

SRA Update

Issue 107 - September 2022

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Welcome to the latest issue of SRA Update. It's September, the start of autumn, and that always marks the beginning of a busy period for legal services. The legal year starts on 1 October, and our practising renewal period gets under way the same day. We will be contacting you next week as part of that process, and we include some information in this issue on what you should do to prepare. Also this month, we have produced new guidance on how we will deal with sexual misconduct - which we continue to get reports on - and we've updated our guidance on acting with integrity. And we are consulting on the details of refinements to our fining regime, so please share your views.

Guidance on dealing with sexual misconduct cases [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/sexual-misconduct-guidance/>]

We continue to get reports of potential sexual misconduct in the firms we regulate. This is an issue we take very seriously. Read our new guidance to understand our approach in this area, our expectations on firms and individuals, the types of behaviours which are unacceptable, and when such issues might become regulatory matters.

[Read more about: Guidance on dealing with sexual misconduct cases](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/sexual-misconduct-guidance/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/sexual-misconduct-guidance/>]

Acting with integrity - guidance updated [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/acting-with-integrity/>]

Many of the issues raised in sexual misconduct cases relate to a lack of integrity. For this and other areas, we have therefore updated that guidance too, including clarification around the latest case law and how that informs our approach.

[Read more about: Acting with integrity - guidance updated](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/acting-with-integrity/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/acting-with-integrity/>]



PC fees set for next practising year

[\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/fee-contributions-2022/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/fee-contributions-2022/)

The Legal Services Board has agreed the level of individual practising fees for 2022/23. They will increase from £266 to £286. Individual compensation fund contributions will fall from £40 to £30. Firm fees vary as they are linked to turnover.

[Read more about: PC fees set for next practising year \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/fee-contributions-2022/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/fee-contributions-2022/)

Practising certificate renewals - what will you be asked [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/practising-certificate-registration-renewals/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/practising-certificate-registration-renewals/)

Practising certificates/registrations renewals will take place from 1 to 31 October 2022. There are no new questions on the renewal application, and we have made minimal changes. You can also see the exact questions, and further guidance, on our website.

[Read more about: Practising certificate renewals - what will you be asked \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/practising-certificate-registration-renewals/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/practising-certificate-registration-renewals/)

Have your say on detail of new approach to fines [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/fining-regime-details-consultation-2022/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/fining-regime-details-consultation-2022/)

Have your say on the detail of planned reforms to our approach to issuing financial penalties. Among the areas we are consulting on are proposals to link all fine levels to income/turnover, a new fixed penalty regime for lower-level misconduct and trialling victim impact statements.

[Read more about: Have your say on detail of new approach to fines \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/fining-regime-details-consultation-2022/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/fining-regime-details-consultation-2022/)

Webinar - financial penalties proposals [\[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/616/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/616/home)

Find out more about our detailed proposals to update our fining regime at our free webinar on Thursday 6 October. Learn more about our ongoing consultation and put your questions to our panel on the detail of our proposed changes.



[Read more about: Webinar – financial penalties proposals](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/616/home)
[<https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/616/home>]

First ever SQE2 results published

[<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/sqe2-results-august-2022/>]

The results for the first SQE2 assessments have been published. The assessments were sat by 726 candidates in 24 countries, with 77 per cent passing.

[Read more about: First ever SQE2 results published](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/sqe2-results-august-2022/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/sqe2-results-august-2022/>]

Help for solicitor advocates [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/advocacy/>]

Do you practise civil or criminal advocacy? We have launched a suite of new resources designed to help you make sure you are a competent and effective advocate. These cover areas such as remote hearings and working with vulnerable witnesses, as well as best practice on key skills and general approaches.

[Read more about: Help for solicitor advocates](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/advocacy/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/advocacy/>]

Magistrates court training records

[<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/high-standards-solicitor-advocacy/>]

As part of our ongoing work to assure criminal and advocacy standards, we are contacting a number of firms to request training records of solicitors working in the magistrates and higher courts. This is similar to our youth court advocacy review. If we are in touch, we appreciate your help.

[Read more about: Magistrates court training records](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/high-standards-solicitor-advocacy/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2020-press-release-archive/high-standards-solicitor-advocacy/>]

Helping you track your continuing competence

[<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/continuing-competence/cpd/continuing-competence/>]



All solicitors must keep their professional knowledge and skills up to date, so we've updated our resources to help solicitors remain competent. You can also watch our short video to see the five steps you need to take.

