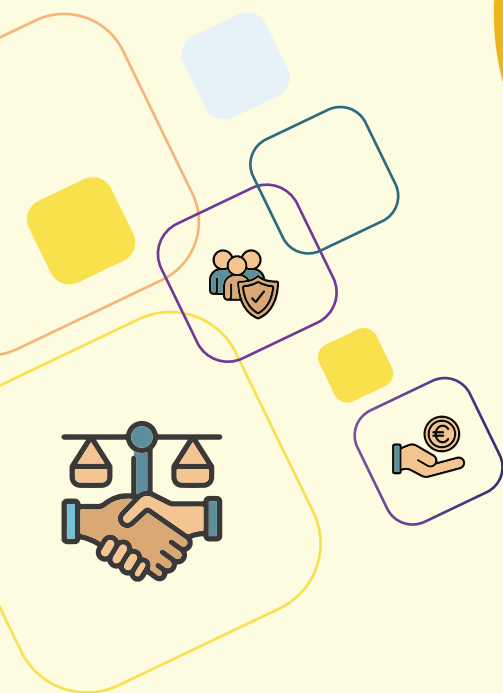




An tÚdarás Rialála
Seirbhísí Dlí

Legal Services
Regulatory Authority



BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

Implementation Plan

Progress Report 4

OCTOBER 2026

Introduction

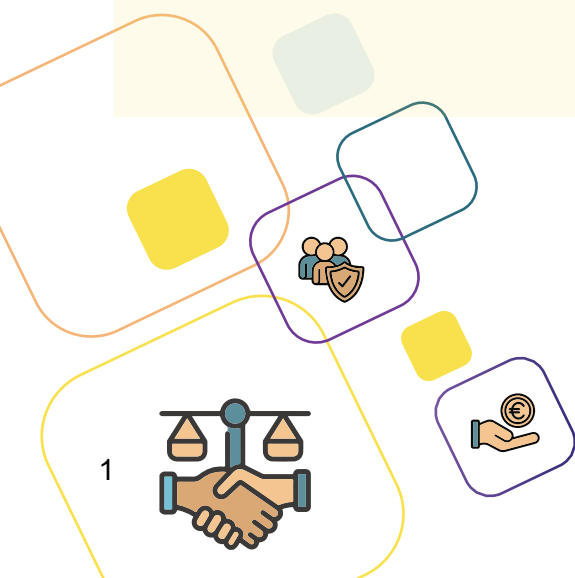
I am pleased to introduce this fourth progress update on the implementation of the LSRA's recommendations to address economic and other barriers facing many aspiring and early career solicitors and barristers.

The LSRA began examining these barriers in 2020 following a request from the then Minister for Justice, who asked the Authority to pay particular attention to equity of access and entry to the legal professions, with the objective of achieving greater diversity. This work culminated in the *Breaking Down Barriers* report, which was submitted to the Minister for Justice in January 2024, setting out 32 recommendations to address the challenges identified.

The Minister welcomed these recommendations as “meaningful reforms that will make a real difference” and requested the LSRA to prepare an implementation plan, with progress indicators and timelines, and to provide six-monthly progress reports to the Department. The LSRA published its *Breaking Down Barriers Implementation Plan* in September 2024, which was noted by Government in October 2024.



The plan provides for the establishment of a *Breaking Down Barriers* Implementation Working Group (IWG), comprising the LSRA and the three legal professional bodies to include the Law Society of Ireland, the Honorable Society of King's Inns and The Bar of Ireland. The IWG collaborates to support the progression of the recommendations through structured engagement, and meets on a regular basis, with five meetings taken place since its establishment.





This report covers the period April 2026 to September 2026. It builds on previous updates and reflects a continued programme of work with the professional bodies and other stakeholders. This phase of implementation has focused on progressing key areas of work to support the continued broadening access to education, training and early career opportunities, and contribute to a more inclusive and diverse professional legal services sector in the public interest.

An important aspect of work allied to our *Breaking Down Barriers* Implementation Working Group is the development of objective standards of accreditation for programmes of professional legal education, enabling eligibility to join the Roll of Solicitors and the Roll of Barristers. The development of standards of accreditation is progressing well, guided by the expertise and insight of the LSRA Education and Training Committee.

As the recently appointed Chief Executive of the LSRA, I look forward to working with all colleagues and stakeholders in continuing to build on the progress made to date through ongoing engagement and collaboration.

Niamh Muldoon

Niamh Muldoon
Chief Executive Officer

Advancing the Recommendations

During this reporting period from April 2026 to September 2026, the LSRA and the professional bodies continue to progress the implementation of the recommendations.

