

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LSB sets out approach to safeguarding quality in the provision of legal services

PLANS FORM RESPONSE TO ADVICE FROM CONSUMER PANEL ON QUALITY ASSURANCE

Responding to the Legal Services Consumer Panel, the LSB has today announced details of how it will develop its approach to [quality assurance in the legal services market](#).

Over the 2011/12 business plan period, specific measures to support Approved Regulators in ensuring quality will include:

- New research to better identify risks to quality in the market
- The design of a 'tool-kit' of regulatory interventions to support quality assurance, with an analysis of the pros and cons of specific measures
- The development of a framework to assess the degree of risks to quality.

The work will build on the Consumer Panel's advice that there is a mismatch between consumer expectations and the safeguards over quality that regulation provides in practice. The Board's action will support the frontline regulators' capacity to identify risks to quality and deal with them in an effective and proportionate way.

Chief Executive of the Legal Services Board, Chris Kenny said:

The Consumer Panel has identified quality assurance as an important priority in consumer protection. The Board agrees and will support the Approved Regulators in identifying and acting on risks to quality. As such, this work complements our recent document on regulatory effectiveness, showing how we will seek to work in partnership to develop regulators' capacity while focusing on what really matters to the public.

Notes for editors:

1. The full response to the Consumer Panel's advice can be found [here](#).
2. The Consumer Panel's advice can be found [here](#).
3. The Legal Services Act ("The Act") created the Legal Services Board as a new regulator with responsibility for overseeing the regulation of legal services in England and Wales. The new regulatory regime became active on 1 January 2010.
4. The LSB oversees eight Approved Regulators, which in turn regulate individual lawyers. The Approved Regulators, designated under Part 1 of Schedule 4 of the 2007 Act, are the Law Society, the Bar Council, the Master of the Faculties, the Institute of Legal Executives, the Council for Licensed Conveyancers, the Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys, the Institute of Trade Mark Attorneys and the Association of Costs Lawyers.
5. In addition, the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Scotland and the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants are listed as Approved Regulators in relation only to reserved probate activities.
6. The legal profession consists of some 15,157 barristers, 116,122 solicitors and 12,116 individuals authorised to operate in other aspects of the legal profession such as conveyancing. In total the legal sector employed over 324,000 individuals in 2010. The sector was valued at £25.97 billion per annum during 2008.