



The Law Society

## **ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR LAW SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

### **MAIN TASKS OF LAW SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

- On the basis of their expertise and experience, members will advise and assist in the formulation, development and communication of policy, in person at meetings, and/or by post, phone, videoconference or email
- Individually or collectively, members will consider and advise on policy initiatives and proposals, research papers, briefings and legal developments, consultations and where necessary will assist with the drafting of papers and responses
- If and when requested, members will act as representatives in speaking to the media, attending external meetings on the Law Society's behalf, or in writing reports and/or articles
- Occasionally and as required, members will contribute to ad hoc working parties and sub-groups dealing with specific issues pertaining to the Committee's work plan

### **GENERAL SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

Committee members should possess the capacity to make a sustained commitment and contribution to the work of the Law Society in the area of law in which the Committee works, both in responding to requests for assistance and bringing forward ideas for consideration and discussion. This will include:

- Awareness of the key issues affecting the legal profession
- Experience in the practice of the area of law of the Committee applied for
- Ability to be objective and discuss issues constructively and consensually
- Ability to look ahead and identify important emerging issues in good time to allow the Committee to discuss proactively
- Problem--solving skills to find solutions to problems
- Ability to consider and advise on the development of policy and best practice
- Excellent communication skills, written and spoken
- Ability to commit and participate regularly as a member of the Committee team
- Ability to work to support the Committee work plan sometimes to tight deadlines

### **AVAILABILITY REQUIRED**

- Anything up to 6 days per year for Committee meetings
- Occasional additional days for meetings necessitated by the Committee work plan
- Occasional attendance at meetings as a representative of the Committee
- Occasional post, telephone and email contact with the Policy Officer and other Law Society staff as required
- Commenting on and/or drafting contents on consultation documents and similar documents, drafting articles as required. This may sometimes be requested as a matter of urgency
- Ability to interact via telephone and email with other Committee Members between meetings to ensure continued progress with the work plan



## PRAC Committees - Role Requirements and Terms of Reference

| COMMITTEE                          | COMMITTEE INFORMATION   |
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| <b>Access to Justice Committee</b> | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To keep under review, and to advise on, policy formulation and negotiations with the LAA (and any successor body), the Ministry of Justice and the wider government and to promote improvements in the availability and operation of legal aid and in access to justice</li><li>• To provide support to practitioners providing or aspiring to provide publicly funded work, in particular through advice, lobbying and practice notes</li><li>• To consider and promote alternative methods of access to justice in conjunction with other relevant committees.</li></ul> <p><u>Main Purpose of the Role</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To act as a representative for the Committee as necessary and to help the Committee fulfil its terms of reference.</li><li>• To participate in Access to Justice Committee meetings to assist them to be productive and successful.</li></ul> <p><u>Specialist Skills and Experience</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Committee has expressed a clear preference for immigration, and not-for-profit representation.</li><li>• The Committee would also encourage applications from BAME practitioners.</li></ul> |
| <b>Children Law Sub-Committee</b>  | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To keep under review and to promote improvements in areas specifically relating to the practice and procedure of public law Children Act proceedings and adoption.</li><li>• To consider such special aspects of private law children issues as may be referred to the Sub-Committee by the Family Law Committee and where such aspects overlap with public law or adoption proceedings.</li><li>• To review and advise on the role, design and operation of any relevant accreditation schemes.</li></ul>   |

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| <p><b>Company Law Committee</b></p>               | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <p>To keep under review and to promote improvements in the law, practice and procedure applying to:</p> <p>(a) companies, other bodies corporate and other forms of incorporated and unincorporated association;<br/> (b) insolvency; and<br/> (c) financial services, including investment vehicles.</p> <p>To consider and respond to Government, European and other regulatory initiatives, proposals, legislation and guidance affecting these areas, and to support and promote the role of solicitors in these fields.</p> <p><u>Specialist Skills and Experience</u></p> <p>In addition to general company law candidates, the Committee is particularly interested in recruiting candidates with a strong background in any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• financial services</li> <li>• corporate governance</li> <li>• equity capital markets</li> <li>• insolvency</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Conveyancing and Land Law Committee</b></p> | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review and promote improvements in all branches of land law, conveyancing procedure and practice and related matters, equal focus being given to commercial and residential property.</li> <li>• To respond to consultation documents from, and generally engage with, outside bodies including inter alia, the Government, Law Commission, HM Land Registry and the Council of Mortgage Lenders.</li> <li>• To assist the profession to adapt to anticipated changes in the conveyancing market including connected regulatory changes.</li> <li>• To promote solicitors as the leading providers of quality conveyancing services. including assisting the Law Society with the development of any conveyancing products or services.</li> <li>• To provide practical assistance and expert technical guidance to the profession through the production of practice notes, articles and other communications.</li> <li>• To provide both a free pool of specialist expertise and a representative sounding board.</li> </ul> <p><u>Specialist Skills and Experience</u></p> <p>All applications are welcome. The Committee is seeking in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• residential property solicitors;</li> </ul> |

