The Legal Quality Standard of Ireland

OCTOBER 2026 - ARTICLES & ITEMS OF INTEREST

IF FIRMS MISSED THE DEADLINE DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF THEIR BUSINESS RISK ASSESSMENT, LAW SOCIETY STATE TO ACT NOW AND SEND THE REQUIRED RESPONSE

In the October edition of the Law Society Gazette, Tina Beattie head of AML and Riona Leahy AML executive at the Law Society of Ireland have written an article titled 'The Compliance of Science'.

It contains links to the Law Society AML Hub and links to 2 free training AML videos. It advises of an upcoming webinar on sanctions on the 26 November 2026.

It states '*in relation to the thematic review 2026, all firms received a notification from the director of regulation last July announcing an AML thematic review. The deadline date (30 September 2026) for submission of the form, which was sent to firms, has now passed. If you overlooked responding on time, please act now and send the required response to AMLThematicReviews@ lawsociety.ie'.*

To view this article in full, see page 41 of Gazette Magazine

LSRA ISSUE WARNING NOTICE THAT WEBSITE 'bws-legallimited.com' OPERATING UNDER THE NAME 'BWS LEGAL LIMITED' IS A FRAUDULENT WEBSITE

On the 27 October 2026, the LSRA issued a warning notice that the website **bws-legallimited.com** operating under the name "**BWS Legal Limited**" is a fraudulent website.

BWS Legal Limited is a company registered in the Companies Registration Office, but it is not operating as a Law Firm. BWS Legal Limited does **not** provide legal advice or services. BWS Legal Limited has no connection whatsoever with the website **bws-legallimited.com** or the individuals purporting to act on its behalf.

The use of the postal address of 80 South Mall, Cork displayed on the website **bws-legallimited.com** and the use of the Company name "BWS Legal Limited" is unauthorised. The Law Society of Ireland has no record of a regulated legal services provider operating from this website.

The following individuals associated with this entity are **not** solicitors on the Roll of Solicitors in Ireland and are therefore **not** entitled to practise as solicitors in this jurisdiction:

- Mr Cian Doran
- Ms Neila Kavanagh
- Mr Ronan Nyström
- Fionn O'Rourke
- Mr Marek Šimek
- Ms Aoife Rosenberg
- Ms Shauna van Aardenne
- Mr Declan Byrne

The article states if you receive correspondence from any entity that you are unsure of, you should check the authenticity of the correspondence by entering the details in the 'Find a Solicitor' search function, on the Law Society's website.

To view this article in full, see Warning Notice to Public – Website "bws-legallimited.com" operating under the name "BWS Legal Limited" is a fraudulent website - Legal Services Regulatory Authority

AI PRACTICE NOTE

On the 21 October 2026, the Law Society of England and Wales published a 58-page AI practice note which gives specific guidance on how lawyers can integrate AI in their practice in line with their professional obligations.

For the link to this article and the practice note, see **Tell clients about AI use, solicitors advised in Law Society practice note | Law Gazette**

MANAGING RISKS IN A LEGAL PRACTICE

On the 22 October 2026, the Law Society of Ireland Top Stories contained an article titled 'Managing risk is accepting that things go wrong'.

In this DSBA practice management webinar Julie Brennan Managing Director of the LQSI advised that the common proposal form can provide a starting point for risk management. She said that while it is understandable that many firms use the short form for PII renewal, others, "as a matter of good practice", choose to fill out the common proposal form annually.

She added that it should be filled in “at senior level” by someone who has, “full visibility of all the questions that are being asked”, such as the principal or partner.

The largest section of the form is on risk management.

“Make sure that you sell your firm as a good risk in your cover letter,” she advised, suggesting the inclusion of things such as positive reports following routine Law Society inspections, awards, relevant expertise and procedures for mitigating risks in higher-risk practice areas.

Acknowledging it as “contentious” Julie Brennan also recommended mentioning if nobody in the firm works remotely. “The risk will always favour staff being in the office and learning all the time, and people being supervised, and everything being much more visible in the office,” she explained.

