

Screening form

Date of Screening	June 2011
Assessor Name & Job Title	Dawn Elvy, Project Support Manager
Policy/Function to be Assessed	Completion of authorisation to practise online
Aim/Purpose of Policy	<p>The Bar Standards Board (BSB) was created by the Bar Council to undertake its regulatory role. The BSB acts in the public interest and aims to inform the consumer about those who are eligible to provide legal services.</p> <p>Developing an authorisation to practise regime meets the BSB regulatory objectives of:</p> <p>1(a) protecting and promoting the public interest 1(d) protecting and promoting the interests of consumers 1(h) promoting and maintaining adherence to the professional principles of the Legal Services Act 2007.</p> <p>The Legal Services Act 2007 and in particular section 13(2) requires individuals wishing to provide reserved legal activities to be authorised to do so by the relevant approved regulator. Rules and a system are already in place which authorises barristers to practise. The BSB consulted on changes to the authorisation regime in March 2010. The outcomes of the consultation were approved by the BSB in November 2010.</p> <p>These new rules were also included in the consultation published in January 2011 on the proposed new Code of Conduct and the final draft of the rules relating to authorisation to practise will be considered by the BSB in July 2011 and pending approval by the Legal Services Board, barristers will have to apply for authorisation to practise for practising certificates valid from the 1 April 2012.</p> <p>As a result of these new rules, barristers and chambers/employers will be required annually online to amend or confirm; contact details, status and entitlement to practise, CPD and insurance online as well as pay their practising certificate fee.</p>

Do you consider the policy to have an adverse impact on equality?

Gender Yes **No**

Race Yes **No**

Disability **Yes** No

Sexual orientation Yes **No**

Religion Yes **No**

Age Yes **No**

Gender reassignment Yes **No**

Pregnancy/maternity Yes **No**

Negative impact and evidence to support this?	<p>Disability</p> <p>There may be an adverse impact on disability equality where those applying for authorisation have impairments which make accessing the information on the website difficult.</p> <p>As detailed in the 'Report of the Analysis of Demographic Data collected from the Practising Bar in 2007' 7% of barristers identified themselves as having a disability.</p>
If no, are your reasons for this?	<p>Gender</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that this procedure will have an adverse impact on gender.</p>
	<p>Race</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that this procedure will have an adverse impact on race.</p>
	<p>Sexual orientation</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that this procedure will have an adverse impact on sexual orientation.</p>
	<p>Religion</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that this procedure will have an adverse impact on religion.</p>
	<p>Age</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that this procedure will have an adverse impact on age.</p>
	<p>Gender reassignment</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that this procedure will have an adverse impact on gender reassignment.</p>
	<p>Pregnancy/maternity</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that this procedure will have an adverse impact on pregnancy/maternity.</p>

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Positive impact and evidence to support this?	Disability Prior to the introduction of authorisation, a barrister would be required to either write or telephone the Bar Council, to update their details or pay their practising certificate fee. The new website, to be launched in the Autumn of 2011, will have significantly improved disability compliance.
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Policy analysis

<p>What are the (potential) barriers to equality arising from this policy?</p> <p>What evidence supports the existence of such barriers?</p>	<p>Disability</p> <p>Some disabled users may experience difficulties completing their authorisation online as a result of their disability. It is therefore important that system is designed to be as accessible as possible for disabled people.</p> <p>Special arrangements will include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Bar Council website complies in relation to accessibility. The website will adhere to specific accessibility guidelines (to be clarified). 2. Ensure that there is a contact email and telephone number to enable disabled barristers to contact the Bar Council, if they require the information in a different format. 3. Ensure that the authorisation forms are available in hard copy for those barristers with a disability who are unable to complete authorisation online.
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Action planning

Recommendations and actions required to reduce/remove barrier	Person Responsible	Deadline
Publicise that disabled barristers are able to obtain the authorisation form in a different format.	Dawn Elvy, Project Support Manager	February 2012
Monitor the number of requests from barristers	Smita Shah, Records Manager	From February 2012
Develop a paper form for those disabled barristers who are unable to complete authorisation online.	Smita Shah, Records Manager	February 2012