separate Guide for that practice area will state those variations.

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[1] "Measuring the digital economy", International Monetary Fund, February 2018, para. 6, p. 7 <file:///C:/Users/gillianchee/Downloads/022818MeasuringDigitalEconomy.pdf>.
[2] "G20 Digital Economy Development and Cooperation Initiative", World Economic Forum and the Group of Twenty (G20), 2016, para. 2, p. 1 <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000185874.pdf> (accessed 12 January 2022).

2.3 **Applicants should read both the Information Guide for Specialists – General and this Guide**.

2.4 This Guide covers the Substantial Involvement, CPD and References criteria, Examination and Selection Panel Interview topics for Data and Digital Economy Law.

3. Substantial Involvement and Continuing Learning Involvement

Accredited Specialist

Substantial Involvement

3.1 For lawyers, applicants must show that, in the immediate **3 years** prior to application, they have been engaged in full-time practice and have dedicated per year a **minimum 450 hours to 1 core and 1 specialism**.

3.2 For inhouse counsel, applicants must show that, in the immediate **3 years** prior to application, they have been engaged in full-time legal work, i.e. work that is a permanent and ongoing feature of their role, in **1 core and 1 specialism** within their organisation(s) **a year**.

Core areas
Data Privacy and Protection and Cybersecurity
Intellectual Property
Technology Procurement (technology contracting and vendor legal risk management)

Specialisms
Artificial Intelligence
e-Commerce (e-payment systems, electronic contracting and fulfilment [logistics])
Digital Asset Management and Protection
Fintech and Regtech Regulation
Internet-of-Things and Computing
Media
Telecommunications

Continuing Learning Involvement

3.3 For lawyers, in the immediate **3 years** prior to application, applicants must have accumulated at least **6 public and/or private SILE CPD points a year** in this specialisation.

3.4 For inhouse counsel, in the immediate **3 years** prior to application, applicants must have **undertaken the equivalent of at least 6 points a year** in this specialisation, e.g. by:

    a.   attaining a relevant educational graduate qualification or professional certification, e.g. certification from IAPP

    b.   attending and/or conducting workshops, webinars, seminars, training courses and similar continuing learning events

    c.   contributing to journals, articles, books, consultation papers and other forms of publications, etc.

    d.   sitting on a formal organisational committee

Senior Accredited Specialist

Substantial Involvement

3.5   For lawyers, applicants must show that, in the immediate **5 years** prior to application, they have been engaged in full-time practice and have dedicated **per year** a **minimum 650 hours to 1 core and 1 specialism**.

3.6   For inhouse counsel, applicants must show that, in the immediate **5 years** prior to application, they have been engaged in full-time legal work (i.e. work that is a permanent and ongoing feature of their role) in **1 core and 1 specialism** within their organisation(s) **a year**.

Core areas
Data Privacy and Protection and Cybersecurity

Intellectual Property

Technology Procurement (technology contracting and vendor legal risk management)

Specialisms
Artificial Intelligence

e-Commerce (e-payment systems, electronic contracting and fulfilment [logistics])

Digital Asset Management and Protection

Fintech and Regtech Regulation

Internet-of-Things and Computing

Cybersecurity

Media

Telecommunications

Continuing Learning Involvement

3.7   For lawyers, in the immediate **5 years** prior to application, applicants must have accumulated at least **6 public and/or private CPD points a year** in this specialisation.

3.8   For inhouse counsel, in the immediate **5 years** prior to application, applicants must have **undertaken the equivalent of at least 6 points a year** in this specialisation, e.g. by:

    a.   attaining a relevant educational graduate qualification or professional certification, e.g. certification from IAPP

    b.   conducting workshops, webinars, seminars, training courses and similar continuing learning events

    c.   contributing to journals, articles, books, consultation papers and other forms of publications, etc

    d.   sitting on a formal organisational committee

4.   References

4.1.   Referees can be D2E and/or non-D2E legal professionals. They must be able to attest to the applicants' involvement and competence in the specialisation.

4.2.   For referees who are D2E legal professionals, criteria set out in Information for Applicants – General section 4 apply.

4.3.   For references in general, considerations set out in Information for Applicants – General section 8 apply.

5.   Examinations

5.1   The selection of topics will depend on topical areas in a given year, and subject to periodic updates over a two- to three-year cycle to keep pace with developments in the field.

5.2   Candidates who have applied to be Accredited Specialists will be examined on the following topics:

Core areas

   a.   Data Privacy and Protection and Cybersecurity
   b.   Intellectual Property
   c.   Technology Procurement

Specialisms

   d.   Artificial Intelligence
   e.   Digital Trade Markets and Platforms
   f.   Digital Asset Management and Protection
   g.   Fintech and Regtech Regulation

5.3   There will be 2 Core questions and 4 Specialism questions. Candidates are to answer all Core questions and 3 Specialism questions.

5.4   Each Core question will cover at least two Core areas, eg Data Privacy and Protection and Cybersecurity and Intellectual Property, and Technology Procurement and Intellectual Property.

5.5   The examination comprises Parts A and B. Part A covers the Core areas (2 hours), while Part B focuses on the Specialisms (3 hours).

5.6   The examination is usually conducted on the first Saturday of September.

6.   Selection Panel Interviews

6.1   The interviews will assess the candidate's grasp and understanding of locally and universally applicable D2E legal concepts and issues.

6.2   Other topics can include:

Contextual knowledge

   a.   Geopolitics and Regulation
   b.   Technology Law and Economics
   c.   Society and Ethics

6.3   Candidates will be informed of the dates for the Selection Panel interviews in due course.