

BAR STANDARDS BOARD

REGULATING BARRISTERS

By email to: Richard.Orpin@LegalServicesBoard.org.uk

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22 April 2024

Dear Richard

REGULATORY REFORM

I have somewhat delayed writing to provide assurance on our progress in delivering the reforms to which we committed last April in order to reflect the conclusion of the special Board meeting held on 11 April to receive the final report of the Fieldfisher review of our approach to enforcement. We have also been considering, in the light of that discussion, our approach to regulatory reform in 2024/25 and subsequent years – of which more below.

The latest update reflecting discussions at the Board meetings on 21 March and 11 April is attached as annex A.

As you will see from the update, we have now delivered significant parts of the principal reforms which were included in our business plan for 2023/24. Developments since my last assurance report in January include:

- the adoption by the Bar Standards Board at its meeting on 21 March of a business plan for 2024/25¹ which aims to maintain the momentum of regulatory reform and to complete the strategic initiatives set in hand as part of the current three year strategy;

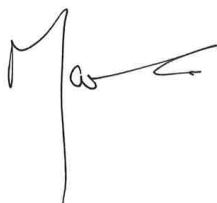
¹ <https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/resources/press-releases/the-bar-standards-board-publishes-its-2024-2025-business-plan.html>

- the endorsement by the Bar Standards Board and the Strategic Advisory Board of the Bar Tribunal and Adjudication Service of the Fieldfisher final report on our approach to enforcement²: we are now planning implementation of the report recommendations;
- the adoption by the Board at its meeting on 21 March of a balanced scorecard for reporting on operational performance: the scorecard will be used to hold the executive to account from 2024/25. The scorecard covers: the quality of decisions; productivity; timeliness; and the responsiveness of service;
- the publication of our Data and Intelligence Strategy³ following approval by the Board at its meeting on 21 March; and
- authorisation in progress of prospective providers of advocacy training in pupillage for courses beginning in September 2024: to achieve authorisation, providers must meet our published requirements aimed at promoting consistency of standards, equality of outcome and robust assessment.

We are, of course, at your disposal to discuss these developments.

Looking forward to 2024/25, we are conscious that our reform plans now go well beyond those adopted in April 2023, including (but not only) the implementation of the recommendations of the independent review of enforcement. Other reforms, as noted above, have been completed. It will make sense, therefore, to agree a re-based programme against which to provide assurance from May 2024 onwards.

Yours sincerely



Mark Neale
Director General

² <https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/resources/press-releases/the-bar-standards-board-publishes-the-fieldfisher-review-of-its-enforcement-system.html>

³ <https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/resources/press-releases/bar-standards-board-publishes-its-data-and-intelligence-strategy.html>