

The Legal Services Board's Draft Equality Scheme

Consultation on the draft Equality Scheme

This consultation will close on **10 March 2010**

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2 FOREWORD

We invite feedback to this consultation on our draft Equality Scheme.

At the Legal Services Board, we have a major commitment to promoting equality and diversity inside our organisation, and also in the wider legal sector.

This document is important because it formally sets out how we place equality and diversity at the heart of our day-to-day working, through functions, activities and policies, and through the recruitment of our staff.

We will consult widely with different interest groups. We want to develop networks and encourage collaborative working with others already engaged in this work.

We welcome all views from individuals and groups about our first draft Equality Scheme. We will work with all of our partners to help create a legal sector that is committed to policies and action to bring about fairness, equality and diversity.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Edmonds". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David Edmonds

Chairman

December 2009

3 INTRODUCTION

3.1 Defining an Equality Scheme

An equality scheme is a plan that outlines a public authority's action over three years, aiming to address aspects of the general duty as outlined in equality legislation. The general duty is a positive duty that builds equality into the beginning of the process of policy making rather than making adjustments at the end of the process.

3.2 Our statement on diversity

We see diversity as a key stepping stone in reaching equality; it recognises and respects people's differences and makes sure that everyone is fully included. Our diversity agenda will be developed across all project streams; a key driver being the regulatory objective that encourages a 'diverse legal profession'.

Our concept of respecting equality and diversity is not to put artificial obstacles in the way of the individual, and to help individuals overcome barriers to making full use of their skills and experience. We fully recognise that everyone whatever their circumstances have talents, and that all people are entitled to exploit their talents to the full.

We place equality and diversity at the heart of the Legal Services Board (LSB) by developing and implementing an integrated diversity policy. We oppose and will seek to overcome all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of a person's race or ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, transgender or gender identity, disability, religion or belief and age in all aspects of our work.

As an employer, our goal is to recruit, motivate, develop and retain outstanding people, reflecting the diverse community, who work together to deliver our common aims and objectives. We are committed to equality of opportunity in all areas of employment, including development and promotion. We aim to treat all colleagues fairly, with dignity and respect.

We acknowledge that there are some practical limitations to what a small organisation can do, but we are committed to creating an environment where we recruit on the basis of knowledge, skill and the ability to do the job; discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated; and there are no unnecessary barriers within the workplace for staff seeking opportunities through training and development, promotion and career planning.

In this way, we will utilise all available talent within the workforce, regardless of background, to ensure that individual performance produces quality work and contributes to the delivery of our Business Plan and is aligned to our culture.

3.3 Our commitment to equality and diversity

We make a commitment to place the equality and diversity agenda at the heart of all of our work. We also enthusiastically give effect to our statutory equality duties by consulting on, adopting and implementing this draft Equality Scheme.

4 THE LEGAL SERVICES BOARD

4.1 Who we are

We are a new organisation created by the Legal Services Act 2007 (The Act) that came into being on 1 January 2009. The Act's overriding mandate is to ensure that regulation in the legal services sector is carried out in the public interest; and that the interests of consumers are placed at the heart of the system.

4.2 Our overarching goal

Our goal is to reform and modernise the legal services market by putting the interests of consumers at the heart of all activity as a regulatory board; the activity of the approved regulators whom we oversee and the legal services market as a whole.

We believe in a legal system that allows access to justice for all, where the consumer can exercise effective choice, are confident about the quality and value of the service he or she receives, and to know how to access effective redress when things go wrong. We also believe in a vibrant, confident legal services sector, at the heart of which sits, in words of The Act, "an independent, strong, diverse and effective legal profession"

4.3 The sector we regulate

The legal profession currently consists of some 16,000 barristers, 112,000 solicitors and 12,000 individuals operating in other aspects of the legal profession. The sector is currently valued at £25.97 billion per annum (total turnover in 2008).

4.4 Our role as an oversight regulator

We are independent of Government and of the legal profession and are responsible for overseeing the legal regulators in England and Wales. We oversee eight separate bodies, the approved regulators, which themselves regulate the lawyers practising throughout the jurisdiction. We also oversee the new organisation being established to handle consumer complaints about lawyers, the Office for Legal Complaints.

