



Law Society Wales review

June 2012

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News

Excellence Awards open for nominations

Since their inception in 2007 the Excellence Awards have proved a marvellous opportunity for legal teams and individuals to showcase their outstanding achievements in the profession. We look forward to hearing from you, and remember, the deadline for nominations is 10 August.

<http://services.lawsociety.org.uk/events/awards/excellence>

Law Conference 2012 - drawing together business and legal leaders

From 20-22 September, the Law Conference 2012 will take place at the Celtic Manor Resort in Newport <http://annualconference.lawsociety.org.uk/default.aspx?tabid=538>. This year's conference features leadership development sessions, networking opportunities, and world-renowned speakers including:

Shami Chakrabarti, director, Liberty
David Edmonds, chair, Legal Services Board
Helen Mahy, general counsel, National Grid
Sandie Okoro, general counsel, Baring Asset Management
Eddie Ryan, managing director, Co-operative Legal Services
Peter Solmssen, general counsel, Siemens AG

Quality Assurance Scheme for Advocates - Solicitor advocates urged to notify the SRA

Solicitors wishing to undertake criminal advocacy from January 2013 will have to notify the SRA under the new Quality Assurance Scheme for Advocates (Crime) (QASA) arrangements.

The notification process is the first step in becoming recognised under the Scheme which is due to be launched early in the New Year. The Scheme will introduce a system of accreditation for criminal advocacy work in the Magistrates' and Crown Courts.

In the next few weeks the SRA will ask those wishing to become accredited to express their interest from 2 July this year when QASA (Crime) Notification Regulations come into force. The deadline for notification is 21 September 2012.

<http://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/qasa-notify-sra.page>

To help solicitor advocates prepare for QASA, we encourage all to join the **Advocacy Section**, which provides mentoring, training and networking opportunities on a circuit and national level and creates the framework to provide the level of support delivered to barristers by their Inns of Court.

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/productsandservices/specialinterest/advocacy.page>

New E&D and Family Sections launched

Following popular demand we have added two new sections to our portfolio of products and services.

Our new **Equality and Diversity (E&D) Section** complements our existing E&D provision, aimed at giving specialist support for law firms. Membership is not restricted to solicitors only, and diversity partners, HR practitioners and procurement professionals are also welcome to join the section. The service includes:

- specialist training and guidance on key equality and diversity issues for legal practices
- insight into current industry best practice from leading specialists
- support to comply with equality and diversity legislative and regulatory requirements
- the chance to meet and network with your peers, and find out how other practices are creating a more diverse workplace



- for the Law Society Diversity and Inclusion Charter signatories, the means to move beyond compliance (red level) and towards best practice (green level) in the annual self assessment

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/productsandservices/specialinterest/equalitysection.page>

Our new **Family Section** is targeted at family and children law practitioners. From legal aid solicitors working on public care cases to mediation specialists, divorce lawyers, CILEX professionals and family court advocates, this section will also benefit members of our Family Law, Family Law Advanced, Children Law and Family Mediation accreditation schemes by allowing them to:-

- receive regular news and information which gives you access to the latest intelligence. Members will also receive relevant news from related sectors such as mental health, criminal law and immigration;
- join in key debates, contribute your views, influence policy, and receive updates on campaigns and consultations;
- develop your skills through a range of training opportunities. These will include FREE webinars, exclusive networking events, specially developed training programmes and, from 2013, an annual conference.

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/productsandservices/specialinterest/familysection.page>

New Solicitor Judges Division launched

If you are a Judge, or interested in becoming one, there is now a new Division providing regular communications, local events and networking opportunities at a national and circuit level.

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/productsandservices/specialinterest/solicitorjudges.page>

PII buyers' guide launched

We have launched our 2012 PII buyers' guide to help you make an informed decision when buying professional indemnity insurance (PII) for the 2012-13 indemnity year. This year the guide provides a particular focus on the relationship between solicitors and the intermediaries they use to help them choose the right insurance partner and explains the level of service solicitors should expect. It also advises solicitors about their rights under Financial Services Authority (FSA) rules, which require brokers to reveal all commission they receive, if asked.

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/newsandevents/news/view=newsarticle.law?NEWSID=447002>

PII proposal form looks to save members' time

The Law Society has created a proposal form for this year's professional indemnity insurance (PII) renewal.

A 'common' proposal form has been on the agenda of the Law Society for some time now. We started the conversation with insurers before the 2011 renewal but were told that we were 'too late' as the content of forms is decided in April. Therefore, hoping to have a form ready for the 2012 renewal, we started early preparation to work with both insurers and brokers to agree a form that includes some of the most common elements of proposal forms.

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/practicesupport/regulation/pii/compositeform.page>

For other guidance on professional indemnity insurance

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/practicesupport/regulation/pii.page>

New CML instructions

The Council of Mortgage Lenders (CML) has issued new instructions for those who are acting only for a lender in a conveyancing transaction. These instructions will form a new part 3 of the CML Lenders' Handbook and will take effect from 2 July.

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/newsandevents/news/view=newsarticle.law?NEWSID=447101>



SRA debates ban on referral fees

A ban on referral fees in personal injury cases comes into force in April 2013, introduced as part of the Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPO). The SRA has published a discussion paper on the matter, setting out the SRA's analysis of the issue and the potential effect on the sector. The paper also outlines the Authority's current thinking on how the ban should be enforced in the context of risk-based, outcomes-focussed regulation.

www.sra.org.uk/referralban

Wales Events

The Law Society's Annual Lecture at the National Eisteddfod

The Annual Eisteddfod Lecture will be delivered by Peter Jones, (Eversheds) on Thursday, 9 August at 4:00pm in the societies tent.

