

Law Society corporate archive (web version)

Access Procedures

Version 1.1 October 2012

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This access procedure relates to the access to Council and Committee documentation forming part of the Corporate Archive and held within the Special Collections of the Library. It is not concerned with published material, photographs, the Society's constitutional documents or the Society's architectural drawings. The responsibility for the Corporate Archive rests with the Librarian and Head of Information Services.

Access to the corporate archive collection

Law Society publications (priced material)

Holdings of priced and published Law Society material can be checked on [LibraryOnline](#).

Council, Board and Committee documentation

What does the Council, Board and Committee documentation include?

The bulk of the Corporate Archive consists of the minutes and agenda papers of the Council, Boards and selected policy making Committees of the Society. Some of the material in these documents is sensitive or confidential for various reasons and this is an important factor in deciding rules of access.

For clarification, references to the 'Society', include The Law Society (TLS) and Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA).

Since 1984 Law Society Council and Committee meetings have been divided into parts 1/public and part 2/confidential discussions to enable confidential subjects to be discussed separately from routine ones. Part 1/public material is the open discussion, part 2/confidential covers material to which access may be restricted. More recent part 1/public material is available for consultation via the Law Society's [website](#).

When requests arise for pre-1984 material, library staff must judge whether material not already clearly classified as 'part 2' (ie confidential) should really fall into that category. Where it is not clear, guidance may be sought from the Law Society's Information Compliance Manager to ensure access conforms to the Society's Freedom of Information Code of Practice.

Permanently Confidential material

There is a small volume of material within the Council or Committee material which would fall into an additional category of permanently confidential. This material can be described as follows:

- Casework decisions very occasionally discussed by Committee or Council, especially prior to the system of appointing adjudicators.
- Salary matters of individual staff discussed by the Remuneration Committee or a similar Committee
- Discussion of discovered material in relation to litigation. The discovered material remains confidential unless used or referred to in court.

How can I get a copy of the Council, Board or Committee documentation?

- Clearly identified public/part 1 material for Council, Boards and all Committees is available once a written request has been submitted regardless of the age of the material. For more recent minutes, see [our website](#).
- Where the request is for personal information about a named individual and the information source is less than 85 years old, your request will be passed to the Information Compliance Manager for access decision.
- Where the requested material is from clearly identified part 2/confidential, or it is deemed 'permanently confidential' your written request will be considered under the Society's Freedom of Information Code of Practice and passed to the Information Compliance Manager to coordinate a response.

All requests to access Council, Board or Committee material should be made in writing or by email to the library.

Researchers should provide details of the subject matter, the date range to be searched and the Council, Board or Committee material to be checked (where known). Requests are dealt with as promptly as possible but there may be a delay in supplying material where further information is necessary or where agreement is needed from the Information Compliance Manager.

Photographs, architectural drawings and other material not classified as Council, Board and Committee documentation

All requests should be made in writing or by email to the library. Access to view material from this collection is by appointment only. Details about our access policy can be found on our [website](#).

Monitor and review

This policy is scheduled for review in October 2013. This review will be conducted by the Library Resource Manager.

Authorisation

This procedure has been approved by:

Fausto Felice

Head of Service Delivery : (last checked: October 2012).

