

SRA Update

Issue 89 - February 2021

- [General updates](#) [#tab_efed1]
- [Compliance updates](#) [#tab_efed2]

Welcome to the latest issue of SRA Update.

As lockdown continues, online information is increasingly important for all businesses, so make sure your firm is publishing what's needed under our transparency rules. You can read more in this edition about our work with law firms and comparison websites to increase the number of consumers using online information to shop around when looking for legal services, and to explore the use of online customer reviews.

Also in this issue, find out about recruitment for solicitors as question writers, assessors and examiners for the Solicitors Qualifying Examination, and our upcoming series of webinars on topical issues.

[Transparency rules](#) [/[sra/news/press/2021-press-releases/transparency-enforcement-starts/](#)]

With our work to ensure compliance continuing, you need to make sure that your firm is publishing all the information required under our 2018 transparency rules, which became fully compulsory in November 2019. We have recently taken action against nine firms for repeatedly failing to do so, resulting in fines of up to £2,000. If you haven't published the information needed already, please act now before we check your website.

Read more about: [Transparency rules](#) [/[sra/news/press/2021-press-releases/transparency-enforcement-starts/](#)]

[Comparison websites pilot aims to identify quality in](#) [/[sra/news/sra-update-89-indicators/](#)]

We are launching a pilot this month to trial further approaches to improving the information available to the public about lawyers and their services. In particular we are looking at encouraging both firms and the public to engage more proactively with both customer reviews, and review comparison websites in particular.

Read more about: [Comparison websites pilot aims to identify quality in](#) [/[sra/news/sra-update-89-indicators/](#)]

[Solicitor examiners wanted](#) [/[sra/news/sqe-update-examiner-recruitment/](#)]

With the design of the new SQE assessment finalised, Kaplan is expanding its team of examiners ahead of the first assessments in November 2021 and applications for positions are now open. The roles available include question writers, markers and assessors and Kaplan are looking for solicitors from a wide range of backgrounds. Kaplan is also recruiting for a number of other roles.

Read more about: [Solicitor examiners wanted](#) [/[sra/news/sqe-update-examiner-recruitment/](#)]

Solicitor apprenticeships, are they for me?

(webinar) [<https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/516/home>*]*

Our webinar on 11 February explains just what an apprenticeship entails, describing the journey from school leaver to fully-qualified solicitor. Find out what's required to gain entry to the profession this way, what the benefits are, and hear from those currently taking that path.

Read more about: Solicitor apprenticeships, are they for me? (webinar)

[\[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/516/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/516/home)

Tax advisers: what you need to know (webinar)

[<https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/518/home>*]*

Join us for this free webinar on 16 February to learn what changes to the money-laundering regulations might mean for your firm. This webinar looks at what you need to do if the changes bring your firm into scope of the regulations, and the useful guidance published to help you understand your obligations.

Read more about: Tax advisers: what you need to know (webinar)

[\[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/518/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/518/home)

Qualifying work experience – what law firms need to know (webinar)

[<https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/517/home>*]*

Everyone looking to qualify through the SQE route – to be introduced on 1 September 2021 - will need to complete at least two years' qualifying work experience (QWE). This free webinar on 22 February offers law firms who currently give training, and those who don't, the latest information on what QWE is and what it means for your firm.

Read more about: Qualifying work experience – what law firms need to know (webinar)

[\[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/517/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/517/home)

Engaging with online customer reviews

(webinar) [<https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/520/home>*]*

Join our webinar to find out more about how you can effectively engage with online customer reviews, the benefits of doing so and how third-party comparison websites which feature legal services providers work. The session on 25 February will also include a live Q&A session where you can put questions to our experts.

Read more about: Engaging with online customer reviews (webinar)

[\[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/520/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/520/home)

AML: what we learnt from law firm visits

(webinar) [<https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/519/home>*]*

Join us for a free webinar on 16 March to get practical advice on how to help keep the proceeds of crime out of legal services. You will hear about the types of issues - and good practice - we have seen from our visits to review practice within law firms.

Read more about: AML: what we learnt from law firm visits (webinar)

[\[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/519/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/519/home)

Share your innovation experiences [[sra/news/sra-](#)

[update-88-innovation-research/](#)

We are conducting research on the use of technology in legal services and new ways of working. You could help at this early stage by sharing your examples of innovative thinking involving technology with our research partners at Oxford University.

Read more about: Share your innovation experiences [[/sra/news/sra-update-88-innovation-research/](#)]

[/solicitors/resources/your-health-your-career/](#)

Are you worried about your health affecting your work? Life as a solicitor can be challenging and the demands and pressures can easily build up. We can signpost you to sources of help and make adjustments for you if you are in difficulty.

Read more about: Your health, your career [[/solicitors/resources/your-health-your-career/](#)]

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Also in this issue, there's supporting information available to help you combat money launderers, and updates on how Brexit might affect your business.

[/sra/news/press/2021-press-releases/transparency-enforcement-starts/](#)

With our work to ensure compliance continuing, you need to make sure that your firm is publishing all the information required under our 2018 transparency rules, which became fully compulsory in November 2019. We have recently taken action against nine firms for repeatedly failing to do so, resulting in fines of up to £2,000. If you haven't published the information needed already, please act now before we check your website.

Read more about: Transparency rules [[/sra/news/press/2021-press-releases/transparency-enforcement-starts/](#)]

[/sra/news/press/2021-press-releases/new-aml-guidance/](#)

Check you are up-to-date with all the latest developments and legislation regarding money laundering by reading two new pieces of national sector-wide guidance issued on the subject. We have published the Legal Services Affinity Group guidance on the 2020 regulations (as amended) and our own sectoral risk assessment to help you review your own firm-wide documents.

Read more about: Support available to help keep out money launderers [[/sra/news/press/2021-press-releases/new-aml-guidance/](#)]

Brexit and the effects on your business

[\[/sra/news/sra-update-88-brexit/\]](#)

Now that we have officially left the EU, there are some changes that could affect the way you work. You can find out about some of these on our Brexit pages. We continue to update the pages as new information about how you might be affected comes to light.

Read more about: Brexit and the effects on your business [\[/sra/news/sra-update-88-brexit/\]](#)

Changes to your phone systems [\[/sra/news/sra-update-88-telephony-upgrade/\]](#)

The next four years will see significant changes made to the telephone network that could affect your equipment. Ofcom asked you to make you aware that the upgrades made by BT Openreach might mean you need to make similar upgrades to you own systems.

Read more about: Changes to your phone systems [\[/sra/news/sra-update-88-telephony-upgrade/\]](#)

Innovation – more research opportunities

[\[mailto:research@fortemarkets.com\]](mailto:research@fortemarkets.com)

Forte Markets are also running a research initiative exploring the regulatory landscape of law firms and how LawTech can help improve it. They want to talk to compliance officers about where they have found the regulatory regime has either supported the development of technology and innovation, or potentially where it has presented challenges.

Read more about: Innovation – more research opportunities [\[mailto:research@fortemarkets.com\]](mailto:research@fortemarkets.com)

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