



BAR
STANDARDS
BOARD

REGULATING BARRISTERS

Service Level Agreement (SLA) Guidance Notes

Service Level Agreement (SLA)

Guidance Notes

1. What is a Service Level Agreement (SLA)?

- 1.1 A Service Level Agreement (SLA) is a written agreement between a service provider and the service users that states the minimum level or quality of service the user requires to meet their business needs. For example an IT SLA would state the level of IT support that users need to carry out their work.
- 1.2 An SLA also includes the information or level of cooperation the service requires from its service users in order to provide quality support or assistance.
- 1.3 SLAs will state how service levels and/or quality is measured and monitored and how issues can be put right if things go off track.
- 1.4 Primarily, an SLA will be used to firm up the protocols between internal services. Where the Bar Council provides a service to the Bar Standards Board, an SLA can provide further assurance that the regulatory functions are carried out free from representative control or influence.

2. Why do I need an SLA?

- 2.1 SLAs help to improve and maintain service level performance which assists the business in meeting its strategic aims and objectives.
- 2.2 They provide the basis for measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of a service and whether it is cost effective. It also helps to monitor demand for a service and can encourage developments in line with users needs.
- 2.3 SLAs assist service users in planning the services they require to carry out their work and also clarifies expectations of both the service and the user.

3. Who should draw up an SLA?

- 3.1 Both parties should have an involvement in drawing up an SLA. Typically the Service Manager/Team leader will complete the service's side of the agreement, and a service user / group of users will complete their part of the document.
- 3.2 SLAs should not be completed without in depth discussions around the service expectations from both parties, what should happen if levels of service fall below the agreed standard and how disputes should be resolved.

4. How do I draw up an SLA?

- 4.1 Once a verbal agreement has been met, a template is provided for you to complete below. It outlines all the necessary areas to consider and each section should be completed.
- 4.2 In the template, describe why service performance levels are important and why providing the right information at the right time is essential in supporting good service delivery.
- 4.3 Try and be specific and realistic when detailing the levels of service required and provide SMART targets (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound).
- 4.4 Do not make the monitoring arrangements too onerous but ensure that it is given the right level of priority. Provide reassurance that performance measurements will be accurate and timely. Think about what should happen if targets are met or not met and record this in the Dispute Resolution section (K).
- 4.5 If you have any issues with drawing up an SLA then speak to your line manager in the first instance or approach the BSB Business Manager for further advice and guidance.

5. What if I need to change an existing SLA?

- 5.1 The first draft may not be perfect, so you should pilot the scheme for an agreed trial period. You should then discuss the appropriate amendments and these can be documented on the front of the SLA template.
- 5.2 It is good practice to set a review date to check that the agreement is still meeting the business' needs and is reflecting the way that the service is delivered; this can be completed annually.
- 5.3 On occasions a business need may arise that is not catered for in the agreement, or some of the performance measurements require reviewing. Both parties must concur with the changes, which should then be recorded and the document amended accordingly.
- 5.4 You may foresee changes to the business that will affect the areas covered in the SLA but do not warrant a full amendment to the agreement. For example, the service provider may be implementing some major developments which could affect service delivery, or the number of service users could increase due to influx of staff to cover additional work. The lead officers should consult with the service users and the service providers to ensure that the service can still be provided to an acceptable level. You may wish to append the SLA with a note of the discussions.

SLA Template

A) Date and version history

Version	Date
eg IT Service Level Agreement Version 0.1 First draft of the agreement prior to pilot	31 August 2010
eg IT Service Level Agreement Version 1.1 First live version following the amendments made after the pilot	31 October 2010

B) Parties Involved and Lead Officers

Service Provider	Lead Officer
eg Information Technology team, Central Services, Bar Council	Ben Denison, Chief Information Officer

Service Users	Lead Officer
eg All staff members at the Bar Standards Board, who use desktop computers, phones and printers	Mandie Lavin, Director

C) Overview of the agreement

How this agreement will meet the businesses needs
eg The staff at the Bar Standards Board (60 users) requires IT equipment to support the day to day business and in delivering the objectives set out in the business plan. All IT requirements such as desktop computers, phones, printers and software will be provided and supported by the IT section, and where necessary training will be given to services users, and faults/issues will be investigated and resolved.

D) Requirements

What is required by the service user
eg IT Strategy document drawn up in consultation with BSB users New computer installation Training on software Software updates to be carried out Spyware, firewall and network security in place Trained engineers to answer and investigate fault calls

What is required by the service provider
eg Reasonable notice period for service requests To be advised of any major changes to the business's needs Adherence to the IT acceptable use policy

E) Length of agreement and review date

Length of Agreement	Review Date
eg There is no end date for this SLA however it will be reviewed annually	31 August 2011

F) Specifications

Level of Service	Target
eg Solve faults and issues as quickly as possible	5 hours from fault call to resolution
eg Meet deadlines regarding requests for new equipment	95% deadlines met

G) Quality

Level of Service	Target
eg Users satisfied with the levels of service provided	90% satisfaction
eg Computer equipment works without issues	6 issues logged per wk

H) Timing

Requests for service	Time frame
eg Users, when requesting new IT equipment, should give a reasonable amount of notice	Minimum 5 days notice

I) Availability of Service

When can you contact us	Hours
eg You can contact us during normal office hours	9.00am – 17.30pm Monday to Friday
eg There will be limited service outside of office hours	Weekends and Bank Holidays
eg In an emergency (servers are down) we can be contacted 24 on 07796 541230	24hrs

J) Performance monitoring and reporting

Measures	Reported to
eg Measures detailed in F) G) and H) published on a quarterly basis. Information will be collected from User requests and a quarterly report set up for each measure.	Director of Central Services, BSB Management Team

K) Dispute resolution

First Steps	Responsibility
eg The Chief Information Officer and the Service users should initially look at resolving any disputes, particularly to see if the SLA has been adhered to (targets and requirements met/not met), and whether it needs reviewing.	Chief Information Officer / Service users

Second Steps	Responsibility
eg If the issues cannot be resolved locally, then they should be raised either with the BSB Director or with the Director of Central Services.	Director of Central Services, BSB Director

L) Signatures

Name and Job Title	Signature and Date
eg Ben Denison, Chief Information Officer	Squiggle, 26/07/10