
Consultation

Costs Lawyer Practising Rules



Closing date: 5pm on 7 August 2026

Costs Lawyer Standards Board



This consultation

The Costs Lawyer Standards Board (CLSB) regulates Costs Lawyers under the framework established by the Legal Services Act 2007. To ensure that Costs Lawyers meet appropriate professional standards, the CLSB establishes requirements in relation to competency and conduct. Those requirements are set out in various regulatory arrangements, collated in the [Costs Lawyer Handbook](#).

The Costs Lawyer Practising Rules govern the practice of Costs Lawyers and the issue and revocation of practising certificates by the CLSB. The current version of the Practising Rules is available [on our website](#).

During the early part of 2026 the CLSB undertook a review of the Practising Rules and determined that some minor changes were needed to introduce clearer language and address real life queries received by the CLSB. Further, the CLSB's rules need to ensure that any individual applying for their first Costs Lawyer practising certificate or reinstatement to the Register of Costs Lawyers is of satisfactory character and suitability. This includes any period prior to first application and during any pauses in practicing.

The CLSB sets out its approach to consultations which is [published on our website](#). This consultation paper explains the rationale for a series of proposed changes to the Practising Rules following the review. It raises questions that you might like to consider as part of your consultation response, although we welcome comments on any aspect of the proposals.

Consultation responses should be submitted online using this link <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZY5YKHZ> by **5pm on 7 August 2026**.

If you have difficulty responding this way, or need any reasonable adjustments, please email enquiries@clsb.info

The current practising system

Costs Lawyers are permitted to practise if they:

- are qualified as a Costs Lawyer;
- have a current practising certificate; and
- have appropriate indemnity insurance.

Practising certificates run to 31 December each year. Annual renewals take place each November for the following year. Those qualifying or returning to practice in-year can apply for a certificate to cover the remaining part of the practising year at a reduced fee. Costs Lawyers with a current practising certificate are listed on the CLSB [Register of Costs Lawyers](#).

The CLSB can grant a practising certificate, grant a certificate subject to conditions on practising, or refuse an application for a practising certificate. Practising conditions might, for example, limit the type of work the Costs Lawyer can do or require them to take steps, such as completing specified training. The CLSB can also impose a condition on a certificate during its currency.

A practising certificate will automatically be revoked on certain events (e.g. death) and is likely to be revoked on others (e.g. bankruptcy). The Conduct Committee can also suspend or revoke a practising certificate and direct the removal (permanent or temporary) of a Costs Lawyer from the register.

Why change is needed

The current Practising Rules are based on those which came into effect in 2011 and which were amended in 2013 (twice), 2014 and 2020.

We are not aware of any need to change the fundamentals of the practising regime. We have sought to address a limited number of issues with the current Rules, as set out in this section. In the case of one proposed amendment, the change is necessary to ensure we meet our regulatory objective of protecting the consumer. Another is to respond to

the concerns raised following recent appeals about delegation of the conduct of litigation. The other two changes are largely process driven to ensure clarity.

Specifying disclosure of complaints histories

The current Rules are not sufficiently detailed on the need for applicants to declare relevant complaints histories prior to being admitted to, or reinstated to, the Register of Costs Lawyers. Rule 4.2 (i) has been relied upon to seek disclosure of such information, but the proposed amendments makes this clearer for those considering a first application or reinstatement.

Delegation of work

The current Rules are silent on what work can be delegated, how it can be delegated, and to who. The Code of Conduct (Principles 3 and 4) already provides public protection in this area, but the introduction of a new Rule 5 in these Practising Rules seeks to make explicit what was implicit. We believe this addresses any misunderstanding so far as we are able that can have arisen following the recent appeals in the Mazur case.

There is a further addition which seeks to ensure that work is only delegated to individuals who are of the same character and fitness as the Costs Lawyers who are delegating the work.

Removal of Rule 6.2

The current Rule 6.2 is obsolete now the only Register is the online public Register. Prior to 2021 there were two registers, but since the new database was introduced there has been only one which is published on the website, therefore this Rule is now obsolete.

