

Law firms in the Regions, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Offshore Britain

Editorial submission request and guidelines

We will soon be starting research for the 2015 edition of *The Legal 500 UK*, and invite you to provide us with editorial submissions. Please note that these submission guidelines have been substantially revised and updated, with the objective of providing more clarity about the information for which we are looking – and therefore place importance on – and more transparency about how we conduct our analysis.

To give your firm the best possible chance of being ranked, please follow these guidelines carefully when preparing and sending your submissions.

Editorial submissions and referee spreadsheets for the Regions, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Offshore Britain must be with us no later than **midnight on Friday 6 February 2015**. Please note that, save in exceptional circumstances, any submissions received after this deadline will not be considered.

The editorial of *The Legal 500 UK* is structured by region, and main and sub-practice areas. Firms should provide submissions for each region in which they are based, in relation to each sub-practice area for which they believe they warrant recommendation.

You can find useful information on how we conduct our research and rank firms, and FAQs at www.legal500.com/assets/pages/about-us/get-involved.html.

If you have any further questions, please email the address below, and either I or one of my team will be pleased to help.

Yours sincerely



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TIMETABLE

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Editorial submissions should reach us no later than midnight on Friday 6 February 2015

Interviews will take place between 16 February and 20 March 2015

Researcher contact details will be posted on Monday 9 February 2015 at www.legal500.com/assets/pages/about-us/get-involved.html

South West Editorial submission request and guidelines

Regional UK Powerlist

Following on from our successful Regional Insight Report 2015, and our collaboration with *Legal Business* to produce the GC Powerlist, we want to shine the light away from the London-centric publications and look to those across the UK who are pushing the in-house legal function forward.

In mid-2015, we will publish our inaugural Regional UK Powerlist, which aims to highlight those individuals in the 12 regions/countries that we cover outside of London. As our Regional Insight demonstrated, the legal press often focuses on those in the capital as the leaders-in-law, whereas the research that we have conducted paints a very different picture. The Powerlist will feature in-house counsel (and the C-Suite, procurement specialists and regulatory and compliance specialists) outside of London who are making an invaluable contribution to the profession.

We are asking all submitting firms to nominate at least two individuals that they feel have been instrumental in:

- changing or forming opinions within their company or industry;
- developing brilliant technical solutions to complex issues;
- creating innovative structures to ensure that the in-house function is driving the business forward; or
- providing a business working model that other corporate counsel/businesses should follow.

PLEASE DO NOT NOMINATE PARTNERS/ASSOCIATES AT LAW FIRMS

Our team of experienced researchers will assess the nominations, and will speak to both the nominee and nominating-lawyer on the long-list to finalise each jurisdictional list. The final editorial will feature not just information on why that individual has made the list, but also comment from the law firms about how they feel those individuals have helped shape innovation in the legal industry.

Please go to the website to nominate for the UK Regional Powerlist 2015: www.legal500.com/assets/pages/cc100/2014/nominate_uk_reg_powerlist.html

For further information, please contact us at corporatecounsel@legal500.com.

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Detailed submission guidelines

The editorial of *The Legal 500 UK* is structured into 12 main practice areas, each of which has several sub-practice areas.

Firms should provide a separate submission for each sub-practice area for which they wish to be considered for a ranking. The main practice areas and sub-practice areas are set out on page 11 onwards.

We do not publish or provide a form or template for submissions. This is because we want firms to present their practices in their own words and format, rather than approaching submissions as a literal and figurative form-filling exercise. Firms are warned against overloading submissions with details unlikely to assist researchers; the best submissions (quality of the work examples aside) are those that provide a clear and succinct snapshot of the practice in question.

There is a certain minimum level of information that a submission will ideally contain, as detailed below.

It may be helpful to approach the drafting of the submission in the same way as a client pitch; rather than a dry recitation of facts, we want to get a sense of the enthusiasm and passion that the team has for its practice area and clients.

Feedback on the 2014 edition

You are encouraged to provide constructive feedback on the practice's ranking in (or omission from) the 2014 edition. If you disagree with our decision last year, and have suggestions as to where the practice should be ranked, please make your reasons as specific and detailed as possible. Please bear in mind that, within tiers, firms are listed alphabetically.

You are welcome to include any observations about the market and rankings generally, but please note that peer feedback is not part of the ranking analysis for firms. Constructive comments about the market – particularly factual statements (for example about partner moves) – can be a useful starting point for researchers to look into things themselves and either corroborate the information or disregard it.

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Detailed work examples

Provide up to ten detailed work examples; all should fall in the calendar year 2014.

The work examples are the central element of the submission: they are a critical part of our qualitative analysis for whether or not to rank a firm in a given practice area. We have increased the limit on work examples to give us a greater evidential basis for our analysis; and to allow firms to illustrate the breadth of their practice with a greater diversity of examples – and from more team members.

