

SRA Business Plan 2021-22 Quarter One 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 2021/2 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 first quarter reporting against the activities in our 2021-22 business plan and the second year of the 2020-23 Corporate Strategy.

Annex 1 shows the RAG status of all the activities under the three objectives, as this is the first quarter there is no reconciliation to the previous quarters this time. A summary of these ratings is as follows:

Status	Completed	Green	Amber	Red	On Hold/Not started
Objective 1		20	3		
Objective 2		6			
Objective 3		6			

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; Blue (On hold) – on hold or in line with planned delivery schedule work not yet started.

This is the first quarter reporting against the activities in our 2021-22 business plan. We have detailed our achievements in quarter one in the table beginning on page 3, with the last three months showing a good start on progress against our business plan.

The table above shows that there three activities which are marked as Amber which are detailed below.

Exceptions: Updates on Amber and Red activities

Activity 1.6

We will implement necessary changes in relation to on-going post six-year run off cover and the future of the Solicitors Indemnity Fund following consultation. Our aim is to provide certainty and proportionate consumer financial redress arrangements. We will issue a consultation in Q1 and return to Board with an analysis of responses and recommendations in Q2.

¹SRA | Business Plan and budget (November 2021 to October 2022) | Solicitors Regulation Authority

Rationale for rating

We published a consultation paper in November 2021, which closed in late February. There was very little support for, and a great deal of opposition to, our preferred option of closure. Further work and stakeholder engagement is in train to clarify issues and questions raised.

Update and corrective action

Further analysis and work to summarise the points raised in the 330 responses is underway, alongside commissioning of WTW to assess further potential options. Consumer engagement and research is also informing our analysis of next steps.

Activity 1.7

We will introduce rules to meet our new legislative obligation to introduce protections against law firms charging consumers excessive fees for claims management work relating to financial products and services. We will ask the Board to agree our post-consultation position and publish our consultation response in Q2.

Rationale for rating

As agreed with the Board, before moving to a full consultation paper, we published a discussion paper and undertook a survey of law firms undertaking Claims Management activities. We also engaged FCA and MoJ officials to assist in developing our policy options throughout Q1. However, the recent Judicial Review application lodged against the FCA has caused us to reassess some of our options for consultation and we consider it important to await developments on the FCA's side before advising the Board further.

Update and corrective action

We are seeking Counsel's opinion and have agreed with MoJ to "pause" issuing our proposed consultation paper until there is clarity on whether the Judicial Review against the FCA is to be granted.

Activity 1.9

We will consult on rule changes and develop support materials to manage risks to consumers and the public relating to (i) wellbeing in the workplace, (ii) supervision of legal work, and (iii) the role of in-house lawyers. We will publish a consultation on wellbeing rules changes, produce supervision guidance and start a programme of support for in-house lawyers in Q2. We will return to the Board with an analysis of responses and recommendations for the well-being rules in Q3.

Rationale for rating

On 1 February 2022 the Board agreed to a proposed consultation on the rule changes relating to wellbeing in the workplace. Guidance on supervision is being drafted for informal testing with stakeholders ahead of publication. We are planning the work to support in-house lawyers which will link to the forthcoming thematic review.

Update and corrective action

The proposed rule changes on wellbeing are aimed at enabling us to better manage risks to consumers and the public; we will test this in consultation. The supervision guidance will help firms understand their obligations, including in immigration and claims management work where there are statutory requirements.

