

SRA Business Plan 2020-21 Quarter Four Update

Our Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objectives 1 - We will set and maintain high professional standards for solicitors and law firms as the public would expect and make sure we provide an equally high level of operational service.

Strategic Objective 2 - We will actively support the adoption of legal technology, and other innovation, that helps to meet the needs of the public, business community, regulated entities and the economy.

Strategic Objective 3 - We will continually build our understanding of emerging opportunities and challenges for the users of legal services, the legal sector and our role in effectively regulating it.

Our business plan for 2020/21 is available on our website [here](#) ¹

Annex 1 shows the activities within each objective.

Progress against activities in our annual planned work programme

This is the fourth and final quarter reporting against the activities in our 2020-21 business plan, the first year of the 2020-23 Corporate Strategy.

Annex 1 shows the RAG status of all the activities under the three objectives, together with the previous quarter's status. A summary of these ratings is as follows:

Status	Completed	Green	Amber	Red	On Hold
Objective 1	10	13	2		
Objective 2	10	2			
Objective 3	1	10			

Relates to objective status based on progress to date: Completed – the activity is complete; Green (G) – in line with expectation and overall delivery is expected; Amber (A) – generally in line although challenge to maintain progress and deliver overall objective; Red (R) – progress behind expectation and will not succeed without direct action; Black (On hold) – on hold or in line with planned delivery schedule work not yet started.

We have detailed our achievements in quarter four in the table beginning on page three, with the last three months showing good progress against our business plan and the end of the planning year. There were a total of 21 completed activities and two marked as Amber, all are detailed below. Activity 1.14 was Amber last quarter and is still at the end of the year, it has progressed and further information is provided.

Activity 1.16 relating to the collection of firm diversity data was reported as Amber last quarter, for this quarter it is now complete as we have received reports from 90% of law firms. The data is now being analysed and will be published in mid-January 2022.

Many of the activities are green and will be on-going across the next two years of the Corporate Strategy as they relate to longitudinal research studies, such as the recently commissioned study with Exeter University on the differences in attainment in professional qualifications between white candidates and their counterparts from other ethnic groups.

¹ <https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/corporate-strategy/business-plan/business-plan-2020-2021/>

Exceptions: Updates on Amber and Red activities

Activity 1.14

We will improve the monitoring of our investigation and disciplinary work by establishing an in-house 'arms-length' quality assurance team for all our disciplinary work

Rationale for rating

This action was rated amber because there had been challenges with the recruitment, the new team has now been appointed: A Head of section and two Quality Assurance managers are in post.

Update and corrective action

The team has worked closely across operational teams to understand local processes and issues, and to gain buy in. Preparatory work developing the monitoring and review methodology and processes is well underway, and from December is expected to start monitoring local QA in I&S and L&E, and to pilot a review of live cases.

Activity 1.18

Building on our 2019/20 we will work to analyse and report on the profile of solicitors in our disciplinary processes, we plan to look at how best to understand the factors that bring the profession into our processes. We will publish any research so that interest groups and the profession can join with us and others to address any underlying factors.

Rationale for rating

Following the initial procurement exercise in the summer, we were not able to appoint a suitable partner, so we are starting phase two by engaging further with academic organisations.

Our in-house, arms-length quality assurance team has now been established, and it will start to develop and pilot its approach to quality assurance in the coming months, adding value to our existing quality assurance arrangements.

Update and corrective action

We will re-launch the procurement in the first quarter of 2021/2022.

Completed Activities this quarter

Activity 1.12

We will continue to work with the other regulators to develop the joint consumer website, Legal Choices. We will report on progress against our target of two to three million visitors at the start of this business year and work with the legal regulators to set out the plan for the 2020–2023 period.

Update

Completed. We published a report on the 2017-2020 work on Legal Choices, developed the forward plan and achieved our in year target of 1m visitors to the website.

Activity 1.13

We will start our evaluation of our new Standards and Regulations, which we introduced in November 2019. As part of our commitment to mainstreaming equality diversity and inclusion (EDI) throughout all our work, our evaluation approach will include an assessment of the EDI implications for both the public and the profession.