A meeting took place in July to discuss key areas of work and agree actions required for progressing the recommendations. This work has focused on developing a stronger evidence base to inform future activity.

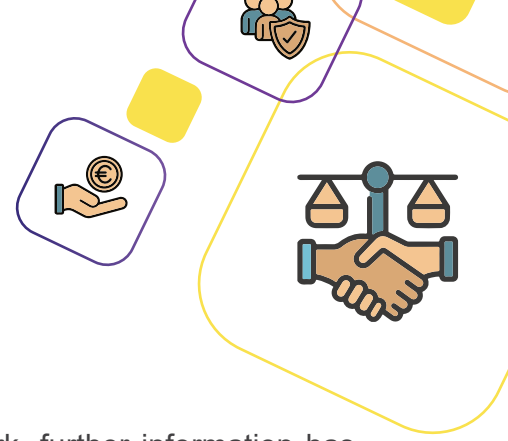
This has included establishing the foundations for the collection of empirical data on diversity from trainee solicitors and student barristers, as well as developing a clearer understanding of information and enhancing supports currently available to prospective solicitors and barristers.

Steady progress is underway in setting up the structures needed to gather data on diversity from trainee solicitors and student barristers undertaking the Law Society's Professional Practice Course and the King's Inns Barrister-at-Law Degree. Data collection is due to commence with the September 2026 intake, marking an important milestone in the implementation of the *Breaking Down Barriers* project.

This data will be collected annually, allowing measurements and trends to be tracked and compared over time, providing a benchmark to assess progress. This in turn may inform future initiatives to ensure broadened access and promote diversity in the legal professions.



Barriers Implementation Working Group (L-R) Stephen Swanton, Director of Education and Professional Development, The Bar of Ireland; Niamh Muldoon, CEO LSRA; Mary Griffin, CEO and Under Treasurer, The King's Inns; Shirley Coulter, CEO The Bar of Ireland; Dr Eimear Brown, Dean of School of Law, the King's Inns; Rory O'Boyle, Head of PPC, the Law Society of Ireland; Sarah Winston, Research Manager, LSRA



The professional bodies have shared information on the range of developments that have been progressed to support students and professionals with disabilities in their studies, or in their working environments. The professional bodies are collaborating with the Courts Service of Ireland with regard to supports available for members of the legal professions with disabilities.

Alongside this work, further information has been gathered from training providers to build a clearer picture of the information and supports available to prospective solicitors and barristers to secure vocational training.

The LSRA acknowledges and welcomes the significant work underway by the professional bodies across these areas to support a diverse and accessible legal profession.



The LSRA Education and Training Committee

As set out in the *Breaking Down Barriers Implementation Plan*, the Education and Training Committee plays an important role in assisting the LSRA with the delivery of the *Breaking Down Barriers* recommendations.

The Education and Training Committee was proposed following a detailed review of legal practitioner education and training conducted between 2018 and 2020 by the LSRA. In its 2020 report, *Setting Standards: Legal Practitioner Education and Training*, the LSRA made several recommendations to the Minister for Justice for reform in the area.

These recommendations included the establishment of an independent Legal Practitioner Education and Training Committee (the LPET Committee) with responsibility for setting and maintaining the standards in the provision of legal education and training across all providers.

Prior to the requisite legislative amendments to establish an independent LPET Committee, an interim Education and Training Committee was established following engagement with the Department of Justice, to oversee and progress the programme of work for the LPET Committee.

Significant work is underway in the development of new accreditation standards for legal professional programmes enabling eligibility to the professions of barrister and solicitor. This work includes design of competency frameworks for graduate professional legal education programme providers, training solicitors and barristers. This work will build on the existing frameworks for each profession.

A commitment to improving accessibility to legal professional training and increasing diversity within the profession remains a consistent focus throughout the development of the competencies and standards for solicitors and barristers.

The drafting of competencies and standards for both branches of the legal professions are advancing and will benefit from public consultation in the coming months.





The *Breaking Down Barriers* project will continue to inform the work of the Education and Training Committee to encourage independent, strong and effective legal professions in Ireland, serving our society.

The LSRA looks forward to continued engagement with the Department and all stakeholders on further development in this important area, to ensure continued high standards in our legal professional education into the future.



