

News Release

SRA sets out plans for 2020-21

29 September 2020

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

Publication follows a consultation exercise earlier this year which saw more than 10,000 people have their say on the proposals through a range of virtual events, written submissions and online polls.

In addition to our core work to protect the public and deliver effective regulation of law firms and solicitors, key areas of work identified in the now-approved plan include:

- preparing for the introduction of the Solicitors Qualifying Examination in September 2021
- supporting greater adoption of innovation and technology in the legal sector
- increasing activity to ensure compliance with anti-money laundering regulations
- supporting the legal sector during the UK EU exit transition
- undertaking research on equality, diversity and inclusion.

In light of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and feedback received during the consultation, the final plan includes an even greater focus on the implications of the pandemic, particularly on the vulnerable. While reaffirming our commitment to developing a Welsh presence, the revised plan suggests delaying the opening of a physical office in Wales in light of the current Covid-19 constraints.

Paul Philip, SRA Chief Executive said: "This was the first time that we publicly consulted on our annual business plan, which sets out our work for the initial year of our new Corporate Strategy. We welcome the interest and engagement by so many people in our work and the broad agreement with our priority areas and key workstreams.

"The world has of course changed since we developed our thinking on our forward strategy and planning last year, and it will take some time for the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic on the legal sector to be properly understood. We must be agile and responsive to what is a fast-moving picture, keeping our planning and budget under review as we work to ensure the high professional standards and public protection that are all the more important at such a difficult time."

Our business plan is set in the context of our wider 2020-2023 Corporate Strategy [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/corporate-strategy/>] , which was agreed following consultation earlier this year. This strategy outlines three overarching objectives:

- To set and maintain high professional standards for solicitors and law firms
- To support the adoption of legal technology and innovation
- To build understanding of emerging opportunities and challenges for the users of legal services and the legal sector, and regulate accordingly

Read our 2020-2021 Business Plan

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/globalassets/documents/sra/board-meetings/2020/annex-2---sra-business-plan-and-budget-2020-21.pdf?version=49da99>] , covering the period November 2020 – October 2021.