

**Submission copied from email**

Date: 29/08/2019

From: Mayo Solicitors Bar Associatio

Dear Sirs,

Herewith find submission from the Mayo Solicitors Bar Association in respect of the 14 proposals for reform made in the report under section 34(1)(a) of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015.

We understand that a report commissioned by the Law Society of Ireland has recommended the removal of criminal law as a subject for trainee Solicitors.

We further understand that the logic for doing so is that a relatively small number of firms specialise exclusively in this area of law.

It has been our experience that while this is true in Dublin (and some other urban centres), it is not true of the country as a whole. Most general practices in the country provide criminal law advice and, in our experience, to a very high standard. They often do so out of necessity as there is little advantage in having a solicitor in Dublin when you need urgent legal advice at two in the morning in Westport or Kilrush.

It is unlikely that any solicitor in rural Ireland will make a living specialising in criminal defence law, as it is a service most often, if not exclusively, provided as part of a general practice.

We would hope that the Legal Regulation Authority recognise the important role of Solicitors (and general practices in particular) in safeguarding rights, where the ordinary citizen meets the criminal justice system.

Kind Regards,

*Aoife O'Malley*

Secretary

Mayo Solicitors Bar Association

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