Update

The independent research was completed on schedule in Quarter 4 and the report will be published shortly. This one-year evaluation of our Standards and Regulations draws on a range of sources including survey feedback from solicitors, interviews with consumers and other stakeholders. The evaluation is the start point for assessing the impacts of STaRs, including EDI impacts, over the next 5 years.

Activity 1.16

We will continue the collection and sharing of diversity data on protected characteristics and socio-economic status so that all those with an interest, including government, the judiciary, charities and the Law Society can see how the profession is developing.

Update

Complete. We have closed the 2021 firm diversity data collection exercise, as well as providing comprehensive diversity data for the annual Judicial Diversity report.

Activity 1.17

Utilising the improvements that our new IT systems have brought, we will work to increase and the diversity data capture rates on mySRA offering an enhanced picture of the profession.

Update

Complete. We ran a collaborative campaign with the Law Society and others in Spring 2021 as planned, securing a significant increase in declarations in mySRA. Plans are in place to build on this in year two.

Activity 1.20

We will establish an increased presence in Wales.

Update

Completed. We appointed a Head of Welsh Affairs, undertook a range of work in Wales and have successfully established our presence.

Activity 1.22

We will scope out a programme of work to undertake a full review of the fees we charge solicitors and law firms and develop an updated approach to our regulatory fees model for introduction in subsequent years.

Update

The review has now concluded and, drawing on external analysis of our model against that of other regulators, we have concluded that our current practising certificate fee framework and compensation fund framework are fit for purpose. In addition, the benefits of stability and simplicity of the current model outweigh any potential benefits from fundamental change.

The review has also led to action being taken in a small number of areas. The most significant is a planned consultation on our arrangements for the keeping of the Roll to improve the accuracy of the data that we hold in relation to admitted solicitors who are not currently practising.

Activity 1.23

We will continue our Modernising IT programme (MIT) of work which will include a new case management system, updated support for our disciplinary processes and building on the IT that we need for the introduction of the SQE.

Update

The MIT programme formally closed March 2021. PCRE21 service window opened on 11 Oct (closed 11 Nov) and IT developments for SQE progressing well.

Activity 1.25

We will commission independent surveys of a cross-section of our stakeholders, including the profession, the public and opinion formers, as well as asking the organisations with which we work most closely for their views.

Update

All aspects of this work are now complete. The results of our public surveys in England and Wales were delivered in Q4 and informed the Board's discussions at its October strategy day.

Activities 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3

We will continue to look at how technology can transform the way the profession works and how legal services are delivered, contributing to the regulatory objectives to increase access to justice, to promote competition in the provision of legal services and to promote the consumer interest.

We will look closely at how Covid-19 has and will affect access to justice. We, like others, also need to consider how best innovation and technology can help people, recognising that digital access and skills vary

We will take forward research that looks at how best technology can help those with limited or no access to digital services, and work to facilitate more publicly available data law firms and the justice system, which is often cited as one of the key barriers to the development of legal technology.

Update

Completed in Quarter 3 with the University of Oxford study whose findings continued to be a catalyst for activities in Q4 2021. These have included our SRA Innovate events, where we shared insights from the research as a starting point for discussion and exploration of possible new services that SRA should offer in relation to lawtech, and how to support future collaboration with innovators and the profession. The research will provide the foundation of our Objective 2 work across the three years of the Corporate Strategy.

We have continued to learn from our Quality Indicator pilot. This included further discussion with comparison and review websites around barriers they encounter in accessing data about solicitors and their firms – and how we might potentially evolve further the datasets we provide to third parties through our API service.

Activity 2.4

We are committed to supporting fair, accessible and inclusive legal technology that has the potential to increase access to justice. In order to add value, we will undertake research to segment the market, with a focus on where and at what level the adoption of new technology is taking place.

Update

First stage completed and this will be on-going activity. We are taking forward Oxford's recommendation of greater customer and market segmentation now in the process of commissioning new, independent research about different types of consumers, and their specific needs. This will then help us to identify where technology could be applied to help close gaps in provision and to identify our role in creating good conditions for potential technology solutions to emerge.

