

Submission of the Association of Judges of Ireland to Legal Services Regulatory Authority pursuant to request made under section 6 (1) of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015.

1. The Association of Judges of Ireland (AJI) comprises most of the judges of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, the High Court, the Circuit Court and the District Court. Among the aims and objectives to of the AJI (as set out in part B of its constitution) are: –
 - (a) To maintain and promote the highest standards in the administration of justice;and:
 - (b) To promote the exchange of ideas on the administration of justice.
2. The members of the AJI wish to make submissions to the Legal Services Regulatory Authority ("LRSA") in response to an express invitation received from the LRSA on 13th June 2018 as part of the LRSA's review of the operation of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015 as required under section 6 (1) of the Act. The AJI is grateful to be consulted in respect of this important review.
3. The AJI has already set out in comprehensive terms its views through its submission to the LRSA (dated 10.06.2018) on the initial training and continuous education of legal practitioners. The AJI again repeats those submissions which it believes will protect and promote the public interest, maintain an independent and strong legal profession and assist in the proper and effective administration of justice.
4. The AJI is firmly of the view that high standards in the education and training of legal practitioners not only in the practice of law but also in the area of ethics is essential to ensure the proper and effective administration of justice. While it is acknowledged that the professional training bodies for Solicitors and Barristers, the Law Society and the

Kings Inns provide excellent training for legal practitioners, nevertheless it is essential that the Authority maintains a proactive supervisory role in the education of legal practitioners so as to ensure the maintenance of high standards. It is particularly important that high ethical standards are promoted and given prominence. In this respect the practice of the Law Society and Kings Inns in the use of practising lawyers in the education of solicitors and barristers is to be encouraged as it gives young lawyers a practical grounding in their duties to the court, their clients and society at large. The LRSA should assist and encourage wherever it can practising lawyers to partake in the initial and continuing education and training of lawyers.

5. The AJI is aware that many judges make themselves available to provide guidance to legal practitioners through lectures, presentations and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) on topical issues relative to court practice and procedure, ethics and legal developments. The AJI is supportive of such judicial activism and indeed happy to support initiatives undertaken by the LRSA which it believes are supportive of the proper and effective administration of justice, encourage an independent, strong and effective legal profession and promote and maintain adherence to the professional principles of independence and integrity. The AJI will also support the LRSA in encouraging lawyers to act in their clients' best interests while complying with the duties they owe to the court and maintaining confidentiality.
6. The AJI is appreciative of the valuable work done to date by the LRSA and is available when appropriate to assist the LRSA in achieving its objectives, provided such assistance does not encroach on the fundamental and inviolable principle of judicial independence.

The Association of Judges of Ireland
17th July 2018.