

Release notes for SRA Handbook, Version 14

30 April 2015

The fourteenth version of the Handbook was published on 30 April 2015.

The changes contained in Version 14 came into effect on 30 April 2015 and are summarised in these release notes. The notes give a brief update only and you will need to refer to the Handbook itself for full details. Any sets of rules or regulations not referred to remain substantially unchanged in this version.

There are three groups of changes in Version 14:

- Changes have been made to the SRA Higher Rights of Audience Regulations 2011 to remove the transitional arrangements which have expired. We retain the power to waive any of the provisions contained within them, but this has been extended to the regulations in general.
- The SRA Authorisation Rules for Legal Services Bodies and Licensable Bodies 2011 and SRA Handbook Glossary 2012 have been amended to remove all remaining transitional arrangements for the authorisation of sole practitioners. This is pending the implementation of a S69 Order, which came into force on 6 April 2015. Following implementation, sole practitioners will not require an annual endorsement on their PC. This will be replaced with an authorisation that does not need to be renewed annually.
- Changes have been made to the SRA Quality Assurance Scheme for Advocates (Crime) Regulations 2013 to allow us to retain greater flexibility and control as to when to implement revised registration timetables for QASA and to remove an administrative requirement on solicitors.

SRA Authorisation Rules for Legal Services Bodies and Licensable Bodies 2011

Rules 27.1 (c) and (d) and 27.3 have both been deleted so to remove all remaining transitional provisions for the authorisation of sole practitioners in the SRA Handbook.

SRA Higher Rights of Audience Regulations 2011

Regulations 11.1 and 11.2 have both been deleted. These contained the transitional arrangements for higher rights advocacy qualification.

The references to "transitional arrangements" within the headings for Part 5 and Regulation 11 have both been replaced with "waiver".

SRA Quality Assurance Scheme for Advocates (Crime) Regulations 2013

Regulations 8.1 has been amended to remove the requirement for any solicitor to submit evidence that they have been assessed by an approved assessment organisation at Level 2a.

Regulation 8.2 has been amended to clarify that the SRA will prescribe the timeframe for when those solicitors who have recently obtained Higher Rights of Audience (Crime) need to apply for reaccreditation.

Regulations 13.1 and 14.1 have been amended to clarify that full accreditation will be subject to the manner prescribed by the SRA.

Regulations 21.2 and 21.3 have been amended to clarify that the original registration and implementation timetable will be replaced by a new timetable prescribed by the SRA.

SRA Handbook Glossary 2012

The definition of "principal" has been amended to remove a reference to the transitional arrangements for the authorisation of sole practitioners which no longer apply.