One of our key roles is to help the approved regulators and, through them, the profession in their own efforts to address the regulatory objectives set out in the Legal Services Act 2007. We will do this by:

- providing constructive critical challenge;
- identifying relevant learning from both legislation and wider regulatory practice in other sectors and in other jurisdictions and ensuring its dissemination;
- acting as a catalyst on matters of legal services research, education and training to assist the development of standards; and

- ensuring that we identify, celebrate and communicate best practice from each of the approved regulators.

This co-ordinating and developmental function is, without doubt, a role for an oversight regulator¹.

4.5 Our regulatory objectives

We share the regulatory objectives with the approved regulators, each of which has direct responsibility for the day-to-day regulation of the different types of lawyers.

We have a clear focus to deliver the eight regulatory objectives, set out in Section 1 of the Act. These are:

- protecting and promoting the public interest
- supporting the constitutional principle of the rule of law
- improving access to justice
- protecting and promoting the interests of consumers
- promoting competition in the provision of services in the legal sector
- encouraging an independent, strong, diverse and effective legal profession
- increasing public understanding of citizens' legal rights and duties
- promoting and maintaining adherence to the professional principles of independence and integrity; proper standards of work; observing the best interests of the client and the duty to the court; and maintaining client confidentiality.

4.6 Full powers to be granted in early 2010

The Act received Royal Assent on 30 October 2007. Work is now underway to implement The Act's provisions; including the LSB gaining the full powers Parliament intended us to have. We have taken on many of these powers on a gradual basis throughout 2009, and it is envisaged that we will become fully operational in early 2010.

¹ Legal Services Board (2009), Business Plan 2009/10, Legal Service Board, London p.8, http://www.legalservicesboard.org.uk/news_publications/publications/index.htm

5 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Equality and the Legal Services Act 2007

Including the general laws (outlined below) which apply to any public body, the Legal Services Act 2007 sets out a specific regulatory objective that relates to diversity. This is a duty to '*encourage an independent, strong, diverse and effective legal profession*'. The objective is supported by other regulatory objectives in the Act including the duty to:

- 'protect and promote the public interest' and to 'protect and promote the interests of consumers'; these duties clearly underscore our objective to promote a diverse profession: the public will only have confidence in a profession that reflects its make-up and consumers will ultimately have a better service from a more representative legal profession.
- 'improve access to justice'; this duty requires a diverse legal profession in order to best represent consumers and to make justice accessible to all.
- 'promote competition' in the provision of services; this duty ensures we are aware of barriers to entry that can be erected by a lack of diversity in the legal profession.

5.2 What 'equality' means to the LSB

The law states that we have a responsibility to have due regard to tackling discrimination and promote equality of opportunity in the following three areas:

- disability;
- gender; and
- race.

These responsibilities are the three 'general duties' to promote equality and our Equality Scheme addresses all three duties. A framework will be developed at a future date to include any further duties that we must promote, including, for example, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation and transgender issues.

Our Equality Scheme will shape the way we do things in the two roles we perform. Firstly, we are an employer of 34 people, and must promote equality in the way we recruit new staff, and in how we treat our staff day-to-day. Secondly, we are an oversight regulator and must take appropriate steps to promote equality of opportunity in relation to employment by those providing legal services. It is important to note that equality and diversity arises in many contexts, not just employment, and that the LSB is committed to placing equality and diversity at the heart of everything we do.

5.3 What the duties demand

The law is clear about what we need to do to give effect to the three duties. We must also ensure that the requirements of these duties are incorporated into everything we do.

The **race equality duty** requires that we have due regard for the need to:

- remove unlawful discrimination;
- promote equal opportunities across all races; and
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

The **disability equality duty** requires that we have due regard for the need to:

- remove unlawful discrimination;
- eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- make sure disabled people have the same opportunities as everyone else;
- make allowances for disabilities, even if it means treating disabled people more favourably than others;
- promote positive attitudes to people with disabilities; and
- encourage disabled people to take part in public life.

