

Law firms (London and the Regions)

Our referee process is the same across the Legal 500 series. Firms supply details of referees in spreadsheets, separate from their editorial submissions. We then process and deduplicate the data, and make initial contact with referees by email. We endeavour to contact all referees provided on time and in the correct format.

We place no limit on the amount of referees that you may provide, and all will be contacted. When deciding on the number of referees for a given sub-practice area, please bear in mind that – on average – the referee response rate across all guides is between 25-30%. The more referees you provide, the greater your chance of us receiving substantive feedback on the practice in question.

Providing referees is not compulsory, and a firm will not be excluded from a ranking on the basis that referees have not been provided. However feedback – from clients, introducers/referrers of work, and counsel – is an essential element of the information considered by the editorial researchers in assessing rankings and writing accompanying editorial.

Referee spreadsheets

All referees should be provided in spreadsheets in the prescribed form. At www.legal500.com/assets/pages/about-us/get-involved.html, you will find dedicated editorial submission guidelines and dedicated referee spreadsheets for all areas of the UK research (including London (by main practice area), and each UK region). Right click to select the relevant spreadsheet.

Completing the spreadsheet

Some of the information requested in the spreadsheet is compulsory, while other information is optional.

REFeree TITLE (MR, MRS): compulsory

REFeree FIRST NAME: compulsory

REFeree SURNAME: compulsory

REFeree JOB TITLE: optional, although it allows us to tailor our distribution

REFeree COMPANY NAME: compulsory

REFeree COMPANY – INDUSTRY/SECTOR: optional, although when The Legal 500 UK is launched, where possible we would like to inform referees of the editorial and rankings, tailored to their industry

REFeree ADDRESS – LINE 1: optional

REFeree ADDRESS – LINE 2: optional

REFeree ADDRESS – POSTCODE: optional

REFeree ADDRESS – COUNTRY: optional

REFeree EMAIL ADDRESS: compulsory. We will only contact referees where an initial email address for us to contact is provided

REFeree TELEPHONE NUMBER: optional

THE LEGAL 500 SUB-PRACTICE AREA: compulsory. We ask referees about the practice, rather than the firm generally. The sub-practice areas are embedded into the spreadsheet (and are also listed in the

relevant editorial submission guidelines). Please enter them in the spreadsheet exactly as we have written them, by selecting from the drop-down box

LAW FIRM NAME: compulsory. Please put the name of the firm the referees in your spreadsheet are being submitted for (i.e. only the name of your firm)

THE LEGAL 500 REGION: compulsory. As with the Legal 500 sub-practice area column, the regions are embedded in the document, and must be selected from the drop-down box

REFEREE CATEGORY: compulsory. Firms are asked to specify (by selecting from the drop-down box) whether the referee is a client; a referrer or introducer of work; or counsel. This will enable us to tailor our reference requests appropriately.

Points to note

Please do not provide referees in any format other than the template spreadsheet. If you do, we may not be able to process the spreadsheet, and your referees may not be contacted.

Please do not delete ANY of the columns. If you do, we may not be able to process the spreadsheet, and your referees may not be contacted.

Please do not insert ANY information (for example headings or explanatory notes) that is not asked for.

Please do not fill out the spreadsheet in capital letters.

If you are a London firm and would prefer to supply a single spreadsheet covering all BPAs, please email stephanie.ezimako@legal500.com

If you are a regional firm providing submissions for more than one region, and would prefer to supply a single spreadsheet covering all regions, please email stephanie.ezimako@legal500.com

What happens next?

The data contained in spreadsheets is extracted and used to generate an automatic email from the relevant researcher to the referee.

The Legal 500 series contacted over 250,000 individual referees in 2014. We will be sending out referee emails shortly after the editorial submission deadlines.

Frequently asked questions

Q. We would like to include a client who instructs our commercial property, M&A and tax practices. How do we fill in the spreadsheet?

A. Add the client three times. Our extraction process allows us to deduplicate, by firm.

Q. How does your deduplication system work?

A. We will deduplicate all of the practice area spreadsheets together if they are sent by the deadline. So if a referee is supplied in relation to three practice areas by the same firm, they will receive one single email asking about all three. If the same referee has been put forward as a reference by various firms and practice areas covered by the same researcher, they will also receive one email, noting each of the firms that have used them as a referee. For London and the regions, if the same referee is put forward by areas covered by 3 or more researchers, the referee will receive an email from our Referee Manager, to check that they are prepared to receive multiple emails in relation to specified areas, and offering them the alternative of replying with information relating to those areas for the client research manager to distribute as relevant. We cannot guarantee to contact clients sent after the deadlines. If a referee has been contacted in our first round of emails (ie sent in before the deadline), they will receive no more

emails from The Legal 500, so submitting referees late will limit the number of referees we contact for late submitters.

Q. What questions do you ask clients?

A. We ask five standard question to all referees:

- 1) How long have you used the firm in this area, and on what type/value of work do you instruct it?
- 2) How would you assess the overall level of service? (Factors may include response times, business acumen/industry knowledge, appropriateness of advice, strength-in-depth of team, and value for money).
- 3) Which individual lawyers would you single out as being particularly good? What do you see as their strengths and qualities?
- 4) How does the firm compare to any others of which you have experience in this area? Would you recommend any other firms/lawyers?
- 5) Do you have any other comments?

Q. Can you copy the firm in on emails?

A. No. The referee process is confidential.

Q. Can you contact us before you contact the referees?

A. No. Please only include referees in the spreadsheet whom we are authorised to contact.

Q. I've made a mistake, can I submit an amended spreadsheet?

A. If you submit an amended spreadsheet, referees included on both may be contacted twice, depending on the timing. Rather than resubmitting, you should contact Stephanie Ezimako in the first instance, email stephanie.ezimako@legal500.com, tel 020 7396 5682

Q. Can I send more than one spreadsheet, as some of our practices have not yet signed off on their referees?

A. Yes. But please ensure that the subsequent lists do not repeat referee details already supplied, and be aware that we will not deduplicate against spreadsheets already processed.

Q. How should I name the spreadsheet?

A. Spreadsheets relating to London should be named:

UK/[London]/[Firm name]/[Business Practice Area].xls

Spreadsheets relating to the regions should be named:

UK/[Region]/[Firm name].xls

Q. What are the deadlines for referee spreadsheets?

A. The deadlines for referee spreadsheets can be found in the editorial submission guidelines, and on The Legal 500 website.

Q. How do I contact the Legal 500 if I have questions?

A. Please email editorial@legal500.com, or contact Stephanie Ezimako, stephanie.ezimako@legal500.com, tel 020 7396 5682.