

Firms are encouraged to provide as many referees as possible per team, per practice area, as this widens the net and increases the amount of positive feedback we are likely to receive. A good minimum guideline is 20 per practice area. We will contact all referees (with an email address). 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 other third parties – is an important 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 [legal500.com/assets/pages/about-us/get-involved.html](https://legal500.com/assets/pages/about-us/get-involved.html), you will find dedicated editorial submission guidelines and a dedicated referee spreadsheet.

### Completing the spreadsheet

There is a reason for each piece of information we request, so it is **strongly recommended** that you **fill in every field**.

For example, we request **title, first name** and **surname** to personalise the emails we send out. Technically, these fields are optional, but personalisation increases response rates and helps beat spam filters.

**Company name** and **job title** are also optional, but having this information about referees can add significant weight to the feedback they provide.

**Law firm name** and **practice area** are **mandatory**. Without these, you won't be able to enter an email address and we won't be able to contact these individuals.

### 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.

### What happens next?

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

We sent more than 300,000 referee emails in the course of our research in 2018, and we are expecting to handle a greater number in 2019. We will be sending out referee emails shortly after the editorial submission deadlines.

### Frequently asked questions

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**Q. We would like to include a client who works with our real estate, corporate/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 many emails will our clients receive?**

A. Only one, but if they have been put forward by multiple firms and/or for multiple practice areas, the email will include multiple links.

**Q. When selecting an individual from a client company to receive a feedback form from The Legal 500, should we choose someone very senior whose feedback may be given more weight or someone less senior who might have more direct experience working with the lawyers and/or be more likely to respond?**

A. Because there is no limit to the number of referees you can provide, we would encourage you to provide both/all potentially useful contacts.

**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 Dipen Patel in the first instance, email [dipen.patel@legal500.com](mailto:dipen.patel@legal500.com), tel +44 20 7071 0161

**Q. How should I name the spreadsheet?**

A. Spreadsheets should be named:

DE\_[Firm name]\_[Practice Area].xls

eg DE\_Smith & John LLP\_Steuerrecht

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

A. Please contact us at [editorial@legal500.com](mailto:editorial@legal500.com), or email Dipen Patel, [dipen.patel@legal500.com](mailto:dipen.patel@legal500.com), tel +44 20 7071 0161