The **gender equality duty** requires that we have due regard for the need to:

- remove unlawful discrimination that treats men and women differently;
- eliminate harassment; and
- promote equal opportunities for men and women.

The requirements above are reflected in an action plan (see Annex 1). The plan will be consulted on from December 2009 and the final version will take into account feedback we receive from a variety of interest groups. The plan will also be revised in the future in line with any further duties that the LSB must address.

6 THE LSB as an EMPLOYER and an OVERSIGHT REGULATOR

6.1 The LSB as an employer

LSB's objective is to be an 'employer of choice' and to create a place where people choose to work because we offer equal and inspiring opportunities to everyone.

In our work on our cultural development we have specifically identified the following criteria to encourage equality, diversity and inclusiveness:

- Mutual respect between colleagues regardless of level,
- Collegiate - inclusive, using term 'we' rather than 'the LSB'
- Collaborative - team-working, sharing ideas, knowledge, skills
- Diverse - comfortable environment for colleagues from any section of society
- Friendly and fun
- LSB interested in colleagues well-being

A major feature of our performance management scheme, to be introduced in early 2010, will be assessments of behaviours and cultural alignment.

During 2010 we will also:

- Ask job agencies try to find (where possible) a minimum of 20 per cent of the candidates from traditionally under-represented groups and that they are people who might bring a range of skills, ideas and outlooks to roles at all levels at the LSB,
- Introduce our approach to professional development which will include training programmes and initiatives to promote diversity within LSB for all colleagues and for managers at all levels,
- Produce reports on LSB's performance, including statistics on the diversity make-up of our colleagues, and
- Seek feedback from colleagues on their views on our progress in promoting equality and diversity.

6.2 The LSB as an oversight regulator

6.2.1 Equality in the legal sector

Our overarching goal is to reform and modernise the legal services market by putting the interests of consumers at the heart of all of our activity as a regulatory board, the activity of the approved regulators whom we oversee and at the heart of the legal services market as a whole. This ensures that legal services are made accessible to consumers and aspirants of all backgrounds including disadvantaged minority groups; offering equal opportunities to everyone who wishes to enter the profession; retain their employment or wish to progress to management/partner level within a legal service provider.

As an oversight regulator we will seek to effect change primarily through our regulation of the approved regulators and by encouraging co-ordinated strategy initiatives. We envisage that equality and diversity issues will be considered in all projects undertaken by us and form an integral part of our project planning. For example, we will, in the course of 2010, ensure that all papers submitted to our Board for consideration include a section on equality and diversity which describes how these issues have been incorporated into policy development, and the likely impact of the recommended option on the achievement of the aims of the Scheme.

We recognise that engagement with other interest groups from a range of backgrounds is essential to gain an understanding of the diversity issues that affect individuals and groups across the legal sector. We will engage in developing, refining, delivering and reviewing the Scheme with a wide range of groups and individuals. This will include those representing the rich diversity of the legal profession, others working in the legal services industry and those representing consumers.

We will, of course, also develop a range of relevant links with statutory bodies, and consumer and citizen organisations which will represent a range of diversity interests and ensure that our own market and consumer research activities properly pick up the views of both consumers and businesses from a wide range of backgrounds. We will encourage our Consumer Panel to develop a similarly wide range of formal and informal contacts.

We will also co-ordinate through the diversity forum, established in June 2009 and chaired by Rosemary Martin, a LSB Board member, to share best practice and encourage joint working to maximise impact. This is particularly important for the smaller approved regulators who share the same commitment as the larger approved regulators but have access to fewer resources.

6.2.2 Consultations and publications

We believe that a crucial part of our role is to facilitate a market that improves access to justice. In achieving this objective, we are committed to working with stakeholders to better understand the legal services market from a consumer perspective so that we can measure how well consumer needs are met.

Through our formal consultation process we ask a wide range of people and groups for their views about our policies, to make sure we take different views into account. We do this by making sure that our publications are available and accessible to everyone interested in them, via our website.

Our learning also comes from feedback from specific consultations with stakeholders, consumers and users on a wide range of issues including the discussion papers on - alternative business structures; the rules governing reserved legal activities; the statement of policy on compliance and enforcement powers; the Levy and regulatory independence. Each of our consultations is open to review and response from the public for a standard period of 12 weeks.

