

## SRA Update

Issue 138 - April 2025

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Welcome to the latest issue of SRA Update. We've put our clocks forward and I hope you're enjoying the lighter evenings. We've also opened the window for those non-practising solicitors who wish to remain on the roll. You have until 28 May to apply - find out how in this month's issue. We have information too on continuing competence, our higher rights of audience pilot, and details of our biannual firm diversity data exercise which will take place in the summer. Whether it's the ethical challenges of working in-house, sanctions compliance or the SQE, we have a range of webinars for you to catch up on. And there are more events to come on issues ranging from anti-money-laundering compliance to practical tips on innovation. Find out how to book your place.

### Paul Philip

Chief Executive

### **[Remaining on the roll now open](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/apply-to-remain-on-roll/)** [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/apply-to-remain-on-roll/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/apply-to-remain-on-roll/)

Solicitors without a practising certificate must tell us each year if they wish to remain on the roll. If that is you, then you will need to apply during the application window (3 April - 28 May) and pay a £20 fee.

[Read more about: Remaining on the roll now open](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/apply-to-remain-on-roll/) [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/apply-to-remain-on-roll/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/apply-to-remain-on-roll/)

### **[Higher Rights of Audience pilot - last chance to sign up](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-137-higher-rights-of-audience-pilot/)** [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-137-higher-rights-of-audience-pilot/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-137-higher-rights-of-audience-pilot/)

We are looking for solicitors to help us test the new higher rights of audience assessment. The University of Law is carrying out the pilot and testing programme in early May, so if you have not already taken the assessment, sign up by Friday 11 April.

[Read more about: Higher Rights of Audience pilot - last chance to sign up](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-137-higher-rights-of-audience-pilot/) [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-137-higher-rights-of-audience-pilot/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-137-higher-rights-of-audience-pilot/)

### **[Apply for free SQE assessment places](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/access-reinvestment-fund/)** [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/access-reinvestment-fund/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/access-reinvestment-fund/)



Organisations who support aspiring solicitors facing personal barriers to qualify can now apply for funding that will cover the cost of sitting the SQE assessments. To be eligible, the organisation must have a track record of running existing schemes helping aspiring solicitors. Deadline to apply is Wednesday 30 April.

[Read more about: Apply for free SQE assessment places \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/access-reinvestment-fund/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/access-reinvestment-fund/)

## **Remaining competent - resources available to help you** [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/continuing-competence/understanding-continuing-competence/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/continuing-competence/understanding-continuing-competence/)

Maintaining your competency to carry out your role is a regulatory obligation. You must keep your knowledge and skills up to date and address any learning and development needs. We have resources, templates, guidance and warning notices that can help you remain competent.

[Read more about: Remaining competent - resources available to help you \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/continuing-competence/understanding-continuing-competence/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/continuing-competence/understanding-continuing-competence/)

## **Firm diversity data - coming in the summer and questionnaire now available** [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/equality-diversity/your-data/#5486\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/equality-diversity/your-data/#5486)

All SRA-regulated firms must collect, report and publish data about the diversity make-up of their workforce every two years. You will be able to report your diversity data to us in early summer 2025. The diversity questions, which have no significant changes, are now available should you wish to start collecting data from your staff.

[Read more about: Firm diversity data - coming in the summer and questionnaire now available \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/equality-diversity/your-data/#5486\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/equality-diversity/your-data/#5486)

## **Our approach to SLAPPs cases** [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/approach-slapps/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/approach-slapps/)

Read our recent statement outlining the key principles underpinning our approach to considering reports of potential firm misconduct in relation to strategic litigation against public participation (SLAPPs).

[Read more about: Our approach to SLAPPs cases \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/approach-slapps/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/approach-slapps/)



## **Chair of the Board's blog - thoughts on last meeting** [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/how-we-work/our-board/news-from-the-board/>]

Anna Bradley, Chair of the SRA, writes a regular blog looking back at the latest Board meeting. During her last reflections, she talked about our planning process for the next business year (2025/26), how we retain a customer focus in our work, and the latest SQE annual report.

[Read more about: Chair of the Board's blog - thoughts on last meeting](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/how-we-work/our-board/news-from-the-board/)  
[<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/how-we-work/our-board/news-from-the-board/>]

## **Meet the senior team - Leeds and Birmingham** [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/>]

Join us in Leeds and Birmingham for an informal roundtable and networking event with senior members of our team. This is your opportunity to speak directly to us about the regulatory issues which most concern and impact you on a day-to-day basis.

