



Law Society North West review, November 2012

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News

Promoting solicitors services campaign

Every year the Society runs a major campaign to raise the profile of solicitors in the public eye. The theme for this year's campaign is Ask a Solicitor, and running from 1st October, it will encourage people to use a solicitor to help with common legal issues. The campaign will include:

- advertising and editorial features in 40 top regional papers
- advertising on 220 railway stations across England and Wales
- advertising inside 5,000 buses
- PR coverage in the regional and local media

You can capitalise on the publicity from this campaign by ordering free campaign materials, including posters, postcards and online banners, and by booking an advertising slot in our regional press supplements.

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/Representation/Promoting-the-profession/#one>

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/representation/promoting-the-profession/#three>

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.

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

<http://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/accreditation/quality-assurance-scheme-advocates.page>

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

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/communities/advocacy/>

New Family Section

The 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.

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/accreditation/specialist-schemes/family-law/>

Excellence Awards

Congratulations again to all the winners and shortlisted firms and individuals at this year's Excellence Awards.

A list of this year's Winners can be found <http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/news/press-releases/excellence-awards-winners-2012/>, and some fantastic photographs can be seen here

<http://www.lawsocietyawards.co.uk/GridPage.aspx?Dir=%2fPhotos%2fGeneral%2fReception&Page=Reception>

Particular congratulations go to the winners, highly commended and shortlisted firms from this region;

- Pannone
- Paul Crowley solicitors
- Rowlinsons



- Beeley & Co
- Holdens
- Roberts Jackson
- DWF
- Russell Jones & Walker – Nomination from Manchester office
- Irwin Mitchell Ditto
- K J Commons
- Jackson Barrett & Gass
- Stephensons

North West Events

Conveyancing Roadshow – Manchester, 21 Nov 2012

In the last few years conveyancers have had to deal with a depressed market, increased competition and perhaps most significantly the changing approach of lenders to panel management. The Law Society has been working hard to support its members in a number of ways, by setting up the CQS, continuing active discussions with the lenders and others. There has been mention in some quarters that a return to separate representation might be a better policy to pursue. The Society has firmly opposed that as a policy but is interested to engage with its members and hear alternative suggestions. To do so they will be running a series of roadshows during the winter of 2012.

<http://services.lawsociety.org.uk/events/node/56537>

Private Client Regional Update Seminar – Running a profitable private client practice - Manchester, 20 Nov 2012

The Law Society Private Client Section's annual regional seminar programme will consist of 16 evening seminars which will take place from November 2012 until February 2013. They cover a range of topics relevant to busy Private Client practitioners and are conducted by lecturers who are acknowledged experts in their fields.

<http://services.lawsociety.org.uk/events/node/55963>

Private Client Regional Update Seminar – A tax planning update – Manchester, 24 Jan 2013

The Law Society Private Client Section's annual regional seminar programme will consist of 16 evening seminars which will take place from November 2012 until February 2013. They cover a range of topics relevant to busy Private Client practitioners and are conducted by lecturers who are acknowledged experts in their fields.

<http://services.lawsociety.org.uk/events/node/55961>

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.

Liverpool – 15 Mar 2013 – <http://services.lawsociety.org.uk/events/node/54972>

Manchester – 23 Mar 2013 - <http://services.lawsociety.org.uk/events/node/54978>

Meet the Judges – Manchester, 21 Nov 2012



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.

<http://services.lawsociety.org.uk/events/node/55624>

MLRO Networking Group – Manchester, 30 Jan 2013

The Law Society is running a series of free Money Laundering Reporting Officer (MLRO) regional networking groups, in association with 192business and BankersAccuity.

<http://services.lawsociety.org.uk/events/node/57483>

Compliance and Regulation Update

SRA launches referral fees consultation

The SRA has launched its official consultation on its approach to enforcing the ban on referral fees in personal injury cases. The ban comes into force in April 2013 as part of the Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPO).

The consultation outlines the proposed revisions to the Outcomes and Indicative Behaviours concerning referral fees in the SRA Code of Conduct. The SRA has suggested two new Mandatory Outcomes be added, stating in Chapter 6 that "you are not paid a prohibited referral fee" and Chapter 9 that "you do not pay a prohibited referral fee".

Also included is draft guidance outlining the SRA's interpretation of the relevant provisions of LASPO. For example, the consultation document lays out how the SRA may view joint marketing schemes. There's also a flow chart to help practitioners identify the risk of possible breaches, analysis of the issues, and a draft supervision and enforcement strategy.

The consultation lasts for eight weeks, and responses are required by 18 December 2012.

<http://www.sra.org.uk/sra/consultations/referral-fees-2012.page>

Practising Certificate Renewals

The 2012 round of Practising Certificate renewals commenced on Thursday 1 November, with a closing date of Friday 14 December. If you have any feedback on the process you can send it to

Samantha.gallagher@lawsociety.org.uk.

Anti-money laundering support

To meet challenging economic and regulatory times, the Law Society is extending its range of anti-money laundering (AML) services for our members, by launching series of new cost-effective and practical tools to help you ensure you are meeting your AML obligations.