We are also collaborating with the Legal Services Board on a project to explore consumers' (and the profession's) levels of acceptability of the use of technology in legal services.

In Q4 we relaunched and are chairing a Research Forum, bringing together legal regulators and other organisations, to explore partnership and collaborative opportunities in the research space. This will continue to be an important feature of our activity in 2022.

Activity 2.6

We will work with existing UK and international networks – including the Better Regulation Executive’s Regulator Forum, Innovation Network, Tech Nation and Innovate UK and the legacy of the Legal Access Challenge (LAC) network – and build new ones as needed. Part of that will be exploring and scoping the need for a specialist innovation and technology panel. We will also explore opportunities to join up with business schools, charities and others to develop collaborative innovation-based projects, and we will look at international developments in this area.

Update

Several key milestones met including our collaboration with Swansea University to develop a virtual Innovation Hub, and that will bring together other universities to look together at lawtech solutions and their use in helping to solve legal service challenges.

We are also part of BEIS’ Regulators Innovation Network and Regulators Forum, and we are supporting TechNation’s LawTech sandbox as part of the Regulator Response Unit. We also work closely with TLS on lawtech, through joint podcasts and other events.

Activity 2.7

We will look at how the planned second round of the Regulators’ Pioneer Fund, which will provide £10m of funding subject to the outcome of the Government Spending Review, can contribute further to increasing access to justice.

Update

Completed. After the delay with BEIS starting the application process, we made up time and submitted a project in July, which received a £167k award for a project designed to explore potential ways of addressing regional inequalities in access to justice, by demonstrating the feasibility of new legal technology tools.

We are now working with partners at Swansea and West of England Universities, the Information Commissioner’s Office, the West of England Combined Authority, Welsh Government and University House Legal Advice Centre. Communities around Swansea and Bristol are being engaged to test new developments.

The project has five workstreams, including collation of existing government, local authority and advice agency datasets to understand legal advice provision, research with advice agencies to understand their experiences, coverage, customer experience and the tools they use, research into law firms’ pro-bono services to explore how these could support so-called legal access “deserts”, an open innovation sprint to develop new digital concepts and tooling for legal access and planning a legacy for the project once it completes in March 2022.

Activity 2.8

We will review how the SRA Innovation Space is working and use information from our first-year evaluation of the new Standards and Regulations to look at how best to develop its focus and operation.

Update

We have relaunched SRA Innovate with a framework that allows enquiries and expressions of interest are handled directly and more quickly. As well as updating our web content, with additional materials to support innovators.

Other improvements have been introducing a survey tool for the SRA Innovate programme, which has shown the majority of law firms are positive in terms of how useful they are finding it. The programme’s website pages are also now covered by analytics to help us understand where and how people are finding out about the SRA and the Innovate programme, which will allow us to continue improving the accessibility of the programme and optimising its content into 2022.

Activity 2.9

We will explore the opportunities to work in partnership with others, including law firms that have already adopted technology effectively, to ensure that the profession can put their ideas into practice.

Update

Completed. Strong partnerships with stakeholders, and in particular good working relationships with law firms, are central to the successful delivery of our quality indicators and unbundling pilots, with each featuring a cohort of participating law firms who are trialling different approaches and providing feedback about their experiences to us.

In Q4 we officially launched our pilot on unbundled legal services and we have 15 firms participating.

Activity 2.11

We will explore cyber -attack prevention methods and how other industries/regulators/jurisdictions have responded, as well as working with key stakeholders to undertake a review of how losses linked to cyberattacks and fraud can be better prevented using technology and innovation.

Update

Completed in September 2021 the Board approved amendments to our Minimum Terms and Conditions (MTCs) for Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII), to clarify the scope of cover when a law firm has been subject to a cyber-attack/computer breach.

The LSB notified us of their formal approval in November 2021.

Activity 2.12

We also recognise that technology and innovation crosses national boundaries and impacts on people from every community. We will build this into our engagement on the EU exit and work with international authorities, including through the International Conference of Legal Regulators, whose website ICLR.net we run.

