



An tÚdarás Rialála  
Seirbhísi Dlí  
Legal Services  
Regulatory Authority

## CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET

Please Read Carefully

### **Higher Executive Officer in the Communications, Research and Innovation Department**

The Legal Services Regulatory Authority (“LSRA”) is seeking to identify and appoint a suitably qualified Higher Executive Officer who will play a key role in the delivery of the communications and research function of the LSRA.

#### **Legal Services Regulatory Authority**

The Legal Services Regulatory Authority, the LSRA, was established under the Legal Services Regulation Act, 2015 (“the Act”) as the independent statutory body responsible for the regulation of the provision of legal services by legal practitioners (both solicitors and barristers) and for ensuring the maintenance and improvement of standards in the provision of such services in the State. The Authority has a number of other functions, which are summarised below, and applicants should refer to the 2015 Act for full details. The Authority was formally established on 1 October 2016.

#### **The Work of the LSRA**

Since its establishment, the LSRA has worked towards an orderly phased roll out of its range of statutory functions. It has published and continues to maintain the Roll of Practising Barristers which is a searchable public register of all barristers entitled to provide legal services in the State. It began receiving and investigating complaints about solicitors and barristers in October 2019.

As part of its ongoing work to ensure increased competition in the legal sector, in November 2019 the LSRA introduced a framework that allows partnerships of solicitors to seek authorisation to operate as Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs). The introduction of LLPs has

the potential to increase competition in the legal services market, reduce professional indemnity insurance costs for LLPs and, consequently, lower legal costs for consumers.

The LSRA's has an ongoing statutory responsibility to promote public awareness and disseminate information to the public in respect of legal services, including the cost of such services.

In addition, the LSRA also has an ongoing and challenging programme of research to fulfil its statutory reporting duties under the Act. In addition to its annual reporting duties, the LSRA has to date submitted to the Minister for Justice a total of nine reports under the 2015 Act. These have involved extensive stakeholder consultations and research into national and international practices in the provision of legal services and legal practitioner education and training.

### **Organisational Structure**

The LSRA's executive function is provided by its Chief Executive Officer. A growing organisation, it currently has over 35 employees working across six departments. These are:

- The Office of the Chief Executive;
- Legal Services, Levy and Registration Department;
- Complaints, Investigations and Resolutions Department;
- Communications, Research and Innovation;
- Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal Support; and
- Corporate Services.

The LSRA's primary offices are based in Stoneybatter, Dublin 7. Remote working facilities have also been made available to staff subject to business needs and the ongoing Covid Restrictions.

Since 2019, the LSRA has received income by way of a statutory levy on legal practitioners as well as fees relating to the authorisation of Limited Liability Partnerships.

### **The Authority**

The Authority is comprised of 11 members nominated in accordance with section 9 of the Act. The Authority has a lay majority and chair. Authority members are appointed by the Government following nomination by 10 organisations. This nomination process was designed to ensure the independence of the Authority while also achieving a gender balance and a balance of interests between legal practitioners and those consumers who avail of their services.

The following is the current Authority membership:

- **Don Thornhill (Chair)** - Higher Education Authority
- **Angela Black** - Citizens Information Board
- **Deirdre McHugh** - Competition and Consumer Protection Commission
- **Stephen Fitzpatrick** - Institute of Legal Costs Accountants
- **Dermott Jewell** - Consumers Association of Ireland

- **Sara Moorhead** - The Bar Council
- **Joan Crawford** - Legal Aid Board
- **Eileen Barrington** - The Honorable Society of King's Inns
- **Geraldine Clarke** - The Law Society
- **Simon Murphy** - The Law Society

There is currently a vacancy on the Authority and a nominee from the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission is expected to be appointed in the near future.