Professional Indemnity Insurance from overseas

The current Rules are silent on whether the CLSB would accept professional indemnity insurance from a provider outside of England and Wales. The CLSB does not seek to prevent Costs Lawyers continuing to practise from overseas subject to compliance with

our full regulatory requirements. Therefore we proposed to insert a new section to Rule 9 to allow for equivalent cover from outside the United Kingdom.

The proposed amendments

Annex 1 to this consultation paper is a table setting out the proposed amendments to the text of the Practising Rules. Changes are shown in red while deleted text has been struck through. Commentary on the rationale for each proposed change is provided in the righthand column of the table.

Annex 2 to this consultation paper shows the amended Practising Rules as they would appear if all the proposed changes are made.

Consultation questions

1. Do you agree that we have focused on the right objectives in updating the Practising Rules? Are there any other key objectives or bodies of evidence that we should take into account? If so, how?
2. Do you agree with the proposed amendments to the Practising Rules? Are there any additional amendments that we should consider?
3. Do you find the proposed presentation of the Practising Rules accessible? Are there any other formatting changes we should consider to make the Practising Rules more user-friendly?
4. Do you foresee any reason why the proposed changes could have a harmful impact on persons with a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010? If so, is there any evidence you can provide that would help us assess that impact?

Section of Rules – Revised Text	Explanation of Proposed Amendments
<p>provided, whether or not the complaint was upheld. Costs Lawyers who hold a current practising certificate should only report first-tier complaints in their annual practising certificate application.</p> <p>(i) been the subject of an adverse order or finding of a civil court or tribunal; or</p> <p>(j) become aware of any other matter that might reasonably be expected to be disclosed in affecting their fitness to become or remain a Costs Lawyer</p> <p>4.3 The applicant must make a prompt report to the CLSB of any material changes of which the applicant is aware to information previously provided to the CLSB by the applicant or on their behalf relating to the applicant or their practice, including any change to the information recorded in the register.</p>	
<p>RULE 5: Delegation of Work</p> <p>5.1 Costs Lawyers must ensure that, where work is delegated to a person who is not a Costs Lawyer authorised by the CLSB whether employed or not, that individual has the necessary competence and knowledge to undertake the role.</p> <p>5.2 A Costs Lawyer must not delegate to a person who is not a Costs Lawyer and to whom any part of Rule 4.2 would apply if they were a Costs Lawyer without the advance written permission of the CLSB. This permission will not be unreasonably withheld, and, where it is not withheld, it may be issued with conditions to protect the public interest and integrity of the Costs Lawyer profession.</p> <p>5.3 Where a Costs Lawyer delegates work within the scope of reserved legal activities to someone who is not an authorised person under the Legal Services Act 2007:</p> <p>(a) the unauthorised individual must be acting on behalf of the Costs Lawyer in assisting with the delegated work;</p> <p>(b) the Costs Lawyer must suitably supervise these activities; and</p> <p>(c) a Costs Lawyer who fails to suitably supervise an unauthorised individual assisting in reserved legal activities will be in breach of Principles 3 and 4 of the Code of Conduct as well as these Practising Rules.</p>	<p><i>This new Rule 5 is proposed to address concerns across the legal sector in England and Wales in relation to what work can be delegated, who is ultimately responsible and awareness of reserved legal activities.</i></p> <p><i>Guidance will be used to improve understanding of what is a reserved legal activity.</i></p> <p><i>This proposed new Rule seeks to codify what the CLSB understands to be the usual behaviour of Costs Lawyers. However, following the fallout from the Mazur case it has become clear to the legal sector’s frontline regulators that there was not a shared understanding on delegation of work; this proposed new rule simply seeks to make explicit what was implicit.</i></p> <p><i>The only exception to the above is proposed Rule 5.2. This new Rule would simply mean that those to whom Costs Lawyers delegate work are held to the same standards of fitness as the Costs Lawyers themselves. As the Costs Lawyer is ultimately responsible for the work they delegate, this change should not only offer clients greater protection, but also Costs Lawyers themselves.</i></p>

