

Press release archive for 2020

December

Ryan Beckwith appeal statement, 21 December 2020

Setting the standards for the profession is at the heart of our role as the regulator of solicitors and law firms in England and Wales, and we take enforcement action when things go wrong.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/ryan-beckwith-appeal-statement/>] SRA publishes data on representation in enforcement work, 14 December 2020

We have published our second annual report covering our enforcement activities over the previous year. The report forms part of the wider suite of 2018/19 reporting, which covers all aspects of our operational work.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/upholding-standards-annual-review/>] SRA publishes suite of resources ahead of SQE introduction, 10 December 2020

With less than a year to go until the first sitting of the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE), we have published further guidance setting out our expectations for qualifying work experience.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/sqe-information-strategy/>]

November

Covid heightens risks faced by law firms, 23 November 2020

The ongoing implications of Covid-19 mean law firms must be more vigilant than ever in how they plan for - and protect against - key risks currently facing the legal sector.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/risk-outlook-covid-threat/>]

October

Green light for new solicitor exam, 28 October 2020

We have welcomed the Legal Services Board's (LSB) decision to approve in full the introduction of the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE).

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/sqe-approved-lsb/>] Encouraging trends identified in one-year review of SRA's transparency reforms, 15 October 2020

The availability of more online information about solicitors and law firms is already making a difference as people start use it to help with decisions about accessing legal services.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/transparency-research-2020/>]

September

SRA sets out plans for 2020-21, 29 September 2020

News release: We have published our 2020-21 business plan, outlining our key priorities and areas of work for the coming year.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/business-plan-2020-21/>] Solicitors urged to respond to frozen asset list if needed, 09 September 2020

Solicitors have just over month to check the latest HM Treasury Consolidated List of asset freeze targets to make sure they are not holding monies belonging to a client that is subject to financial sanctions.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/frozen-assets-2020/>] Cybercrime thematic review, 02 September 2020

News release: With Covid-19 meaning huge numbers are now working remotely and carrying out both personal and business affairs online, a new report has highlighted the need for law firms to remain extra vigilant over the threat posed by cybercriminals.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/cybercrime-thematic-review/>] SRA recruiting four new Board members, 02 September 2020

We are recruiting four new Board members as two lay and two solicitor members reach the end of their terms.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/board-recruitment-2020/>]

August

Investment schemes that are potentially dubious, 17 August 2020

Law firms have once again been warned about the need to be vigilant when advising on investment schemes, as a new report published today highlights examples of poor practice which is leaving people at risk of falling victim to dubious schemes.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/investment-schemes-thematic-review-warning-notice-2020/>]

July

SQE fees confirmed and transitional arrangements updated, 30 July 2020

We have confirmed that the candidate fee for the new Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) will be £3,980. We will also give greater flexibility for universities and students around transition to the new assessment, in the light of Covid-19.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/sqe-final-design-costs/>] Law firms maintain improvement in complaints handling , 29 July 2020

Law firms have maintained their improvement in resolving complaints made to them, a report we have published has shown.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/first-tier-complaints-2020/>] Proposed fee levels to remain the same and Compensation Fund contributions drop, 28 July 2020

Individual practising fee levels for 2020/21 should again remain at the same level, our Board has decided.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/proposed-fee-levels/>] Ensuring high standards in solicitor advocacy , 28 July 2020

We have announced a number of new measures which will come into effect next year, designed to maintain and ensure high standards of advocacy

among solicitors.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/high-standards-solicitor-advocacy/>] Compensation Fund changes aim to strike the right balance, 28 July 2020

We have announced changes to how the SRA Compensation Fund will operate in the future, so that the fund can continue to protect the public while remaining affordable for the profession and their clients.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/compensation-fund-changes/>] Law firms offered free mentoring on EDI approaches, 16 July 2020

News release: Law firms have the chance of free mentoring and support to help them develop their approaches to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), in a new scheme launched this week.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/law-firms-mentoring/>] Independent report highlights 'powerful potential' of SQE for diversity, 14 July 2020

News release: An independent report on the new Solicitors Qualification Examination (SQE) has concluded that the assessment design is fair and overall the SQE could help address diversity issues in the legal profession.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/sqe-for-diversity/>]