Achievements in the last period

	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3
Achievements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The first SQE1 assessment was successfully delivered in November 2021. 2. The SQE evaluation framework is complete and has been published. 3. We have agreed a number of exemptions from the SQE for lawyers who have qualified in Brazil, Romania, Hong Kong, Scotland and Denmark. We have held a meeting with the Ontario Law Society with a view to receiving an application from them for Ontario qualified lawyers. 4. We published a consultation on our policy for issuing financial penalties in our disciplinary procedures in November 2021. To complement the formal consultation, we have held focus groups with the public and consumer representative bodies, carried out a survey of 500 consumers, conducted polls on social media, and conducted a survey for the profession. We have engaged with key external stakeholders such as the Legal Services Consumer Panel and Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal. 5. We have discussed our work with key stakeholders, including the Counsel General, Law Council members, the Senedd Head of Legal Services and in six meetings with Welsh Government officials 6. SQE ICT projects, Phase II and Phase III completed and launched to schedule on Nov '21 and Jan '22 respectively. PCRE21 concluded as planned and with minimal disruption. 7. We have certified to the ISO:14001 environmental accreditation as the SRA and received a positive audit report. 8. Phase 1 of the quality indicators pilot focused on increasing the engagement of firms and 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We have remained an active member of the LawTech UK Sandbox Regulatory Response Unit including supporting the 8 start- up members of the Sandbox and participating in the ministerially sponsored showcase event. We have also contributed to the regulator led work around promoting digital ID checks and developing a shared view of Lawtech data needs. 2. Through the Regulators Pioneer Fund (RPF) work we have convened multiple stakeholders and mined available data to map THE changing legal needs and corresponding provision in Wales and the South- West of England. This includes looking at the changing role of technology. The work has also identified where technology may be further developed to improve access. The findings will be published in Q2 and will be used as the basis of a series of “hackathons” aimed at overcoming some of the identified barriers. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our first, new style, Risk Outlook was published in Q1. 2. During January we held an external workshop on how to support access to justice for vulnerable consumers. This involved engagement from multiple stakeholders including LSCP, MoJ, Citizens Advice and MIND to discuss. 3. We publicly announced our appointed expert supplier during Q1 for our research to better understand the reasons for the ethnicity differences in legal professional assessments. Stakeholder feedback has been positive and they welcome the rigorous approach that we are taking to better understand this issue. 4. We have commissioned an expert AI provider (Glass.ai) to scrape the internet to experiment with mapping the provision of services across the legal sector (unregulated and regulated). 5. During Q1 we successfully relaunched the Research Forum. We have held two meetings, the last one in January focussed on consumer segmentation. SRA are taking the lead to organise and chair meetings. 6. Our compliance conference had 600 attendees, with more than 32,000 viewers joining the week long virtual follow up conference. Q1 also saw us deliver a series of well attended webinars. 100% of attendees who fed back said they would attend a similar event again.

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	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3
	<p>consumers with online customer reviews. In phase 2, we have worked with firms, digital comparison tool providers, the Legal Ombudsman, HM Land Registry and others to explore publishing objective data about quality.</p> <p>9. The Institute of Customer Service (ICS) has re-awarded our Contact Centre its ServiceMark accreditation. The accreditation will be in place for a further three years until December 2024.</p>		
Impacts and Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Candidates were able to take part in the SQE assessments and receive their results. We demonstrated that the SQE is a robust assessment of competence which will make sure that everyone who qualifies as a solicitor has met the robust high standards that we expect. 2. We have a clear and transparent ten-year programme of evaluation for the SQE reforms. The programme will evaluate whether we have met our stated objectives of greater assurance of standards and development of new and diverse pathways to qualification. 3. The approach to agreeing a standard exemption for a qualification means that we can grant decisions relatively quickly without the need for qualified lawyers with that qualification to complete a detailed application form. We intend to make this process available online this year. 4. Our engagement activity has received positive feedback and puts us in the best position to understand the views of our stakeholders around proposals designed to ensure that our fining framework is robust, transparent, effective and efficient. 5. Raising awareness of our work contributes to legal sector developments in Wales, helping consumers. We have expanded our Legal Choices 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We have received positive feedback from the LawTech UK Sandbox participants that our advice and support has helped them to develop their offerings. 2. Through our RPF work, we have already obtained funding from a major law firm to develop an open-source case management system for pro bono providers. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The positive press coverage and reception for the report showed that our new approach has been welcomed and helps to position us as an authoritative voice and provides a valuable resource for stakeholders. 2. Feedback showed the workshop allowed the stakeholders to feel heard and that the SRA moved forward the debate on vulnerability. This will have a reputational benefit for us. 3. This has positively built on our reputation with many stakeholders and sends a signal to the profession and potential solicitors by demonstrating how seriously we are taking this issue. 4. The outputs from Glass.ai will help us better understand the extent of legal advice deserts. This mapping experiment has also gained interest and enthusiasm from key stakeholders, such as the LSB, LSCP and the MoJ, who have provided support and insights to help shape the output. 5. Members have found it useful to share their research plans and ideas, and have welcomed the increased collaborative opportunities that this presents.

