

The Legal Services Board's Equality Scheme

The final Equality Scheme for 2010/11

May 2010

1 Contents

1	Contents	1
2	FOREWORD	3
3	INTRODUCTION	4
3.1	Defining an Equality Scheme	4
3.2	Our statement on diversity	4
3.3	Our commitment to equality and diversity	4
4	THE LEGAL SERVICES BOARD	5
4.1	Who we are	5
4.2	Our major priorities.....	5
4.3	The sector we regulate.....	5
4.4	Our role as an oversight regulator.....	5
4.5	Our regulatory objectives	6
5	OUR EQUALITY and DIVERSITY OBJECTIVES	7
6	LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS	8
6.1	Equality and the Legal Services Act 2007	8
6.2	What ‘equality’ means to the LSB	8
6.3	What the duties demand	9
7	THE LSB as an EMPLOYER and an OVERSIGHT REGULATOR	10
7.1	The LSB as an employer.....	10
7.2	The LSB as an oversight regulator.....	10
7.2.1	Equality in the legal sector.....	10
7.2.2	Consultations and publications	11
8	OUR STARTING POINT	13
8.1	A focus on diversity	13
8.2	Consideration of the three key aspects of Equality and Diversity.....	13
8.2.1	Disability	13
8.2.2	Gender.....	13
8.2.3	Race	13
8.3	Looking ahead – future work focus	14
8.3.1	Transparency.....	14
8.4	Consideration of new strands of equality	15
8.5	Commitment to promoting Equality and Diversity.....	15

9	CONSULTATION with the PUBLIC, INTEREST GROUPS and STAFF	16
9.1	External participants.....	16
9.2	Internal staff	16
10	PROGRESSING the LSB's EQUALITY SCHEME.....	17
10.1	Monitoring	17
10.2	Equality Impact Assessments	17
10.3	Communication	18
	ANNEX 1 ACTION PLAN.....	19

2 FOREWORD

We would like to thank all respondents for their contributions to this consultation process. We have had a lot of helpful input which has strengthened the Equality Scheme for 2010/11.

The Legal Services Board is fully committed to promoting equality and diversity inside our organisation, and in the wider legal sector - an important statutory duty for us.

This document is important because it sets out how we place equality and diversity in our day-to-day working, through functions, activities and policies, and through the recruitment of staff. We propose to become a leading player in promoting good practice to help to create policies and practices in the areas for which we have a responsibility to bring about fairness, equality and diversity.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Edmonds', written in a cursive style.

David Edmonds
Chairman

May 2010

3 INTRODUCTION

3.1 Defining an Equality Scheme

An equality scheme is a plan that outlines a public authority's action to address aspects of the general duties in relation to race, gender and disability 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 has 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 eliminate all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of a person's race or ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, 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 the final Equality Scheme for 2010/11.

4 THE LEGAL SERVICES BOARD

4.1 Who we are

The Legal Services Board is a new organisation, created by the [Legal Services Act 2007](#). The Board came into being on 1 January 2009 and became fully operational on 1 January 2010. Its 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 major priorities

Our goal is simple and clear – to reform and modernise the legal services market place in the interests of consumers, enhancing quality, ensuring value for money and improving access to justice across England and Wales.

Funded by, but wholly independent of, the legal profession our three major priorities are:

- assuring the public about the rigour and independence of legal regulation by ensuring a common baseline of regulatory competence, learning lessons from other sectors and maintaining clear independence from both government and professional interests;
- better consumer redress when things go wrong through a new independent ombudsman for complaints, ensuring fair, effective and rapid dispute resolution for everybody concerned;
- giving consumers more choice and lawyers new business opportunities by opening up the market and increasing competition to allow new types of legal business to emerge.

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 ([approved regulators](#)) in England and Wales.

We oversee eight approved regulators who themselves are required to ensure independent regulation of the eight branches of the legal profession. In addition, two further professional bodies from outside the traditional legal services sector namely, the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Scotland (ICAS) and the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), were designated formally as approved

regulators from 1 January 2010. Those bodies are both listed as approved regulators in relation only to reserved probate activities.

We also oversee the new organisation being established to handle consumer complaints about lawyers, the [Legal Ombudsman](#).