June

Board agrees SIF extension 2020, 30 June 2020

New release: We have agreed to extend by a year the use of the Solicitors Indemnity Fund (SIF) to provide post six-year run-off cover for claims against firms which have closed without a successor practice.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/board-agrees-sif-extension-2020/>] Legal Access Challenge insights show legal tech potential, 18 June 2020

News release: The Legal Access Challenge was a success and has bolstered our view – shared by Nesta Challenges - that legal technology can help people to more easily access legal services.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/legal-access-challenge-final-reports/>] Further reduction in Compensation Fund contributions, 08 June 2020

News release: Contributions from the profession to the Compensation Fund for the next practising year are set to fall once more, the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) has decided.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/reduction-in-compensation-fund-contributions/>] SRA consults on 2020-21 business plan, 08 June 2020

News release: The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) is consulting on its forward business plan and budget for the first time as part of its commitment to accountability and transparency.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/business-plan-budget-compensation-fund-contributions/>] SQE design decision, 08 June 2020

News release: Our Board has approved the final design of the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE). Set to be introduced in 2021, the SQE will



replace the current system where different tests are set and marked by more than 100 different organisations.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/sqe-design-decision/>] SQE2 pilot results, 05 June 2020

News release: Results of the Solicitors Qualifying Examination 2 (SQE2) pilot, along with analysis and recommendations, have been published by Kaplan.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/sqe2-pilot-results/>]

May

Kaplan appointment solicitor apprenticeships, 13 May 2020

Kaplan, the assessment organisation we appointed to develop and run the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE), has been approved by the Education and Skills Funding Agency to be the End-Point Assessment Organisation for Solicitor Apprenticeships.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/kaplan-appointment-solicitor-apprenticeships/>]

April

Cybercrime warning for law firms during lockdown, 23 April 2020

Law firms and their employees have been urged to be extra vigilant during the coronavirus lockdown amid increased reports of cyber attacks against businesses whose staff are working remotely.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/cyber-awareness-during-lockdown/>] Domestic abuse legal support app and social care justice chatbot win legal access challenge, 09 April 2020

A technology platform which helps survivors of domestic abuse protect themselves from violence and a chatbot designed to assist people, including those with learning disabilities, understand their social care rights, have been named the two winners of the Legal Access Challenge.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/legal-access-challenge-winners/>]

March

Representation in law firms improving, but more to do, 30 March 2020

Levels of diversity within the legal sector workforce continue to slowly improve, although it varies depending on firm size and level of seniority. The apparent unwillingness of employees to declare they have a disability continues.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/representation-law-firms/>] Consultation on minor changes to Principles for Qualified Lawyers, 26 March 2020

We are consulting on minor changes to exemptions for qualified lawyers who are seeking admission through the new Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE)

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/principles-qualified-lawyers-consultation/>] SRA sets out its strategic priorities for next three years, 20 March 2020

Following consultation with more than 500 people, we have finalised our 2020 - 2023 corporate strategy, with a focus on high professional standards and supporting innovation to help people access legal help.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/corporate-strategy-2020/>] Disability in the workplace report highlights best practice, 12 March 2020

A new report published today has found an apparent reluctance among disabled legal professionals to inform their employers of their disability.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/disability-workplace-report/>] SRA opens consultation on providing immigration services, 12 March 2020

We have launched a public consultation on our rules governing where solicitors are allowed to work while offering immigration services.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/sra-consultation-providing-immigration-services/>]

January

Stonewall names Solicitors Regulation Authority one of Britain's top 100 LGBT-inclusive employers, 30 January 2020

We have been named one of the most inclusive employers in Britain by lesbian, gay, bi and trans equality charity Stonewall in its Top 100 Employers list for 2020. We are placed 93rd on the 2020 list.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/sra-in-stonewall-top-100/>] SRA consults on Compensation Fund changes, 21 January 2020

We have launched a 12-week consultation on our Compensation Fund. Views are sought from the profession, public and representative groups on the proposals. They aim to continue protecting clients who lose money because of dishonesty by a solicitor, or in circumstances where they cannot claim on a law firms' professional indemnity insurance, while at the same time making sure management of the fund remains sustainable.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/compensation-fund-consultation-2020/>] Fifth directive means firms need to review their anti-money laundering processes, 10 January 2020

The fifth Anti-Money Laundering Directive means law firms have to make changes to the way they work to help keep the proceeds of crime out of legal services.

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/5aml-d-comes-into-force/>]