We have also become involved in further outreach such as hosting forums around other specific project streams. An alternative business structures forum was held in Manchester this year and attended by around 90 people representing groups and individual interests. We also hold workshops with approved regulators which allow for more detailed debate and discussion on specific project streams. We intend to hold similar workshops and forums in the future. We will seek to develop this activity further and widen the range of participation within it in the course of the coming years.

In turn, this broad range of information will help shape the Equality Scheme, which puts equality at the heart of everything we do. The scheme will touch every function, activity and policy at the LSB.

7 OUR STARTING POINT

7.1 A focus on diversity

We view diversity as sitting at the heart of equality. It recognises and respects people's differences and makes sure that everyone is fully included. The diversity agenda is already established in the LSB's overall work ethos and is considered, where appropriate, across all project streams. For example, the alternative business structures (ABS) discussion documents have explored the potential impact of the introduction of the ABS on specific individuals and groups within the legal sector such as sole practitioners who are traditionally made up of a higher representation of Black and Minority Ethnic Groups (BME).

Diversity is also a strong theme in one of our major project streams, currently named 'Developing a workforce for a changing market'. Within this work stream, the focus of our first year was on "promoting access to a diverse profession" and developing the networks of approved regulators, legal educators, representative groups and other interested parties to progress our stated aims.

We are currently developing a strategy and a continuous programme to support this project stream. We give regular updates to and receive advice from the LSB's Board members and will also be consulting with the LSB's independent Consumer Panel².

7.2 Consideration of the three key aspects of Equality and Diversity

It is envisaged that the future work of the LSB will include not just consultation with specific interest groups but also working in partnership with others already engaged in areas of equality and diversity. A more detailed description of our future work is as follows:

7.2.1 Disability

We intend to further our legal duty around equality and disability by making sure disabled people are fully served by legal services sector. This may require the rules set by approved regulators to include all types of diversity. Specific interest groups such as, the Lawyers with Disabilities Division [of the Law Society] will also be targeted for feedback on consultations. We will also engage with consumers of legal services who have disabilities.

7.2.2 Gender

There is a need for further information on the experience of women in the context of retention and progression within law firms. We recognise that we now need to build on our activities in this area. We will engage with women's interest groups such as the Women's Solicitors Network in our consultations.

² The Consumer Panel (http://www.legalservicesboard.org.uk/about_us/lsb_consumer_panel/index.htm) will play an important role in ensuring that the views and interests of consumers are reflected in our plans. The Panel will be independent of the Board and will have considerable scope to advise and influence the LSB from the consumer perspective. The Consumer Panel is made up of nine members including the Chair (Dianne Hayter) who have professional experience of representing a range of minority groups such as disabled people and ethnic minorities, all of which will help to ensure that the LSB's work is informed by an equality perspective.

7.2.3 Race

We recognise that BME groups' experiences with barriers to progression and retention in the legal sector need further exploring. We intend to identify barriers to progression and retention and begin to break them down, working appropriately with the approved regulators to ensure real outcomes are achieved. It is essential that BME lawyer groups such as the Black Solicitors' Network are involved in our consultation processes. We will also engage with consumers of legal services who belong to BME groups.

7.3 Looking ahead – future work focus

We intend to support the approved regulators to develop a workforce strategy that covers three primary areas: widening access (diversity and social mobility); education and training; and quality assurance. A broader description of each primary area is included below:

7.3.1 Diversity and Social Mobility

We will build on the mapping of issues and initiatives undertaken in 2009/10 to identify synergies and agree a set of common priorities with the approved regulators. This work will tie in with recommendations for the professions from Milburn's Panel of Fair Access to the Professions.

7.3.2 Quality Assurance

We will focus on developing evidence on how consumers view quality and what they understand of the range of assurance measures and titles provided by different arms of the sector.