[Read more about: Meet the senior team - Leeds and Birmingham](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/>]

## **In-house solicitors conference - watch on-demand** [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/in-house-2025/>]

In March, more than 200 delegates attended our third in-house conference. Sessions considered the role of the employer, developing an ethical culture and the impact of technology on the profession. 98% of delegates said they would attend the event again, with more than half rating the event 9+ out of 10. The whole event is now available to watch on-demand.

[Read more about: In-house solicitors conference - watch on-demand](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/in-house-2025/)  
[<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/in-house-2025/>]

## **SQE Virtual Conference - watch on-demand** [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/sqe-conference-2025/>]

Our recent virtual SQE conference offered the latest on qualifying work experience, featuring perspectives and experiences from employers and a newly qualified solicitor. It also covered our SQE annual reports, insights on assessments and answers to common candidate questions. It is now available on-demand to watch.



[Read more about: SQE Virtual Conference - watch on-demand \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/sqe-conference-2025/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/sqe-conference-2025/)

## **Sanctions: Insights and updates webinar**

[\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/sanctions-updates/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/sanctions-updates/)

If you missed our sanctions webinar, you can watch it now on demand. In this session, we shared the recent trends and findings from our own proactive sanctions work, as well as updates on the UK sanctions regime. And Suzie Ogilvy, a compliance professional and Partner Consultant in Ogilro Risk, talked about common challenges and sanctions red flags.

[Read more about: Sanctions: Insights and updates webinar \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/sanctions-updates/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/sanctions-updates/)

## **Webinar: Our approach to AML enforcement**

[\[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/738/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/738/home)

Hear direct from our AML investigations team on our approach to investigating individuals and firms when we discover non-compliance with anti-money laundering (AML) legislation. Registration is now open for the webinar on 7 May 2025.

[Read more about: Webinar: Our approach to AML enforcement \[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/738/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/738/home)

## **Webinar: AML for sole practitioners**

[\[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/737/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/737/home)

By popular demand we are running an AML webinar aimed at sole practitioners on 21 May 2025. We will cover how you can best protect your practice from the risk of money laundering.

[Read more about: Webinar: AML for sole practitioners \[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/737/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/737/home)

## **Navigating technology and AI - join us in Leeds and Birmingham**

[\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/)

Innovation and technology are reshaping the legal sector, with solicitors and law firms increasingly using technology, including AI, in their day-to-day work. At our latest free innovation events, you can get insights and valuable advice about navigating the evolving technology landscape. Join us either in Leeds (10 June) or Birmingham (3 July).

[Read more about: Navigating technology and AI - join us in Leeds and Birmingham \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/)



## **New claims management provider for Solicitors Indemnity Fund** [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-138-sif-provider/>]

Following the end of the initial contract and after a full tender process, we have changed the claims management provider for the Solicitors Indemnity Fund (SIF). A new contract with Lester Aldridge has been signed and came into effect on Tuesday (April 1).

[Read more about: New claims management provider for Solicitors Indemnity Fund](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-138-sif-provider/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-138-sif-provider/>]

## **Get practical tips for onboarding clients online** [<https://publications.sra.org.uk/lawtech-insight-february-2025/>]

The latest issue of Lawtech Insight covers practical tips on procuring onboarding technology and discusses everything from integration to data security. Also covered are the latest news stories on legal technology and innovation.

[Read more about: Get practical tips for onboarding clients online](https://publications.sra.org.uk/lawtech-insight-february-2025/) [<https://publications.sra.org.uk/lawtech-insight-february-2025/>]

## **First in series of ombudsman's blogs hope to help with SDLT issues** [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-138-leo-blogs/>]

The Legal Ombudsman is publishing a series of blogs to provide insights for firms on common problems, with the aim of reducing complaints being made by clients. The first article looks at the issue of changes to stamp duty land tax.

[Read more about: First in series of ombudsman's blogs hope to help with SDLT issues](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-138-leo-blogs/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-138-leo-blogs/>]

## **Have you thought about working for us?** [<https://sra.tal.net/vx/appcentre-SolicitorsRegulationAuthority/candidate/jobboard/vacancy/2/adv/>]

We are currently recruiting for a wide range of roles, including qualified roles in Investigation and Supervision. Our jobs page has more information.