Update.

Completed. We have the work programmes for the Agile Nations workstream in lawtech approved at Ministerial level and we played a key role the International Conference of Legal Regulators and have provided materials for the website.

Activity 3.1

We will build on our current sector risk analysis, publish through our Risk Outlook, and work across boundaries to support consumer protection and to speak up in line with the regulatory objectives where it is necessary to do so.

Activity

We have completed our initial horizon scanning activity through Q4, bringing research findings and analysis from a range of external and internal sources together to prepare insights papers, and to update colleagues and external stakeholders, about our work and understanding of emerging issues. This work will be on-going across the corporate strategy but the first phase has concluded successfully.

Achievements in the last period

	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3
Achievements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SQE registration and booking systems opened in July and closed in September for the first SQE assessment in November 2021. 2. Visits to Legal Choices website in the year ending 31 October 2021 exceeded 1 million, which was our target for the year. There were also more than 1 million quality views of Legal Choices videos on Facebook and YouTube, including 0.9 million video views on Facebook with an average duration of 30 seconds at a cost per view of less than £0.01. 3. The one-year evaluation of our Standards and Regulations (STaRs) draws on a range of sources including survey feedback from solicitors, interviews with consumers and other stakeholders. The evaluation is the start point for assessing the impacts of STaRs, including EDI impacts, over the next 5 years. 4. Attended and spoken at a number of events including the high-profile Legal Wales conference. We also spoke at the only Welsh specific event held as part of Pro Bono week, the focus of which was our Regulators Pioneer Fund 2 project. 5. Continuous Improvement Programme established 6. Staff have now returned to the offices one day a week with effect from early September 7. Work has commenced on the refurbishment of The Cube 8. PCRE21 service window opened on 11 Oct (closed 11 Nov) 9. IT for introduction of SQE progressing well 10. The fees review has concluded in action being taken in a small number of areas. The most significant is a planned consultation on our arrangements for the keeping of the Solicitor's Roll 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In this quarter 4 period we have delivered two SRA Innovate events in Liverpool and Cardiff. We convened stakeholders including practitioners, lawtech companies, academia and consumer groups to debate and learn more about the role and impacts of technology in the legal services sector. 2. We have relaunched SRA Innovate. 3. In Q4 we delivered new content and started drafting new guidance relating to virtual law firms, and the delivery of legal services entirely through digital channels. 4. We have had the work programmes for the Agile Nations workstream in lawtech, that BEIS chose us to lead, agreed at Ministerial level and announced in the media after the international Plenary meeting. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consumer research has been an integral component of our work during 2021, and in Q4 we completed initial analysis of our commissioned research exploring consumer attitudes towards comparison and review websites. 2. This Public Legal Education steering group met in Q4 to discuss progress and ensure 2020/21 commitments were on track to be met, to share learning and discuss opportunities to do more. 3. We have just commissioned the University of Exeter to conduct in-depth research and analysis of the underlying issues and contributory factors relating to the attainment gap for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) candidates in legal professional assessments.