9 August 2012: **Llandow**

Client Care and Complaints Handling

Thursday 6 October 2011 was a key date for solicitors - it marked the implementation of the SRA's outcomes focused approach to regulation, and the one year anniversary of the commencement of the Legal Ombudsman's office. In light of these developments, now is the best time to evaluate your firm's client care and complaints handling processes.

13 September 2012: **Cardiff**

<http://services.lawsociety.org.uk/events/node/54700>

AML workshop - Embedding a culture of compliance

As all Money Laundering Reporting Officers know: clients do not walk into the office with a neon sign saying "beware money laundering risk" flashing over their heads. Equally, many fee earners may enquire about specific anti-money laundering compliance obligations on a file, where actually broader ethical and professional liability issues pose a greater risk.

27 September 2012: **Cardiff**

<http://services.lawsociety.org.uk/events/node/54959>

Meet the Judges - Cardiff

This year the Law Society is repeating its successful 'Meet the Judges' events, which give solicitors the opportunity to hear directly from solicitor judges their experiences of applying for and taking on a judicial post. Immediately following this there will be a reception which will mark the launch of the Law Society's Solicitor Judge Division which aims to improve engagement between the Society and this important group of members. Combining these two events will give attendees an enhanced opportunity to network informally with colleagues and those who have already entered the Judiciary.

9 October 2012: **Cardiff**

<http://services.lawsociety.org.uk/events/node/54734>

OFR: Practical tools for COLPs and COFAs

The Solicitors Regulation Authority's Authorisation Rules require all firms to have compliance officers in place to spearhead their organisation's compliance culture and practice. While appointing these officers is a reasonably straightforward decision, feedback from the profession has made it clear that these key members of staff would benefit from further support with the day-to-day implementation of their roles.

30 October 2012: **Cardiff**

<http://services.lawsociety.org.uk/events/node/54789>



Wales Policy

Consultation on a separate legal jurisdiction for Wales

The Welsh Government's consultation has now closed. The Law Society Wales Office response is available on the News page. With regard to the Welsh Government's consultation we have submitted a more general paper highlighting the importance of the law to the economy, we raise issues around the profession and the impact on legal services and regulation as well as legal education.

Consultation on the Draft Human Transplantation (Wales) Bill

The Welsh Government is consulting on a draft Bill which will introduce a system where a person's consent to donation of organs and tissue will be deemed to have been given unless they objected during their lifetime. The proposal is for a 'soft opt-out' system where those who object must register their objection rather than the current voluntary 'opt-in' donor register. More information and the draft Bill are available on the Welsh Government's website:

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/healthsocialcare/organbill/;jsessionid=lzWyPjQPyT263ydtwbDJQGsgpCMIJqpgFqpfMMLIRwXgBsKwPng5!-1822353977?lang=en>

Welsh Government review of advice services for Wales

The Welsh Government is undertaking a review of advice services for Wales looking at third sector provision and advice services funded by the Welsh Government. The Wales Office will engage through the Community Legal Service Independent Providers Forum for Wales.

NHS Redress in Wales

The operation of the redress scheme in Wales through regulations made under the NHS Redress (Wales) Measure 2008 is underway. Any members with observations or problems arising from the new system should inform the Wales Office who are taking this matter forward.

Compliance and Regulation Update

SRA publishes fourth version of Handbook

A fourth version of the SRA Handbook was published and came into effect on 21 June 2012. For notes on Version 4 go to <http://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/handbook/release-notes-v4.page>

COLP and COFA nominations open

All firms must nominate a compliance officer for legal practice (COLP) and a compliance officer for finance and administration (COFA) by 31 July. They will ensure your firm has systems and controls to enable you to comply with regulatory requirements.

It is essential to prepare for the online nomination process - which opened on 31 May - by reading the Regulatory provisions: [rule 8.5 of the SRA Authorisation Rules](#) or [regulation 4.8 of the SRA Practising Regulations](#), and the [SRA Suitability Test](#)
<http://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/>

Helping to prepare for COLPs and COFAs

We've responded to the need for compliance officers for legal practice (COLPs) and compliance officers for finance and administration (COFAs) to understand their new roles and implement compliance systems within their firms with the publication of two new titles - [COLPs Toolkit](#) and [COFAs Toolkit](#).



New LeO newsletter

LeO has published its first issue of LeO News, an e-newsletter that shares news, views and information from the Legal Ombudsman with organisations and individuals who are interested in its work.

<http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/news.html>

Accreditation Awards

More Conveyancing Quality Scheme achievements

Congratulations to the following practices for successfully achieving the Law Society CQS standard :

- Gwyn James Solicitors
- Clarke & Hartland
- JNP Legal
- Rees Wood Terry
- Loosemores Solicitors
- Gamlins Solicitors LLP

The Conveyancing Quality Scheme (CQS) provides a recognised quality standard for residential conveyancing practices. Achievement of membership establishes a level of credibility for member firms with stakeholders (regulators, lenders, insurers and consumers) based upon:

- the integrity of the Senior Responsible Officer and other key conveyancing staff;
- the firm's adherence to good practice management standards;
- adherence to prudent and efficient conveyancing procedures through the scheme protocol.

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/productsandservices/accreditation/conveyancingqualityscheme.page>

Conveyancing Quality Scheme hits the 1,500 mark

Law Society chief executive Desmond Hudson said, "This is a milestone for CQS and cements its place as the must-have accreditation in the residential property market. All CQS firms now automatically qualify to act for some banks and their mortgage customers, including HSBC and Clydesdale and Yorkshire Banks. The scheme has well and truly arrived with consumers being the main beneficiaries."

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<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/aboutlawsociety/how/workinwales.page>