

Breaking Down Barriers Implementation Plan



Progress Report 2

September 2025



An tÚdarás Rialála
Seirbhísi Dlí

Legal Services
Regulatory Authority

Update from Dr Brian Doherty, CEO Legal Services Regulatory Authority

Chair of Breaking Down Barriers Implementation Working Group

It is my pleasure to introduce this second progress update on the implementation of the LSRA's recommendations to address economic and other barriers facing many aspiring and early career solicitors and barristers.

The LSRA began examining these barriers following a request from the then Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee TD, who asked the Authority to pay particular attention to equity of access and entry to the legal professions, and the objective of achieving greater diversity. The LSRA brought forward a total of 32 recommendations in its final *Breaking Down Barriers* report submitted to the Minister in January 2024.

The Minister welcomed these recommendations as “meaningful reforms that will make a real difference.” In order to track impact, she asked the LSRA to prepare an implementation plan with progress indicators and timelines and to submit six-monthly progress reports to the Department. The LSRA produced its *Breaking Down Barriers* Implementation Plan in September 2024 and it was noted by government and published in October 2024.

The plan provides for the establishment of a *Breaking Down Barriers* Implementation Working Group, with quarterly meetings. To date, I have been pleased to chair three meetings of the Implementation Working Group, in January, April and July 2025. Its current membership consists of the LSRA and the three legal professional bodies – the Law Society of Ireland, the Honorable Society of King's Inn and The Bar of Ireland.

This progress report is for the period April to September 2025 inclusive. I am pleased to note that the progress outlined in this report builds on the significant work documented in the first departmental update submitted in March 2025 and covering the previous six-month period.

I am acutely conscious that this progress report marks the end of my involvement in the LSRA's ambitious *Breaking Down Barriers* project as I am stepping down as Chief Executive of the LSRA in September 2025.

I would like to pay tribute to all involved in advancing the reform agenda to widen and increase access to education, training and early career opportunities, and to enhance diversity in the legal professions. Particular thanks go to the professional bodies who have enthusiastically embraced the LSRA's reform agenda.

While inevitably my departure may have an impact on some timelines in the implementation of the LSRA's recommendations, I have every confidence that the LSRA and its key stakeholders will continue to work apace to deliver on the *Breaking Down Barriers* reforms to build a more inclusive and diverse legal services sector.

*Dr Brian J Doherty,
September 2025*



Barriers Implementation Working Group Continues to Make Ground

The *Breaking Down Barriers* Implementation Working Group (IWG) is the primary mechanism to progress the recommendations as set out in the LSRA's Implementation Plan.

The group has been chaired until now by the LSRA's Chief Executive, Dr Brian Doherty. Its membership is comprised of nominated representatives of the professional bodies for solicitors and barristers.

The professional bodies are:

- the Law Society of Ireland (Law Society)
- the Honorable Society of King's Inns (King's Inns)
- The Bar of Ireland (Bar Council)

The IWG will ensure the timely progression of the majority of the 32 *Breaking Down Barriers* recommendations.

- At its inaugural quarterly meeting at the LSRA's office in January 2025, members discussed a total of 12 recommendations with progress indicators for the final quarter of 2024 and the first quarter of 2025.
- At its second meeting at the premises of The Bar of Ireland in April 2025, members reviewed progress to date and also discussed a total of eleven further recommendations with progress indicators in Q2 2025.

- At its third meeting at the premises of the Law Society in July 2025, members reviewed progress to date and discussed a total of eleven further recommendations with progress indicators in Q3 2025.



The third meeting of the *Breaking Down Barriers* Implementation Working Group took place on 3 July 2025 at the Law Society's premises in Blackhall Place, Dublin. The attendees were:

LSRA: *Dr Brian Doherty*, CEO; *Nuala Haughey*, Head of the Communications, Research and Innovation; *Sarah Winston*, Research Manager; *Rebecca Wolfe*, Administrator.

Law Society of Ireland: *TP Kennedy*, Director of Education, *Claire McGee*, Head of Public Policy.

King's Inns: *Mary Griffin*, CEO and Under Treasurer; *Dr Eimear Brown*, Dean of School of Law.

The Bar of Ireland: *Ciara Murphy*, CEO; *Stephen Swanton*, Director of Education and Professional Development.

Education and Training Committee Established to Drive Reforms

The *Breaking Down Barriers* project builds upon foundations laid down in the LSRA's earlier work in examining legal practitioner education and training and bringing forward recommendations for structural reform.

An intensive period of research and stakeholder consultations began in 2018 and culminated in a LSRA report to the then Minister for Justice in November 2020. *Setting Standards - Legal Professional Education and Training* made a total of 14 recommendations for reform. Two core recommendations in *Setting Standards* were:

- The development of a clear definition of the competence and standards required to practise as a solicitor or barrister.
- The establishment of a new independent body to drive reform in the legal practitioner education and training arena, called the Legal Practitioners Education and Training Committee, or LPET. The LPET Committee, which will require primary legislation, will both set and assure educational and training standards and accredit new and existing legal education and training providers.

The recommendation in *Breaking Down Barriers* that relate to legal practitioner education and training anticipate the establishment of the LPET Committee, and identify priority areas for its work agenda.