Section of Rules – Revised Text	Explanation of Proposed Amendments
<p>Rule 5 6: Register of Costs Lawyers</p> <p>56.1 The Register may be kept in electronic form of Costs Lawyers will be published on the CLSB website.</p> <p>56.3 The Register will contain the following information in respect of each Costs Lawyer:</p> <p>(a) name;</p> <p>(b) registration number;</p> <p>(c) date year of qualification as a Costs Lawyer;</p> <p>(d) details of their practice of employment</p> <p>(e) contact details;</p> <p>(f) any conditions on their Practising Certificate;</p> <p>(g) any published disciplinary outcomes, and</p> <p>(h) any other information required by law or deemed appropriate to be held.</p> <p>5.4 A short version of the Register which shows the name and registration number of each Costs Lawyer, their date of qualification, the organisation in which they practise (if applicable) and any conditions on their Practising Certificate will be made available in an electronic format for public inspection through the CLSB website. Other information may appear in this public Register from time to time, unless the Costs Lawyer requests that it does not so appear. Disciplinary information relating to a Costs Lawyer may appear in the public Register in accordance with the Regulatory Arrangements.</p>	<p><i>This Rule changes from Rule 5 to Rule 6 to accommodate the proposed new Rule 5.</i></p> <p><i>These changes at 6.1, 6.3 and 6.4 (formerly 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4) collectively update the Rules to reflect the manner in which the CLSB publishes details of all Costs Lawyers, and harmonises it with what is specified in the Disciplinary Rules and Procedure. Rule 5.4 is obsolete as there are no longer two registers, there is only the one, which is published on the website.</i></p>
<p>Former Rule 6: Issue of Practising Certificates</p> <p>6.2 The commencement date for the Practising Certificate will be the date on which it is entered on the Register and this will also appear on the Practising Certificate.</p>	<p><i>Rule 6 is now Rule 7. However, the former Rule 6.2 is obsolete now the only Register is the online public Register. Historically, prior 2021, there were two registers but since the new database was introduced there has been only one, which is as published on the website therefore this Rule is now obsolete.</i></p>
<p>Rule 10: Indemnity Insurance</p> <p>10.1 Costs Lawyers must ensure that they:</p> <p>(a) practise with the benefit of professional indemnity insurance of a minimum £100,000 (any one claim) to include loss of documents; and</p>	

Section of Rules – Revised Text	Explanation of Proposed Amendments
<p>(b) on an ongoing basis, assess all financial risk associated with work being undertaken by them and ensure that professional indemnity insurance (including loss of documents insurance) is in place in excess of the minimum set out in Rule 9.1(a) at a level commensurate with that risk.</p> <p>(c) professional indemnity insurance will ordinarily be written in the United Kingdom from a provider regulated under United Kingdom legislation. In the event a Costs Lawyer is based overseas and provides cover from another jurisdiction, they must evidence that it provides equivalent cover and, if written in any language other than English, provide a suitable translation certified as accurate.</p>	<p><i>The current Rules are silent on whether the CLSB would accept professional indemnity insurance from overseas. The CLSB does not seek to prevent Costs Lawyers continuing to practise from overseas subject to compliance with our full regulatory requirements. Therefore we proposed to insert a new section to Rule 9 to allow for equivalent cover from outside the United Kingdom.</i></p>

Annex 2 – Complete version of proposed new Practising Rules

Introduction

These Rules govern the practice of Costs Lawyers and the issue and revocation of practising certificates by the CLSB. They replace any other practising rules or regulations previously issued by the CLSB.

Definitions

ACL	Association of Costs Lawyers (named in the Legal Services Act 2007 as the Association of Law Costs Draftsmen)
Applicant	Any person who applies for a Practising Certificate
Approved Regulator	A body designated as an approved regulator under the Legal Services Act 2007
CLSB	Costs Lawyer Standards Board, acting as an approved regulator under the LSA following delegated authority by the ACL on 31 October 2011.
Costs Lawyer	A person who holds a current Practising Certificate and is therefore authorised to carry on the following reserved legal activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The exercise of a right of audience• The conduct of litigation• The administration of oaths
Complaint	Information established by the CLSB under its supervision arrangements or information received from a third party (natural, legal or commercial) which relates to a potential breach of a Principle by a Costs Lawyer.
Conduct Committee	Committee established by the CLSB to consider Costs Lawyer conduct matters, as defined in the Disciplinary Rules and Procedures

CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CPD Rules	CLSB's rules and requirements for continuing professional development that apply at the relevant date
Disciplinary Rules and Procedures	CLSB's rules and procedures governing disciplinary matters that apply at the relevant date
First-tier Complaint	Complaints that are made directly to a provider of legal services are referred to as "first-tier complaints".
Practising Certificate	Certificate issued annually allowing a Costs Lawyer to practise under the title of Costs Lawyer and carry on reserved legal activities
Prescribed	Prescribed by the CLSB from time to time
Register	The register of Costs Lawyers who hold a current Practising Certificate
Regulatory Arrangements	The CLSB Handbook, including the Code of Conduct, and associated CLSB guidance, policies and procedures
Regulatory Objectives	The objectives listed in section 1(1) of the Legal Services Act 2007
Second-tier Complaint	Complaints that are escalated to the CLSB or Legal Ombudsman are known as "second-tier complaints".
Training Rules	The CLSB's rules and requirements for training and qualification that apply at the relevant date

RULE 1: Right to practise as a Costs Lawyer

1.1 No person shall be entitled to practise as a Costs Lawyer unless:

- (a) they have qualified as a Costs Lawyer in accordance with the Training Rules;
- (b) they have a current Practising Certificate which has been issued in accordance with these Rules and which is not suspended;
- (c) they comply with CPD requirements set out in the CPD Rules; and
- (d) they have professional indemnity insurance in accordance with Rule 9.

RULE 2: Application for a Practising Certificate

- 2.1 An application for a Practising Certificate must be made in the prescribed form, correctly completed, by the prescribed time, and be accompanied by:
- (a) the prescribed fee; and
 - (b) any information and documents that may be prescribed or reasonably requested by the CLSB.
- 2.2 The application will only be made once the CLSB has received all the payments, information and documents relating to it.
- 2.3 The applicant must ensure that all details provided in and in connection with the application are correct and complete, and if they become aware of any changes to the information supplied or any inaccuracy or relevant omission, they must notify the CLSB as soon as practicable.

RULE 3: Decisions

- 3.1 As soon as reasonably practicable after the receipt of a completed application for a Practising Certificate, the CLSB will notify the applicant of its decision.
- 3.2 The CLSB will either:
- (a) grant a Practising Certificate (with or without conditions); or
 - (b) refuse the application.
- 3.3 The CLSB will refuse the application if the applicant:
- (a) does not meet, or has not demonstrated that they meet, the criteria in Rule 1.1(a), (c) and (d);
 - (b) has not complied with Rule 2;

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- (c) has failed to pay any fixed costs or financial penalties imposed pursuant to the Disciplinary Rules and Procedures which are due at the date of the application;
 - (d) is subject to an order suspending their Practising Certificate; or
 - (e) is subject to an order permanently revoking their Practising Certificate.

3.4 The CLSB may refuse the application or impose conditions on the issue of a Practising Certificate if satisfied that:

- (a) the applicant is unsuitable to practise as a Costs Lawyer (or in the case of a condition, is unsuitable to undertake certain activities or engage in certain business or practising arrangements);
- (b) the applicant is putting, or is likely to put, at risk the interests of clients, third parties or the public;
- (c) the applicant will not comply with the CLSB's Regulatory Arrangements (and/or in the case of a condition, will require monitoring in relation to compliance with the CLSB's Regulatory Arrangements);
- (d) in the case of a condition, the applicant should take specified steps conducive to the Regulatory Objectives; or
- (e) it is otherwise in the public interest to do so in light of the Regulatory Objectives.

3.5 The CLSB may also impose or amend conditions on a Practising Certificate during its currency on one or more of the grounds set out in Rule 3.4. If the CLSB does so, it must give 21 calendar days' written notice with reasons to the Cost Lawyer in question, unless it is satisfied on reasonable grounds that it is not in the public interest to do so.

3.6 The CLSB may remove a condition on a Practising Certificate if it considers, on written application of the Costs Lawyer or on its own initiative, that there has been a change of circumstances such that it is no longer satisfied that any of the grounds in Rule 3.4 for imposing a condition apply.