Implementation Plan: Progress to Date

No. Recommendation

1. Increase flexible training routes and annual reporting

The Law Society and King's Inns (the training providers) have provided the LSRA with information on their initiatives to increase flexible routes for legal practitioner training and their impacts for the *Pathways to the Professions* annual reports for 2024 and 2025. Below is an outline of some new initiatives the training providers are introducing;

- » The Law Society is advancing plans to introduce a new Professional Solicitor Apprenticeship Programme as an alternative route to qualification for school leavers and legal executives/law clerks, with the first apprentices expected to commence in September 2027.
- » Commencing December 2026, the Law Society will introduce a new Modular Professional Practice Course (PPC), which will be in addition to the full-time PPC and the PPC Hybrid.
- » The King's Inns has adopted the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy, a mechanism through which prior learning is identified, assessed and formally recognised by educational institutions within programmes on the National Framework of Qualifications. The King's Inns applies this policy to the Diploma in Legal Studies, which is a route of entry to the Barrister-at Law Degree programme.

The LSRA welcomes these initiatives and will continue to report information provided by the training providers in the *Pathways to the Professions* annual reports.

2. Annual reporting on diversity of intake of students and trainees

Annual reporting on the diversity of student barristers and trainee solicitors is due to commence in the Autumn of 2026. The King's Inns and Law Society of Ireland (the training providers) have worked with data protection experts and undertaken Data Protection Impact Assessments to safeguard the privacy of students and trainees in the collection of aggregate data on diversity.

The LSRA will receive aggregated diversity data from the training providers yearly, which will inform the analysis and reporting of trends in the LSRA's annual *Pathways to the Professions* reports.

This initiative will support the LSRA and training providers in monitoring progress towards a more diverse and accessible legal profession and identifying where any further action may be required.

3.	Explore levy and other funding for financial supports for diversity
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The professional bodies have provided the LSRA with their views and suggestions on the most appropriate funding mechanisms and the anticipated impact of any additional funding. In addition, each provided information on their existing schemes, including the resources associated with them, for both monetary costs and human resources.

The LSRA will continue to engage with the professional bodies on enhanced funding mechanisms.

4.	Review mandatory pupillage in the King's Inns Professional Code of Conduct Code
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The King's Inns and The Bar of Ireland have shared their views with the LSRA on the requirement of mandatory pupillage in the King's Inns Professional Code of Conduct. Both bodies are in favour of retaining the requirement, to support both standards of practice and in mentorship and support of newly qualified colleagues. The King's Inns noted that it is committed to keeping the provisions of its Professional Code of Conduct, including the provision relating to pupillage, under periodic review.

The development of the National Competency Framework is ongoing, and the pupillage requirement will remain under periodic review.

5.	Explore and develop financial supports for barrister pupils
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The Bar of Ireland has outlined that having conducted a preliminary analysis of minimum payments for pupils along with an exploration of potential public funding models, it is of the view that any introduction of financial supports for pupils would need to be externally funded – either directly by Government or via an appropriate State-administered access scheme.

The Bar Council fully supports the principle of reducing financial barriers to entering the profession and welcomes ongoing engagement with the LSRA, Government departments, and relevant agencies to explore appropriate and proportionate models.

Engagement is ongoing between the LSRA and The Bar of Ireland on proposals for financial supports and funding mechanisms for barrister pupils.

6. Pupillage outside of Dublin

The Bar of Ireland outlined that in 2022 it convened a working group to examine the feasibility of completing pupillage outside of Dublin. After examining the issue, it concluded that the conditions necessary for meaningful pupillage are not consistently available outside Dublin.

The Council of The Bar of Ireland has indicated it remains open to exploring alternative evidence-based approaches that support wider geographical access to pupillage however any such alternatives must provide an equivalent standard of training.

The LSRA looks forward to further updates on such initiatives.

7. System of quality assurance and formalised oversight of pupillages

The Bar of Ireland detailed the work it has undertaken in recent years to modernise and enhance pupillage. This work includes:

- » A two-year research programme, involving engagement with masters, recent pupils and relevant committees.
- » Enhancements to the guidance available to pupils.

The Bar of Ireland has developed the Advancing Pupillage Work Plan (2024–2027), which will provide measures to enhance quality, consistency and oversight of pupillages which include:

- » A clearer, modernised framework of aims and learning outcomes which are organised around broad domains of competence appropriate to a barrister's practice and will be implemented for the October 2026 intake of pupils.
- » Mechanisms to enhance quality assurance.
- » Support and guidance for masters, which may include optional master workshops, additional online resources and peer-support initiatives.

The LSRA welcomes this initiative and looks forward to an update following the implementation of the Advancing Pupillage Work Plan.