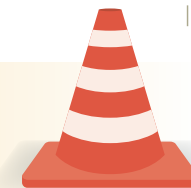
The LSRA (the Authority) has taken a series of steps towards setting up the LPET Committee, including:

- An Education and Training Committee of the Authority was established under section 16 of the Act in September 2023. Its role is to lay the foundations and build the framework for the LEPT Committee.
- Three members of the S16 Committee were appointed by the Authority in late 2024, including Dr Don Thornhill as chairperson. Dr Thornhill is the former chair of the Authority.
- A further four members of the Committee were appointed by the Authority in March 2025, following an open competition.
- The S16 Education and Training Committee have met twice to date on 16 April and 3 September 2025.

A key priority of the Authority's S16 Education and Training Committee is to oversee the development of a national Competency Framework to define the competencies required of solicitors and barristers and the standards to which these should be demonstrated.

The LSRA commends the professional bodies for solicitors and barristers for the considerable work they have already undertaken in the area of professional competencies. Since *Setting Standards* was published in November 2020, the Law Society, the King's Inns and the Bar of Ireland have each produced their own Competency Frameworks.

The S16 Education and Training Committee will play an important role in assisting the Authority with the delivery of the *Breaking Down Barriers* Implementation Plan. It is working towards completion of its challenging programme of work within fifteen months of its establishment.



Breaking Down Barriers

Implementation Plan Progress Report 2, September 2025

Breaking Down Barriers contains a total of 32 recommendations which contain 80 individual actions for implementation over the lifetime of the plan.

This update documents progress, or further progress, towards a total of 22 recommendations. Further details are contained in the table starting on page 16.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PATHWAYS

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Increase flexible training routes and annual reporting

PROGRESS UPDATE:

The LSRA in April 2025 reported for the first time to the Minister on the existing flexible training routes for legal practitioner training and the impact of these. The details were contained in its *Pathways to the Professions 2024: Annual Report on Admission Policies of the Legal Professions*. As this is an ongoing recommendation, the training providers will continue to report annually to the LSRA (LPET Committee once established) on their initiatives to increase flexible training routes to the legal professions and the impact of these.

Existing and planned flexible training initiatives include:

For barristers:

The King's Inns provides its Barrister-at-Law (BL) degree course on a part-time basis, allowing students to work full-time while studying if necessary. A higher proportion of part-time students are aged 30 and older compared to their full time counterparts. It also provides a part-time Diploma in Legal Studies programme open to candidates with no third level qualification and graduates from disciplines other than law. In total, 33% of new entrants to this course in 2024 were mature students. Diploma holders are entitled to sit the entrance exam for the BL degree course.

For solicitors:

The Law Society is exploring a new solicitor apprenticeship model for school leavers. Since 2020, it has provided a part-time 'hybrid' version of its Professional Practice Course, allowing trainee solicitors to stay in full-time employment while training if necessary. The course has facilitated trainees who are more demographically diverse than their full-time counterparts.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PATHWAYS

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Annual reporting on diversity of students and trainees

PROGRESS UPDATE:

In July 2025, the LSRA-appointed diversity experts, the Bridge Group, provided a draft expert research report on the collection of diversity data on student barristers and trainee solicitors by the training providers.

The draft report includes a diversity data questionnaire and expert guidance on data collection, storage and reporting. It was developed in consultation with the LSRA, the Law Society and the King's Inns. The LSRA has shared the draft expert report with the professional bodies and invited their feedback.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Explore levy and other funding for financial supports for diversity

PROGRESS UPDATE:

The three professional bodies have shared with the LSRA their views on exploring the use of the annual levy on the professions and other funding mechanisms to develop increased supports for prospective solicitors and barristers to increase diversity of intake.

The professional bodies have also supplied to the LSRA detailed information on a range of existing financial support schemes, that they operate including the resources associated with them, including both monetary costs and human resources. These include existing scholarships, grants and bursaries for trainee solicitors and student barristers.

The LSRA has carefully analysed the views of the professional bodies and will carry out further consultations with the legal professions and other key stakeholders. The LSRA will then bring proposals to the Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration.

BARRISTER PUPILLAGE

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Review mandatory requirement of pupillage in King's Inns Code

FURTHER PROGRESS UPDATE:

The King's Inns and The Bar of Ireland have shared with the LSRA their views on the impact of the removal or retention of the mandatory requirement in the King's Inns Code of Conduct that barristers undertake nine months' unpaid pupillage before they can represent clients before courts.

The LSRA is carefully considering the responses from the King's Inns and The Bar of Ireland, and will engage with the Section 16 Education and Training Committee on this matter.

BARRISTER PUPILLAGE

RECOMMENDATION 5:

Explore and develop financial supports for barrister pupils

PROGRESS UPDATE:

The LSRA in June 2025 advised The Bar of Ireland of its wish to engage with it in relation to its work to date in exploring innovative solutions to develop appropriate financial supports for barrister pupils. The Bar of Ireland has indicated that it will provide the LSRA with this information by end of the 2025.

The LSRA intends to then further engage with The Bar of Ireland on exploring potential solutions, including undertaking an analysis of a minimum payment for barrister pupils in their pupillage year.

SOLICITOR TRAINEESHIPS

RECOMMENDATION 9:

Minimum pay threshold for solicitor trainees

PROGRESS UPDATE:

The LSRA in May 2025 invited the Law Society to share in writing any actions or engagement it has had with relevant stakeholders in relation to ensuring that all solicitor trainees receive a minimum pay threshold during training.