The work examples should be matters (whether transactions, cases or other instructions) that, collectively, represent the practice as a whole and illustrate its expertise. When drafting the text for each example, bear in mind who will be reading it and for what purpose: researchers often have several dozen submissions for a given practice area, and they are looking for differentiating factors between firms.

Remember that our researchers, although familiar with the practice area in question and the market generally, are generally not lawyers. As such, write in layman's terms, and do not assume that the work 'speaks for itself'.

For each work example, you should include the following information, where relevant:

- What, if anything, about the example is confidential and cannot be published (see below for further details);
- In clear and straightforward terms, why the example has been included;
- Why the example is representative of the practice;
- How the practice was uniquely able (or one of a select handful able) to handle the matter;
- How the practice added value for the client(s);
- The identity of the client(s);
- The size or value of the matter;
- The firm(s) acting on the other side of the matter;

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- The team member(s) that led on the matter, and other lawyers that played a significant role;
- Support from other practices within the firm; and
- Links to any relevant and useful press releases or articles.

We recognise that some legal work, notably contentious and transactional matters, is lengthy and can span more than one year. Work examples of this nature used in last year's submission may be included again this year, provided that there are notable developments (which should be explained).

Please ensure that any information that cannot be published is clearly marked as confidential. Where only some of the facts in an example are confidential, please specify clearly which parts are and are not confidential. See below for further details.

Whether or not a matter is confidential (in whole or in part) does not affect our ranking analysis; it affects only what we can write about in the editorial. As such, wherever possible, you should include at least one publishable matter, so that any editorial about the practice is representative and colourful. By comparison, where we cannot publish details of any work examples, any editorial will be somewhat prosaic.

Practice information

Always bear in mind that *The Legal 500 UK* has a team-based focus, rather than on individual lawyers. Firms that can demonstrate this strength-in-depth in their submissions stand a better chance of being ranked.

Set out the basic information about the team, including:

- Head(s) of team (and of any sub-teams, such as contentious/non-contentious);
- Size and makeup of team (number of partners, senior associates and so on);
- Location of each team member (and, where an individual is not based in one location, details of their division of time between different offices); and

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- Where a lawyer does not specialise in one area of law exclusively, an explanation of their role and why they are being put forward as part of the team.

Think carefully about the message that you want to convey to us, and explain clearly what the practice does (and does not do). This may include, but is not limited to, information on:

- Specialisms and particular expertise of team members in the practice area;
- Client base (both type and geographic);
- Lists of representative active clients/new clients;
- Any sector focus;
- Types of work on which the practice focuses (such as high-end litigation);
- Key differentiators between the practice and those of its competitors; and
- Where relevant, support available to/from other practices in the firm on cross-disciplinary/jurisdictional matters.

Provide details of any significant developments for the period 1 January 2014 to date. These can be anything that you feel would be relevant to our analysis for the rankings, and should include the arrival or departure of any senior team members (and where they have joined from/departed to), and new client wins or panel appointments.

It is also helpful to include any other information that will help to contextualise the practice, such as: the total number of deals handled that year; the number of cited cases on which the firm acted; or where a partner is chair of a prominent legal association.

Leading individuals

Every lawyer mentioned in our editorial is 'recommended', but our 'leading individuals' lists are designed to highlight those lawyers who are pre-eminent in their given field. The lists are exclusive and have been substantially reduced in recent years; where appropriate, they will be shortened again this year.

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Usually, for a lawyer to be awarded leading individual status, he or she will have:

- A substantial amount of excellent referee feedback;
- A substantial amount of excellent peer feedback;
- Had a prominent role in several leading matters in the current year; and
- A strong track record over recent years.

Please provide full details of any lawyers that you wish to nominate as leading individuals. Generally speaking, you should not put forward every partner/lawyer in the practice; this is unrealistic and is counterproductive for the lawyers concerned.

Each nomination should include any relevant supporting information that demonstrates the profile of the individual in question, with reference to both work examples and non-work highlights.

Contact information

Provide contact details for the person whom we should contact in the first instance about the submission. Please include his or her name, position, email address and telephone number. Where this person is not the practice head, please also provide contact information for the latter.

Barristers

We welcome any feedback that you are able to provide on barristers (either at the London or regional Bar) that you have either used or been on the other side of. Please email any feedback separately, to editorial@legal500.com, with the subject lines:

- UK/Bar feedback/London Bar/[Practice area]; or
- UK/Bar feedback/Regional Bar/[Practice area].

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Sending editorial submissions

When sending your submissions:

- Please email all submissions separately from any referee spreadsheets, to **editorial@legal500.com**
- Firms can provide submissions for the region in a single email or in multiple emails. From an administrative point of view, we prefer a single email (attaching either one document containing all sub-practice area submissions, or multiple documents). If sending a single email, the subject line should be marked as follows:
 - UK/South West/[Firm name]
- If a firm is providing submissions in multiple emails, the subject lines should be marked with the relevant sub-practice area(s) ie
 - UK/South West/[Firm name]/[Sub-practice area(s)]
- A firm providing submissions for more than one region must do so in separate emails, whether single or multiple; no email should include submissions relating to more than one region
- Do not send any hard copy submissions.
- Please paginate submissions.