8. Solicitor apprenticeship

The Law Society has reported that the Professional Solicitor Apprenticeship Regulations are nearing the final stages with the Law Society's Education Committee, after which there will be further engagement with the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration.

The new apprenticeship programme is expected to last seven years wherein trainees would be paid for their work in a solicitor's firm four days per week while spending one day attending classes at the Law Society. The Law Society anticipates that it will welcome its first cohort from September 2027 with expressions of interest accepted from Autumn 2026.

The Law Society indicated that a public awareness raising campaign on solicitor apprenticeships was underway. This includes attendance at the Higher Options event in the RDS in mid-September to attract and inform potential apprentices.

9. Ensure minimum pay threshold for trainee solicitors

In correspondence with the LSRA, the Law Society has outlined its position in relation to monitoring and enforcing breaches of the minimum pay threshold for trainees, wherein it does not envisage an enforcement role for the Law Society in respect of alleged breaches of the National Minimum Wage Act 2000.

The Law Society explained that the statutory power to investigate and make findings in respect of such breaches lies with the Workplace Relations Commission. It notes that its Education Committee is aware that trainees have availed of this enforcement mechanism. The Law Society states that if it were to take on this role, it would require considerable additional financial and staff resourcing.

The Law Society has informed the LSRA that it has undertaken the following measures to ensure a minimum pay threshold for trainee solicitors:

- » It has included a contractual term that the living wage should be the minimum salary for trainee solicitor participants on the Small Practice Traineeship Grant and the Independent Law Centre Traineeship Grant, which it administers.
- » The Professional Practice Course (PPC) application pack provides guidance on pay requirements for trainee solicitors and encourages training firms to consider adopting the living wage as the minimum rate of pay for trainee solicitors. This information is also published on the Law Society website.
- » All incoming trainee solicitors to the PPC are advised by the Traineeship Executive of their entitlements under the National Minimum Wage Act 2000. Trainees can avail of assistance from the Traineeship Executive, if they are experiencing a difficulty with a training firm in relation to this.

The LSRA welcomes these initiatives promoting awareness of the appropriate traineeship terms and conditions and looks forward to updates on further development.

10. Solicitor traineeships in public and private sector

In November 2025, the Law Society hosted a symposium on training contracts in the public sector. It provided practitioners in the public sector with guidance on employing trainee solicitors in their organisations.

The symposium was attended by 70 solicitors mainly from public sector, with over 20 organisations represented. Speakers included the Law Society's Traineeship Executive, and training solicitors and trainee solicitors from Tusla, Dublin City Council, An Garda Síochána and the Chief State Solicitor's office.

The Law Society has indicated that this will be an annual occurrence and the LSRA will assist with messaging and promotion.

The LSRA welcomes this initiative and will continue to monitor the progress of traineeships in the public and private sector.

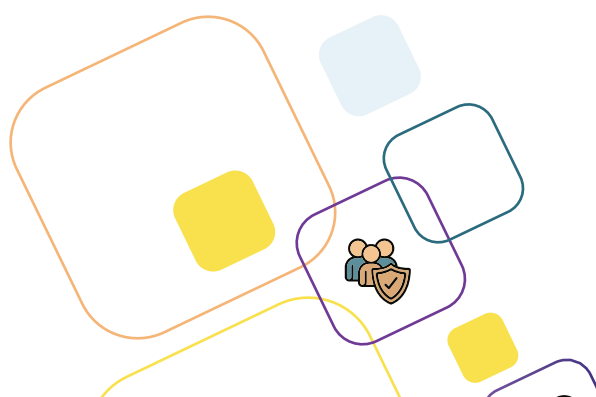
11. Increased financial supports for small firms to provide training contracts

The Law Society has informed the LSRA that it is actively engaged with detailed proposals to increase its financial supports for small regional firms. To date the Law Society has awarded 32 Small Practice Traineeship Grants which enable smaller regional practices to offer solicitor training contracts.

The Law Society offers six Small Practice Traineeship Grants each year and commencing in 2026 a new Independent Law Centre Traineeship Grant, worth €25,000, is available to support solicitor training contracts with an independent law centre.

The Law Society also provides indirect support to trainees that secure training contracts with smaller law firms through Access and Bursary allocations.

The LSRA welcomes these initiatives and looks forward to updates on further development.



12.	LPET Committee to evaluate effectiveness of access initiatives
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The LSRA Education and Training Committee is in the process of developing the National Competency Framework along with accreditation standards for the legal professional education and training of solicitors and barristers and will continue to monitor access initiatives to the legal profession.

