

The Patent Regulation Board and the Trade Mark Regulation Board (The Intellectual Property Regulation Board)

DRAFT/Business Plan for 2016

Policy Focus and Objectives

The regulatory objectives which underpin all of IPReg's activities are:

- *protecting and promoting the public interest;*
- *supporting the constitutional principle of the rule of law;*
- *improving access to justice;*
- *protecting and promoting the interests of consumers;*
- *promoting competition in the provision of legal services;*
- *encouraging an independent, strong, diverse and effective legal profession;*
- *increasing public understanding of the citizen's legal rights and duties;*
- *promoting and maintaining adherence to the professional principles*

Specific Work Programme for 2016

Details of the specific activities in our 2016 work programme are shown over leaf.

Note: annual activities, such as the appointment and appraisal of board members, submission of the IGR (internal governance review) to the LSB and formal admissions to and publication of the statutory registers, are not shown although the plan does highlight areas where the annual activities are intended to be undertaken in a different way in 2016

Regulatory and Policy		
	Activity	Description
1	Alternative Business Structures	<p>At the end of first year following designation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review the authorisation processes and report outcome to the Legal Services Board • embed working arrangements with the General Regulatory Chamber regarding appeals. • (with the Legal Services Board and other Regulators) lobby the Ministry of Justice to vary the Legal Services Act 2007 to simplify the ABS licensing regime
2	IPReg Assurance Programme	<p>Implement the IPReg Assurance Programme to include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • desk top individual firm reviews and cross-firm (“thematic”)¹ reviews to assess current and emerging risks; • meetings with managers of and visits to firms. • amend (as necessary) the format for future risk-based reporting from firms
3	Rule Changes - Support to the Profession	<p>Provide further training on the regulatory rule changes particularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the handling of client monies • the obligations under money laundering regulations • the responsibilities of a Head of Legal Practice (“HoLP”) and a Head of Finance and Administration (“HoFA”) <p>Procure training modules for prospective HoLPs and HoFAs</p>
4	IPReg Code	<p>Embed understanding of the obligations in the Code through a series of presentations delivered on-line and/or via the supervisor.</p> <p>Review enquiries to IPReg office to determine if there any patterns</p>

¹ <http://www.fca.org.uk/about/what/regulating/how-we-supervise-firms/thematic-reviews>

5	First tier complaints (i.e. "in the office")	Continue annual collection of statistics and review. Publish any necessary guidelines.
6	Research	<p>Commission and review research on unregulated intellectual property legal services and agree any appropriate actions.</p> <p><i>(This activity was deferred due to difficulties in the collection of the necessary data but in 2015 the IPO are intending to publish details of the applicants' agents which may enable this research to commence)</i></p> <p>Continue to monitor the Enterprise Court small claims procedure (intended to widen access to the lay applicant).</p>

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Education, Training and Qualification		
	Activity	Description
1	Accreditations	<p>Continue the cycle of the accreditation of Examination Agencies (Bournemouth , Brunel, Queen Mary London, Nottingham Trent, the Patent Examination Board)</p> <p>Complete (if outstanding) the review of IPReg’s accreditation processes</p>
2	Review of Foundation Level Education Requirements	<p>Review (with the Examination Agencies) what should comprise the “core subjects” for the foundation level qualification.</p> <p>Publish an agreed set of learning outcomes</p> <p>Review the standards of assessment of the Examination Agencies to ensure consistency.</p>
3	“Stale” Examinations	Publish a policy on “stale” examinations
4	Training	<p>Promote awareness of the Patent and Trade Mark Competency Checklists</p> <p>Explore the need for best practice guidance on supervised training (to include a possible template “memorandum of understanding” setting out training commitments)</p>
5	Diversity	<p>Continue to publish diversity statistics in the format agreed with the LSB.</p> <p>Update the 2013 IPReg paper “Recruitment and Diversity in the Patent and Trade Mark Profession”</p> <p>Collate (annually) the diversity data published by the Examination Agencies to identify any trends.</p>
6	Training in Professional and Ethical behaviour	Explore how and when training in professional and ethical behaviour is best provided to trainee and/or qualified attorneys.
7	Continuing Professional Development	Keep the IPReg requirements under review and benchmark against other CPD regimes.

Communications		
	Activity	Description
1	Liaison meetings	Develop stronger working relationships with the IPO Liaise with the MOJ regarding the contribution of the profession to “UK PLC” Continue regular meetings with main stakeholders including LSB, CIPA, ITMA, LeO, PAMIA and other ARs as necessary.
2	Meetings with registrants	Continue the programme of presentations at regular open meetings with registrants to maintain their awareness of the regulatory regime, update them on developments and to receive their feedback.
3	Website	Continue the programme of website enhancements