

Research Department SLA

A) Date and version history

Version	Date
Research Department SLA Version 0.1	12 August 2010
Research Department SLA Version 0.2	24 August 2010
Research Department SLA Version 0.3	7 September 2010

B) Parties Involved and Lead Officers

Service Provider	Lead Officer
Research Department, Central Services, Bar Council	Nicola Power, Research Manager

Service Users	Lead Officer
All staff members of the Bar Standards Board	Mandie Lavin, Director
BSB committees who use research evidence in their policy making.	BSB committee secretaries

C) Overview of the agreement

How this agreement will meet the businesses needs
<p>The research department is a newly established department set up to improve standards in research evidence and information across the organisation. The BSB will require good quality research and information in order to inform its policy making and to be used as evidence for external stakeholders.</p> <p>The priorities of the BSB will inform the research department's strategy and work plan, so that the evidence being generated is relevant and timely.</p> <p>The research department which includes the existing library function will supply information and evidence from either the library archive and/or research data as and when it is required subject to mutually agreed deadlines.</p> <p>The research department will commission and manage large and/or cross cutting research projects. This will require mutually agreed deadlines depending on the complexity of the work. If a research project is a component part of a larger cross cutting project, this will involve working alongside the Project Support Office and making sure that the timescales and deadlines are agreed by all parties.</p>

D) Requirements

What is required by the service user
The research department will advise on and oversee the delivery of all research activity conducted in-house or commissioned externally by any other department. The research department will also conduct some ad-hoc primary research.

The research department will normally project manage large and/or cross cutting research projects. This will require mutually agreed deadlines that will depend on the complexity of the work.

The research department will produce a research policy for the BSB, providing guidance for staff on commissioning and managing research projects and clarifying the service relationship between the research department and the service users.

The research department will provide an efficient and prompt response to requests whilst keeping managers and staff informed of progress.

The research department will maintain a thorough understanding of all BSB research and evidence on the profession to enable an effective and informed first point of contact to all internal and external stakeholders.

What is required by the service provider

To provide the research department with the BSB's operational/strategic plans and give as much notice as possible about any new policy areas/initiatives that may need evidence or information from the research department.

To include the research manager as early as possible in any meetings where any new research projects or information requirements are being discussed

Understand that the timescale for research projects can range between 3 – 12 months depending on the scale and complexity of the research design and methodology required.

For committee secretaries to inform their committees of the establishment of the new research department and of the new research policy.

E) Length of agreement and review date

Length of Agreement	Review Date
This SLA will be reviewed annually	31 August 2011
There will be a 3 month review of the additional arrangements in the SLA, carried out by the service provider and the service users	3 month review to be carried out in January 2011

F) Specifications

Level of Service	Target
The research department will respond to requests for existing research data and or archive information as soon as possible, depending on the complexity of the inquiry, ease of access to the data sources and priorities of what the data is needed for.	To be agreed mutually between the user and the research team
The research department will provide an overview of the current BSB research projects, which will include the timetables and deadlines of each project.	Provided by the Research Manager on a quarterly basis to the SLA Meeting

G) Quality

Level of Service	Target
An overview of the research projects, which will note both good examples as well as areas where there may be concerns, will be reported to the quarterly SLA meetings.	Report from the BSB will be presented to the quarterly SLA meeting

H) Timing

Requests for service	Time frame
BSB staff should contact the research department if they have a research requirement. An initial response will be provided, or a meeting set up to discuss the scope of the project, within two days of this contact.	Minimum 2 days notice

I) Availability of Service

When can you contact us	Hours
Anytime during normal office hours	9.00am – 17.00pm Monday to Friday
There will be limited service outside of office hours but there is usually someone in the office from 8.00am and until 17.30pm.	8.00am – 17.30pm Monday to Friday
In exceptional circumstances, such as when nearing a deadline on a crucial project, support can be provided outside of office hours. This must be arranged with the research manager in advance.	Evenings, Weekends and Bank Holidays

J) Performance monitoring and reporting

Measures	Reported to
The measures detailed in F) G) and H) will be monitored through overview reports that detail the quality and timeliness of advice; the reports will note both good examples as well as areas where there may be concern.	Will be presented by both the E&D team and the BSB to the Quarterly SLA Meetings

K) Dispute resolution

First Steps	Responsibility
The Research Manager and the Service Users should initially attempt to resolve any disputes as to whether the SLA has been adhered to (targets and requirements met/not met). This may include reviewing the content of the SLA. Where issues around prioritisation occur, these must be raised with the Directors	Research Manager / Service users

Second Steps	Responsibility
If the issues cannot be resolved locally, then they should be raised with either of the Directors. Non-compliance with the SLA should be discussed with the reasons why targets or	Director of Central Services, BSB Director

requirements cannot, or have not, been met. Resolution or remedial action should be investigated and then agreed by both Directors.	
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Third Steps	Responsibility
The Directors can refer SLA issues to the Chairs Committee if the prioritisation of services or independence of the regulatory functions are, or may become, compromised. The Committee may decide that the BSB should explore other avenues, possibly external sources, for service provision.	Chair of the Chairs Committee

L) Signatures

Name and Job Title	Signature and Date
Nicola Power Research Manager	07 September 2010
Oliver Delany Director - Central Services	
Mandie Lavin Director - BSB	