The Law Society, by way of response in July 2025, welcomed the opportunity to fully engage with this recommendation. It confirmed that, under the National Minimum Wage Act 2000, a training solicitor is obliged to pay trainee solicitors a minimum salary. Furthermore, it advised that its Education Committee recommends that a training solicitor gives consideration to paying trainees the higher non-statutory “living wage”. The Law Society said the experience of trainee solicitors is often that they are paid in excess of both the statutory minimum salary and the non-statutory living wage.

The Law Society stated that the recommendation raised some “complex considerations” which will require further input at Committee level, and it expected to be in a position to provide a more substantive reply by Q1 2026.

RECOMMENDATION 10:

Solicitor traineeships in civil and public service

PROGRESS UPDATE:

As reported in the March 2025 progress update, the Law Society has outlined to the LSRA the work it has undertaken to date to encourage and support the direct intake of trainee solicitors in the public and private sectors, and also its new initiatives for 2025.

The LSRA and the Law Society are currently collaborating on a planned symposium on solicitor traineeships in the public sector, scheduled to take place at the premises of the Law Society in Blackhall Place in late 2025. The LSRA has also begun to engage with the Law Society on the viability of establishing its own direct solicitor trainee intake scheme.

SOLICITOR TRAINEESHIPS

RECOMMENDATION 11:

Increased financial supports for small firms to provide training contracts

PROGRESS UPDATE:

The LSRA in May 2025 invited the Law Society to share in writing its views and updates on the recommendation that it should increase its financial supports for small firms to provide training contracts and also extend this funding to include independent law centres, as well as increasing flexible options for training firms to take on trainees.

In its response in July 2025, the Law Society informed the LSRA that it is “actively engaging with detailed proposals to increase its financial supports for small firms, with these proposals requiring input from a number of Law Society committees.” It said it expected to be in a position to provide a more substantive response over the coming months.

ACCESS PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES

RECOMMENDATION 13:

Professional bodies to evaluate access initiatives and consider new initiatives

PROGRESS UPDATE:

The *Breaking Down Barriers* Implementation Plan established the LSRA’s *Pathways to the Professions* annual reports as the reporting mechanism for updates from the professional bodies on the effectiveness and impact of their existing access initiatives and new potential initiatives and information on new initiatives.

In April 2025, the LSRA reported for the first time to the Minister in its *Pathways to the Professions* annual report 2024 on the professional bodies’ existing access initiatives at second and third level.

In preparation for the 2025 *Pathways to the Professions* annual report (to be published in April 2026) the LSRA in May 2025 advised the professional bodies that as this recommendation contains annually recurring implementation actions, it envisages that their access initiatives will be continuously evaluated in order to determine what works, to consider new programmes, and to share best practice. Therefore, as part of its annual reporting cycle, the LSRA will each year seek information from the professional bodies about their access initiatives and the impact of these.

INFORMATION ON CAREER PATHWAYS AND OPPORTUNITIES

RECOMMENDATION 16:

Improved system for selection of masters

PROGRESS UPDATE:

The LSRA in July 2025 invited the King's Inns and The Bar of Ireland to share in writing any actions they have taken to date in relation to improved information, outreach and supports for prospective barristers to identify and secure masters, and any planned further measures planned to implement this recommendation.

The LSRA will continue to engage with the King's Inns and The Bar of Ireland on their initiatives to improve the system for the selection of masters.

RECOMMENDATION 17:

Information campaigns on different career pathways in law

PROGRESS UPDATE:

As reported in the March 2025 progress update, the LSRA in autumn 2024 ran a multi-channel campaign and held numerous events to highlight the new opportunities available to solicitors and barristers with the introduction of legal partnerships as a new business model for legal services providers. A legal partnership is a business partnership between a barrister and another legal practitioner, who can be either a solicitor or barrister.

The first legal partnership was established in December 2024. Since then, the LSRA has received a number of legal partnership notifications which are currently being progressed.

In advance of the establishment of the LPET Committee, the LSRA will continue to engage with the training bodies as well as public and private sector employers, to highlight this new business model as part of a range of different career pathways for solicitors and barristers.

SOLICITORS' WORKPLACE CULTURE

RECOMMENDATION 18:

Measures to ensure positive workplace culture and employee wellbeing

PROGRESS UPDATE:

The LSRA has discussed this recommendation with the Law Society and has carried out a stakeholder analysis. It is currently researching self-assessment templates on employee wellbeing for law firms over a stated size to complete and report to the Law Society and LSRA on an annual basis. The LSRA intends to consult further about this recommendation with the Law Society, including its Wellbeing Committee, and other relevant stakeholders.

SUSTAINABILITY OF SELF-EMPLOYED BARRISTERS' EARLY CAREERS

RECOMMENDATION 19:

Initiatives to sustain early careers for self-employed barristers

PROGRESS UPDATE:

As reported in the March 2025 progress update, the LSRA has begun engaging on the sustainability challenges for self-employed barristers in the early career years, particularly for women and under-represented groups. It is finalising a brief discussion paper outlining a range of sustainability challenges and potential new initiatives for discussion and consideration. The LSRA intends to consult further with stakeholders, including The Bar of Ireland and barristers on the Roll of Practising Barristers.

SUSTAINABILITY OF SELF-EMPLOYED BARRISTERS' EARLY CAREERS

RECOMMENDATION 20:

Introduce direct access to barristers in non-contentious matters

PROGRESS UPDATE:

Since September 2024, with the entry into force of section 101 of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015, barristers may now provide legal services in non-contentious matters where their instructions on the matters are received directly from a person who is not a solicitor.

