



Irish Institute of Legal Executives CLG.

Section 33 Consultation  
Legal Services Regulatory Authority  
PO Box 12906  
Dublin 7

9<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Email: [publicconsultations@lsra.ie](mailto:publicconsultations@lsra.ie)

**RE: SECTION 33 CONSULTATION**

Dear Sirs,

The Irish Institute of Legal Executives welcomes the invitation to submit to the Legal Services Regulatory Authority as part of its public consultation process under Section 33 and we refer to our previous submissions on the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and 11<sup>th</sup> February 2022 and 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023.

Within the Legal Profession, as previously stated in our submissions, the Irish Institute of Legal Executives plays a crucial role in the administration and admissions policies of Legal Executives in this jurisdiction. The Institute holds a high-level admission policy in admitting Legal Executives to our organisation in much the same manner as the Law Society of Ireland and the Bar of Ireland as do other stakeholders. Admission is based on Academic and Legal Experience.

The Institute sets out its Membership uptake during the period of 2023/2024.

| NEW MEMBERS | STUDENT MEMBERS<br>Academic Year | REGISTERED MEMBERS |
|-------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 54          | 30 (2023/2024)                   | 1,088              |
| 52          | 30 (2022/2023)                   | 1,045              |
| 38          | 30 (2021/2022)                   | 989                |
| 42          | 30 (2019/2020)                   | 951                |

As we see from the above table Membership of Legal Executives registered with the Irish Institute of Legal Executives. As Legal Executives continued to work closely with Solicitor colleagues throughout 2023 and beyond, it is noted from the recruitment sector that Legal Executives are on demand as they play a crucial role in the Legal Services industry like Solicitors and Barristers.

The value placed on Legal Executives and their role within the provision of Legal Services in Ireland was never more evident than in 2019-2020/2021-2022 academic years when the Law Society of Ireland themselves ran their inaugural course designed specifically for Legal Executives titled “*Certificate in Property Law & Conveyancing for Legal Executives*”. This recognition by the Law Society is perhaps the greatest acknowledgment of the value of the Legal Executive in Ireland and illustrates a great demand for Legal Executives in Ireland. Legal Executives have adapted to the new working way of life and many working between Offices and their homes and adapting to the new Hybrid way of work.





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Recognition is also achieved by virtue of the Institute being invited to participate in the Property Registration Authority Customer Focus Group together with Solicitors, Architects, Local Authority Legal Agents, The IFA and others.

Our value and importance are further underlined when you consider that annual talks for the Institute of Legal Executives have been carried out by The Property Registration Authority, Solicitors, Barristers and Recruitment Agencies.

As in previous submissions presented to the Legal Services Regulatory Authority, the Irish Institute of Legal Executives feel it is imperative that we take this opportunity to reiterate the following:-

- Regulation of Legal Executives would provide a *greater choice to the Consumer and more competitive legal costs.*
- Regulation offers protection for consumers of legal services and Legal Executives. Legal Executives are conducting high level of legal work on a daily basis that requires regulation/recognition to ensure that the very high standards of Legal Executives are maintained and to ensure that any person holding themselves out to be a Legal Executive is properly trained and carries the requisite skill and knowledge.
- The high and perceived high cost of legal services is preventing people on lower income levels from equal access to justice.
- 90% of our fully qualified Legal Executive members (MIILEX) are educated in legal disciplines to HETAC Level 7 and above, many holding third level Diplomas, Degrees, Masters and PhDs.
- Regulating/Recognition of the Legal Executives offers more choice to the Consumer. Access to cheaper legal advice is necessary as Free Legal Aid is not accessible to many due to means testing or lengthy waiting lists.
- The Legal Services Regulation Act 2015 addresses many issues in respect of cost. However, it offers no dramatic change to the way legal services are delivered. The regulation of Legal Executives would offer a fresh and modern approach to legal services.
- Our background is identical to that of Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (“CILEX”) in England and Wales (see: [www.cilex.org.uk](http://www.cilex.org.uk)).
- Legal Executives in England and Wales can become Judges, Coroners, Conveyancers and Partners in Law Firms.
- Legal Executives are employed across a wide range of organisations in Ireland including but not limited to, Revenue Solicitors Office, Banks, Public Service, Local Authorities, Chief State Solicitors Office, Approved Housing Bodies together with Private Legal Practices.
- Legal Executives do very similar work as Solicitors and work alongside them on a daily basis (drafting documents, attending Court, Closing sales/purchases, they meet with the customer, they deal with customer files from beginning to conclusion). Legal Executives carry enormous experience and vast knowledge in their chosen field
- Legal Executives are consistently reminded by their Solicitor colleagues that they quite simply could not operate without them, given the importance of their role.



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Having considered the Irish Institute of Legal Executives Submissions to-date and having Legal Executives recognised and regulated by the Legal Services Regulatory Authority and any subsequent amendments to be made to the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015 would be an important step forward not only for us, Legal Executives but for the provision of the legal service in Ireland.

The Institute hopes that the Authority will not lose the excellent opportunity to recognise the role of Legal Executives and more importantly provide us with official recognition and regulation as a third-tier level/type of legal practitioner and not just the Solicitor and Barrister profession in Ireland.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Deborah Walsh'.

Yours faithfully,  
**On behalf of the Board of the  
Irish Institute of Legal Executives**