The Anti-Money Laundering Toolkit puts into practice the expectations contained in the Law Society anti-money laundering practice note, which has been approved by HM Treasury. The toolkit, which includes a CD-ROM, is designed to provide firms with practical 'need to know' information and contains a full range of draft policies, procedures and template forms which legal practices can adapt to their individual circumstances.



http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/news/stories/aml-assistance-delivered-to-your-legal-practice/?utm_source=emailhosts&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=AML+22%2F10%2F12

SRA emphasizes benefits of co-operation and proactive engagement

Speaking at the COLPs and COFAs Conference in Holborn Bars on Thursday, 18 October, SRA Executive Director Samantha Barrass, reported on the progress that had been made since announcing the start of the compliance officers' nomination process in May this year.

The majority of firms had met the SRA's nomination deadline of 31 July and others had responded to the SRA once the deadline had passed. However there were still a few hundred remaining who had not completed the process. The approach to these firms, Ms Barrass stated, is switching from that of 'constructive engagement to enforcement action', the aim being to send a message more broadly that the SRA will take action against those who fail properly to cooperate.

All nominations were being checked for their suitability and thousands of nominations had already been through this process. The SRA claims to be on target to approve nominations by the end of the year.

Ms Barrass stressed that ongoing dialogue with compliance officers was a priority for the SRA and a communications framework would be put in place that would include the publication of information on the website such as case studies and alerts, and the organisation of workshops and webinars.

Law Society invests in compliance support for COLPs and COFAs

The Law Society has become a shareholder in Rliance, which has quickly established itself as the market-leading online support tool for law firm COLPs and COFAs. The agreement, which includes an equity investment by the Law Society, provides for the Society's involvement in further development of the product and promotion of Rliance as part of the Law Society Risk and Compliance service.

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/news/press-releases/law-society-invests-in-rliance-compliance-product-to-support-colps-and-cofas/>

LeO / YouGov complaints handling report

The report, which explores challenges and barriers faced by customers during the complaints process, found that many customers were likely to recommend a lawyer based on a good complaint outcome, despite the initial negative experience. However, despite being good for business, the report showed that some lawyers weren't handling complaints effectively, with customers claiming they felt intimidated or threatened by their lawyer, leading them to drop the complaint.

In a survey of around 1000 customers who had complained to the Legal Ombudsman before giving their lawyer the chance to resolve the complaint – what is known as a 'premature complaint' – 63% said it was because they had no confidence it would be taken seriously or that it would be resolved fairly.

http://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/aboutus/Research_and_survey_findings.html

Diversity reporting requirements

The Solicitors Regulation Authority plans to make unannounced visits to 100 'randomly selected' law firms to assess their compliance with mandatory diversity reporting requirements. The visits are in addition to a two-stage profession-wide survey of firms. By 4 September 2012 7,131 firms, out of some 11,000, had completed questionnaires reporting that 186,084 people work for them.

Second-stage questionnaires are to be given to each individual member of staff inviting them to provide information about their ethnicity, age, disabilities and caring responsibilities. Data will also be collected on sexual orientation, religion or belief, and gender reassignment.



The drive to collect diversity data arises from a statutory requirement, laid down by the Legal Services Board in August 2011, that all law firms and chambers should publish statistical information on the diversity profile of their staff. The SRA will publish the survey's findings next year, but in subsequent years firms and chambers will be required to publish their own data.

Back in the Summer the Law Society published a practice note to help firms comply with the new requirements to collect diversity data. President Lucy Scott-Moncrieff said the new requirement 'will help the Law Society better meet the needs of our diverse membership and promote greater diversity in the profession.'

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/advice/practice-notes/sra-equality-monitoring/>

Compliance support for firms

Remember the Law Society's risk and compliance service is available to offer ongoing support to members.

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/communities/risk-compliance-service/>

New Practice Notes

Anti-Money Laundering (6 October)

This practice note is to help you comply with the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, Terrorism Act 2000 and Money Laundering Regulations 2007 and all amending legislation up to October 2012. It also details good practice. The 2007 regulations entered force on 15 December 2007 and the TACT and POCA Amendment Regulations 2007 entered into force on 26 December 2007.

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/advice/practice-notes/aml/>

Defence Costs Orders (1 October)

Solicitors need to inform clients in criminal cases about the changes to the Defendants' Costs Orders regime which are in effect for criminal proceedings commencing after 1 October 2012, following the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012.

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/advice/practice-notes/defence-costs-orders/>

Accreditation Awards

More Practice Management achievements

Congratulations to the following practices for recently achieving the Law Society Lexcel standard:

Lexcel is the Law Society's international practice management standard.

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/accreditation/lexcel/>

More Conveyancing Quality Scheme members

Congratulations to the following practices for recently achieving the Law Society Conveyancing Quality Scheme (CQS):

The Conveyancing Quality Scheme (CQS) is the Law Society's quality standard for residential conveyancing practices.

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/accreditation/specialist-schemes/conveyancing-quality-scheme/>



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