In June 2025, the LSRA published on its website a *Guidance Note for Barristers* on direct access in non-contentious matters with information on section 101 of the Act.

As reported in the March 2025 update, The Bar of Ireland's Professional Practices Committee has also produced for its members a guidance document called *Ethical Toolkit: Direct Access*.

RECOMMENDATION 21:

Expanded direct access to barristers in contentious matters

PROGRESS UPDATE:

The LSRA has revisited recommendations 4-11 from its 2017 report, *Certain Issues Relating to Barristers*. These recommendations were to permit direct access to barristers in contentious matters for specific categories of cases under licence by the Authority.

The LSRA is currently finalising a consultation document and intends to run a public consultation. Once the consultation is complete it will carefully analyse the submissions and report the findings to the Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration.

SUSTAINABILITY OF SELF-EMPLOYED BARRISTERS' EARLY CAREERS

RECOMMENDATION 22:

Revisit introduction of Multi-Disciplinary Practices

PROGRESS UPDATE:

The LSRA has previously considered the introduction of Multi-Disciplinary Practices (MDPs) under the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015 and, for reasons of sequencing and resources, it prioritised the prior introduction of limited liability partnerships and legal partnerships.

The LSRA introduced limited liability partnerships in September 2020 and the regulatory framework for legal partnerships came into effect four years later, in September 2024. The LSRA is in the early stages of developing a public consultation on the introduction of MDPs.

RECOMMENDATION 23:

Develop guidance for employed barristers representing employers

PROGRESS UPDATE:

The LSRA has carefully considered the issues relating to section 212 of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015 which allows an employed practising barrister to appear on behalf of their employer in a court, tribunal or forum of arbitration. The LSRA has prepared a consultation paper on this issue and intends to run a suitable consultation.

SUSTAINABILITY OF SELF-EMPLOYED BARRISTERS' EARLY CAREERS

RECOMMENDATION 24:

Introduce measures to ensure barristers fees paid in timely manner

PROGRESS UPDATE:

The Bar of Ireland and the Law Society are collaborating to develop a proposed joint protocol to ensure that barristers are paid fees in a timely manner. The Bar of Ireland has conducted an analysis of complaints made by its members to its Fee Recovery Unit. To facilitate the progression of this recommendation, the LSRA has provided the Law Society and The Bar of Ireland with an analysis of its statistical data on complaints from barristers about non-payment of fees by solicitors.

RECOMMENDATION 25:

Consider options to allow barristers to sue for fees

PROGRESS UPDATE:

In June 2025, The Bar of Ireland provided the LSRA with substantive material on its position on the recommendation for the LSRA to consult with stakeholders on options for changing the law to allow barristers to sue for their fees. The LSRA has carefully considered the material provided by The Bar of Ireland and will now undertake a focused consultation with other key stakeholders before reporting to the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration.

SUSTAINABILITY OF SELF-EMPLOYED BARRISTERS' EARLY CAREERS

RECOMMENDATION 26:

Address concerns about fees levels and structures for legal aid work

PROGRESS UPDATE:

The LSRA continues to engage with stakeholders on the levels and structure of professional fees for State funded legal aid work undertaken by junior barristers.

As reported in the March 2025 progress update, upon invitation, The Bar of Ireland provided to the LSRA its views and concerns about fees and structures for legal aid work. The LSRA has noted these views and concerns. In June 2025 it wrote to the Legal Aid Board requesting its views on a number of matters.

RECOMMENDATION 27:

Ensure transparency in procurement of State funded work

PROGRESS UPDATE:

The LSRA invited the Law Society and The Bar of Ireland to share relevant information on the procurement and distribution of State funded work for early career barristers and solicitors. The Law Society in June 2025 informed the LSRA that as the number of solicitors setting up their own practices during their early careers is particularly small, they would seldom if ever be involved in the procurement of State funded work on their own behalf.

The LSRA acknowledges that this issue is more pertinent to early career barristers. The Bar of Ireland in March 2025 provided the LSRA with its information and analysis.

The LSRA has analysed this information and has conducted a stakeholder analysis for a roundtable event which it intends to hold. At this event, the LSRA will seek the input of the stakeholders on how best to develop mechanisms to ensure transparency in the procurement and distribution of State-funded work for early career barristers.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

RECOMMENDATION 29:

Targeted actions for legal professions to reflect diversity of modern Ireland

PROGRESS UPDATE:

The LSRA has analysed various diversity frameworks and charters for the legal services sector in Ireland other jurisdictions, as well as in other professions.

It is finalising a discussion paper to share with the professional bodies to progress work on this recommendation to take targeted actions towards building solicitor and barrister professions that reflect the diversity of modern Irish society.

RECOMMENDATION 30:

Collect and publish demographic data on legal professions

PROGRESS UPDATE:

As reported in the progress update for recommendation 2, the LSRA in July 2025 shared with the professional bodies a draft report from diversity experts the Bridge Group on the appropriate collection of diversity data from trainee solicitors and student barristers.

This is the first step in establishing the best practice methodology and mechanics for collecting and publishing diversity data in the legal professions.

In due course, the LSRA intends to engage in further detail with The Bar of Ireland and the Law Society on collecting and publishing diversity data on those who are qualified and practising as solicitors and barristers.