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|                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in-house property solicitors;</li> <li>• academics with a high degree of technical competence on land law; and</li> <li>• a welsh representative.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Criminal Law Committee</b>   | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To keep under review and to promote improvements in criminal law, practice and procedure.</li> <li>• To consider matters referred to the Committee by other committees, working parties and task forces.</li> </ul> <p><u>Specialist Skills and Experience</u></p> <p>The Committee has expressed a clear preference for applications from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an experienced criminal law academic</li> <li>• experienced practitioners.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Employment Law Committee</b> | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To keep under review, and promote improvements in, employment law and practice.</li> <li>• To support members of the profession undertaking work in employment law.</li> <li>• To promote the role of solicitors practicing in employment law.</li> </ul> <p>All applications are welcome.</p>   |
| <b>European Union Law</b>       | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <p>The European Union Committee will be responsible for ensuring that the Law Society responds to relevant EU proposals and communications in a timely and effective manner, and for assisting the Society in its lobbying activity in the EU institutions.</p>   |
| <b>Family Law Committee</b>     | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To keep under review, and to promote improvements in, family law, practice and procedure, including child care law and procedure.</li> <li>• To review and advise on the role, design and operation of any relevant accreditation schemes.</li> </ul> <p><u>Specialist Skills and Experience</u></p> <p>The Committee is seeking to appoint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A member with family EU law expertise, as this is a prominent component of the committee's work plan.</li> <li>• A representative from Wales and/or regions outside London</li> <li>• A member with expertise in finances</li> </ul> |

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|  | All applications are welcome.   |
| <b>Housing Law Committee</b>               | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To keep under review and promote improvements in law and practice relating to residential letting in the public and private sectors (including security of tenure, rent control, repairing obligations, harassment/illegal eviction and homelessness).</li> <li>• To monitor and promote improvements in the practice and procedure of courts and tribunals relating to housing cases.</li> <li>• To promote and develop legal services and awareness of legal issues in the housing field.</li> </ul> <p><u>Specialist Skills and Experience</u></p> <p>The Committee would particularly welcome applications from solicitors working in Local Authority.</p>  |
| <b>Immigration Law Committee</b>           | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To keep under review and to promote improvements in immigration and asylum law, practice and procedure.</li> <li>• To review and advise on the role, design and operation of any relevant accreditation schemes.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Intellectual Property Law Committee</b> | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <p>The purpose of the Law Society Intellectual Property Committee is to advise on policy issues and other matters of national and international intellectual property and make recommendations to the Law Society's Policy and Regulatory Affairs Board in these areas.</p> <p>The Committee will normally consider reporting on intellectual property matters only where doing so addresses any one or more of these objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influencing law reform to achieve a better system of justice;</li> <li>• Supporting solicitors to help them achieve the standards expected of them, and deliver good service;</li> <li>• Regulating and setting standards for solicitors to make sure they deliver a good and ethical service to consumers; or</li> <li>• Representing the interests of solicitors as a whole.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee considers the objectives listed above to cover reports on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the clarity, accessibility and workability of intellectual property legislation and practices,</li> <li>• the ability of proposed intellectual property legislation or practices to achieve their stated purpose; and</li> <li>• matters concerning intellectual property awareness among private individuals and companies and within public bodies.</li> </ul> |

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|                                       | <p>The Committee will consider the following factors in deciding whether to report on an issue, and in framing that report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the extent to which the issue raises questions that fall within the Committee objectives;</li> <li>• the need for expert Intellectual Property input on the issue;</li> <li>• the extent of resources available to the Committee; and</li> <li>• the timeliness of the request; and</li> <li>• the likely impact of a report from the Committee.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee will not report on intellectual property matters for the purpose of advancing any particular factional interests over any other factional interest.</p> <p><u>Specialist skills and experience</u></p> <p>The committee is interested in hearing from anyone who has the necessary skills and experience to contribute to the committee’s deliberations, in any area of IP law, whether in private practice or in-house, and in any part of the country. Ideally, we would probably have at least one more specialist in patent law, and at least one more representative from a regional firm, but candidates with other experience should not be discouraged from applying.</p> <p>At present, inevitably Brexit is dominating the committee’s discussions, including both making recommendations on the UK’s future relationship with the EU in the field of IP, and on the detailed technical measures that may be needed to implement whatever policies the government decides on.</p> <p>The government has indicated that its future digital strategy may diverge from that of the EU. We are continuing to provide limited input into EU policy papers on its digital strategy, particularly on IP aspects.</p> <p>The committee has provided comments to government on various aspects of Brexit already, but this work is likely to continue. Candidates should be willing to work on both the high-level and technical issues that arise from Brexit, as well as any non-Brexit-related IP issues that come up during the next 3 years.</p> |
| <p><b>International Committee</b></p> | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote the international reputation and interests of solicitors and the Law Society both at home and abroad;</li> <li>• To support the International Department in its work to promote the rule of law in its work on the development of independent legal professions and access to justice worldwide;</li> <li>• To advise on the implications for the profession of international developments, particularly within international associations and professional and governmental bodies;</li> <li>• To raise awareness in the profession of the increasing importance of international work to the legal sector and the benefits to be derived from it;</li> </ul>  |