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	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3
	<p>eviction product to include the diverging Welsh arrangements.</p> <p>6. Improvements to ICT relating to PCRE gave a better customer experience with good levels of availability of the system.</p> <p>7. Certification to ISO:14001 demonstrates to our stakeholders that we are actively committed to becoming a more sustainable organisation.</p> <p>8. We have seen a significant increase in the numbers of regulated firms engaging with digital comparison tool providers as a result of the quality indicators pilot.</p> <p>9. ServiceMark is a national standard recognising an organisation's achievement in customer service, and its commitment to upholding those standards. It is awarded based on customer satisfaction feedback and an assessment of employee engagement with the organisation's approach to customer service.</p>		<p>6. Our face to face then virtual compliance event was very well received, meeting the accessibility needs of compliance officers and offering choice in how they wanted to consume our information and interact with us.</p>

Annex 1

Ref	Objective	Current (Q1) RAG rating
<p>Objective one – setting and maintaining high standards for the profession and ourselves 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.</p>		
<p>Solicitors Qualifying Examination</p>		
1.1	<p>Following the introduction of the SQE we will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assure standards through delivering a robust, reliable, valid and cost-effective assessment, delivered as following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SQE1: Q1 ○ SQE2: Q2-3 ○ SQE1: Q3 ○ SQE2: Q4 • continue our post introduction monitoring and evaluation work which will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Designing a comprehensive evaluation framework (Q1) ○ Developing and publishing perceptions study (Q3) ○ Running a Qualifying Work Experience survey (Q4) • Developing processes for SQE data sharing (Q4) 	
1.2	<p>Maintaining standards and quality of legacy qualifications, particularly that of the Legal Practice Course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Course Monitoring Exercise • Remove emergency remote proctoring arrangements and instead enable training course providers to make a decision about permanent remote proctoring of assessments. 	
<p>Continuing competence</p>		
1.3	<p>Over the next 18 months, we will take forward a programme of work to improve the mechanisms that we use to assure the ongoing competence of solicitors, including identifying options for enhancing data collection and analysis (Q3); responding to the LSB’s consultation on its draft statement of policy on ongoing competence (Q2); enhancing the guidance we provide to solicitors about competence to support them in maintaining their competence (Q2); and considering if we need more regulatory tools in place to respond to poor practice and protect consumers</p>	
<p>Advocacy Standards</p>		
1.4	<p>We will continue our work to assure advocacy standards through 2021 and 2022, including evaluating our audit of sample training records of solicitors working in youth courts (Q1); reviewing training records of solicitors practising criminal advocacy (Q3), finalising our approach to improving the higher rights of audience assessment (Q2), publishing standards guidance for solicitors in the youth court, updating resources for solicitors doing advocacy in civil and criminal courts, and the youth court (Q3), and developing resources for members of the public to understand what good advocacy looks like and about the role of their advocate.</p>	

