



Solicitors
Regulation
Authority

Firm Based Authorisation
Legal Disciplinary Practice (LDP) Election
application form FA1c
Guidance notes
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1. Introduction

The form should be completed if you are an existing Legal Disciplinary Practice (LDP) that wishes to elect to become a licensed body.

The criteria for an existing LDP 'electing' to be licensed is as follows:

- the firm must already hold LDP status; and
- the firm must have no more than 25% non-lawyer management; and
- the firm must have no more than 25% non-lawyer ownership; and
- neither non-lawyer management nor non-lawyer ownership can increase above 25% as part of the application; and
- election is only available to the existing authorised, LDP legal entity and therefore the firm cannot change its legal entity as part of this application.

Compliance officers, non-deemed owners and non-deemed managers will not be required to complete individual application forms if they are already approved in those roles in the existing LDP. However, if the licensed body will have new compliance officers or non-deemed owners or managers, individual forms will need to be completed. The forms can be found at <http://www.sra.org.uk/newfirm/>.

If the above criteria do not apply to your situation, you will need to complete the full FA1 firm application form to apply to be a licensed body.

2. Getting Started

How to use the form

The form is an editable Portable Document Format file (PDF) and should be completed electronically.

Please answer all questions and complete all the relevant boxes.

All declarations must be signed before submitting the form - this can be done electronically using the tick box.

Please note: we will not be able to process your application unless it is complete.

3. Advice & Help

Where to get help with your application:

- You may find it helpful to refer to the [SRA Glossary](#).
- Pre-application questions: if you have queries in advance of submitting your notification, you can email - authorisation@sra.org.uk or call us on 0370 606 2555.
- Professional Ethics guidance: it will not always be clear whether an organisation will require authorisation, or which persons require approval.

Professional Ethics team help with these queries along with guidance on the SRA Handbook. Professional Ethics can be contacted at professional.ethics@sra.org.uk or on 0370 606 2577.

4. The form

4.1 Section 1 - Basic application details

This section is intended to capture initial information about the type of application. It also requires you to confirm certain details that will allow us to assess you meet the eligibility criteria to elect to be licensed.

The firm contact is the person you are giving us permission to discuss all aspects of the application with and notify of our final decision.

4.2 Section 2 - Registration and address details

We require the registration details of the applicant if it is a body corporate.

Your firm will continue with the same SRA number and records. You should therefore ensure all branch offices and addresses are correct and amend them, as necessary, through the existing organisation's mySRA account before making your application.

4.3 Section 3 - Business management and governance

We expect firms to provide a full corporate structure, showing all share ownerships together with any voting rights, and all management roles.

We also expect firms to complete the questions required for us to comply with our obligations under the Legal Services Act 2007.

4.4 Section 4 - Financial management

This section asks about client money and turnover. Applicants should provide accurate and up-to-date information.

4.5 Section 5 - Services and Insurance

This section is about the types of services that will be provided by the applicant and the insurance held by your firm.

The SRA Indemnity Insurance Rules apply to all authorised bodies. It is a requirement under the SRA Handbook 2011 for all persons who are practising to have qualifying insurance. Please refer to the participating insurers list at www.sra.org.uk/indemnity.

The SRA will not grant the application if the applicant does not have indemnity insurance. We expect applicants to provide evidence of cover at the point of approval.

4.6 Section 6 - People

In this section, applicants will need to provide information regarding all role holders in the firm and any managers of corporate managers. All managers, owners and compliance officers (collectively referred to as Authorised Role Holders) of the applicant who are not deemed approved, and have not previously been approved in those roles in the existing firm, will need approval from the SRA.

To comply with Rule 12 of the Practice Framework Rules, the firm must have at least one lawyer manager qualified to supervise. The requirements are set out in Rule 12.2 of the Practice Framework Rules.

You may have more than one manager who is qualified to supervise but, for our records, we only require one name. Giving the details of one manager who is qualified to supervise does not impose additional responsibilities on that individual.

Non-solicitors: If the manager qualified to supervise is not a solicitor (e.g. he or she is a licensed conveyancer) please provide evidence that the manager has been entitled to practise as a lawyer for at least 36 months within the last ten years. This may be, for example, by providing certified copies of their practising certificates (if appropriate) or a letter from their regulator confirming the position.

4.7 Section 7 - Declaration

Authorised individual manager: The firm's authorised individual manager must be an individual lawyer manager, who is authorised by the firm and its managers, to make declarations on its behalf. For an existing recognised body electing to be licensed, we expect this to be one of the existing Authorised Signatories for the firm.

5. Where to send the form

Please return the form by email to: authorisation@sra.org.uk