### **The LSRA's Vision, Functions and Objectives**

#### **Our Vision:**

*"To establish the LSRA as an efficient, effective and accountable regulatory body with the capacity to protect and promote the public interest and the interests of consumers of legal services whilst encouraging an independent, strong, competitive legal profession with high standards of professionalism and integrity."*

#### **LSRA Statement of Strategy 2019-2022**

#### **Our Mission:**

*"The Legal Services Regulatory Authority will regulate the provision of legal services by legal practitioners and will ensure the maintenance and improvement of standards in the provision of legal services in the State."*

#### **Adapted from section 13(1) of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015**

#### **Our Six Statutory Objectives:**

The Legal Services Regulatory Authority will

- (1) Protect and promote the public interest.
- (2) Support the proper and effective administration of justice.
- (3) Protect and promote the interests of consumers relating to the provision of legal services.
- (4) Promote competition in the provision of legal services in the State.
- (5) Encourage an independent, strong and effective legal profession.
- (6) Promote and maintain adherence to the professional principles of legal practitioners specified in the 2015 Act.

#### **Our Four Core Values:**

The work of the LSRA as a public service body will be guided by our four core values:

1. Independence
2. Consumer Protection
3. Innovation
4. Transparency and Accountability

#### **Our Eleven Key Functions:**

The Authority will undertake the following specific functions as part of its role:

- (1) Keep under review and make recommendations to the Minister in respect of:
  - a. admission requirements of the Law Society, Bar Council, and Honorable Society of King's Inns;
  - b. availability and quality of education and training including ongoing training for the solicitors' and barristers' professions;
  - c. policies in relation to admission and, or, entitlement to practise of the Law Society, Bar Council and the Honorable Society of the King's Inns;
  - d. professional codes;
  - e. the organisation of the provision of legal services in the State.
- (2) Disseminate information in respect of the education and accreditation requirements and any other matters referred to above as the LSRA thinks fit.
- (3) Specify the nature and minimum levels of professional indemnity insurance required.
- (4) Establish and administer a system of inspection of legal practitioners for the purposes of the Act.
- (5) Receive and investigate complaints against legal practitioners.
- (6) Establish and maintain the roll of practising barristers.
- (7) Promote public awareness and disseminate information to the public in respect of legal services, including the cost of such services.
- (8) Keep the Minister for Justice informed of developments in respect of the provision of legal services including their cost.
- (9) Keep the Minister informed of developments in respect of the provision of legal services and make recommendations to assist the Minister in coordinating and developing policy.
- (10) Undertake, commission or assist in research projects and other activities in respect of the provision of legal services, which may increase public awareness and promote an improvement in standards for their provision, and make recommendations to the Minister for Justice.
- (11) Perform any other functions conferred by the Act or by regulations made under it.

## **The Role of the HEO in the Communications, Research and Innovation Department**

Working within the LSRA's Communications, Research and Innovation Department, the Research and Communications Higher Executive Officer (HEO) will work closely with the Head of the Department to deliver a diverse and challenging research agenda and to ensure that the key messages relevant to the work of the LSRA are communicated effectively to the appropriate audiences and using appropriate media.

The LSRA's Communications, Research and Innovation Department is comprised of two units – the Education, Research and Analysis Unit and the Media and Communications Unit.

The Department plays an important role in discharging the statutory objectives of the LSRA to protect and promote the public interest; support the proper and effective administration of justice; protect and promote the interests of consumers relating to the provision of legal services; promote competition in the provision of legal services; encourage an independent, strong and effective legal profession; and promote and maintain adherence to professional principles.

The HEO will be responsible for a challenging portfolio of both research and communication responsibilities. The successful candidate will be required to work as part of small team and also on their own initiative, to manage the delivery of both research and communication projects, to engage with key stakeholders on behalf of the LSRA and to represent the LSRA in various fora. They will also be required to deliver high quality, robust and accurate research and other reports to the Head of Department and the CEO.

**The main functions of the Communications, Research and Innovation Department are included in Appendix One.**

### **MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES of the HEO Role:**

#### **Research**

- 1) Collaborate with senior management in multiple research-related projects including:
  - Contributing to the development, provision and management of the LSRA's research strategy, policies and protocols;
  - Assisting in designing research methodologies and undertaking, commissioning and reviewing research;
  - Drafting and editing research briefs and research reports in the broad areas of legal services provision, education and training and new business models;
  - Compiling and preparing statistical information and analysis for public dissemination;
  - Monitoring and reporting on the impact of recommendations, innovations or structures;
  - Carrying out regular structured reviews of work quality and the delivery of objectives in conjunction with the Head of Unit;

- Managing statutory consultations with legal professional bodies and others, including collating and analysing written submissions.

