

Unified Civil Contract

As we have made clear, the only guarantee of a seamless transition to the Unified Contract was by returning your signed Contract for Signature to us by Friday 30 March 2007. We are pleased to confirm that current estimates show, despite predictions by other parties, a huge take up of the contract which will preserve access to legal aid for vulnerable clients.

Although we have no concerns about access England and Wales, we recognise that some providers may have failed to meet the deadline through no fault of their own and in the circumstances we confirm that we will continue to accept signed contracts until 5pm on Monday 2 April 2007.

Those providers who failed to return their contracts by 30 March but meet this cut off time will not be able to start new matters or cases until we have confirmed that we have signed the contract, which we anticipate being able to do within a very short period.

Please note that any further contracts for signature submitted after 5.00 pm on Monday 2 April 2007 will not be signed by the Commission. However, we will shortly be providing details of a new civil bid round as part of the CLS Strategy for improving access to joined-up services.