3.7 The CLSB must notify its reasons in writing to the applicant in the event the CLSB:

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- (a) refuses an application;
 - (b) makes a Practising Certificate subject to conditions; or
 - (c) refuses to remove a condition imposed on a Practising Certificate.

RULE 4: Disclosure

- 4.1 An applicant or Costs Lawyer must disclose the events set out in Rule 4.2 to the CLSB:
- (a) when making an application for a Practising Certificate;
 - (b) when making an application to remove a condition on a Practising Certificate (including to remove a condition imposed under an interim suspension order pursuant to the Disciplinary Rules and Procedures); and
 - (c) at any other time as soon as reasonably practicable after the event has occurred.
- 4.2 The events that the applicant or Costs Lawyer must disclose are that they have (in any jurisdiction):
- (a) been subject to any criminal charge, conviction or caution, subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974;
 - (b) been subject to an adjudication of bankruptcy;
 - (c) been granted a debt relief order;
 - (d) entered into an individual voluntary arrangement or a partnership voluntary arrangement;
 - (e) been a director of any company or partner in an LLP or partnership that has been the subject of a winding up order, an administrative order or an administrative receivership, or has otherwise been wound up or put into administration in circumstances of insolvency;
 - (f) been disqualified from being a company director or the trustee of a charity;
 - (g) been the subject of an adverse disciplinary finding, or is currently subject to ongoing disciplinary proceedings, by any regulatory or professional body;
 - (h) been the subject of a complaint from a client or member of the public about any costs service they have provided, whether or not the complaint

was upheld. Costs Lawyers who hold a current practising certificate should only report first-tier complaints in their annual practising certificate application.

- (i) been the subject of an adverse order or finding of a civil court or tribunal; or
- (j) become aware of any other matter that might reasonably be expected to be disclosed in affecting their fitness to become or remain a Costs Lawyer.

4.3 The applicant must make a prompt report to the CLSB of any material changes of which the applicant is aware to information previously provided to the CLSB by the applicant or on their behalf relating to the applicant or their practice, including any change to the information recorded in the register.

RULE 5: Delegation of Work

5.1 Costs Lawyers must ensure that where work is delegated to a person who is not a Costs Lawyer authorised by the CLSB whether employed or not, that individual has the necessary competence and knowledge to undertake the role.

5.2 A Costs Lawyer must not delegate to a person who is not a Costs Lawyer and to whom any part of Rule 4.2 would apply if they were a Costs Lawyer without the advance written permission of the CLSB. This permission will not be unreasonably withheld, and, where it is not withheld, it may be issued with conditions to protect the public interest and integrity of the Costs Lawyer profession.

5.3 Where a Costs Lawyer delegates work within the scope of reserved legal activities to someone who is not an authorised person under the Legal Services Act 2007:

- (a) the unauthorised individual must be acting on behalf of the Costs Lawyer in assisting with the delegated work;
- (b) the Costs Lawyer must suitably supervise these activities; and
- (c) a Costs Lawyer who fails to suitably supervise an unauthorised individual assisting in reserved legal activities will be in breach of Principles 3 and 4 of the Code of Conduct as well as these Practising Rules.

RULE 6: Register of Costs Lawyers

- 6.1 The Register may be kept in electronic form.
- 6.2 The name of each Costs Lawyer will be entered onto the Register upon:
- (a) the issue of a Practising Certificate; or
 - (b) the expiry of any suspension of a current Practising Certificate.
- 6.3 The Register will contain the following information in respect of each Costs Lawyer:
- (a) name;
 - (b) registration number;
 - (c) date of qualification as a Costs Lawyer;
 - (d) details of their practice or employment;
 - (e) contact details, including an email address;
 - (f) any conditions on their Practising Certificate;
 - (g) any published disciplinary outcomes; and
 - (h) any other information required by law or deemed appropriate to be held.
- 6.4 If a Costs Lawyer is subject to an order (pursuant to the Disciplinary Rules and Procedures or otherwise) for suspension of their name from the Register, the Costs Lawyer's name will be removed from the Register for the period of the suspension. The Costs Lawyer's name will be reinstated to the Register upon expiry of the suspension if they have a Practising Certificate that is current at that time. If they do not have a Practising Certificate that is current at that time, their name will be reinstated to the Register upon successful application for a Practising Certificate.
- 6.5 If a Costs Lawyer is subject to an order (pursuant to the Disciplinary Rules and Procedures or otherwise) for permanent removal of their name from the Register, the Costs Lawyer's name will be removed from the Register and will be reinstated only upon successful appeal against the order.