13.	Professional bodies to evaluate access initiatives and consider new initiatives
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The LSRA reported on the professional bodies access initiatives in the *Pathways to the Professions* 2024 and 2025 annual reports. An overview of new initiatives is set out below:

- » The Law Society increased its member contribution to the grant-funded access programmes.
- » The Law Society now offers a new traineeship grant with an Independent Law Centre.
- » The King's Inns has developed an outreach programme for secondary schools and continues to engage in and expand its University Outreach programme.
- » The Bar of Ireland expanded its University Internship Programme to make more places available.
- » The Bar of Ireland expanded the online component of its transition year programme to provide access to all transition year students wishing to avail of it.

The LSRA welcomes these initiatives and will continue to report information provided by the three professional bodies in the *Pathways to the Professions* annual reports.

14. Professional bodies evaluation of funded access programmes

The LSRA reported information provided by the professional bodies on evaluations of their funded access programmes in the *Pathways to the Professions* 2025 annual report. An overview is set out below:

- » Since its introduction in 2001, the Law Society's Access Programme has provided 267 trainees, who are now qualified solicitors, with financial support. It is currently providing 126 individuals who are pursuing the FE-1 exams with financial support, and 86 trainees who are currently progressing through the PPC or the in-office training period.
- » In 2025, the Law Society introduced a member contribution at the Practising Certificate renewal stage to sustain funding and access supports. This has generated an additional €170,000 for grant-funded access programmes, and as a result, the Law Society expanded the Access Programme by funding five additional PPC places and 20 additional FE-1 examination places.
- » Since 2017, the King's Inns Maurice Gaffney Scholarship has been available to a limited number of students undertaking the Diploma in Legal Studies course (a Diploma in Legal Studies provides eligibility to sit the Barrister-at-Law entrance exams). The scholarship provides total or partial payment of the fees for the course and for a limited number of repeat assessments.
- » Since 2002, the King's Inns provides financial support annually to one student undertaking the Barrister-at-Law Degree through the McCarthy Bursary. The bursary includes full remission of fees and a contribution towards study-related costs. There have been 23 recipients of the McCarthy Bursary to date, the majority of which are current members of the Law Library and the rest are working in other areas related to law, including the judiciary.
- » Since 2017, The Bar of Ireland and King's Inns have jointly operated and funded the Denham Fellowship which supports two prospective barristers each year from socio-economic disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue a career at the Independent Referral Bar. Supports include remission of fees to pursue the Barrister-at-Law Degree course and a stipend while undertaking the degree and during their first four years of practice at the Law Library. To date, there are 15 barristers and two prospective barristers that have availed of the Denham Fellowship.
- » The Bar of Ireland noted the feedback collected from participants on its Transition Year (TY) Programme indicated that the programme had a positive impact on a student's intention to pursue a career in law. According to The Bar of Ireland, the long-term impact of the programme is starting to emerge at university level law career fairs and in the annual new intake of pupils, where participants are reporting that the TY Programme was a factor in their decision to pursue a career in law.

The LSRA welcomes these renewed initiatives and will continue to report information provided by the professional bodies on evaluations of their funded access programmes in the *Pathways to the Professions* annual reports.

15. Improved information, outreach and supports for securing training contracts

The Law Society has provided the LSRA with an overview of its outreach and public legal education programme which include initiatives such as the TY Law Moodle, the Solicitors of the Future Programme, the Street Law Programme, attendance at career talks and graduate fairs and facilitating visits to the Law Society's campus.

The Law Society outlined how it has enhanced the online application system to make registering a training contract and applying for a place on the PPC an easier and quicker process. It also provides support to trainees during their in-office training period with workplace visits.

The Law Society outlined further proposals to improve information for securing training contracts which includes:

- » The "Finding Your Training Contract" resource will now be publicly available on the Law Society website.
- » The Law Society will write to every training firm to inform them of the "Finding Your Training Contract" resource through which law firms may advertise traineeship vacancies and secondment opportunities free of charge.
- » The Law Society will advise FE-1 candidates on first registration for the FE-1 examination of the relevant "Finding Your Training Contract seminar" resource.
- » The Law Society will publish information on these resources in the Law Society members' e-zine.

The Law Society intends to evaluate the proposed measures annually using the following indicators:

- » Number of visits to the resource web pages.
- » Number of traineeship and secondment vacancies advertised on the resource web pages.
- » Annual sample survey of users of the resource web pages.
- » The Law Society will monitor the impact of these initiatives over time.

16. Improved system for selection of masters

The Bar of Ireland and the King's Inns have provided the LSRA with information on work already undertaken and future measures to improve information, outreach and supports available for prospective barristers to identify masters.