ACHIEVED



IN PROGRESS



FUTURE ACTION



PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PATHWAYS

RECOMMENDATION 1: INCREASE FLEXIBLE TRAINING ROUTES AND REPORTING

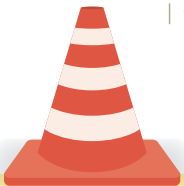
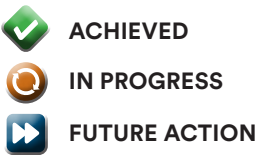
The Law Society of Ireland and the Honorable Society of King's Inns should continue to **increase flexible routes** for legal practitioner training, **reporting annually** to the LSRA and the LPET Committee once established on their initiatives and their impact.

| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|--|------|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 1.1 LSRA, LSI and HSKI agree a template for annual report on flexible training initiatives and their impact. | ✓ | | | | | | | | |
| 1.2 LSRA seek input of Section 16 Education and Training Committee. | 🔄 | | | | | | | | |
| 1.3 LSRA invite LSI and HSKI to submit first annual report on increasing flexible training routes and their impacts. | | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| 1.4 LSRA publish information and data in its “ <i>Pathways to the Professions</i> ” annual report. | | | ✓ | | | | | | |

RECOMMENDATION 2: ANNUAL REPORTING ON DIVERSITY OF STUDENTS AND TRAINEES

Legal practitioner training providers should **report annually** using agreed templates to the LSRA, and the LPET Committee once established, on the **diversity of intake in all legal practitioner training courses**. The data gathered would be used to enhance and expand flexible training routes, including hybrid, blended, remote and asynchronous learning.

| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|--|------|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 2.1 LSRA commission expert report on appropriate diversity data to be collected. | | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| 2.2 LSRA engage with LSI and HSKI on lawful basis and methodology for collection of data. | | 🔄 | | | | | | | |
| 2.3 LSRA seek the input of the Section 16 Education and Training Committee. | | 🔄 | | | | | | | |
| 2.4 LSRA request training providers to collect data and submit in agreed format. | | | 🔄 | | | | | | |
| 2.5 Training providers collect the data for their student/trainee intake in autumn 2025. | | | | 🔄 | | | | | |
| 2.6 LSRA publish annual update on diversity data in “ <i>Pathways to the Professions</i> ” annual reports. | | | | ✓ | | | ▶▶ | | |



PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PATHWAYS

RECOMMENDATION 3: EXPLORE LEVY AND OTHER FUNDING FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORTS FOR DIVERSITY

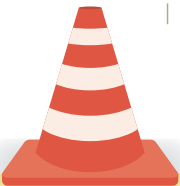
The LSRA and the professional bodies should **explore the use of the annual levy** on the professions and **other funding mechanisms** to develop **increased financial support** for prospective solicitors and barristers to increase diversity of intake.

| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|---|------|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 3.1 LSRA and professional bodies meet to discuss innovative solutions and funding mechanisms. | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.2 LSRA consultation with the legal professions and other key stakeholders on proposed supports. | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.3 LSRA bring proposals to the Minister. | | | | | | | | | |

RECOMMENDATION 4: REVIEW MANDATORY REQUIREMENT OF PUPILLAGE IN KING’S INNS CODE

The Honorable Society of King’s Inns should **review the mandatory requirement** in its Code of Conduct that **barristers undertake nine months’ pupillage** before they can represent clients before courts. This should be done once the King’s Inns demonstrates to the LPET Committee, once established, that its Barrister-at-Law degree meets the competency framework standard for entering practice as a barrister.




| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|--|------|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 4.1 LSRA engage with HSKI on mandatory pupillage requirement. | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.2 LSRA engage with Bol on mandatory pupillage requirement. | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.3 LSRA engage Section 16 Committee to ensure BL degree meets competency framework standard for entering practice as a barrister. | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.4 LPET Committee request HSKI to report on compliance with recommendations once it is established (timeline not yet determined). | | | | | | | | | |

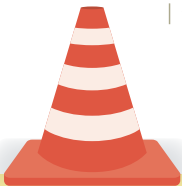


PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PATHWAYS

RECOMMENDATION 5: FINANCIAL SUPPORTS FOR BARRISTER PUPILS

The LSRA and The Bar of Ireland should **explore innovative solutions** to develop appropriate financial supports for barrister pupils, including **undertaking an analysis** of a minimum payment for barristers within their year of pupillage.

| | 2024 | | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|--|------|----|------|---|---|---|------|----|----|--|
| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | |
| 5.1 LSRA engage with the Bol on the work it has done to date in this area. | | | |  | | | | | | |
| 5.2 LSRA invite Bol to consider and report on potential solutions. | | | | |  | | | | | |
| 5.3 LSRA and Bol propose a potential range of financial supports and funding mechanisms. | | | | | |  | | | | |






SOLICITOR TRAINEESHIPS

RECOMMENDATION 9: ENSURE MINIMUM PAY THRESHOLD FOR SOLICITOR TRAINEES

The Law Society should **actively engage** with firms and organisations which train solicitors to **ensure** that all solicitor trainees receive a minimum pay threshold during training.




Legislative amendments should be introduced to allow the Law Society to **monitor** and **enforce breaches** of the minimum pay threshold for trainees.