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.

We are committed to ensuring that equality and diversity is considered across all of the regulatory objectives and not just those specifically relating to diversity.

5 OUR EQUALITY and DIVERSITY OBJECTIVES

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

The objectives set out below have been set out in the action plan in Annex 1 and will be reviewed later in the year as part of the business planning process for 2011/12.

Our equality and diversity objectives are:

1. to encourage a more diverse workforce across the legal sector at all levels;
2. to promote, and encourage the approved regulators to promote, equality and diversity among the legal sector we regulate;
3. to make decisions based on information that takes equality into account including input from relevant consumer and interest groups where possible;
4. to ensure that the LSB's own practices and policies, in relation to staff and stakeholder communication and ensuring a consistent focus on equalities through our entire work programme, exemplify the best practice we promote to others.

In meeting objective 4 we will:

- make sure the LSB always takes equality into account when we develop our policies, procedures and processes and put them into action;
- make everyone at the LSB more aware of our equality and diversity objectives on an ongoing basis;
- make the LSB's duties, policies and services increasingly accessible via the LSB website and, to ensure all correspondence is available in a variety of different formats on request.

We consider that the objectives are adopted on the assumption that equality considerations will be built into policy development at the beginning of the policy making process rather than making adjustments at the end of the process.

6 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Equality and the Legal Services Act 2007

Including the general laws (outlined below) which apply to any public body, the Act 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 the make-up of the country's population 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 that can be erected to entry, career progression, retention, access to senior positions and transferrable skills by a lack of diversity in the legal profession.

We are committed to ensuring that equality and diversity is considered across all of the regulatory objectives and not just those specifically relating to diversity.

6.2 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 final Equality Scheme addresses all three duties. The Equality Act 2010 introduces additional strands of equality around age, religion or belief, sexual orientation and gender identity issues etc. The main provisions of the Equality Act 2010 will come into force in October 2010.

Our final Equality Scheme will shape the way we do things in the two roles we perform. Firstly, we are an employer of around 35 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.

6.3 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.

An action plan sets out what we will do to ensure we meet the equality duties on race, disability and gender (see Annex 1). The action plan will be reviewed later in the year as part of the business planning process for 2011/12.

The approved regulators and their regulatory arms also have a responsibility to promote equality and diversity for all individuals and groups.

7 THE LSB as an EMPLOYER and an OVERSIGHT REGULATOR

7.1 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
- We are interested in colleagues well-being

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

During 2010/11 we will also:

- Ask job agencies to try to find (where possible) a minimum of 20 per cent of the candidates from traditionally under-represented groups and ensure 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.

7.2 The LSB as an oversight regulator

7.2.1 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 our Equality Scheme.

We recognise that engagement with 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 our Equality 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 activity through the Diversity Forum of Professional Regulators, established in June 2009, 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.

7.2.2 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. Our consultations are open to review and response from the public usually for a period of 12 weeks.

We have undertaken further outreach such as hosting forums around specific project streams. For example, outreach forums to discuss alternative business structures (ABS) were held in Manchester, Newcastle, Bristol and Cardiff at the end of 2009 and beginning of 2010 and attended by people representing group 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 year.

In turn, this broad range of information has helped shape our final Equality Scheme, which puts equality at the heart of everything we do. Our final Equality Scheme touches every function, activity and policy at the LSB.

8 OUR STARTING POINT

8.1 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.

Diversity is also a strong theme in one of our major project streams, '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 give regular updates to and receive advice from the LSB's Board members and will also be consulting with the LSB's independent Legal Services Consumer Panel¹.

8.2 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:

8.2.1 Disability

We intend to further our legal duty around equality and disability by helping to make 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.

8.2.2 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.

8.2.3 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.

¹ The Legal Services [Consumer Panel](#) will play an important role in ensuring that the views and interests of consumers are reflected in our plans. The Panel is 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.

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.

We are committed to promoting equality and diversity inside our organisation and also in the wider legal sector. This includes adhering to the race, gender and equality duties to 'remove unlawful discrimination', 'promote equal opportunities', and 'eliminate harassment'.