The King's Inns:

- » In collaboration with the Bar of Ireland, hosts a panel discussion with an experienced master and former pupil during the Practice Management modules of the Barrister-at-Law Degree course which take place in October.
- » Organises and hosts two lectures for students on navigating the civil and criminal courts and in devilling, in both criminal and civil law.
- » Hosts a "Barrister Student Night" during the dining term where students dine with practising barristers.

The Bar of Ireland:

- » Has enhanced its publicly available Register of Master's with additional information such as the inclusion of practice area details. This register is published in February each year and is updated regularly to ensure prospective pupils have access to current information.
- » Provides an information session for prospective entrants, which is advertised on social media channels and hosted on The Bar of Ireland public website during the membership application period.
- » Provides half-day programme of activity for students on the King's Inns Diploma in Legal Studies interested in a career at the Independent Referral Bar. This includes information on pupillage and the guidance on finding a master.
- » Regularly reviews criteria for addition to the Register of Masters to ensure their alignment with the needs of pupillage

The LSRA welcomes these initiatives and looks forward to updates on further development and expanded initiatives.

17. Provision of information on career pathways in law

The LSRA commissioned an external research report to examine the information available for prospective solicitors and barrister on training, pupillage and alternative career paths for law graduates.

The report examines the existing career paths for solicitors and barristers and how these pathways are currently communicated to aspiring legal professionals. It identifies information provision gaps from third-level onwards and potential steps for the LPET Committee, when established, to enhance and coordinate information on legal career progression. The report will be provided to the LPET Committee for consideration at an appropriate stage, following its establishment and the prioritisation of its work programme.

18.	Positive workplace culture
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The Law Society of Ireland has conducted research and developed a range of initiatives to promote awareness of health and wellbeing, a culture of respect for all colleagues, alongside a positive workplace culture, under the banner of “well within the law”.

The LSRA welcomes these initiatives and looks forward to updates on further development and expanded initiatives.

19.	Initiatives to sustain early careers for self-employed barristers
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The LSRA commissioned an external research report to consider new initiatives to increase career sustainability for early career barristers. The research report was based on findings from the *Breaking Down Barriers* report, interviews with relevant stakeholders and other relevant reports.

The report has been completed and will inform the next stage of this work. The LSRA will engage with The Bar of Ireland on its findings and recommendations.

20.	Direct access to barristers in non-contentious matters
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In September 2024, section 101 of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015, which permits barristers to provide legal services in non-contentious matters where the instructions on the matter were received directly from a person who is not a solicitor, was commenced.

The LSRA and The Bar of Ireland have each published guidance on section 101 on their respective websites.

This recommendation is complete and requires no further action.

21.	Expanded direct access to barristers in contentious matters
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After initial analysis the LSRA has determined that further consideration is required for this recommendation in light of developments in recent years.

The LSRA will maintain this analysis under periodic review.

22. Revisit introduction of Multi-Disciplinary Practices

The LSRA has previously considered the introduction of Multi-Disciplinary Practices 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 Legal Partnerships in September 2024.

In light of the very limited uptake of Legal Partnerships, the period for review will be extended prior to introduction of further models, such as the Multi-Disciplinary Practices.

Prior to the introduction of Multi-Disciplinary Practices, the LSRA will engage with the professional bodies.

23. Develop guidance for employed barristers representing employers

The LSRA has sought assistance from the King's Inns Graduate Committee, whose membership includes employed barristers, with the drafting of guidance for employed 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.

Collaboration on such guidance for employed barristers representing employers is underway.

24. Introduce measures to ensure barristers fees are paid in timely manner

In July 2020, The Bar of Ireland introduced a Fee Recovery Unit and in November 2025, The Bar of Ireland and the Law Society developed a "Best Practice Protocol" in November 2025, to ensure barristers are paid fees in a timely manner. These measures are published on the LSRA website.

The LSRA welcomes these measures and will continue to monitor practice and trends in this regard.

25. Consider options to allow barristers to sue for fees

The Bar of Ireland has provided the LSRA with substantive material on its position on this recommendation. For reasons set out in the submission, The Bar of Ireland is not in favour of changing the law to allow barristers to sue for their fees.

The Bar of Ireland continues to support Law Library members in the collection of outstanding fees with dedicated resources for Law Library members.

The LSRA will continue to explore this recommendation.

