

Further Public Consultation by the Legal Services Regulatory Authority on the Education and Training of Legal Practitioners

On 28 September 2018 the Legal Services Regulatory Authority (LSRA) submitted a report to the Minister for Justice and Equality on the education and training of legal practitioners as required under section 34(1)(a) of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015.

The report by the Authority included a research report prepared by a specialist team from Hook Tangaza consultants. The full report, as well as the submissions made as part of the previous public consultation on legal education and training can be found here: [Section 34 Report](#)

The research report sets out 14 proposals for reform of the education and training of legal practitioners in Ireland.

The Authority are of the view that these proposals if implemented have the capacity to significantly affect the education and training of legal practitioners and the wider legal services sector. The Authority, therefore, has decided to undertake a further period of consultation with both the providers and users of legal services, to explore the possible impact of the proposals on legal education and the provision of legal services.

Following the further consultation, and the hosting of a symposium on legal education and training in September 2019, the LSRA will submit a further report to the Minister under section 34.

Key Proposals

The Hook Tangaza research report made fourteen proposals.

At the heart of these proposals are two core proposals, which the report states *“will provide both a foundation and catalyst for further reforms of the education and training system for legal practitioners.”*

The two core proposals are as follows:

Proposal 1: A clear definition of the competence and standards required to practise law should be developed for legal practitioners.

Proposal 2: Roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in the legal education and training system should be reformed by the Authority establishing a Legal Practitioner Education and Training (LPET) Committee, which would be responsible for setting the statement of

competence and defining standards, which legal practitioners would achieve on qualification.

The LPET Committee would require existing providers of legal education to demonstrate how they met these standards and to enable new providers to explain how they would seek to meet them.

The fourteen proposals are included below at Appendix One.

Scope of the Consultation

The Authority now invites written submissions from members of the public and any other interested party in relation to the proposals put forward in the Hook Tangaza report or on any relevant aspect of the education and training arrangements in the State for legal practitioners.

The LSRA is keen to hear views in relation to the practical implementation of the proposals including issues such as the potential costs of the reforms and their potential impact on legal education and the delivery of legal services.

It would be helpful for respondents to set out the reasons for the views expressed, and to provide any available evidence, which they consider to be relevant.

Respondents are asked to indicate on whose behalf they are responding, for example as a member of the public, a public representative, an individual or a firm within the solicitor or barrister profession, a client or a body representing collective interest etc.

Members of the public or other interested parties wishing to contribute should send a written submission as soon as possible but in any event to be received no later than **31 August 2019**.

Submissions may be sent:

- By e-mail to S34Consultation@lsra.ie or
- By post to
Section 34 Further Consultation
Legal Services Regulatory Authority
P.O. Box 12906
Dublin 2

Freedom of Information

Attention is drawn to the fact that information provided to the Authority may be disclosed in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act, 2014. Therefore, should it be considered that any information provided is commercially sensitive, please identify same, and specify the reason for its sensitivity. The Authority will consult with interested parties making

submissions regarding information identified by them as sensitive before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request. Any personal information, which you volunteer to the Authority, will be treated with the highest standards of security and confidentiality and in accordance with the Data Protection Acts, 1998 and 2003 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) when commenced.

Publication of Submissions

The Authority intends where appropriate to publish any submissions received by it on its website and otherwise. Please note that a decision on any such publication may occur without prior consultation with respondents to this consultation notice. It is in the interest of respondents to highlight, in their submissions, any commercially sensitive or confidential information, which they would not wish to be disclosed.

Legal Services Regulatory Authority

12 July 2019

Appendix One:

On 28 September 2018, following a public consultation, the LSRA submitted a report under s. 34 on the education and training of legal practitioners in the state. The report included 14 proposals set out by the Hook Tangaza Review team. The Review team proposed:

1. A clear definition of the competencies and standards required to practise as either a solicitor or a barrister should be developed for both solicitors and barristers.
2. Roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in the legal education and training system should be reformed by the Authority establishing a Legal Practitioner Education and Training (LPET) Committee, which would be responsible for setting the statement of competence and defining standards, which legal practitioners would achieve on qualification. The LPET Committee would require existing provider of legal education to demonstrate how they met these standards and to enable new providers to explain how they would seek to meet them.
3. An accreditation and validation framework should be developed for legal education and training.
4. Programmes offered by existing and new providers to be accredited against the competency framework.
5. Assessment methodologies should ensure adherence to standards.
6. The LPET Committee should monitor the quality of legal education and training. Legal education and training providers should be required to maintain ongoing quality assurance processes.
7. Admission to programmes of legal practitioner education should be based on achievement of specified competencies at defined standards.
8. The LPET Committee should develop a common set of competencies and standards for admission to the current Professional Practice Course and barrister-at-law degree programmes.
9. Non-law graduates to have alternative means to enter the profession other than through the FE-1.
10. Additional routes to qualification will encourage diversity and increase access.
11. Admission responsibilities of professional bodies to be separated from delivery of education programmes.
12. Transfer arrangements between the professions to be reviewed once a new competency framework is in place.
13. The process for foreign (Non-EU) transfers and agreements to be assessed against new competency framework, once in place.
14. CPD programmes to be linked to competence frameworks and standards.

The full report is available here at [Section 34 Report](#).