	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3
	<p>to improve the accuracy of the data that we hold in relation to admitted solicitors who are not currently practising.</p> <p>11. First ICS external benchmarking survey of customers across a number of our teams took place in September and October. Results due before end of calendar year.</p> <p>12. All aspects of the work to commission independent surveys are now complete. The results of our public surveys in England and Wales were delivered in Q4.</p>		
Impacts and Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1,155 candidates registered for the first SQE exam. The process ran smoothly. 2. A Q4 video ad campaign on pandemic-related housing law issues generated high levels of audience engagement at minimal cost. There was particularly strong audience engagement with video content aimed at renters facing issues with landlords. 3. The evaluation of STaRs has allowed us to understand more about the emerging impacts of the Standards and Regulations, including early warning of any unintended consequences. Our commitment to independent evaluation also provides credibility and confidence externally. 4. SRA's profile is being raised in Wales, along with greater awareness about the breadth of our work as a result of reaching a wide range of audiences. 5. First year's efficiency savings identified and targets met. 6. The interim solutions to both The Cube and the London location are working well, in the main, and informing the long-term solutions. 7. The refurbishment work will take 16 weeks, due completion end of February 2022 providing a collaborative and engaging workspace. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The feedback for the Innovate events was positive, with network building and peer to peer learning particularly highlighted. The events help raise our profile around technology and innovation, and to strengthen our partnerships and working relationships with stakeholders from the lawtech world. 2. This framework ensures enquiries and expressions of interest are handled directly and more quickly. As well as updating our web content, with additional materials to support innovators. The improvements we have delivered during 2021 to our SRA Innovate resources, including improvements to content on the SRA's website, have resulted in clearer and more relevant messaging for law firms. 3. Our work in 2021 to develop the Agile Nations Lawtech Innovation Network is positioning us well as we head into 2022, with workstreams in place to develop a framework of principles to support innovators to make contact with 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This research is an important phase of our quality indicators pilot and will form a central element of the pilot evaluation work that we will start in Q1 2022. 2. We published information for the public on lawtech in Q4, helping people to understand how lawtech can help them and addressing common concerns. 3. This is a long-term and important project that will provide insights in due course to help us determine where we can best affect and influence positive change. It will continue through into 2022 as a core focus of our research and analysis work.

	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3
	<p>8. Much improved User Experience compared with PCRE 2020, positive feedback received. Invoices and cash on-track</p> <p>9. SQE ICT projects, Phase II Go-Live scheduled for post PCRE. Phase III on schedule for Jan '22 Go-Live</p> <p>10. The keeping of the Roll project is designed to improve our data accuracy of our records.</p> <p>11. Set of survey results for benchmarking and to action plan from for continuous improvement.</p> <p>12. The findings offer insight into our stakeholders' perceptions of us and work. They fed into the October Board workshop discussion on delivering our Corporate Strategy.</p>	<p>regulators in other jurisdictions, and to highlight and work towards a resolution of potential data issues.</p>	

Annex 1

Ref	Objective	Current (Q4) RAG rating	Previous (Q3) RAG rating
Objective one – We will set and maintain high professional standards for solicitors and law firms as the public would expect and make sure we provide an equally high level of operational service.			
Solicitors Qualifying Examination and solicitor competence			
1.1	We will continue to work with key stakeholders, the profession, academics and education and training providers to develop the Solicitors Qualifying Examination SQE ahead of its introduction in autumn 2021.	G	G
1.2	We will work with our assessment provider to make sure we can introduce the SQE in Welsh in an incremental way, helping to meet the needs of the profession and the public in Wales.	G	G
1.3	We will also undertake a strategic review of our approach to regulating solicitors' continuing competence which is likely to be a programme of work that continues over several years.	G	G
1.4	We will build on our work supporting the profession to attain high standards in advocacy and supporting solicitors working in the youth justice system and the young people involved.	G	G
1.5	We will continue to authorise providers of the Police Station Representatives Accreditation Scheme qualification and we want to enhance our quality assurance of this qualification by reviewing current arrangements this year-	G	G
Anti-Money Laundering			
1.6	We will continue working with the profession and others, such as the Law Society and we are committed to meeting our obligations in legislation to preventing money laundering that involves the solicitors and firms we regulate.	G	G
1.7	We will expand our Anti Money Laundering (AML) visits to visit all high-risk firms on a three-year rolling basis, along with visiting a sample of lower risk firms. Every month we will call in and analyse a sample of firms' AML policies, procedures and controls, or their risk assessments, and we are planning to undertake a thematic review into tax advice. We will publish what we learn from the reviews, as well as other guidance as needed to help firms get it right, including our work to support the implementation of the Sixth Money Laundering Directive.	G	G
1.8	As part of making sure we meet high standards ourselves, and those required by Office of Professional Body Anti-Money Laundering Supervisors (OPBAS), we will start to review the methodology we use to risk rate firms and target our AML oversight, so that we can make changes in future.	G	G
1.9	We will report transparently on our AML work, directly to OPBAS and HMT, and through our Board, making sure we are fully accountable to the public and the profession.	G	G