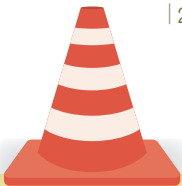
| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | | 2025 | | | 2026 | | | |
|--|------|----|---|---|----|------|----|----|----|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 9.1 LSI consider recommendation and liaise with Department of Justice and other relevant stakeholders. | | |  | | | | | | |
| 9.2 LSRA engage with Law Society in relation to a potential code of practice under section 22 of 2015 Act. | | |  | | | | | | |
| 9.3 LSRA and LSI engage and collaborate with Department of Justice on legislative amendment. | | | |  | | | | | |

RECOMMENDATION 10: SOLICITOR TRAINEESHIPS IN CIVIL AND PUBLIC SERVICE

The Law Society should work with key stakeholders to **actively encourage and support direct intake** of trainee solicitors **in the public and private sectors**, with particular focus on **the civil and public service**.

Public sector agencies that routinely recruit solicitors are **encouraged to establish direct trainee** intake schemes.


| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | | 2025 | | | 2026 | | | |
|---|------|---|------|----|---|------|----|----|----|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 10.1 LSI consider and develop a liaison strategy with the public and private sector agencies. | |  | | | | | | | |
| 10.2 LSRA engage with LSI on viability of establishing a direct trainee intake scheme for the LSRA. | | | | |  | | | | |
| 10.3 LSRA assist with messaging and engagement to encourage the establishment of direct trainee intake schemes in other appropriate agencies. | | | | |  | | | | |



SOLICITOR TRAINEESHIPS





RECOMMENDATION 11: INCREASED FINANCIAL SUPPORTS FOR SMALL FIRMS RE TRAINING CONTRACT

The Law Society should **increase** its financial supports for small firms to provide training contracts and also **extend this funding** to include independent law centres. It should also **increase flexible options** for training firms to take on trainees such as allowing several small firms to share one trainee solicitor.

| | 2024 | | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|---|------|----|---|----|----|----|------|----|----|--|
| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | |
| 11.1 LSI explore recommendation and engage with the LSRA on potential financial supports. | | |  | | | | | | | |

RECOMMENDATION 13: EVALUATE EFFECTIVENESS OF EXISTING ACCESS INITIATIVES AT 2ND & 3RD LEVEL

The Law Society, the Honorable Society of King’s Inns and The Bar of Ireland should evaluate the **effectiveness and impact** of their **existing access initiatives** at second and third level (DEIS school initiatives, transition year programmes, mentoring programmes, and other experiential education initiatives). Based on their findings, and the findings of the LSRA research, they should consider new initiatives (like targeted internships or mini-pupillages for DEIS/minority students to help them gain connections). These initiatives should be **kept under review** for efficacy.

| | | 2024 | | 2025 | | | 2026 | | | |
|------------------------|--|------|----|---|----|----|------|---|----|----|
| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 13.1 | LSI, HSKI and Bol consider recommendation and report the findings of the evaluations undertaken of existing access initiatives and new potential initiatives being considered to the LSRA as part of their submissions to the LSRA's annual <i>Pathways to the Professions</i> admissions reports. | | |  | | | |  | | |
| 13.2 | LSRA engage with LSI, HSKI and Bol on initiatives and share findings and best practice. LSRA to commence programme of engagement to prepare a shared vision of how to improve diversity and monitor initiatives. | | |  | | | |  | | |

INFORMATION ON CAREER PATHWAYS AND OPPORTUNITIES



ACHIEVED



IN PROGRESS



FUTURE ACTION



RECOMMENDATION 16: IMPROVED SYSTEM FOR SELECTION OF MASTERS


The Bar of Ireland should work with the Honorable Society of King's Inns and relevant stakeholders to improve the information, outreach and supports available for prospective barristers to identify masters with whom to undertake their mandatory pupillage year at the Bar. A reformed system for the selection of masters should be more formalised, fair and transparent, with enhanced mechanisms for support and supervision of pupillages during the pupillage period.


| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | | | | | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|---|------|----|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 16.1 Bol and HSKI collaborate to explore this recommendation. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16.2 Reformed system for selection of Masters introduced with enhanced support and supervision of pupillages. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16.3 Impact of improved supports should be reviewed and improved where necessary through annual sample survey of prospective barristers who engage with the new system. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |


RECOMMENDATION 17: MORE INFORMATION TO HIGHLIGHT DIFFERENT CAREER PATHWAYS

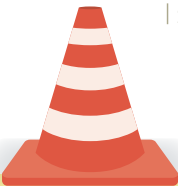
The LPET Committee, once established, should engage with the Honorable Society of King's Inns, the Law Society and public and private sector employers to **highlight different career pathways** for barristers and solicitors. Further, the **introduction of legal partnerships** is an opportunity for the LSRA and the LPET Committee once established, in collaboration with the King's Inns and the Law Society, to roll out an **information campaign and enhanced outreach as well as other supports** for barristers and solicitors interested in this new business model.

| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | | | | | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|---|------|----|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 17.1 LSRA to engage with HSKI, LSI, public and private sector employers to highlight different career pathways. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 17.2 LSRA produce a roadmap for LPET Committee on how best to highlight different career pathways. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 17.3 LSRA engage with the HSKI and LSI on an information campaign on legal partnerships. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

 **ACHIEVED**

 **IN PROGRESS**




 **FUTURE ACTION**




SOLICITORS WORKPLACE CULTURE


RECOMMENDATION 18: POSITIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE


The LSRA should collaborate with law firms and the professional bodies on the **introduction of measures** to ensure positive workplace culture and employee wellbeing. The LSRA to engage with the Law Society in consultation with other key stakeholders to **create a self-assessment template to be completed and reported** on an annual basis to the Law Society and the LSRA by all law firms over a stated size. This self-assessment will **measure activity** undertaken by the firm to ensure a positive workplace culture, dignity in the workplace, a reasonable work-life balance for staff, and employee well-being. These reports will be published on the websites of the LSRA and Law Society and by the firms themselves.

