



OIFIG AN PHRÍOMH-ATURNAE STÁIT
CHIEF STATE SOLICITOR'S OFFICE

12 February 2025

Section 33 Consultation
Legal Services Regulatory Authority
PO Box 12906
Dublin 7

Your Ref:

Our Ref: [REDACTED]

Contact: [REDACTED]

Tel: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

By email only – publicconsultations@lsra.ie

Re: LSRA Consultation on the Admission Policies of the Legal Professions in 2024

Dear Sir / Madam

Thank you for your invitation to the Chief State Solicitor's Office to make a submission as part of the above consultation. We note that submissions are particularly sought by the Authority on the following four issues:

1. The level of demand for the services of practising barristers and solicitors in 2024.
2. The costs of legal services in 2024 and whether these were available at a reasonable cost to consumers.
3. The standard of education and training for persons admitted to practise.
4. The extent to which the admission policies of the legal professions are consistent with the public interest in ensuring the availability of legal services at a reasonable cost, taking into account the demand for services and the need to ensure adequate education and training standards for persons admitted to practise.

As mentioned in our submission last year, in respect of the Authority's comparable consultation for 2023, the Chief State Solicitor's Office comprises solicitors who work in the full time service of the State. As such, we do not experience consumer demand or charge legal costs to consumers in the same way as a private practice would do. Accordingly, the aspect of the consultation which is of most relevance to us is point 3 above.

The CSSO continues to be committed to a culture of ongoing learning for our solicitors and so the standard of available education and training is critically important to us. We recently held an internal Recognition Event to acknowledge legal staff (over 90 people) who have undertaken substantive legal qualifications in recent years. The Chief State Solicitor and senior management took the opportunity to emphasise the value of continuous legal

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education and training for practitioners and congratulated our staff on their achievements in this area.

It might be of interest to the Authority to see a snapshot of the type of courses undertaken and so I have included these as an Appendix. Many of these courses would have been attended by a number of solicitors from our Office in recent years and I am pleased to confirm that feedback as to standards continues to be positive, as set out in our 2023 submission.

In your consultation notice, the Authority further provides that respondents may also wish to comment on any other issues in relation to the operation of the Act, including the objectives of the Authority under section 13(4). Two of these objectives are of specific interest to the Chief State Solicitor's Office, namely:

- e) *encouraging an independent, strong and effective legal profession, and*
- f) *promoting and maintaining adherence to the professional principles of independence and integrity (...cont.)'*

We would note that there is considerable synergy between our respective offices on these objectives and core values. Aside from the delivery of an excellent standard of legal service to our clients, the mission of the CSSO also includes supporting adherence to the rule of law. As you will appreciate, this requires an independent, strong and effective legal profession of the type promoted by the Authority. Ireland is fortunate to have a strong Constitutional foundation to its legal structure and this in and of itself supports the independence of the legal profession. We would encourage greater public awareness and education of the fundamentals of our Constitution, the profession's integrity that is tightly bound to that base, and within and across the profession a strong collegiate support in the upholding of those values.

Here in the CSSO, we emphasise the importance of these qualities for practitioners, both internally to our own legal staff and also externally when we speak to trainee solicitors at the Law Society of Ireland or to college students who are interested in pursuing a legal career. The importance of adherence to the rule of law will feature as a theme in a student essay competition which we are launching shortly for the next generation of legal professionals. It will likely also feature in the public law conference which, together with colleagues in the Attorney General's Office, we will organise for our internal and external legal stakeholders later this year.

We wish the Authority well in its consultation process.

Yours faithfully,



MARIA BROWNE
CHIEF STATE SOLICITOR

Communications with Maria Browne as a Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015 may require you to register under the Regulation of Lobbying Act. See www.lobbying.ie for further detail.

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Appendix

CSSO Qualifications achieved 2020 - 2024

Course	Provider
Advanced Diploma in Data Protection Law	The Honorable Society of King's Inns
Advanced Diploma in Forensic Criminology	City Colleges
Advanced Diploma in Immigration & Asylum Law	The Honorable Society of King's Inns
Advanced Diploma in Legal Practice through Irish	The Honorable Society of King's Inns
Advanced Diploma in Planning and Environmental Law	The Honorable Society of King's Inns
Advanced Diploma in Public Procurement Law	The Honorable Society of King's Inns
Certificate in Assisted Decision Making Capacity	The Law Society of Ireland
Certificate in Agribusiness & Food Law	The Law Society of Ireland
Certificate in Conveyancing	The Law Society of Ireland
Certificate in Corporate Governance	Public Affairs Ireland
Certificate in Environmental Law & Climate Change	The Law Society of Ireland
Certificate in Immigration Law and Practice	The Law Society of Ireland
Certificate in Justice	Harvard University
Certificate in Leadership in the Public Service	Public Affairs Ireland
Certificate in Pensions Law & Applied Trusteeship	The Law Society of Ireland
Certificate in Professional Irish – Level 4	Gaelchultúr Teoranta
Certificate in Public Law	Public Affairs Ireland
Certificate in Strategic Development and Leadership for the in house Lawyer	The Law Society of Ireland
Certificate in Technology Law	The Law Society of Ireland

Degree of Barrister-at-Law	The Honorable Society of King's Inns
Diploma in Commercial Property	The Law Society of Ireland
Diploma in Criminal Law & Practice	The Law Society of Ireland
Diploma in Criminology & Forensic Psychology	City Colleges
Diploma in Employment Law	The Law Society of Ireland
Diploma in Environmental & Natural Resources Law	University College Cork
Diploma in Judicial Skills & Decision Making	The Law Society of Ireland
Diploma in Organisational Change & Transformation	UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School
Diploma in Regulation Law	The Law Society of Ireland
Certificate in Employment Law & Remote Working	The Law Society of Ireland
ICM Certificate in Public Law	Public Affairs Ireland
ILM Certificate in Leadership 3 day programme	Public Affairs Ireland
Irish Language Intermediate B1	Gaelchultúr Teoranta
Irish Language Intermediate B2	Gaelchultúr Teoranta
Master of Law in HR Law	Griffith College
Postgraduate Diploma in Environmental & Natural Resources Law	University College Cork
Postgraduate Diploma in European Law	King's College, London
Professional Academy Diploma in Leadership & Management	UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School
Professional Diploma in Advanced Management	UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School
Professional Diploma in Industrial & Employment Relations	Institute of Public Administration
Professional Diploma in Leadership & Management	UCD Professional Academy