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	We will also continue our work to enhance the consistency and robustness of Police Station Representatives Accreditation Scheme, including publishing our Chief External Examiner's report (Q2), and consulting on regulatory arrangements for the PSRAS scheme (Q3)	
Our Standards and Regulations		
1.5	<p>We will publish the one-year evaluation of our Standards and Regulations in Q1. In Q2, we will have scoping reports signed off by the Executive Policy Forum for several projects on areas of the Standards and Regulations that the evaluation and connected feedback suggest should be reviewed.</p> <p>We will also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission an expert research supplier to ensure independence of year-three evaluation of the Transparency Rules (Q2) • Begin the year-three evaluation of the Transparency Rules to check their ongoing impacts on the market, including for consumers. Share initial findings of year-three evaluation with relevant stakeholders to make sure that this work supports improvements in the market (Q3) • Finalise the report of year-three evaluation of the Transparency Rules (Q4) for publication and identify their current impacts and understand their effectiveness in the legal services market • Summarise findings and engage with appropriate stakeholders to enable findings to be actioned (Q4) 	
1.6	We will implement necessary changes in relation to on-going post six-year run off cover and the future of the Solicitors Indemnity Fund following consultation. Our aim is to provide certainty and proportionate consumer financial redress arrangements. We will issue a consultation in Q1 and return to Board with an analysis of responses and recommendations in Q2.	
1.7	We will introduce rules to meet our new legislative obligation to introduce protections against law firms charging consumers excessive fees for claims management work relating to financial products and services. We will ask the Board to agree our post-consultation position and publish our consultation response in Q2.	
1.8	Following the completion of our strategic review of regulatory fees, we will consult on our approach to maintaining the accuracy of our regulatory data related to non-practising solicitors on the roll. We will publish a consultation in Q2 and return to the Board with an analysis of responses and recommendations in Q3.	
1.9	We will consult on rule changes and develop support materials to manage risks to consumers and the public relating to (i) wellbeing in the workplace, (ii) supervision of legal work, and (iii) the role of in-house lawyers. We will publish a consultation on wellbeing rules changes, produce supervision guidance and start a programme of support for in-house lawyers in Q2. We will return to the Board with an analysis of responses and recommendations for the well-being rules in Q3.	
International recognition and lawyer transferability		
1.10	We will continue to work closely with stakeholders, including the UK government, EU, international regulators and professional associations in other jurisdictions, to understand what more needs to be done following the UK's exit from the EU. In particular we will monitor the impacts of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement introduced following the UK exit implementation period.	
1.11	We will work closely with stakeholders regarding the recognition of professional qualifications between different jurisdictions.	
Anti-money Laundering		