Ref	Objective	Current (Q4) RAG rating	Previous (Q3) RAG rating
Our regulatory model, Standards and Regulations and Transparency Rules			
1.10	We will work with the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to provide evidence for their review of the effectiveness of the pricing and transparency requirements we set for firms, and of the clickable logo we brought in to help the public understand the consumer protections regulated firms provide.	Complete	Complete
1.11	We will continue our rolling programme of firm website reviews and enforcement and we will increase the resourcing of this work.	G	G
1.12	We will continue to work with the other regulators to develop the joint consumer website, Legal Choices. We will report on progress against our target of two to three million visitors at the start of this business year and work with the legal regulators to set out the plan for the 2020–2023 period.	Complete	G
1.13	We will start our evaluation of our new Standards and Regulations, which we introduced in November 2019. As part of our commitment to mainstreaming equality diversity and inclusion (EDI) throughout all our work, our evaluation approach will include an assessment of the EDI implications for both the public and the profession.	Complete	G
1.14	We will improve the monitoring of our investigation and disciplinary work by establishing an in-house ‘arms-length’ quality assurance team for all our disciplinary work	A	A
1.15	Subject to LSB approval we will implement the changes to the Compensation Fund following public consultation.	Complete	Complete
Equality, diversity and inclusion			
1.16	We will continue the collection and sharing of diversity data on protected characteristics and socio-economic status so that all those with an interest, including government, the judiciary, charities and the Law Society can see how the profession is developing.	Complete	A
1.17	Utilising the improvements that our new IT systems have brought, we will work to increase and the diversity data capture rates on mySRA offering an enhanced picture of the profession.	Complete	G
1.18	Building on our 2019/20 we will work to analyse and report on the profile of solicitors in our disciplinary processes, we plan to look at how best to understand the factors that bring the profession into our processes. We will publish any research so that interest groups and the profession can join with us and others to address any underlying factors.	A	G
UK-EU exit			
1.19	We will continue to monitor how the March 2020 UK exit from the EU will change the way solicitors and law firms work. In order to do that, we will work closely with the government and other agencies, including EU and international regulators, to ensure a smooth transition to any new arrangements.	G	G
Developing our work in Wales			
1.20	We will establish an increased presence in Wales.	Complete	G

Ref	Objective	Current (Q4) RAG rating	Previous (Q3) RAG rating
Continuous improvement			
1.21	We are committed to working as efficiently and effectively as possible while providing good customer service. In order to do that, we are reviewing key areas of our supporting resources, for example, our premises strategy.	G	G
1.22	We will scope out a programme of work to undertake a full review of the fees we charge solicitors and law firms and develop an updated approach to our regulatory fees model for introduction in subsequent years.	Complete	G
1.23	We will continue our Modernising IT programme of work which will include a new case management system, updated support for our disciplinary processes and building on the IT that we need for the introduction of the SQE.	Complete	G
1.24	We will build on our 2019/20 work with the Institute of Customer Service to develop an organisation-wide approach to understand what our service users think and to improve customer experience across everything we do.	G	G
1.25	We will commission independent surveys of a cross-section of our stakeholders, including the profession, the public and opinion formers, as well as asking the organisations with which we work most closely for their views	Complete	G