26. Engagement between relevant stakeholders to address concerns on fee levels and structures for legal aid work undertaken by junior barristers

The LSRA notes that there has been ongoing substantial engagement between stakeholders in this area, including:

- » The restoration of FEMPI fee reductions for State-funded legal aid work between January 2024 and July 2026.
- » The publication of the Majority and Minority reports from the Civil Legal Aid Review Group in July 2025.
- » Submission from The Bar of Ireland to the Joint Committee on Justice, Home Affairs and Migration on Civil Legal Aid in January 2026.
- » Representations from relevant stakeholders to the Joint Committee on Justice, Home Affairs and Migration debate on the matter of “Engagement on Civil Legal Aid and Related Matters” in February 2026.

The LSRA will continue to monitor, and support where appropriate, ongoing engagement between relevant stakeholders.

27. Ensure transparency in procurement of State funded work

The Bar of Ireland has shared with the LSRA the information that it has gathered on the various procurement methods used by the different State agencies.

The LSRA will engage with the relevant stakeholders on how best to promote awareness and accessibility for State-commissioned legal services from junior counsel.

28. Create a disability action plan for the legal professions

The professional bodies have provided in writing to the LSRA the supports that they have in place for their students, trainees or members that have a disability, an outline of which is summarised below. Initiatives to address gaps and to inform and strengthen approaches to support students, trainees and members with disabilities include:

The Law Society:

- » Utilises the Universal Design for Learning principles, through flexible teaching formats including; blended and hybrid formats, recorded lectures to enable flexible access, and training on inclusive teaching practices provided to faculty staff.
- » Is piloting the Boost platform to assist neurodivergent learners with organisation, prioritisation, time and task management.
- » Develops an individual Learning Educational Needs Support (LENS) plan for trainees who disclose a disability, these supports include various assistive technologies and assessment accommodations.
- » Provides a sensory space and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) to support students with sensory sensitivities, anxiety or stress.
- » Engages with external organisations and stakeholders such as AHEAD, and student and alumni with lived experience via the Legal Disability Network.

The King's Inns:

- » Identifies teaching, learning and assessment supports for students who disclose a disability at the point of registration.
- » Provides a wide-range of exam-related accommodations.
- » Applies dedicated guidelines for marking scripts of students with reading, writing or spelling difficulties to timed written examinations.
- » Has ongoing learning supports for students with disabilities, throughout the duration of the course.
- » Accessibility features include an entrance ramp, lift, accessible toilets, evacuation chairs, adjusted furniture and physical supports.
- » Reviews accommodations annually and seeks feedback from learners with disabilities to evaluate the effectiveness and quality of supports provided.
- » Will seek enhancement of non-examination supports and broader inclusion measures.

No. Recommendation

The Bar of Ireland:

- » Recently undertook a targeted consultation with members, specifically inviting the perspectives of those with lived experience of disability.
- » Delivers disability inclusion training for all executive staff and as Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for members, with specific programmes such as Deaf Awareness and Sighted Guide training.
- » Is reviewing and improving Law Library facilities, including accessibility audits, infrastructure adaptations including installing and upgrading safety rails and alarms, the addition of accessible parking spaces and quiet workspaces, and the installation of braille signage and elevator keypads to improve navigation and usability.
- » Provides disability-related supports and reasonable accommodations, to facilitate access to Law Library services and facilities.
- » Is reviewing its Accessibility Statement to provide clear and transparent information on accessibility features and supports with a commitment to ongoing improvements across all services.
- » Provides confidential supports through Member Services.
- » Engages with stakeholders such as the disAbility Legal Network.
- » Promotes external resources including the Work and Access Programme.

The LSRA notes that the Law Society, the King's Inns and The Bar of Ireland, together have met with a representative from the Courts Service for information sharing on disability supports, with a view to working together on this recommendation. A disability charter has been proposed, which will form a general agreement of over-arching principles to govern their work and from which different initiatives may arise.

The LSRA welcomes these initiatives and looks forward to updates on further development.

The LSRA note the observations of both training providers on the lack of available dedicated State funding sources for students with disabilities, relative to the lower student/trainee numbers in both institutions. This is in contrast to dedicated funding, understood by the professional bodies, to be available for State funded higher education institutions in pursuit of enabling access for students with disabilities.