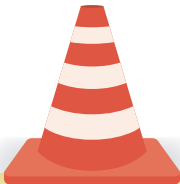
| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | | | | | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|--|------|----|----|---|----|---|---|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 18.1 LSRA engage with LSI and other stakeholders to develop a self-assessment template on employee wellbeing for law firms to complete. | | | |  | | | | | | | | | |
| 18.2 LSRA host event with relevant stakeholders on positive workplace culture and employee wellbeing with a view to agreeing a charter of measures that can be introduced to promote this. | | | | | |  | | | | | | | |
| 18.3 LSRA and LSI oversee collection and publication of self-assessments. | | | | | | |  | | | | | | |

SUSTAINABILITY OF SELF-EMPLOYED BARRISTERS' EARLY CAREERS

 ACHIEVED




 IN PROGRESS

 FUTURE ACTION






RECOMMENDATION 19: INITIATIVES TO SUSTAIN EARLY CAREERS FOR SELF-EMPLOYED BARRISTERS

The LSRA should engage with the barrister profession to **consider initiatives to make a career as a self-employed practising barrister more sustainable in the early years**, in particular for **women and under-represented groups**. Reforms could include, for example, targeted initiatives, practical information on the self-employed profession, practical supports in relation to building and managing a practice, alternative career pathways and new business models including legal partnerships, professional wellbeing, mentoring and personal development.

| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|---|------|---|------|----|---|--|------|----|----|----|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 19.1 LSRA regularly consult with entire barrister profession to identify and recommend new initiatives to increase career sustainability. | |  | | | | | | | | |
| 19.2 LSRA invite Bol to provide information on work already undertaken and progress made in this area. | |  | | | | | | | | |
| 19.3 LSRA and the Bol to consider/explore the development of the initiatives. | | | | |  | | | | | |

RECOMMENDATION 20: INTRODUCE DIRECT ACCESS TO BARRISTERS IN NON-CONTENTIOUS MATTERS

The LSRA should engage with the Department of Justice on **introducing direct professional access** to barristers in non-contentious matters. This would be achieved with the commencement of section 101 of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015. Section 101 states that no professional code shall operate to prevent a barrister from providing legal services as a practising barrister in relation to a matter, other than a contentious matter, where his or her instructions on that matter were received directly from a person who is not a solicitor. The LSRA to **engage with the profession and develop and provide guidance** where necessary on the receipt of direct instructions in non-contentious matters.

| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|--|---|---|------|----|----|--|------|----|----|----|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 20.1 Section 101 was commenced on 25 September 2024. |  | | | | | | | | | |
| 20.2 LSRA engage with professional bodies and business community to develop guidance for the legal profession on application of section 101. | |  | | | | | | | | |
| 20.3 Bar of Ireland to publish guidance on section 101 for its members. |  | | | | | | | | | |

SUSTAINABILITY OF SELF-EMPLOYED BARRISTERS' EARLY CAREERS



ACHIEVED



IN PROGRESS



FUTURE ACTION



RECOMMENDATION 21: EXPAND DIRECT ACCESS TO BARRISTERS IN CONTENTIOUS MATTERS

The LSRA should progress work on a **scheme for expanded direct access** to barristers. The LSRA previously recommended that direct access to barristers be permitted to organisational clients in contentious matters in certain circumstances.


| | 2024 | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|--|------|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 21.1 LSRA revisit recommendations from its <i>Certain Issues Relating to Barristers</i> report 2017 on permitted direct access in contentious matters in specific categories of cases. | | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| 21.2 LSRA conduct a public consultation on recommendations 4-11. | | | 🔄 | | | | | | |
| 21.3 LSRA engage with professional bodies and wider legal profession on recommendations 4-11. | | | | 🔄 | | | | | |
| 21.4 LSRA report to Minister on legislative changes and framework required to expand direct access to barristers. | | | | | | ▶▶ | | | |


RECOMMENDATION 22: REVISIT MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES


The LSRA should revisit the introduction of multi-disciplinary practices (MDPs). The LSRA has previously considered the introduction of MDPs under the 2015 Act and for reasons of sequencing and resources prioritised the prior introduction of legal partnerships and limited liability partnerships. Following the introduction of legal partnerships, the **LSRA should monitor their uptake and impact and revisit** the introduction of MDPs.