Ref	Objective	Current (Q4) RAG rating	Previous (Q3) RAG rating
Objective two - We will actively support the adoption of legal technology, and other innovation, that helps to meet the needs of the public, business community, regulated entities and the economy.			
2.1	We will continue to look at the how technology can transform the way the profession works and how legal services are delivered, contributing to the regulatory objectives to increase access to justice, to promote competition in the provision of services and to promote the consumer interest.	Complete	G
2.2	We will look closely at how Covid-19 has and will affect access to justice. We, like others, also need to consider how best innovation and technology can help people, recognising that digital access and skills vary	Complete	G
2.3	We will take forward research that looks at how best technology can help those with limited or no access to digital services, and work to facilitate more publicly available data law firms and the justice system, which is often cited as one of the key barriers to the development of legal technology.	Complete	G
Increase our understanding of the use of technology in the legal sector			
2.4	We are committed to supporting fair, accessible and inclusive legal technology that has the potential to increase access to justice. In order to add value, we will undertake research to segment the market, with a focus on where and at what level the adoption of new technology is taking place.	Complete	G
2.5	We will look at what benefits and risks there might be for consumers, including the vulnerable (both long term and situational), those in digital poverty and small businesses, from new technology. This will also consider the impact on legal service provision that innovation and technology has had to date and the changes already brought about by the global Covid-19 pandemic.	G	G
2.6	We will work with existing UK and international networks – including the Better Regulation Executive’s Regulator Forum, Innovation Network, Tech Nation and Innovate UK and the legacy of the Legal Access Challenge (LAC) network – and build new ones as needed. Part of that will be exploring and scoping the need for a specialist innovation and technology panel. We will also explore opportunities to join up with business schools, charities and others to develop collaborative innovation-based projects, and we will look at international developments in this area.	Complete	G

Ref	Objective	Current (Q4) RAG rating	Previous (Q3) RAG rating
Develop specific initiatives to promote and develop the use of legal technology and innovation			
2.7	We will look at how the planned second round of the Regulators' Pioneer Fund, which will provide £10m of funding subject to the outcome of the Government Spending Review, can contribute further to increasing access to justice.	Complete	G
2.8	We will review how the SRA Innovation Space is working and use information from our first-year evaluation of the new Standards and Regulations to look at how best to develop its focus and operation.	Complete	G
2.9	We will explore the opportunities to work in partnership with others, including law firms that have already adopted technology effectively, to ensure that the profession can put their ideas into practice.	Complete	G
2.10	We will also work to increase our guidance and support materials for the both the profession and the public. Building public trust in lawtech solutions is an important component of increasing access to justice.	G	G
2.11	We will explore cyber -attack prevention methods and how other industries/regulators/jurisdictions have responded, as well as working with key stakeholders to undertake a review of how losses linked to cyberattacks and fraud can be better prevented using technology and innovation.	Complete	G
2.12	We also recognise that technology and innovation crosses national boundaries and impacts on people from every community. We will build this into our engagement on the EU exit and work with international authorities, including through the International Conference of Legal Regulators, whose website ICLR.net we run.	Complete	G

Ref	Objective	Current (Q4) RAG rating	Previous (Q3) RAG rating
Objective three - We will continually build our understanding of emerging opportunities and challenges for the users of legal services, the legal sector and our role in effectively regulating it.			
3.1	We will build on our current sector risk analysis, publish through our Risk Outlook, and work across boundaries to support consumer protection and to speak up in line with the regulatory objectives where it is necessary to do so.	Complete	G
Improving our understanding			
3.2	We will also work with others to develop our understanding of the legal services market from a longitudinal and economic perspective, so that we improve our understanding of consumer concerns and requirements.	G	G
3.3	We will commission research, including reaching out directly to consumers to listen to their needs, and monitoring the findings of research undertaken by others. We will share our data and publish authoritative reports on key issues.	G	G
3.4	We will analyse the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the structure of the legal market over several years and any implications for how services are accessed by consumers.	G	G
Speaking up			
3.5	We will work to address relevant public protection and public policy issues, using clear criteria, including consumer protection, to assess where we can add value.	G	G
Public legal education			
3.6	We plan to develop a strategy for 2020–2023 to help us to identify opportunities to work with others to increase our provision of public legal education building on our work to date.	G	G
Immigration and asylum services			
3.8	We will continue to look into issues around the accessibility and quality of immigration and asylum legal advice.	G	G
3.9	We will carry out a thematic review into the quality of service delivery and ensure that those who need immigration and asylum services can access quality advice.	G	G
Understanding patterns of attainment in education and training			
3.10	We will continue to review the attainment gap and ensure that everyone meets the same high standard however they learn and contribute to a truly diverse profession by making it easier for people from every background to become a solicitor.	G	G
3.11	We plan to share our data, commission research and work with others to increase understanding of the difficult issues around the attainment gap, including how protected characteristics and social mobility intersect, and what might be done.	G	G