The LEGAL 500
UNITED KINGDOM
31st EDITION

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 2018 edition of *The Legal 500 UK*, and invite you to provide us with editorial submissions.

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 2 February 2018**. 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 **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

Alexander Boyes
Editor, The Legal 500 UK Solicitors
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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 10 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We do not publish or provide a form or template for submissions.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 2017 edition

You are encouraged to provide constructive feedback on the practice's ranking in (or omission from) the 2017 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 2017.

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.

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;
- 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.

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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
- 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:

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- 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 2017 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.

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.

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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.

NEW: Next generation lawyers

The rankings in The Legal 500 focus on the bench strength of the teams within law firms. Currently we highlight partners in the leading individuals lists and within the editorial. Responding to feedback from GCs, who regularly assess the quality of the associates before they look at the partners – or simply look to the team as a whole – going forward we will be including a list of the UK's leading 'next generation' of partners (or experienced non-partners in smaller markets where partnership status is rarely bestowed). We encourage firms to include information about senior associates and counsel in the submission whom they feel make a material difference to the practice's offering, and who have a strong case to be recognised by The Legal 500. This should include client referees and it should include credit given in the detailed 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/Wales/[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/Wales/[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

All information provided to us may be published by all The Legal 500 and Legalease Ltd products, unless it is marked as confidential. Please identify clearly any confidential information – whether client names, deal or case values, or other details – by marking that information **CONFIDENTIAL**, in bold red and upper case. Please use red typeface for all of the confidential information.

Please avoid putting global confidentiality restrictions at the front of submissions. Please also try to be as clear as possible about what exactly is confidential; is it the case as a whole, the name of the client, or the issue/value at stake?

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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 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 **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 2018 we will send all participating firms an email notifying them of

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 2018, 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 around 300,000 individual referees in 2017. 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 2 February 2018.**
- **Any referees received between midnight on Friday 2 February 2018 and midnight on 16 February 2018 will be contacted only if that individual has not already been submitted in a spreadsheet by any firm before midnight on Friday 2 February 2018. This is to help ensure that referees do not receive multiple emails from us.**
- **Any referees submitted after midnight on Friday 16 February 2018 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/Wales/[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: Wales

Corporate and commercial
- Corporate and commercial: Cardiff and South Wales
- Corporate and commercial: North and Mid Wales

Crime, fraud and licensing
- Crime: fraud
- Crime: general
- Licensing

Dispute resolution
- Commercial litigation
- Debt recovery

Finance
- Banking and finance
- Insolvency and corporate recovery

Human resources
- Employment: Cardiff
- Employment: elsewhere in Wales
- 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
- Charities and not-for-profit
- Contentious trusts and probate
- Family: Cardiff
- Family: South and Mid Wales
- Family: North Wales
- Personal tax, trusts and probate

Projects, energy and natural resources
- Project finance and PFI

Public sector
- Public sector

Real estate
- Commercial property: Cardiff
- Commercial property: elsewhere in Wales
- Construction
- Planning and environment
- Property litigation
- Social housing

TMT (technology, media and telecoms)
- IT and telecoms
- Intellectual property
- Media and entertainment
- Sport