



Master of the Faculties - Priorities for 2019

At the annual Notarial Forum meeting (to be) held at The Faculty Office on 29th January 2019, the Master of the Faculties, Charles George QC, (will) outline(d) his priorities for the calendar year 2019. The Forum is an opportunity for senior members of the two representative bodies – the Society of Scrivener Notaries and the Notaries Society of England & Wales – to meet the Master, the staff of the Faculty Office (FO) and the members of the Master's Qualifications Board and Advisory Board to discuss matters of interest and concern to the profession.

The Master's priorities are directed principally to the Faculty Office and amount to a 'business plan' for the year whilst recognising that there will be other matters requiring attention that will arise throughout the year. The priorities for 2019 may be summarised as follows:

- A. To make further progress with the new IT project for the Faculty Office.** A project to update the Faculty Office website and to facilitate online practising certificate renewals with effect from Autumn 2019 is underway.
- B. To make progress with Practice Authorisation (Entity Regulation).** The Master is keen to ensure that the FO develops a regulatory regime which provides a proportionate and targeted approach to the regulation of notarial entities where two or more notaries are practising in partnership or where, as is increasingly the case, a single notary is practising within a limited company or an LLP. Part of this project will involve a review of practising certificate fees and a consultation on this aspect will be launched in the Spring.
- C. To review professional qualifications, including recruitment, the content of the UCL course, supervision and CPE.** The Qualifications Boards will be asked to review the requirements for qualifying as a notary, whether it should remain a largely graduate entry profession, ways of enhancing the diversity of the profession and the content of the Notarial Practice course run by UCL. A review of supervision and CPE will also be undertaken.
- D. To comply the LSB (Regulatory Standards and Diversity) Action Plans and work arising from the OPBAS inspection.** In late 2018, the LSB reported on its findings both in relation to the revised Regulatory Standards work and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion work and set out areas where the FO needs to undertake further work. The OPBAS inspection took place in December 2018 and work to address its findings will also be required.
- E. To make progress with regard to the regulatory regime in the Channel Islands (and to begin the process for Gibraltar).** Draft interim regulations have provided a basic regulatory regime for the Channel Islands. Additional work is required to fully implement these regulations. Further work on the statutory framework will also be required following the visit to the CI by the Master and Chief Clerk in November 2018. A similar provision for Gibraltar needs to be put in place.
- F. To revise the Overseas admission documentation.** Work to revise the documentation required for applying for admission in our overseas jurisdictions and the wording of the overseas Notarial Faculty itself is required as the current process and formats are outdated.