29. Targeted actions for legal professions to reflect diversity of modern Ireland

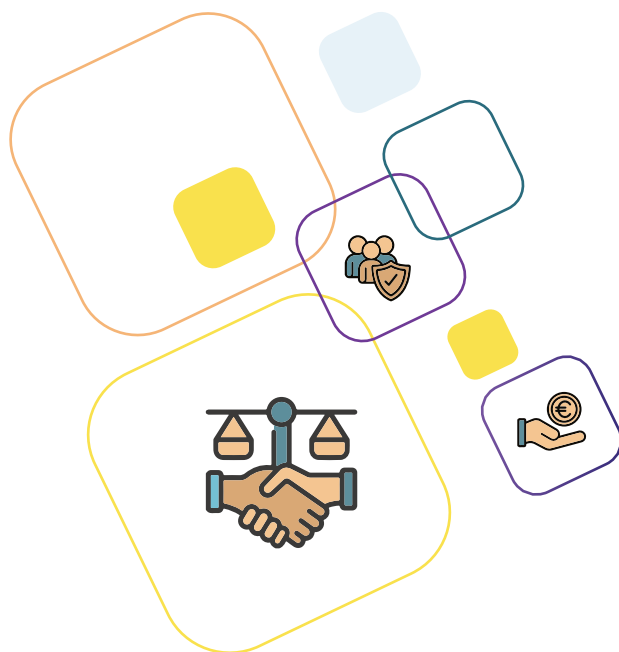
The LSRA notes and welcomes the Law Society's Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter, the King's Inns Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and The Bar of Ireland's Equality Action Plan.

The LSRA further notes the introduction of the role of student diversity and inclusion officer to the Law Society's student-run PPC Connect Committee, ensure accessibility and inclusion in student events and The Bar of Ireland's commissioning of an Ipsos B&A membership survey that will support a better understanding of diversity, inclusion and barriers to equal opportunity, and inform future action to improve accessibility, inclusion and member support.

The LSRA is developing a diversity charter for the legal professions and will continue to engage with all stakeholders to promote equality, diversity and inclusion.

30. Collect and publish demographic data on legal professions

Periodic reporting of demographic data is anticipated to be informed by the data collected by the three professional bodies, commencing Autumn 2026.



31. Removal of barriers to entry for non-EEA students

The King's Inns and the Law Society have provided the LSRA with a review of their existing arrangements for entry for non-EEA students on their respective Professional Practice Course and Barrister-at-Law Degree course.

The King's Inns highlighted that students outside of the EEA can undertake the Diploma in Legal Studies as it is fully remote, however visas are required for the purpose of completing the exams. Once non-EEA students have either an approved qualification or King's Inns Diploma in Legal Studies, they can apply to sit the entrance exams for the Barrister-at-Law Degree.

The Law Society advised that non-EEA students are eligible to sit the Preliminary Examination and the FE-1s. It further noted that qualified lawyers from outside of the EEA, can in some circumstances undertake the Qualified Lawyers' Transfer Test (QLTT) to become a solicitor in Ireland. The Law Society indicated that both the FE-1s and QLTT are available online, facilitating non-EEA student to sit the exams.

The Law Society highlighted that its intake for the full-time PPC in 2025 had several trainees from countries outside of the EEA, and that that this is a growing trend.

Both training providers indicated that eligibility requirements for visas, in particular for those who wish to undertake professional legal training on a part-time basis, may present a barrier for non-EEA students.

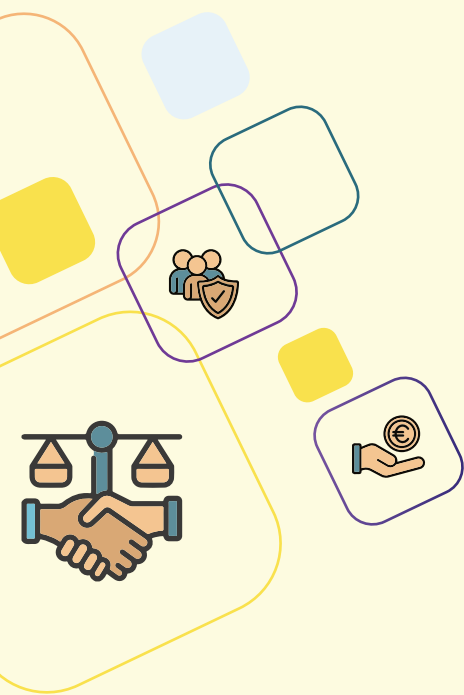
The LSRA will continue to engage with the training providers on recognition of foreign qualifications.

32. Transfer between branches of the legal profession

There is a mutual recognition mechanism framework in place between the King's Inns and the Law Society which allows barristers and solicitors with a minimum of three years' post qualifying practice to transfer between the professions.

The LSRA notes and welcomes engagement between the three professional bodies to further consider this recommendation. The LSRA will continue to monitor progress in this area.





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