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|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make recommendations to the Office Holders, Boards and the Council on the representation of the Law Society at international events and on international bodies.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Mental Health and Disability Committee</b>   | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To keep under review and promote improvements in law, practice and procedure affecting individuals with disabilities and the mentally vulnerable;</li> <li>• To promote and develop legal services to patients detained or subject to compulsory powers under the Mental Health Act 1983 or the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and to those within the categories referred to above;</li> <li>• To review and advise on the role, design and operation of any relevant accreditation schemes.</li> </ul> <p><u>Main purpose of the role</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To actively contribute to discussion and policy formulation in mental health and mental capacity law. This is a highly expert and influential committee containing senior lawyers, policy specialists and members of the senior judiciary. The committee are regularly called upon by Government and other stakeholders for their expert opinion. We undertake a significant amount of drafting, including responses to Government consultations and the production of practice notes and other guidance for the profession.</li> <li>• The Committee is looking to recruit experienced practitioners who are committed to advancing the law outside of their day to day practice. We are particularly keen to receive applications from practitioners in Wales. Successful candidates will commence their first term of membership in September 2018.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Planning and Environmental Law Committee</b> | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <p>To keep under review, and to promote improvements in, planning law, practice and procedure (including related areas of law such as listed buildings and conservation, highways, nature conservation, water resources, drainage and flood risk, compulsory purchase and compensation) and environmental law and procedure.</p> <p><u>Role requirements</u></p> <p>The Committee's work covers a variety of different topic areas within the fields of planning and environmental law. To ensure a balanced view is given in such responses it is important that the composition of the Committee reflects, so far as is possible, a diversity of practice experience. The Committee would particularly welcome applications from those whose experience can be less well represented on the Committee, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solicitors with experience of practising in Wales</li> </ul>  |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solicitors who are employed by, or frequently act for, local authorities</li> <li>• Solicitors with specialist environmental experience</li> <li>• Solicitors practising outside of central London</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Technology and Law Committee</b>                | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <p>Individually and as part of a team to assist with the formation, development and communication of the Law Society's policy on electronic law; and advise on EU electronic commerce legislation and technical developments/ materials relevant to the legal profession.</p>  |
| <b>Professional Indemnity Insurance Committee</b>  | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <p>To monitor and investigate issues around solicitors indemnity insurance.</p>  |
| <b>Professional Standards and Ethics Committee</b> | <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To monitor and keep under review the ethical values, professional principles and standards regulating and governing solicitors, their organisations and their areas of practice, and in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) to develop proposals for best practice and changes to professional principles and standards for submission to the SRA and elsewhere;</li> <li>b) to respond to consultations on changes to professional principles and standards promoted by the SRA, the LSB and other regulators; and</li> <li>c) to provide support and advice on interpretation, management, and best practice in relation to ethical values, professional principles and standards as appropriate.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• To report to the Legal and Regulatory Policy Committee, and to seek approval from that Board for policy proposals and for major responses to consultations.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Regulatory Processes Committee</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To monitor the processes and procedures employed by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) and the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT) respectively in performance of their role in regulating solicitors and in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) respond to consultations on processes and procedure from SRA and other regulators;</li> <li>(b) develop proposals for changes to processes and procedure for submission to SRA, SDT and elsewhere;</li> <li>(c) provide advice on proper processes, procedures and good practice in relevant areas as appropriate.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• To monitor the systems in place for complaints about solicitors and in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) respond to consultations on complaints from the Legal Ombudsman;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |



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|  | <p>(b) develop proposals for changes to processes and procedure for complaints for submission to the Legal Ombudsman;</p> <p>(c) provide advice on proper processes, procedures and good practice in relevant areas as appropriate.</p> |
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