6.6 A Costs Lawyer's name will be removed from the Register if they do not have a current Practising Certificate.

RULE 7: Issue of Practising Certificates

7.1 The Practising Certificate will be delivered to the address notified to CLSB as the applicant's practising address or to such other address as the applicant shall advise the CLSB in writing and may be delivered either by post or electronically.

7.2 The commencement date for the Practising Certificate will be the date on which all conditions are satisfied in order for it to be issued and this will also appear on the Practising Certificate.

7.3 The Practising Certificate will include the following details:

- (a) the full name of the Costs Lawyer;
- (b) the commencement date;
- (c) the date of expiry; and
- (d) any condition to which the Practising Certificate is subject.

7.4 In the event conditions are imposed on a Practising Certificate, a replacement Practising Certificate will be issued stating the condition and the date on which it was imposed.

7.5 A replacement Practising Certificate will be issued in the event a condition expires, is varied, is successfully appealed or is revoked.

RULE 8: Expiration of a Practising Certificate

8.1 A Practising Certificate will expire:

- (a) on the expiry date stated on the Practising Certificate;
- (b) when a replacement Practising Certificate is issued; or
- (c) on the death of the Costs Lawyer.

RULE 9: Revocation and suspension of a Practising Certificate

9.1 A Practising Certificate may be revoked by the CLSB if:

- (a) the Costs Lawyer no longer meets the criteria in Rule 1.1(a), (c) and (d), or it comes to light that the Costs Lawyer did not meet those criteria at the time of applying for the Practising Certificate;
- (b) the Costs Lawyer is subject to an order permanently revoking their Practising Certificate;
- (c) the Costs Lawyer discloses one or more of the events set out in Rule 4.2 to the CLSB and the CLSB is satisfied of one or more of the matters in Rule 3.4 (a), (b), (c) or (e).

9.2 If a Costs Lawyer is subject to an order suspending their Practising Certificate, they will not be able to practise as a Costs Lawyer for the period of the suspension. If the Practising Certificate is still current when the suspension ends, the Practising Certificate will remain valid. If the Practising Certificate has expired during the period of the suspension, the Costs Lawyer must apply for a new Practising Certificate.

RULE 10: Indemnity insurance

10.1 Costs Lawyers must ensure that they:

- (a) practise with the benefit of professional indemnity insurance of a minimum £100,000 (any one claim) to include loss of documents; and
- (b) on an ongoing basis, assess all financial risk associated with work being undertaken by them and ensure that professional indemnity insurance (including loss of documents insurance) is in place in excess of the minimum set out in Rule 9.1(a) at a level commensurate with that risk.
- (c) professional indemnity insurance will ordinarily be written in the United Kingdom from a provider regulated under United Kingdom legislation. In the event a Costs Lawyer is based overseas and provides cover from another jurisdiction, they must evidence that it provides equivalent cover

and, if written in any language other than English, provide a suitable translation certified as accurate.

RULE 11: Appeals

- 11.1 An applicant or Costs Lawyer may appeal a decision of the CLSB to:
- (a) refuse to issue a Practising Certificate;
 - (b) impose conditions upon a Practising Certificate;
 - (c) refuse to remove a condition imposed on a Practising Certificate; or
 - (d) revoke a Practising Certificate.
- 11.2 An appeal must be made within 21 calendar days of the date on which the Costs Lawyer is notified of the decision they intend to appeal.
- 11.3 The appeal must be in writing to the CLSB and must set out the grounds on which the appeal is being made.
- 11.4 The only grounds for making an appeal are that the decision was flawed because:
- (a) there was a material error of law;
 - (b) there was a failure to take into account material information;
 - (c) the decision was irrational or based on irrelevant considerations;
 - (d) there was a material failure to follow the Regulatory Arrangements;
 - (e) the decision was unlawful; or
 - (f) new evidence has been obtained which could not have been made available when the decision was made and which will be material to the decision.
- 11.5 An appeal shall be by way of review by a Conduct Committee and the decision on the appeal shall be made on the papers.
- 11.6 The Conduct Committee may not impose any decision or condition that is harsher than the original.
- 10.7 There is no right of appeal beyond the Conduct Committee.