We will seek to work with the approved regulators to utilise their existing networks to further the requirements of other equality duties. For example, this may involve engaging with the Law Society's BME Forum to further the race equality duty 'to promote good relations between people of different racial groups' and/or the Law Society's Disability Advisory Panel 'to ensure disabled people have the same opportunities as everyone else', 'to make allowances for disabilities', 'to promote positive attitudes to people with disabilities' and 'encourage disabled people to take part in public life'.

The LSB considers that the equality duties around race, gender and disability will be encompassed both in our internal policies through our working and recruitment processes, and also across our policy development through the use of Equality Impact Assessments to identify opportunities and mitigate any potential areas of adverse impact at equality and diversity on the outset of policy making.

8.3 Looking ahead – future work focus

We intend to further our existing work through the work stream 'developing a workforce for a changing market'. In 2010/11, we will extend our focus to consider more widely what consumers and procurers of legal services need, want and should be able to expect from the legal workforce. This goes beyond diversity.

As outlined in our Business Plan for 2010/11, we intend to support the approved regulators in three primary areas:

- widening access (diversity and social mobility);
- education and training;
- quality assurance.

We will agree with approved regulators and others, responsibilities and timescales for delivery. Progress in some areas will require deep-seated cultural change and will take some time to achieve. In other areas, benefits can and must be achieved much more quickly. It is our ambition to make this happen.

8.3.1 Transparency

Throughout, we will encourage approved regulators and practitioners to systematically collect and display transparent, consistent, measurable and, understandable information across the three strands of this work stream. This will better enable consumers to make informed choices about the type of provider that they use: mainstreaming the issues for the owners and managers of legal service

providers and incentivising continuous improvement that can be robustly measured. Visibility and competition will place a market and consumer value on the range of quality assurance measures available, as well as on the diversity of the workforce. We will not only encourage approved regulators to do more, but hold them to account for their efforts, not least in relation to how far they impose similar disciplines on those they oversee.

We can only deliver this work in partnership. From the provision of education and training at under-graduate and post-graduate levels, training contracts and continuing professional development, change can only be delivered by educational establishments, legal services providers, the profession and regulators working together. Similarly, it is only through signing up to shared ambitions and clear targets that we will achieve the breakthrough in diversity that we are seeking.

A broader description of each primary area may be found in the [Business Plan 2010/11](#).

8.4 Consideration of new strands of equality

We are committed to include additional strands of equality when the main provisions of the Equality Act 2010 are introduced in October 2010 and the Equality Scheme is reviewed later in the year as part of the business planning process for 2011/12.

The law in relation to the public sector duties has been simplified and revised to include additional strands including - gender identity, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

We will ensure that issues around the new strands are developed and the appropriate groups are targeted for public consultation on all of our working.

8.5 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 Legal Services 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 17 for details).

9 CONSULTATION with the PUBLIC, INTEREST GROUPS and STAFF

We have talked to and involved a variety of people – both outside and inside the LSB – in developing our Equality Scheme which will be reviewed later in the year as part of the business planning process for 2011/12.

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 have consulted on the draft Equality Scheme at the beginning of December 2009 when we opened a 12 week public consultation for our Business Plan. The feedback from the consultation process has been summarised in a separate response document available on our website and the final Equality Scheme for 2010/11 has been amended accordingly.

Initially, our Equality Scheme applies to the duties on race, gender and disability. We plan to extend the Scheme to include additional equality strands at a future date.

9.2 Internal staff

We consulted on the draft Equality Scheme with all members of the LSB's Board. We will invite the Legal Services Consumer Panel and LSB staff to comment on the final Equality Scheme when it is reviewed later in the year alongside the business planning process for 2011/12.

The responses from the consultation process have also informed our 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

Our research budget and programme has been finalised and includes two research projects which both consider topics of diversity in the context of the legal sector. The first is an internal literature review on barriers to entry and progression to the legal market. Qualitative analysis has been conducted to greater understand the drivers of the sector's diversity.

We have held research seminars with academics to collate legal research already carried out and identify gaps. We have established a Research Strategy Group (which includes independent representation) that has been tasked with providing oversight for the research programme.