7.3.3 Education and Training

We will consider how existing education and training arrangements/options are aligned to the needs of the legal sector. We will further continue the work that we started last year to bring together the profession, approved regulators and the providers of legal education to consider qualifications routes that provide flexibility and maximum opportunity for non-traditional aspirants to the profession. We will do this in light of the recommendations of the Milburn's "Panel on Fair Access to the Professions" to ensure a joined up approach for maximum impact.

7.4 Consideration of new strands of diversity

The law in relation to the public sector duties has been simplified and revised to include four more strands – transgender (gender identity), age, sexual orientation and religion or belief. The new provisions will be contained within the Equality Bill, which will not come into force until 2011 at the earliest. Once this Bill has been enacted, the LSB will ensure that issues around the new strands are developed and the appropriate groups are targeted for public consultation on all of our working.

7.5 Commitment to promoting Equality and Diversity

Overall, we will ensure our performance is consistent across all service and policy delivery areas to promote gender, disability and race equality. We envisage that much of our operational work with approved regulators will also be relevant to all three strands.

We will also ensure the promotion of disability, race and gender equality in all recruitment process across our staff, the LSB's Board and the Consumer Panel.

We will continue to monitor our progress and review the impact of our Equality Scheme through the use of tools such as Equality Impact Assessments (see Page 18 for details).

8 OUR EQUALITY and DIVERSITY OBJECTIVES

Our view is that a successful Equality Scheme will need to meet a clear set of objectives.

We are in our first year of operation and are yet to be fully staffed. It is intended that once we receive our full powers in January 2010, responses from the December consultation on the Business Plan 2010/11 will be considered and a clear set of objectives will be defined. The objectives set out below and the action plan in Annex 1 will be refined and developed in the light of specific consultation responses to this document and progress in that wider context.

In the meantime, we have chosen to adopt the following objectives:

- to make everyone at the LSB more aware of our equality and diversity objectives on an ongoing basis;
- to make sure the LSB always take equality into account when we develop our policies and put them into action;
- to make decisions based on information that takes equality into account including input from relevant consumer and interest groups where possible;
- to make our actions and objectives more measurable so that we can monitor progress internally;
- to encourage a more diverse mix of people employed across the legal sector at all levels;
- to promote equality and diversity among the legal sector and the approved regulators we regulate; and
- to make the LSB's duties, policies and services accessible to everyone via the LSB website and to ensure all correspondence is available in a variety of different formats.

We intend to post our objectives (and related expectations statement) to the LSB's website once we have received feedback from the consultation stage of the Business Plan 2010/11.

9 CONSULTATION with the PUBLIC, INTEREST GROUPS and STAFF

We intend to talk and involve a wide variety of people – both outside and inside the LSB – in developing our Equality Scheme which will be finalised in early 2010.

9.1 External participants

We will conduct research to help us gain valuable insights from a range of external organisations through meetings and workshops with stakeholders currently working in the area of equality and diversity. We see the Diversity Forum for Professional Regulators as an ideal opportunity to gather opinions from representatives from the approved regulators in Senior Management positions or who are directly involved in equality and diversity within their respective organisations to help develop our Equality Scheme.

We will consult on the draft Equality Scheme at the beginning of December 2009 when we open a 12 week public consultation for our Business Plan.

Initially, our Equality Scheme will only apply to the diversity strands of disability, gender and race. We plan to extend the scheme to other diversity strands at a future date.

9.2 Internal staff

We intend to invite feedback on the draft Equality Scheme from all members of the LSB's Board, Consumer Panel and LSB staff.

The responses from this process will inform our proposed action plan, which is attached at Annex 1.

10 PROGRESSING the LSB's EQUALITY SCHEME

The Equality Scheme is an important stepping stone on the way to creating a consistent and joint approach to promoting equality.

10.1 Monitoring

We have a dedicated research budget and Research Manager who will identify key pieces of research to be commissioned by the LSB. It is envisaged that once the research budget and plan has been finalised, equality and diversity topics will be further investigated in the context of the legal sector. We will also seek evidence from other interested bodies across the sector and part of this research may also explore the needs, concerns and experiences of our various stakeholders.

We know there are gaps in our knowledge which may be filled through contact with approved regulators and other interest groups or perhaps through research projects. We envisage that our objectives will address these gaps.