Confidentiality

We will assume that all information provided to us is not confidential, and may be referred to in the editorial, unless indicated otherwise. As noted above, please indicate clearly where any information (whether client names, deal or case values, or any other detail) is confidential and not publishable by marking it as **CONFIDENTIAL** (in capitals, bold and red text).

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References

Referee feedback is an important element of our analysis. Please provide details of referees whom we can contact for feedback. 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.

A referee will often be a client, but may be any third party, such as an introducer or referrer of work, or counsel. Please specify the type of each referee, so that we can tailor our reference requests appropriately.

The referees put forward for a practice area should be representative of that practice's client base and work. Both longstanding and new clients should be included. Firms are welcome to put forward more than one individual at a client or organisation as referees. The most senior person at a client is not always the best referee; it is the quality of the feedback that is most important, so putting down individuals who have had day-to-day involvement with the practice is more likely to result in a detailed response.

Referee details must be provided in our prescribed spreadsheet format. Spreadsheets for each region can be downloaded from www.legal500.com/assets/pages/about-us/get-involved.html. These spreadsheets include a drop-down box that enables firms to specify to which sub-practice area each referee relates.

For detailed notes on how to complete referee spreadsheets, please see our 'Referees explained' document, available at www.legal500.com/assets/pages/about-us/get-involved.html, where you can also find an example PDF.

Referees will be contacted by email shortly after the start of the research period, and asked for feedback on the firm and sub-practice area in question. At the appropriate time in 2015 we will send all participating firms an email notifying them of

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the date that we will start contacting referees, so that firms can let the referees know to expect our feedback request.

Referees will also receive an email on publication of *The Legal 500 UK* in 2015, stating that the rankings and editorial are available to view, free of charge. Referees will **not** be put on any marketing or sales lists.

The Legal 500 series contacted over 250,000 individual referees in 2014. To ensure referees are not repeatedly contacted, it takes time to process and de-duplicate the spreadsheets. **Please note the following rules and deadlines for referees:**

- **The referee deadline is midnight on Friday 6 February 2015.**
- **Any referees received between midnight on Friday 6 February 2015 and midnight on 20 February 2015 will be contacted only if that individual has not already been submitted in a spreadsheet by any firm before midnight on Friday 6 February 2015. This is to help ensure that referees do not receive multiple emails from us.**
- **Any referees submitted after midnight on Friday 20 February 2015 will not be contacted.**

Sending referee spreadsheets

When sending referee spreadsheets:

- Please email all referee spreadsheets separately from any editorial submissions, to editorial@legal500.com
- Firms can provide spreadsheets for the region in a single email or in multiple emails. In either case, the subject line should be marked as follows:

UK/South West/[Firm name]/Referees
- A firm providing spreadsheets for more than one region can email the spreadsheets separately or together
- Please do not send any hard copy spreadsheets.

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List of main and sub-practice areas: South West

Corporate and commercial

- Corporate and commercial: Bristol
- Corporate and commercial: Dorset and South Wiltshire
- Corporate and commercial: M4 Corridor and Gloucestershire
- Corporate and commercial: The West Country
- Corporate tax
- EU and competition

Crime, fraud and licensing

- Crime: fraud
- Crime: general
- Licensing

Dispute resolution

- Commercial litigation: Bristol
- Commercial litigation: Dorset and South Wiltshire
- Commercial litigation: M4 Corridor and Gloucestershire
- Commercial litigation: The West Country
- Debt recovery

Finance

- Banking and finance
- Insolvency and corporate recovery

Human resources

- Employment: Bristol
- Employment: Dorset and South Wiltshire
- Employment: M4 Corridor and Gloucestershire
- Employment: The West Country
- Health and safety
- Immigration
- Pensions

Insurance

- Clinical negligence: claimant
- Clinical negligence: defendant
- Personal injury: claimant
- Personal injury: defendant
- Professional negligence

Private client

- Agriculture and estates
- Bloodstock
- Charities and not-for-profit
- Contentious trusts and probate
- Family
- Personal tax, trusts and probate

Projects, energy and natural resources

- Energy
- Project finance and PFI

Public sector

- Education
- Health
- Local government

Real estate

- Commercial property: Bristol
- Commercial property: Dorset and South Wiltshire
- Commercial property: M4 Corridor and Gloucestershire
- Commercial property: The West Country
- Construction
- Environment
- Planning
- Property litigation
- Social housing

TMT (technology, media and telecoms)

- IT and telecoms
- Intellectual property
- Media and entertainment
- Sport

Transport

- Rail
- Shipping