[Read more about: Helping you track your continuing competence](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/continuing-competence/cpd/continuing-competence/)

[\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/continuing-competence/cpd/continuing-competence/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/continuing-competence/cpd/continuing-competence/)

Ombudsman courses in September

[\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-ombudsman-courses/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-ombudsman-courses/)

The Legal Ombudsman is running courses in September to help you deal even more effectively with client complaints. The online sessions – on myth-busting and the language of complaints – take place on September 14 and 21 respectively.

[Read more about: Ombudsman courses in September \[https://higher-](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-ombudsman-courses/)

[rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-ombudsman-courses/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-ombudsman-courses/)

Webinar - unbundling services

[\[http://events.sra.org.uk/sra/607/home\]](http://events.sra.org.uk/sra/607/home)

More and more firms are starting to explore the potential for offering unbundled services. Our free webinar on 13 September allows you to hear direct from the firms who took part in our pilot into this area. Hear about the day-to-day benefits, opportunities and challenges they have experienced from offering services in this way.

[Read more about: Webinar - unbundling services](http://events.sra.org.uk/sra/607/home)

[\[http://events.sra.org.uk/sra/607/home\]](http://events.sra.org.uk/sra/607/home)

Keeping of the Roll returns next year

[\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/annual-exercise-solicitors-practising-certificates/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/annual-exercise-solicitors-practising-certificates/)

Following changes in laws regarding how personal data is handled, we are reintroducing a requirement for those of you without practising certificates to complete an annual application to remain on the Roll of Solicitors. Ahead of this it is important that all currently non-practising solicitors check that their contact details within mySRA are up to date.

[Read more about: Keeping of the Roll returns next year \[https://higher-](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/annual-exercise-solicitors-practising-certificates/)

[rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/annual-exercise-solicitors-practising-certificates/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/annual-exercise-solicitors-practising-certificates/)



Your health, your career [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/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](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/your-health-your-career/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/your-health-your-career/>]

Welcome to the Compliance News section of the latest issue of SRA Update. We have produced guidance on how we will approach disciplinary action against any solicitor that is convicted of a crime while involved action on matters of principle or social conscience, such as demonstrations or protests. We have also updated our guidance on professional obligations in light of the current industrial action being taken by the Criminal Bar Association. And we are to undertake more work on compliance with our transparency rules – it's important that you do so, not least as you might be missing out on potential new clients otherwise.

Convictions for principled action [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/convictions-arising-social-conscience/>]

Solicitors like everyone else have causes close to their hearts, and there have been occasions when demonstrations they are involved with have escalated, leading to police action. Read our new guidance on our approach to potential disciplinary action for those that have received criminal convictions in such situations.

[Read more about: Convictions for principled action](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/convictions-arising-social-conscience/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/convictions-arising-social-conscience/>]

Your obligations during Criminal Bar Association action [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/duties-during-action-criminal-bar-association/>]

The Criminal Bar Association is continuing with its action in protest at Legal Aid levels. You and your clients might be affected by this action. Read our guidance reminding you of your obligations should you encounter such situations.



[Read more about: Your obligations during Criminal Bar Association action](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/duties-during-action-criminal-bar-association/)
[<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/duties-during-action-criminal-bar-association/>]

Transparency rules - more checks on website information [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-107-transparency-rules-checks/>]

We will soon be starting a rolling programme of checks on all law firm websites to make sure you are complying with our transparency rules. Ahead of this, please take a moment to double check you are compliant with all of our transparency requirements.

[Read more about: Transparency rules - more checks on website information](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-107-transparency-rules-checks/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-107-transparency-rules-checks/>]

Overseas register [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-106-overseas-register/>]

The Register of Overseas Entities (ROE) was launched on 1 August as part of the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act 2022. It brings obligations around the verification of overseas entities.

[Read more about: Overseas register](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-106-overseas-register/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-106-overseas-register/>]

Compliance Officers Conference - save the date! [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-conference/>]

This year's Compliance Officers Conference will take place on Tuesday 8 November at the International Convention Centre (ICC) in Birmingham. There will then be a week of online events from 14 November, as we did last year. Booking details will follow in the autumn.

[Read more about: Compliance Officers Conference - save the date!](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-conference/)
[<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-conference/>]

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To ensure we have your current email address, log in to [mySRA](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mySRA) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mySRA>] and check your profile.

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