We are committed to working through the quarterly Diversity Forum for Professional Regulators to develop a better evidence base on the make-up of the legal profession, against which the success and effectiveness of existing diversity and equality initiatives by approved regulators can be measured. The framework will also help to monitor our progress against the final Equality Scheme.

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.

10.2 Equality Impact Assessments

We are committed to completing impact assessments through our policy making process. As a priority we will develop our processes to improve their focus on equality issues and ensure that this is embedded in the staff development strategy which we are currently developing.

We will carry out Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) 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 EIA, 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 final Equality Scheme for 2010/11 on our website which has been built to the relevant standards set out by the Cabinet Office for public sector sites. The final Equality Scheme for 2010/11 plus other consultation documents are available in different formats on request. We are in the process of scoping the redevelopment of our website and accessibility concerns will be included in this although as there is no dedicated budget for this year, we may only be able to deliver incremental improvements.

We have developed a Welsh Language Scheme that will be the subject to a 12 week consultation period shortly and submitted to the Welsh Language Board for approval. Once the LSB's Welsh Language Scheme has been implemented, the Welsh Language Board will also be responsible for reviewing the LSB's progress on the Scheme's action plan. This is important to consider as our regulatory jurisdiction covers Wales.

ANNEX 1 ACTION PLAN

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
1. 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 current programmes. Map current sector diversity as a baseline for measuring the impact of future changes.	Q2 (10/11): publish framework and review progress against it at least annually	LSB Work Stream Project Team
	Education and Training	Develop a broad understanding of current qualification routes and work collaboratively with approved regulators, educators, Skills for Justice and other stakeholders. Work with Gateways to the Profession Collaborative Forum to embed social mobility into development of education and training	Q1 (10/11): publish single source map of qualification routes	LSB Work Stream Project Team
2. To promote, and encourage the approved regulators to promote, equality and diversity among the legal sector we regulate	Diversity Forums for Professional Regulators	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 the quarterly Diversity Forums for Professional Regulators	LSB Work Stream Project Team
	Supporting the Law Society's Diversity and Inclusion Charter and protocol on the procurement of legal services.	To encourage measurable outcomes for the approved regulators e.g. supporting the Law Society's Diversity and Inclusion Charter and protocol on the procurement of legal services and requiring the 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's Diversity and Inclusion Charter and protocol on the procurement of legal services.	LSB Senior Management team

Objective	Activity	Description	Milestone/output	Responsibility
3. 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 where appropriate before final decision-making is completed. In particular, if the assessment shows that equality and diversity is adversely impacted and demonstrate that other routes have been considered or that the impact has been minimised or mitigated where appropriate.	2010: A balanced decision-making process which takes into account equality and diversity in all project team decisions.	LSB Project Managers
	Targeted consultation	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.	LSB Communications Team
4. To ensure that the LSB's own practices and policies, in relation to staff and stakeholder communication and ensuring a consistent focus on equalities through our entire work programme, exemplify the best practice we promote to others	To make sure the LSB always take equality into account when we develop our policies, procedures and processes and put them into action	<p>To insert a section into the standard Board paper template (and sub-Committee papers where appropriate) 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.</p> <p>To include a section in 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. To include the completed EIA (or summary) with Board papers (or sub-Committee papers) where appropriate.</p>	<p>2010: An agreed Board template.</p> <p>2010: An agreed impact assessment template.</p>	LSB Senior Management Team

Objective	Activity	Description	Milestone/output	Responsibility
	To make everyone at the LSB more aware of our equality and diversity objectives on an ongoing basis	<p>We will brief staff in detail on the final Equality Scheme and monitor and report on its implementation through staff meetings.</p> <p>To roll out relevant training on equality and diversity including training in impact assessments, for all staff and Board members.</p>	<p>2010: A more informed staff that considers equality and diversity issues in aspects of their work, where appropriate.</p> <p>2010: a programme of training on equality and diversity to be completed by all staff and Board members.</p>	LSB Senior Management Team
	To make the LSB's duties, policies and services increasingly accessible via the LSB website and, to ensure all correspondence is available in a variety of different formats on request	<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 different formats on request.</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) on request.</p>	Ongoing: posting of all public documents on the website.	LSB Communications Team

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