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1.12	We will further expand our programme of AML visits to law firms during 2021-2022. Our guidance and resources for solicitors and law firms are kept under continual review and updated as legislation evolves. There is still more to do to ensure we respond quickly and adapt to new developments and we will be transparent about our findings with information about our AML activities published.	
1.13	<p>Our AML programme of work this year will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completing and publishing findings from a thematic review of the role of money laundering officers in law firms, in order to build our understanding of these roles and the effectiveness of our requirements • publishing an annual report about the delivery of our AML supervisor responsibilities that provides information about our approach to our stakeholders • improving our AML resources, including webinars and updated guidance if there are legislative changes, to support solicitors and law firms to understand their duties and how best to meet them. 	
Equality, Diversion and Inclusion		
1.14	<p>We will improve understanding of diversity issues in the profession through monitoring, research and better diversity data by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishing the 2021 firm diversity data in Q2 and following up with firms who did not report in Q2 and 3 • Encouraging firms to publish their diversity data from Q2 onwards and reviewing compliance with our publishing requirements from Q4 into 2022/23 • Improving the diversity data we hold, by re-launching our campaign to encourage diversity data declarations on mySRA in Q2 and reviewing the firm diversity data role categories to better reflect differences in seniority in Q3 • Publishing our annual monitoring data on the diversity of individuals in our enforcement processes in Q3 and commissioning independent research into the overrepresentation of those from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background in Q2 to conclude in Q4 2022/23 with interim outcomes over the period of the research. 	
1.15	<p>We will work with others to drive progress on diversity and consider where further requirements may be needed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging with larger firms to explore the possibility of enhanced diversity data reporting or other requirements to promote diversity from Q2 onwards with a view to developing proposals in Q4 • Working with others, particularly the larger firms, to identify and promote best practice with a focus on retention and progression from Q2 onwards • Working with others to promote diversity including the Law Society, diversity groups and others from Q1 onwards • Piloting 'exit questionnaires' for those leaving private practice for in-house roles or those leaving the profession altogether to explore diversity and retention issues in Q4. 	
Compliance and Enforcement		
1.16	<p>Our enforcement strategy supports us to tailor our enforcement approach and we are committed to making sure we are fair and transparent in reaching determinations. To support this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review and consider opportunities to improve compliance and enforcement approaches for the SRA Transparency Rules in Q2, so that consumers can access the information they need from firms about their services. • establish an internal Quality Assurance team, independent from our operational teams, to support continual improvement across SRA workstreams. • consult on proposals to improve our approach to using our fining powers and the bandings we follow for setting disciplinary fines. We will publish a consultation in Q1 and return to the Board with an analysis of responses and recommendations in Q3. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review our publication policy for disciplinary findings to make sure that it meets modern best practice and public expectations. We will publish a consultation document in Q2 and return to the Board with an analysis of responses and recommendations in Q4. 	
Our work in Wales		
1.17	We will build on the establishment of our new presence in Wales, to continue strengthening our stakeholder relationships and further raising awareness of our work	
1.18	We will continue to identify and deliver Welsh language requirements within the SQE and other SRA-led projects to make sure we are meeting our commitment to using the Welsh language. We will establish a physical office and progress recruiting additional Wales based staff.	
Our people, our customers, our resources		
1.19	Our improvements in IT have helped us to improve our customer service across the organisation and this will continue to be a priority for us. We will consider other ways to use technology to improve customer experiences.	
1.20	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop our working environment and workplace culture so that we are agile and are promoting a good work / life balance for our people demonstrate efficient and effective use of our resources within a culture of continuous improvement so that we continue to provide strong customer service experiences deliver a strategic approach to our resourcing to ensure we get the most from our people, processes, technologies, data and information simplify and take a digital-first, user friendly approach towards corporate reporting, and publishing information and regulatory data for our customers. further improve our website's navigation and accessibility following user engagement and testing with different communities. We want to make sure we can meet the diverse needs and requirements of our stakeholders enhance our Solicitors Register, and work with stakeholders to improve the accessibility of information about lawyers for the public, so that important regulatory information is easily available. 	
Public legal education and information for consumers		
1.21	We will continue to enhance and improve our successful Legal Choices consumer website through further development of the website's products, so that members of the public can easily find and interact with information they may need about lawyers and legal issues	
1.22	We will continue to provide more information under our Public Legal Education programme on key areas including immigration, advocacy and how technology can support access to legal services. This will include testing and evaluating different methods of disseminating our research to maximise its impact.	
1.23	We will improve further the information available to consumers in line with CMA recommendations. Our work will be built on consumer research and user testing including through pilots such as those in train around quality indicators and unbundling of legal services. We will evaluate the Q1 pilot in Q2 and commission the 'year-three' evaluation of the Transparency Rules by Q3.	