We also envisage that close working with the approved regulators is needed to monitor progress against the Equality Scheme and other initiatives.

10.2 Equality Impact Assessments

We will carry out Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) to make sure that we have due regard to any impacts that our proposed policies or projects will have on diversity groups. It is intended that this will be a rigorous and systematic process that may call on a variety of sources and tools, ranging from census data and existing or commissioned research. We envisage that the key to any impact assessment is that the effects are legitimate, accepted, understood, minimised and mitigated where appropriate.

We are currently in the early stages of developing a framework for Equality Impact Assessments, but will ensure that all relevant guidance and best practice has been taken into account in the development process before the framework is agreed and rolled out for use across our organisation.

10.3 Communication

We will publish the Equality Scheme on our website which has been built to the relevant standards set out by the Cabinet Office for public sector sites. The Equality Scheme plus other consultation documents are also available on request in different formats to cater for a variety of groups, for example, visually impaired stakeholders.

We are also in the initial stages of investigating our obligations as a public body under the Welsh Language Scheme, to translate our policies and dealings with the public into Welsh. This is important to consider as our regulatory jurisdiction also covers Wales.

ANNEX 1 ACTION PLAN

We aim to continue to develop networks across all interested parties and encourage collaborative working. This will ensure maximum efficiency of effort, build the widest possible evidence base and identify the gaps where the LSB can most effectively target its own limited research facility.

In 2010/11 we aim to:

- Develop, with regulators an overarching approach including activities, outcomes and measures and including links to Milburn recommendations for social mobility and government response,
- Work with the approved regulators to agree the framework to measure the effectiveness of the current programmes,
- Develop a broad understanding of current qualification routes and bring together approved regulators, educators, Skills for Justice and other stakeholders,
- Develop understanding of how consumers view quality and what they understand of the range of assurance measures and titles provided by different arms of the sector and,
- Take the lead in achieving clarity of understanding over which bodies should be responsible for the development and delivery of different types of quality assurance.

By 2013, consumers will be confident that their access to justice is facilitated by a legal workforce that:

- At all levels ever more closely matches the diversity of the UK,
- Actively works to overcome discrimination and disadvantage in its own working practices and cultures, going above and beyond its statutory objectives,
- Is rigorous in setting, monitoring and communicating competency levels,
- Consistently modernises itself through formal continuing education requirements and a consistent culture of professional learning improvement and,
- Is transparent in its diversity and quality assurance to allow consumers to make informed choices about the type of provider that they use and allows aspirants to choose the type of provider they work for.

10.4 Detail of work we will do in 2010/11

We have set out the following series of actions to make sure we achieve our objectives. Each has been designed to put equality and diversity at the heart of everything we do in our day-to-day activities.

Objective	Activity	Description	Milestone/output	Responsibility
To make everyone at the LSB more aware of our equality and diversity objectives on an ongoing basis	LSB staff consultation	We will brief staff in detail about the draft and final Equality Scheme and regularly monitor and report on its implementation through staff meetings.	2010: A more informed staff that considers equality and diversity issues in aspects of their work, where appropriate.	LSB Senior Management Team
To make sure the LSB always take equality into account when we develop our policies and put them into action	Board paper template	To insert a section into the standard Board paper template that will require the author of that paper to describe how they have considered equality and diversity in their policy development and coach colleagues on its appropriate use.	2010: An agreed Board template.	LSB Senior Management Team
	Impact Assessments	To insert a section into all LSB impact assessments that requires policy development to assess any impact on equality and diversity where appropriate, and to minimise and mitigate that impact wherever practicable.	2010: An agreed impact assessment template.	
To make decisions based on information that takes equality into account including input from relevant consumer and interest groups where possible	Board papers	The Board members to consider the section on equality and diversity and to make sure this information is taken into account with all high level decision-making.	2010: A balanced decision-making process which takes into account equality and diversity in all high level decisions.	LSB Board
	Impact Assessments	LSB staff to consider the outcomes from all impact assessments before final decision-making is completed. In particular, if the assessment shows that equality and diversity is adversely impacted and that other routes have been considered or that the impact has been minimised or mitigated	2010: A balanced decision-making process which takes into account equality and diversity in all project team decisions.	LSB Project Managers