### **Communications**

- 2) Assisting with implementing effective communications strategies for a range of target audiences, including:
  - Assisting with the production of communications materials in a range of formats and tailored for key stakeholder groups including legal practitioners and consumers of legal services.
  - Assisting with internal communications projects.
- 3) Responding to parliamentary questions, FOI requests and data access requests.
- 4) Assisting in co-ordinating stakeholder and outreach events including public consultations, and assisting in managing relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders.
- 5) Updating the LSRA's website and social media channels.

### **General**

- 6) Contributing to the wider work of the Communications, Research and Innovation Department and the LSRA in relation to the delivery of its statutory objectives.
- 7) Building and maintaining contacts with all relevant stakeholders to deliver the best possible outcomes consistent with the LSRA's statutory objectives and within existing resources.
- 8) Managing and prioritising projects and optimising research output.

### **ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:**

Applicants must be able to demonstrate how they meet each of the following essential criteria:

1. A) Hold an honours degree (Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications) in a relevant discipline with at least 2.1 honours and with a proven track record in academia / research.

and

- B) Have a minimum of two years' experience in a relevant role involving developing research methodology, conducting research and analysis, writing and communicating research findings.

2. First-rate organisational and time-management skills, with the ability to plan, prioritise and monitor multiple projects and assigned tasks in a busy work environment and working within deadlines.
3. Excellent oral and written communication skills, with a high level of attention to detail and the proven ability to write and present complex information in a concise, accessible and plain English style for different audiences.
4. Strong interpersonal and team leadership skills with some experience in liaising with senior personnel and a range of stakeholders.
5. Proven experience in the use of information technology including a range of software programmes and digital platforms.
6. Applied working knowledge of the legal, regulatory, policy making or public administration systems.
7. Commitment to public service values and delivery of quality public service.

The key competencies relating to effective performance at Higher Executive Officer grade in the Civil Service will be used in the selection process. These are:

- Team Leadership;
- Analysis & Decision-making;
- Management & Delivery of Results;
- Interpersonal and Communication Skills;
- Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self-Development; and
- Drive & Commitment to Public Service Values.

The competency framework for Higher Executive Officer can be found here:  
[https://www.publicjobs.ie/images/pdfs/Higher\\_Executive\\_Officer\\_Level.pdf](https://www.publicjobs.ie/images/pdfs/Higher_Executive_Officer_Level.pdf)

## **Principal Conditions of Service**

### **General**

Appointments are on a permanent basis as a public servant as per section 25(4) of the 2015 Act, subject to the satisfactory completion of the specified probationary period.

### **Salary**

The salary for the post is based on the starting point on the HEO Officer (PPC) scale of €49,845.

The relevant scale is as follows (DPER Circular 12/2020)

€49,845 €51,303, €52,756, €54,210 €55,669. €57,123, €58,578, €60,679<sup>1</sup>, €62,776<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> After 3 years satisfactory service at the maximum.

<sup>2</sup> After 6 years satisfactory service at the maximum.

Salary shall be deemed to accrue from day to day and to be payable in the appointed person's bank account by equal instalments fortnightly in arrears by electronic funds transfer.

This rate of pay may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy. Statutory deductions from salary will be made as appropriate.

#### **Annual Leave**

Annual Leave will be 29 working days, rising to 30 years after 5 years' service. This is exclusive of public holidays.

#### **Pension**

The LSRA is a Public Service Body and a relevant authority for the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (SPS). Persons employed by the LSRA will become members of the SPS.

Where an employee was already a member of a pre-2013 public service pension scheme, that scheme may apply subject to certain conditions.

More information in respect of the Scheme can be found on the website [www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie](http://www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie)

#### **Probation**

The appointee must serve a probationary period, which normally will last for twelve months. Should the appointee's services be satisfactory as regards health, attendance, conduct and efficiency generally during the probationary period, the appointee, on completion of the period will be finally appointed. Should the appointee's services be unsatisfactory, the appointment may be terminated at any time during the period. The LSRA may extend the probationary period if necessary.