[Read more about: Have you thought about working for us?](https://sra.tal.net/vx/appcentre-SolicitorsRegulationAuthority/candidate/jobboard/vacancy/2/adv/) [<https://sra.tal.net/vx/appcentre-SolicitorsRegulationAuthority/candidate/jobboard/vacancy/2/adv/>]



## **Your health, your career** [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/all-other-topics/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/all-other-topics/your-health-your-career/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/all-other-topics/your-health-your-career/>]

Welcome to the latest issue of Compliance News. A new 'failure to prevent fraud' offence is due to be introduced. We have published information to help you understand your obligations. We also have included reminders about the new charge for car finance claims introduced by the Financial Conduct Authority, guidance on sham litigation, our warning notice around marketing and 'no win, no fee', as well as an update to our query on accepting cryptocurrency as payment.

### **Paul Philip**

Chief Executive

## **New 'failure to prevent fraud' offence coming in the autumn** [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-138-prevent-fraud-crime/>]

The UK's new corporate 'failure to prevent fraud' offence comes into force in September. The offence will make it easier to fine and prosecute large organisations for fraud offences by closing loopholes that have allowed them to avoid prosecution.

[Read more about: New 'failure to prevent fraud' offence coming in the autumn](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-138-prevent-fraud-crime/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-138-prevent-fraud-crime/>]

## **New charge for financial product mis-selling claims** [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-138-car-finance-claims-charge/>]

The Financial Ombudsman Service has started charging for compensation claims made through 'professional representatives'. Each application, if ten or more are received, will be £250, although 70 per cent is refunded if the claim is successful. We have guidance for those firms who run financial product mis-selling claims.

[Read more about: New charge for financial product mis-selling claims](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-138-car-finance-claims-charge/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-138-car-finance-claims-charge/>]



## **Sham litigation - learning from criminal case**

[\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/sham-litigation/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/sham-litigation/)

We have written guidance about sham litigation following an attempted case that led to a ten-year prison sentence last year. We spoke to some of the firms who were contacted by the perpetrators and can share some of the tactics they spotted as well other general features related to sham litigation.

[Read more about: Sham litigation - learning from criminal case \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/sham-litigation/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/sham-litigation/)

## **Warning around marketing and ‘no win, no fee’** [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/warning-notice-unsolicited-approaches/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/warning-notice-unsolicited-approaches/)

We have issued a warning notice about marketing your services to the public. We are particularly concerned about the behaviours of some firms doing high-volume consumer claims work. Unsolicited approaches such as cold calling and door knocking are prohibited, while firms need to make sure that information on ‘no win, no fee’ arrangements is clear and accurate, including information on charges and the risks around costs.

[Read more about: Warning around marketing and ‘no win, no fee’ \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/warning-notice-unsolicited-approaches/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/warning-notice-unsolicited-approaches/)

## **Cryptocurrency query updated** [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/money-laundering/aml-questions-answers/#collapse\\_2d4d\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/money-laundering/aml-questions-answers/#collapse_2d4d)

We have updated a question in our anti-money laundering Q&A about accepting cryptocurrency as a payment. We do not recognise crypto as money that can be paid into the client account. A valid client account can also only be used via a bank or building society, and neither have the facilities for crypto at this stage.

[Read more about: Cryptocurrency query updated \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/money-laundering/aml-questions-answers/#collapse\\_2d4d\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/money-laundering/aml-questions-answers/#collapse_2d4d)

## **Subscription**

### **If you are regulated by the SRA**

As a regulated individual, please **simply ensure that the SRA has your current contact email address on record.**

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

No subscription request is required.

We recommend that you ask your network administrator to ensure that bulk email with "SRA Update" in the subject line is not filtered as spam.

If you do not wish to receive SRA Update, please [unsubscribe](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update/unsubscribe) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update/unsubscribe>].

## **If you are not regulated by the SRA**

If you are not regulated by the SRA, please **email a subscription request** to [SRAupdate@sra.org.uk](mailto:SRAupdate@sra.org.uk) [<mailto:SRAupdate@sra.org.uk>].

## **Unsubscribe**

To unsubscribe, please [complete our unsubscribe form](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update/unsubscribe) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update/unsubscribe>]. We cannot process unsubscribe requests submitted by email.

## **Editorial comment**

Please send editorial comment to [SRAupdate@sra.org.uk](mailto:SRAupdate@sra.org.uk) [<mailto:SRAupdate@sra.org.uk>].