

<p align="center">Collaborative Working Statement</p>	<p align="center">Assuring and Improving Quality of Legal Aid Services – Quality Working Group</p>
<p>Purpose of the group</p>	<p>This document primarily outlines the arrangements for collaborative working for assuring and improving the quality of legal aid services. It also details the practical arrangements for the working party meetings.</p> <p>Party to this agreement are the following organisations: The Law Society (TLS), Advice Services Alliance (ASA), Solicitor Regulation Authority (SRA), Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS), Resolution, Legal Services Commission (LSC) and the Ministry of Justice (MOJ)</p>
<p>Key objectives</p>	<p>There is a clear commitment from all parties that they will work constructively with each other to achieve the objectives in the Terms of Reference set out in the Unified Contract Settlement – attached at Annex A.</p>
<p>Agreement</p>	<p>In agreeing to work collaboratively, these organisations have and will continue to seek their common aims and deliverables, and will work collectively to deliver them. It is equally recognised that the regulatory body will have some objectives that are not common, perhaps to one another, and certainly to a number of those held by the procuring organisations. Additionally, timing will need to be considered to accommodate, where possible, other parties' work plans.</p>
<p>Key Messages</p>	<p>With such a significant degree of commonality in aims and deliverables, collaboration is sensible. Fundamentally, it will provide the best opportunity to ensure that the working group achieves the “proportionality” that it seeks, while the LSC’s duties as procurer of Legal Aid Services can also be met.</p>
<p>Agenda and papers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members are invited to suggest or request items for discussion. • The LSC will aim to circulate a meeting agenda and any accompanying papers no later 3 days prior to the date of a meeting but we will aim for one week. • Members may be invited to comment on issues or policy papers between meetings.
<p>Meeting dates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Proposed) minimum of one per month. • Dates to be circulated in advance. • Members may request a meeting on an exceptional basis with the agreement of the Chairs. • There may be other quality working groups reporting to this main group, which meet in-between.
<p>Attendance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members should send a suitable substitute to represent their organisation on the understanding that they can make decisions on behalf of their organisation. • Members will confirm attendance or send apologies as soon as practicable before a planned meeting

Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members attending on behalf of an organisation can and are encouraged to represent the views of their membership but participation in the group does not imply acceptance or agreement by members or the organisations they represent of any policy or strategy of the LSC. • Members are free to suggest any additional members. The Chairs in consultation with the group as a whole must agree that they be invited to attend. <p>Current members:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Law Society 2. Solicitors Regulatory Authority 3. Advice Service Alliance 4. The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies 5. Resolution 6. The Ministry of Justice 7. The Legal Services Commission
Timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st May 2008: Working Group Commences • 31st October 2008: Work completed • 31st December 2008: Review of QA Report published • 14th February 2009: TLS/LSC report on whether recommendations accepted
Chairs	<p>The group will be chaired by a member of the Law Society, Legal Services Commission or other member; with the agreement of the group.</p>
Key contacts	<p>Administration : Jennifer Will, Legal Services Commission Email: jennifer.will@legalservices.gov.uk Tel: 0207 759 0385 (Direct Line)</p>
Terms of Reference	See Annex A
Agreed by	Working Party : Date to be included