#### **Duties**

The appointee will be expected to perform all acts, duties and obligations as appropriate to this position (which may be revised from time to time.)

#### **Hours of Attendance**

Hours of attendance will be as fixed from time to time but will amount to not less than 43 hours and 15 minutes gross per week (37 Hours Net.)

The appointee will be required to work additional hours from time to time

#### **Sick Leave**

Pay during properly certified sick absence, provided there is no evidence of permanent disability for service, will apply on a pro-rata basis, in accordance with the provisions of the sick leave circulars.

Appointees will be required to sign a mandate authorising the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection to pay any benefits due under the Social Welfare Acts direct to the LSRA and payment during illness will be subject to the appointee making the necessary claims



**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

**Candidates should note that different terms and conditions may apply, if immediately prior to appointment, the appointee is already a serving civil or public servant.**

**The above outlines the principal conditions of service and is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all terms and conditions of employment which will be set out in the employment contract to be agreed with the successful candidate.**

## Competition Process

Applications should be made electronically by e-mail to [recruit@lsra.ie](mailto:recruit@lsra.ie)

The candidate should ensure that they provide evidence of how they meet the essential criteria listed above and demonstrate the required competencies for the role.

Applicants should submit their fully completed application form with the following elements included:

- Academic, Professional or Technical Qualifications;
- Employment History;
- Summary of Experience;
- Key Achievements to Date;
- Research Exercise; and
- Personal Statement.

Candidates must be legally entitled to work in Ireland at the time of application.

**Closing date for applications is 1pm on Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021.**

**Applications will not be accepted after the closing date**

## Selection Process

The selection process may include:

- Shortlisting of candidates, on the basis of the information contained in their application;
- A competitive preliminary interview(s);
- A technical test;
- Work simulation/role play/media exercise, and any other tests or exercises that be deemed appropriate.

## Shortlisting

Whilst a candidate may meet the eligibility requirements for the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, the LSRA may decide that a smaller number will be called to the next stage of the selection process. The LSRA will employ a shortlisting process to select a group who, based on the examination of the application form appear to be the most suitable for the position. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates who, based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience.

An expert board will examine the application forms against agreed shortlisting criteria based on the requirements of the position. It is therefore in your own interest to ensure that you provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications and experience in your application.

## **Interviews**

The interviews for this post are likely to be held in week commencing 22<sup>nd</sup> February or 01 March 2021. Due to Covid 19 restrictions, video conferencing software may be used in the interview process. Interviews will be semi-structured in format, with candidates asked to provide examples of the competencies for the role. We will endeavour to give as much notice as possible of interview dates.

Candidates who do not attend for interview as scheduled, or who do not furnish such evidence as required in regard to any matter relevant to their application, will have no further claim to consideration in this process

## **Health and Character References**

Candidates must be in good health, capable and competent of carrying out the work assigned to them, and they must also be of good character. Those under consideration for a position will be required to complete a health and character declaration.

Please be assured that we will only contact referees should you come under consideration after the preliminary interview stage. Please note, that should you be successful at interview, we will require a reference from your current or most recent employer.

Referees should be able to provide relatively recent information on your performance, character and behaviour in a work context.

## **Canvassing**

Candidates should be aware that any attempts to enlist support for their application through any person except as a referee named on the application forms will result in their application being disqualified.

## **Equal Opportunities Employer**

The Legal Services Regulatory Authority is committed to equality of opportunity in employment and welcomes applicants irrespective of disability, gender, race, age, religious belief / political opinion or sexual orientation. All applications for employment are considered on the basis of merit.

## **Security Clearance**

Some posts within the LSRA may require security clearance and will require completion of a form for Garda vetting purposes. In the event of conflicts of interest, candidates may not be considered for certain posts.

## **Data Protection Act 1998 to 2018**

When your application form is received, we create a computer record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature. Such information held on computer is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Acts 2018.

