

# APPOINT OF ADJUDICATORS INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS



## INTRODUCTION

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The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) regulates solicitors and solicitors' firms in England & Wales. With the passage of the Legal Services Act 2007 it will also, over the course of the next few years, regulate entities which include solicitors and other providers of professional services.

In regulating solicitors, the SRA's purpose is to set, promote and secure in the public interest standards of behaviour and professional performance necessary to ensure that clients receive a good service and that the rule of law is upheld. This involves setting standards, monitoring and supporting solicitors, providing consumer protection, enforcement and discipline, and facilitating access to justice, transparency and consumer education.

All solicitors have a duty to uphold high standards of professional behaviour and to comply with regulatory requirements. The Solicitors' Code of Conduct 2007 sets out mandatory Rules and includes the framework of principles, guidance and values within which the SRA expects all solicitors to operate. The Code of Conduct is publicly available on the SRA web site. The SRA Board authorises adjudicators and other individual decision-makers within the SRA to exercise certain powers so that:

- the public is adequately protected,
- the integrity of the profession is maintained,
- solicitors comply with their professional obligations, and
- solicitors remain fit and proper people to continue in practice.

Throughout its processes, the SRA seeks to demonstrate that it is a fair regulator and that decisions are made without unlawful discrimination. Decisions made by the SRA include decisions:

- to resolve a non-compliance with a regulatory requirement or a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct<sup>1</sup>
- to grant or refuse a waiver of a rule or requirement or to grant recognition
- to determine admission, or entry, or an application under any SRA Regulations
- to grant or refuse an application for a practising certificate
- to impose conditions on practising certificates
- to intervene into a solicitor's practice
- to determine an application for a grant from the Compensation Fund

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<sup>1</sup> The Code of Conduct may be found on the SRA website at: <http://www.sra.org.uk/code-of-conduct.page>.

- to determine beneficial entitlement, and related decisions, to money held by the SRA on statutory trust following intervention into a solicitor's practice
- to impose a sanction, such as a reprimand, a formal warning as to future conduct, or a fine when the Legal Services Act 2007 comes into force
- to determine an appeal against a waiver or other decision under the Solicitors' Indemnity Insurance Rules
- to determine an appeal against a waiver decision under the Code of Conduct

When dealing with a case, decision-makers may be involved in making decisions in one or more of the above categories and may do so alone or in conjunction with other decision-makers.

The SRA now requires Adjudicators who amongst other key skills and abilities have experience of promoting equality & diversity and dealing with diverse customers particularly, black and ethnic minorities. Successful applicants will be expected to take up their appointment post 1 September 2009.

### **Key skills and abilities**

Adjudicators must be:

- able to assimilate assess and evaluate potentially complex issues in a timely manner
- completely unbiased in their thinking
- competent listeners
- highly capable at expressing themselves orally
- in possession of strong written skills
- able to reach, and justify, decisions
- able concisely to capture the reasoning behind decisions taken
- able to apply with consistency the SRA's published principles, guidelines and criteria on decision-making
- able to understand equality and its impact on decision-making

### **Experience and knowledge required**

Adjudicators must:

- have an understanding of professional regulation issues
- have a commitment to maintaining professional integrity for the good of the public
- demonstrate an awareness of issues faced by a diverse consumer group and profession which is increasingly diverse in ethnicity and other factors
- demonstrate an awareness of issues faced by the diverse profession which practices in circumstances ranging from sole practitioners to multi-national law firms

## **Commitment**

- adjudicators are likely to be expected to attend between six and twelve meetings a year, which will require prior preparation
- additional work involving the preparation of decisions alone may be available by arrangement in due course
- Training sessions/workshops as required

## **Eligibility**

Applications are invited from those who can demonstrate they fulfil the criteria indicated above whether or not they are legally qualified. Members of the Council of the Law Society are not eligible for appointment.

## **Term of Appointment and Remuneration**

All members will be appointed by the SRA Board. The term of appointment will be three years, subject to annual review, which may be renewed for further periods.

Attending meetings (whether for decision-making purposes or for other purposes such as training) will be remunerated at a rate of £400 per meeting. UK travel expenses and, where necessary, subsistence will also be paid. When adjudicating alone, decision-makers will be paid £35 per hour.

Adjudicators will be subject to a system of performance monitoring and appraisal.

## **Equal opportunities**

The SRA Board is committed to providing equal opportunities for all, irrespective of race, age, disability, gender, marital status, religion, sexual orientation, and to the principle of public appointments on merit involving open and transparent processes.

## THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS & HOW TO APPLY

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Open and transparent selection processes will be used at all key stages, including the interview stage.

The process will be overseen and evaluated by the OPAC and a selection panel. The selection panel will identify for interview those who most closely fit the person specification. At each stage, the selection panel will have regard to the need for diversity and a balance of skills and expertise.

Candidates to be invited for interview will be informed by Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2009.

References will be taken on all candidates selected for interview as soon as the interview arrangements have been made.

Please apply by sending a completed application form demonstrating by using examples how your experience matches the key skills and abilities required. Please do take the time to clearly demonstrate how you meet the key skills and abilities as these will be taken into account in the short listing process.

All applications must be received by no later than **5pm Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2009** either by e-mail to: [andrew.tromans@waterhouseconsulting.co.uk](mailto:andrew.tromans@waterhouseconsulting.co.uk) or post to: Andrew Tromans, Director of Executive Search, Waterhouse Consulting, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Newland House, 137-139 Hagley Road, Birmingham B16 8UA.

All applications will be acknowledged on receipt. If you have not received an acknowledgement within 5 working days, please contact Andrew on 0121 285 0440.

Calls will be accepted up to one week after the closing date to deal with queries regarding the submission and receipt of application forms.

We cannot accept responsibility for the non-receipt of applications.

### Contact

Should you have any queries, including how to obtain audio, Braille or large print versions of the application pack, please contact Adrian Lyne on 0121 285 0440 or email at: [adrian.lyne@waterhouseconsulting.co.uk](mailto:adrian.lyne@waterhouseconsulting.co.uk) or write to him at: Waterhouse Consulting, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Newland House, 137-139 Hagley Road, Birmingham B16 8UA.