RULE 12: Notification of decisions

12.1 If it is considered to further the Regulatory Objectives, the CLSB may notify any or all of the following about decisions made under these Rules:

- (a) ACL;
- (b) an Approved Regulator;
- (c) the Legal Services Board;
- (d) a law enforcement agency;
- (e) the Legal Ombudsman.

Consultation Practising Rules: Consultation on proposed changes



Closing date: 5pm on 7 August 2026

Costs Lawyer Standards Board

CLSB
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Initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

This document supports, and should be read with, the CLSB’s [consultation](#) on the proposed changes to the Practising Rules for Costs Lawyers in 2026. The consultation closes at 5pm on 7 August 2026.

The Legal Services Board’s [Guidance](#) on Applications To Alter Regulatory Arrangements Rules states that a regulator must carry out an equality impact assessment (EIA) in relation to its proposed changes, and the EIA should be informed by consultation with the regulated community. Below is a preliminary EIA setting out how we anticipate the proposed changes to the Practising Rules will affect practitioners with protected characteristics.

We welcome your input, particularly if you have evidence which suggests that the practising fee could create barriers to access or progression for certain groups of Costs Lawyers.

Protected characteristic group	Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?	Please explain and give examples of any evidence / consultation / data used (source of diversity data below can be found here on our website)	Actions to address negative impact
Disability	No	8.7% of Costs Lawyers report having a disability. We have no data to suggest that this group would be impacted disproportionately.	Not applicable
Gender reassignment	No	We have not asked this question of the profession since 2023 when the number of respondents who answered that their gender was different to their sex registered at birth, and the number who preferred not to say, were both less than 5. We have no data that would indicate any disproportionate impact on this group.	Not applicable
Marriage or civil partnership	No	We do not collect data on the marital status of practitioners, however as the same Practice Rules apply to all practitioners and marital status does not impact ability to	Not applicable

		practise, we have not identified any risk of differential impact based on this characteristic.	
Pregnancy and maternity	Yes	While it is foreseeable that Costs Lawyers who take leave for pregnancy and maternity could ultimately take a longer break from practising, the proposed Rule change on disclosures of complaints would not have a disproportionate impact as they would not have been Practising during the gap. The other changes are technical and we do not see any impact on this group.	Not applicable
Race	No	10.3% of Costs Lawyers identify as Black, Asian or Other Minority Ethnic background. Our EDI work continues to identify how the CLSB can influence greater diversity from these groups but there is no data that suggests that the proposed Rule changes present a barrier or evidence differential impact.	Not applicable
Religion or belief	No	43.4% of Costs Lawyers report having no religion or being atheist and a further 46.3% identify as Christian. The proportion of practitioners from other faith groups is small, around 1% or less per group, although a material number of practitioners preferred not to report their religion (5.8%) so these groups might be larger than recorded. Our data does not suggest any differential impact of the proposed Rule changes on smaller faith groups.	Not applicable
Sexual orientation	No	7.9% of Costs Lawyers identify as LGBTQIA+. We have no evidence the proposed Rule changes have any differential impact on this group.	Not applicable
Sex (gender)	Yes	There is potential for women applicants for reinstatement to be disproportionately affected following extended parental leave. However, these changes would only impact those who were working in an unregulated capacity during that period.	Not applicable

Age	No	Due to the profile of qualifying Costs Lawyers, only a small proportion (14.5%) are under the age of 35, and 22.7% are 55 or older. The majority of Costs Lawyers fall in the middle age ranges. There is no evidence to suggest that the proposed Rule changes which are the same for all practitioners will have any differential impact on the younger or older groups.	Not applicable
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