## **Eligibility**

Eligible Candidates must:

- (a) A citizen of the European Economic Area. The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or
- (b) A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or

- (c) A non-EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or Swiss citizen and has a stamp 4 visa; or
- (d) A person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015 or any family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification and has a stamp 4 visa or
- (e) A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or Switzerland and has a stamp 4 visa

To qualify candidates must meet one of the citizenship criteria above by the date of any job offer.

**Note: This document is for information only, and is not intended as a legal interpretation of any other documents, guidelines or legislation**

**LSRA January 2021**

## Roles and Responsibilities of the Education, Research and Analysis Department

### 1. Education

- Undertake reviews and prepare annual reports in relation to admissions policies to the professions (section 33);
- Undertake reviews, conduct public consultations and prepare reports in relation to the education and training (including on-going training arrangements in the State for legal practitioners), including the manner in which such education and training is provided (section 34(1)(a));
- Lead, maintain and develop professional interface with all legal professional education, training and standard-setting bodies including universities, institutes of technology and all other third level institutions offering, or planning to offer courses in legal education, training and CPD:
  - i. In the State
  - ii. Internationally
- Lead, maintain and develop professional interface with national and international associations of legal practitioners with a view to identifying, promoting awareness of and addressing deficits in legal professional training in conjunction with all relevant educational training bodies;
- Establish and maintain a system of monitoring compliance with continuing professional development requirements of legal practitioners not otherwise subject to such monitoring by the professional bodies and leading, maintaining and developing professional interface with professional bodies in that regard;
- Review and regulate professional codes in conjunction with the Legal Services and Regulation Unit (section 23);
- Supervise, assist or draft any Codes of Practice in conjunction with the Legal Services and Regulation Unit (section 22(1));

### 2. Research & Analysis

- Assist in the preparation of statistical information on any aspects of the LSRA that may be required by the SMT or the Authority;
- Undertake reviews, conduct public consultations and prepare reports in relation to the unification of the solicitor's and barristers' professions, the creation of the new profession of conveyancer and any such matters as the Minister for Justice and Equality may request (section 34);
- Undertake, commission or assist in research projects and other activities in respect of the provision of legal services, which in the opinion of the Authority may promote an improvement in standards for the provision of those services and public awareness of them and make any recommendations to the Minister for Justice and Equality (section 13(2)(i));
- Monitor and report on the impact of recommendations, innovations or structures implemented to allow legal practitioners to provide services together or with others;
- Formulate a rolling research strategy designed to assist the LSRA in the achievement of its strategic objectives;
- Managing and tracking complaint trends, causes and outcomes to inform risk management and risk focused inspections (Part 3) and a complaint reduction information agenda (Part 6);
- Prepare reports on a six-monthly basis on the performance of Complaints and Disciplinary Hearings (section 73(1));
- Undertake reviews and prepare reports as required in relation to the operation of legal partnerships and multi-disciplinary practices (section 121);
- Develop recommendations, innovations and models which may assist the LSRA with its objective of ensuring the maintenance and improvement of standards in the provision of legal services in the state e.g. The changes to the operation of existing models of legal practice in the State (section 119 (2)(b));

## 1. Content Management

- Manage responses to Parliamentary Questions;
- Manage all media queries;
- Maintain the LSRA's website content, social media presence and profile;
- Prepare all LSRA information leaflets and other literature;
- Monitoring and archiving of all media reporting on LSRA.

## 2. Publications, Documentation & Reporting

- Develop and deliver an annual rolling communication strategy for the LSRA to successfully promote the work of the LSRA with key stakeholders, including the public and the legal profession;
- Develop and deliver a media strategy (including the use of social media and emerging technologies) to ensure the work of the LSRA has an appropriate platform and profile;

- Manage the publication of determinations of the Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal and other necessary information (section 88(3));
- Manage the publication of determinations of orders of the High Court and other necessary information (section 88(4));
- Manage the publication of notices stating the operative part of any order of the High Court in *Iris Oifigiúil* and in any other such manner as the Authority may consider appropriate (section 115(3) and (4));
- Prepare all LSRA information leaflets and other literature;
- Assist the CEO and the Authority with preparation of the LSRA Annual Report and the Strategic Plan;

### **3. Event Management**

- Plan, manage and evaluate outreach events, public consultations, LSRA conferences and events;