A good risk management strategy will have layers and operate all year.

“It's your team meetings, it's the review of files, it's reviews of your registers, it's even your post procedures so that if something isn't caught in one place, it'll be caught somewhere else.”

Acknowledging the growing complexity of compliance, Julie Brennan also highlighted what she called the “compliance multiplier”, with every hour invested in compliance saving six hours in the long run.

In her overview of what LQSI considers top compliance priorities for Irish law firms heading into 2027, Julie Brennan included:

- AML compliance,
- AI governance,
- Cybersecurity including the risks posed by phishing, malware, lost devices and sensitive data, alongside the relevance of NIS2-aligned controls even for firms not directly covered by the directive,
- Data Protection, including increased regulatory scrutiny of data governance and accountability and “an ongoing expectation that firms maintain documented retention schedules, and third party and cloud provider oversight will continue to remain a key risk area, so it's another area of which firms need to be very mindful”,
- Third party and vendor risk management,
- Professional standards and client care (Law Society and LSRA),
- Environmental and Social Governance (ESG) and sustainability expectations.

To view this article in full see Managing risk is accepting that things go wrong

LAW SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND PUBLISH SOLICITOR POPULATION DIVERSITY DATA REPORT – 2025/2026

On the 5 October 2026, the Law Society of Scotland published a news story stating diversity continues to grow across the Scottish solicitor profession.

The latest diversity data, collected by the Law Society as part of solicitors’ annual practising certificate (PC) renewal process for 2025/26, was completed by two-thirds (66%) of members and offers a key insight into the make-up of today’s Scottish legal profession and emerging trends.

The research examined solicitors' ethnicity, disability, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, and sex.

Data for 2025/26 was compared against previous diversity surveys and the 2022 Scottish Census, to understand how the demographic profile of solicitors compares to the wider Scottish population.

This news article sets out the key findings and also provides a link to the 21-page report. To view this article, see Scottish solicitor profession increasingly diverse | Law Society of Scotland

SRA ANNUAL REPORT SHOWS FIRMS FINED £2.6 MILLION FOR AML BREACHES BUT ALSO FIRMS ARE SHOWING IMPROVEMENTS IN AML COMPLIANCE

On the 23 October 2026 the Law Society of England and Wales published an article stating their Solicitors Regulation Authority says there are signs that firms are getting better at AML compliance despite a sharp rise in financial sanctions handed out in the past year.

According to its annual AML report, in the year ended April 2026, firms and solicitors were fined a total of £2.6 million. This included 145 settlement agreements coming to £2m, 14 fines issued through SRA adjudicators adding up to £364,000 and fines totalling £228,000 levied through the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal. All fines are paid to the Treasury.

The SRA, which completed 966 AML compliance assessments during the year, reported improvements in firm-wide risk assessments, client and matter risk assessments, policies, controls and procedures, sanctions controls and proliferation financing risk assessments.

The number of reports of suspected breaches of AML regulations fell from 426 to 336 in 2025/26. Around half of these reports related to alleged failures to perform a risk assessment on a client or matter, or alleged failures to carry out a source of funds check.

The SRA said the recurring nature of these referral themes showed that many firms continue to struggle with the practical implementation of AML controls.

To view this report in full, see **SRA annual report shows firms fined £2.6m for AML breaches but signs that worst may be over | Law Gazette**

LAW SOCIETY OF IRELAND PUBLISH NEW GUIDE 'YOUR GUIDE TO REGULATION

On the 14 October 2026, the Law Society of Ireland published a guide titled 'Your Guide to Regulation'. It states this is a practical, comprehensive resource designed to support solicitors in understanding and meeting their professional, regulatory, and ethical obligations throughout the lifecycle of legal practice. Developed as part of the Practice Essentials series, the guide brings together essential information, checklists, templates, and best-practice guidance covering key areas including practice management, financial regulation, anti-money laundering compliance, professional indemnity insurance, practising certificates, artificial intelligence, and emerging regulatory developments.

To view this guide, see Your Guide to Regulation