<p>Objective Two – technology and innovation 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</p>		
<p>Collaboration and partnership working</p>		
2.1	<p>Our technology and innovation work to date has helped us to forge solid working relationships within and outside the legal services market, including technology providers and regulators from other sectors. To support and develop this work we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete our commitments to high-profile programmes such as the LawTechUK Sandbox (on-going), the Agile Nations forum, and other initiatives, so that we positively influence and have impact in the lawtech sector • Work with Government and other funding providers to produce published materials, signposting and brokerage to help firms and startups to secure funding. We will build our relationships with innovation labs, business schools and universities to explore and trial new technology and innovation to help meet the needs of the public, business communities, regulated entities and the economy • Engage in forums, roundtables and webinars around key lawtech developments • Maintain and develop relationships with digital comparison tool providers operating in the legal services market to support the emergence of new ways for consumers to be empowered during interactions with legal service providers. We will evaluate the QI pilot in Q2. 	
<p>Supporting lawtech and evolving our profile and our ways of working</p>		
2.2	<p>We will collaborate with lawtech start-ups, law firms and academic institutions to produce, in Q4, a think piece about how to identify and develop skills needed to accelerate the development and adoption of lawtech in different segments. This will include focus on the role of regulation.</p> <p>In Q2 we will produce a paper with options for improving the regulatory data that we provide externally considering feedback that we have received from lawtechs through SRA Innovate and connected collaboration activity.</p>	
2.3	<p>We will look to identify ways that technology may help, diverse communities access legal services through digital solutions. We will use our regular horizon scanning (see 3.3 for further details) and our Government backed Regulators Pioneer Fund (RPF) work to identify areas where a growing reliance on technology may be having a positive or negative impact on the rule of law, administration of justice and certain groups of end users.</p>	
2.4	<p>We will trial a lawtech programme where we will work with providers and offer small amounts of funding to support “proof of concept” activity. This will test, in real time, how innovative uses of technology can help provide the delivery of compliant, accessible and user-friendly legal services. This will also help us understand the role that regulation can legitimately play in supporting lawtech and any regulatory issues that might arise. Findings may inform the design of any permanent support functions, including any SRA Sandbox. Each cohort will follow a specific theme or issue identified by our research, intelligence or stakeholder engagement. We will start with the first cohort in Q2.</p>	
<p>Addressing regulatory barriers and managing risks</p>		
2.5	<p>We will continue to identify the ways that cybersecurity technology can be used to prevent cyberattacks and fraud. We will share our findings with the profession and other stakeholders, including by publishing our Risk Outlook report on information and cyber security (Q2), part of an ongoing series to disseminate information about emerging risks to firms.</p>	