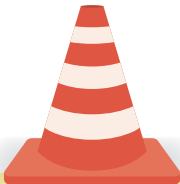
| | 2024 | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|---|---------|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 22.1 LSRA engage with legal practitioners and other relevant stakeholders to gauge the interest in MDPs. | | | 🔄 | | | | | | |
| 22.2 LSRA conduct a further public consultation on the introduction of MDPs. | | | | | ▶▶ | | | | |
| 22.3 The LSRA monitor the uptake of legal partnerships in the first year of their introduction and host a seminar "Legal Partnerships- One Year On" inviting key stakeholders to attend and provide their views on the new model. | | | | | | | | | ▶▶ |
| 22.4 LSRA to report to the Minister with recommendations. | Q2 2027 | | | | | | | | |

SUSTAINABILITY OF SELF-EMPLOYED BARRISTERS’ EARLY CAREERS

 ACHIEVED



 IN PROGRESS

 FUTURE ACTION







RECOMMENDATION 23: EMPLOYED BARRISTERS REPRESENTING EMPLOYER

The LSRA should **develop guidance for barristers and employers** on section 212 of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015 which allows an employed practising barrister to appear on behalf of their employer in a court, tribunal or forum of arbitration.


| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|--|------|------|---|----|----|------|---|----|----|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 23.1 LSRA develop guidance notes for employed practising barristers and employers on the application of section 212 and also distribute via email to all barristers on the Roll. | | |  | | | | | | |
| 23.2 LSRA monitor the application of section 212. | | | | | | |  | | |

RECOMMENDATION 24: MEASURES TO ENSURE BARRISTERS FEES PAID IN TIMELY MANNER

Relevant stakeholders should collaborate on measures to ensure that barristers are paid fees in a timely manner.

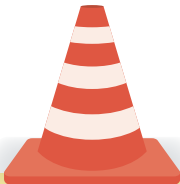
| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|--|------|------|---|---|---|------|----|----|---|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 24.1 Bol collaborate with the LSI to explore recommendation and submit proposal of measures to the LSRA. | | |  | | | | | | |
| 24.2 LSRA consult with legal profession on proposed measures. | | | |  | | | | | |
| 24.3 LSRA engage with Department of Justice on any legislative amendments required. | | | | |  | | | | |
| 24.4 LSRA monitor effectiveness of measures. | | | | | | | | |  |

SUSTAINABILITY OF SELF-EMPLOYED BARRISTERS’ EARLY CAREERS

 ACHIEVED



 IN PROGRESS

 FUTURE ACTION




RECOMMENDATION 25: CONSIDER OPTIONS TO ALLOW BARRISTERS TO SUE FOR FEES

The LSRA should **consult with key stakeholders** on options for changing the law to **allow barristers to sue for their fees**, and report on the matter with recommendations to the Department of Justice.


| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | | | | | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|--|---|---|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 25.1 LSRA consult with relevant stakeholders on allowing barristers to sue for their fees. |  | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 25.2 LSRA report to the Minister with recommendations. | |  | | | | | | | | | | | |


RECOMMENDATION 26: ADDRESS CONCERNS RE FEES LEVELS & STRUCTURES FOR LEGAL AID WORK


Engagement between relevant stakeholders should be intensified so that the concerns identified in the LSRA research around the **levels and structure of professional fees** for State funded legal aid work undertaken by junior barristers are explored and addressed.

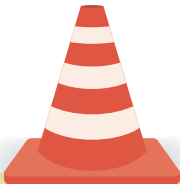
| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | | | | | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|--|---|----|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 26.1 LSRA engage with relevant stakeholders to explore recommendation with the purpose of developing a roadmap addressing concerns in a timely manner. |  | | | | | | | | | | | | |

SUSTAINABILITY OF SELF-EMPLOYED BARRISTERS’ EARLY CAREERS

 **ACHIEVED**



 **IN PROGRESS**

 **FUTURE ACTION**




RECOMMENDATION 27: ENSURE TRANSPARENCY IN PROCUREMENT OF STATE FUNDED WORK

The Department of Justice should consider current mechanisms across all government departments and State agencies to **ensure transparency in the procurement and distribution of State funded work** for early career barristers and solicitors including the potential for the introduction of **equitable briefing policies** and standards.

| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|---|------|---|------|----|---|--|------|----|----|----|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 27.1 LSRA engage DoJ on potential mechanisms to ensure transparency across departments and State agencies. | |  | | | | | | | | |
| 27.2 LSRA to consult with all government departments and state agencies on the introduction of transparency measures and the potential introduction of equitable briefing policies and standards. | | | | |  | | | | | |

RECOMMENDATION 29: BUILD LEGAL PROFESSION REFLECTIVE OF DIVERSITY OF MODERN IRISH SOCIETY

The LSRA, the professional bodies and other legal profession stakeholders should commit to taking targeted actions towards building solicitor and barrister professions that reflect the diversity of modern Irish society.

| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | 2024 | | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|---|------|----|---|----|----|--|------|----|----|----|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 29.1 LSRA invite the professional bodies to introduce a Diversity Charter setting out their commitment to take necessary steps to address any shortcomings in diversity of the professions. | | |  | | | | | | | |

SUSTAINABILITY OF SELF-EMPLOYED BARRISTERS’ EARLY CAREERS

ACHIEVED


IN PROGRESS

FUTURE ACTION



RECOMMENDATION 30: COLLECT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ON LEGAL PROFESSIONS

Demographic data on the legal profession should be **routinely collected and published** to **establish a diversity profile** and to **inform and monitor actions to encourage greater diversity**. The data should include the range of protected characteristics under equality legislation, as well as socio-economic status. The LSRA and the LPET Committee once established, to engage with the professional bodies on defining, lawful gathering and monitoring of the required data.

| | 2024 | | 2025 | | | | 2026 | | | |
|---|------|----|------|---|----|----|------|----|----|--|
| IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | |
| 30.1 LSRA and LPET Committee establish a method, in consultation with key stakeholders, for publishing a diversity profile of the legal profession to monitor and inform future actions that would encourage greater diversity in the legal profession. | | | |  | | | | | | |