Objective	Activity	Description	Milestone/output	Responsibility
	Targeted consultation	where appropriate. To identify the right groups to consult and also to ensure the consultation is spread widely across consumer groups, interest groups and approved regulators.	2010: Create a database of appropriate groups to contact for consultation purposes.	Corporate and Public Affairs function
To make our actions and objectives more measurable so that we can monitor progress internally	Setting the direction	Develop, with regulators an overarching approach including activities, outcomes and measures and including links to Milburn recommendations for social mobility and government response.	2010: publish a paper setting out our analysis and focus for future activity.	LSB Work Stream Project Team
	Quality Assurance	Develop understanding of how consumers view quality and what they understand of the range of assurance measures and titles provided by different arms of the sector and, Take the lead in achieving clarity of understanding over which bodies should be responsible for the development and delivery of different types of quality assurance.	2010: publish research report 2010/11: initial analysis of other accreditation schemes	LSB Work Stream Project Team LSB Senior Management team
To encourage a more diverse mix of people across the legal sector at all levels	Workforce Access (diversity and social mobility)	Work with the approved regulators to agree the framework to measure the effectiveness of the current programmes.	2010: publish framework and review progress against it at quarterly diversity forums.	LSB Research Manager
	Education & Training	Develop a broad understanding of current qualification routes and bring together approved regulators, educators, Skills for Justice and other stakeholders.	2010/11: publish single source map of qualification routes.	LSB Work Stream Project Team
To promote equality and diversity among the legal sector and the approved regulators we	Diversity Forums for Professional Regulators & Educators	Continue the work that we started in 2009/10 to bring together the profession, approved regulators and the providers of legal education.	2010: continue with quarterly diversity forums	LSB Work Stream Project Team

Objective	Activity	Description	Milestone/output	Responsibility
regulate	Supporting the Law Society Charter	To encourage measurable outcomes for the approved regulators e.g. supporting the Law Society charter on procurement of services and requiring publication of diversity data for bidders in relation to large legal contracts	2010: the LSB to encourage the approved regulators to consider a procurement requirement similar to the Law Society Charter.	LSB Senior Management team
To make the LSB's duties, policies and services accessible to everyone via the LSB website and to ensure all correspondence is available in a variety of different formats	Publication of LSB documents and correspondence	<p>To ensure all LSB correspondence in the form of consultation documents, consultation responses, policies, rules, statements and all other forms of communication that is not subject to the Data Protection Act 1998 are made readily available on the LSB website.</p> <p>To ensure all public documents are available in a range of formats for different groups such as visually impaired stakeholders.</p> <p>To ensure the format of public documents follow the guidelines for 'clear print' provided by the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB).</p>	Ongoing: posting of all public documents on the website.	LSB Communications Team

ANNEX 2 RESPONDING to this CONSULTATION

We welcome views and comments on all aspects of our draft Equality Scheme by 5pm on Wednesday 10 March 2010.

We would prefer to receive responses electronically (in Microsoft Word format), but hard copy responses by post or fax are also welcome. We are also keen to engage in other ways and we would welcome contact with anyone with an interest in the work proposed in this draft Equality Scheme during the consultation period.

Responses should be sent to:

Email: consultations@legalservicesboard.org.uk

Post: Rosaline Sullivan,
Legal Services Board,
7th Floor,
Victoria House,
Southampton Row,
London
WC1B 4AD

Fax: 020 7271 0051

We intend to publish all responses to this consultation on our website unless a respondent explicitly requests that a specific part of the response, or its entirety, should be kept confidential. We will record the identity of the respondent and the fact that they have submitted a confidential response in our summary of responses.

If you want to discuss any aspect of this consultation, or need advice on how to respond, please contact the LSB by telephone (020 7271 0050) or by one the methods described above.

We will consider all responses to this consultation and will publish the final Equality Scheme in spring 2010.

Legal Services Board

7th Floor
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Southampton Row
London WC1B 4AD

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F 020 7271 0051

www.legalservicesboard.org.uk