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2.6	<p>We will build our capacity to further assess and continually monitor the market landscape, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope and establish additional in-house market monitoring capability (Q2) • Embed processes within BAU such as Horizon Scanning and Strategic Risk work, alongside the operational risk team (Q3) 	
<p>Objective three – anticipating and responding to change 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.</p>		
3.1	<p>We will publish regular Risk Outlook reports that communicate our assessment of risks and emerging issues to a wide range of stakeholders, with proposals as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First report on 'the new normal' (Q1) • Publish reports on information and cyber security, and on innovation (Q2) • Publish report – topic TBC (Q3) • Publish report – topic TBC (Q4) 	
<p>Research and analysis</p>		
3.2	<p>We will embed our horizon scanning process with key internal and external stakeholders, including engaging the Horizon Scanning Forum delegates to look at the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any required actions to support access to justice for vulnerable consumers following a roundtable with external stakeholders and a deep dive analysis of this risk (Q2) • any required actions on changes to the role of regulation (Q3) • any required actions on the risks from the normalisation of hybrid and remote working (Q3) • review the progress of programme and any required actions on all nine priority risks and agree priority risks for next year (Q4). <p>We will report on progress of horizon scanning programme by producing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start of Year report to define priorities for the coming year (Q1) • Quarterly reports to the Horizon Scanning Forum • End of Year Review to assess and report on progress, success and recommend improvements and changes to the programme (Q4). 	
<p>In addition we will commission our own research, to make sure that we can communicate authoritatively on issues in the market. We will focus on the following areas to support our Corporate Strategy:</p> <p>Research to better understand the reasons for the ethnicity differences in legal professional assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the research will be robust and thorough by commissioning an expert supplier to undertake the research (Q1) • Share initial findings with relevant stakeholders to make sure that this work supports improvements in the market (Q3) • Engage with a broad range of stakeholders by setting up a reference group (Q2) 		
<p>Research to better understand the reasons for the over-representation of black, Asian and minority ethnic solicitors in our enforcement processes</p>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the research will be robust and thorough by commissioning an expert supplier to undertake the research (Q2) • Share initial findings with relevant stakeholders (Q4) • Engage with a broad range of stakeholders by setting up a reference group (Q3) 	
	<p>Collaboration with the Legal Service Board (LSB) to research the social acceptance of technology to help the market to understand and compare how receptive consumers and the profession are to using technology in different circumstances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSB have a consumer panel, and we will enable a comparison with the profession's views by launching an online forum and survey of solicitors to evidence their likely acceptance of different technologies (Q1) • Publish joint report with the LSB (Q2) 	
	<p>Quality indicators pilot: continue to support and evaluate the pilot with research design and analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design research to support phase 2 of the pilot (Q1) • Design and analyse research to evaluate the pilot (Q3) 	
	<p>Unbundled Services pilot: design and analyse research to support and evaluate the pilot</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design research to support the pilot (Q1) • Design and analyse research to evaluate the pilot (Q2) 	
	<p>Begin/conduct research to better understand 1) the Professional Indemnity Insurance market and 2) the unregulated market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial scoping taking place during Q1 • liaise with the LSB on their proposed unregulated market research (Q1) • liaise with the LSB on their ongoing PII research (Q2) • commissioning to begin during Q2 	
3.3	<p>We will prioritise our segmentation research to better understand different types of consumers and areas of unmet legal needs so that we can target our resources appropriately</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the research is robust by commissioning a research supplier with appropriate expertise (Q1) • Share direction of travel plans and assess previous research undertaken by the LSB through the Legal Regulators Research Forum (Q1) • Share initial findings with relevant stakeholders (Q3) • Publish final report (Q4) • Summarise findings and engage with appropriate stakeholders to enable findings to be actioned (Q4) <p>We will prioritise understanding, segmenting and monitoring the evolution of different types of legal service providers across the market, both regulated and unregulated, to help us understand where there are gaps in provision. For example we will commission a project to attempt to understand the unregulated market by using online AI techniques to map provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoping and inception (Q1) • Report and data (Q2) 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feed outputs into segmentation research (above) and into scoping our research on the unregulated market (noted in 108) (Q2) <p>We will also begin work to look at the feasibility of an internal interactive data tool to explore the regulated market to show trends and possibly being able to predict forward (Q3).</p>	
Leading debates and speaking up		
3.4	<p>To ensure that we have access to relevant data and are able to speak authoritatively and act appropriately on key issues affecting the legal market, we will use our convening power to continue to work closely with other regulators, operators in the legal profession and representative bodies, members of the public, government agencies and many other stakeholder communities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaunch the quarterly Legal Regulators Research Forum, which will be chaired by the SRA (meetings Q1, Q2, Q3 Q4), including sharing partnership opportunities and sharing research. • Relaunch risk forum with other legal regulators, and expand network with regulators and contacts in other sectors (to be relaunched Q2) 	
3.5	<p>We will build on the successes of our online events by enhancing our face to face events with more virtual engagement on an on-going basis. Engagement events will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance Officers Conference on 23 November 2021 • Annual SQE conference • Innovation-themed events 	
3.6	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue to develop strategic partnerships to maximise the impact of our thought leadership in the challenges that face the legal sector, using our convening power to help to make sure issues are explored with stakeholders and responded to collaboratively • identify opportunities to host - and take part - in events that facilitate discussion on strategic issues in the legal sector and beyond. While building new cross-sector relationships so that we can bring a range of subjects to the table for debate with our stakeholders • explore new ways to provide our perspectives and lead debates with other regulators so that we maximise opportunities to work in partnership to address cross-cutting issues 	