BAR STANDARDS BOARD

REGULATING BARRISTERS

Data and Intelligence Strategy 2024 – 2027

Summary

Introduction

Who are we?

The Bar Standards Board (BSB) regulates barristers and specialised legal services businesses in England and Wales in the public interest. In exercising our regulatory functions, we promote the regulatory objectives of the Legal Services Act 2007.[1]

We identify potential harm to the regulatory objectives, or opportunities to promote the objectives. This involves identifying evidence and trends within the barrister market. We then respond through a range of regulatory tools, ranging from education, to setting standards, to enforcement action, in order to deliver a profession that meets the needs of consumers and the broader public.

[1] Legal Services Act S28(2) states that an approved regulator must, so far as is reasonably practicable, act in a way which is compatible with the regulatory objectives, and which the approved regulator considers most appropriate for the purpose of meeting those objectives

What are data and intelligence?

Data refers to facts and figures that we collect from a variety of sources. These can be numbers or measurements (quantitative data), or text-based descriptions or anything not related to numbers (qualitative data.) **Intelligence** is the insights gained from analysing this data, used to identify and solve problems, or to make decisions.

A regulator must use data and intelligence to work effectively and to be agile, evidence-led and risk-based. Getting the right data in the right place at the right time is a basic driver of value for money for public bodies: making services work for people, improving systems and processes, and supporting better decisions.[2]

[2] National Audit Office, Challenges in using data across government (2019)

Why does data and intelligence matter to the BSB?

At the BSB we recognise the value of effective data and intelligence in exercising our regulatory functions. We use data and intelligence to drive effective policy, and regularly publish key data on both developments within the sector, and on our own performance and decision-making.

We recognise, however, that we can use data and intelligence more effectively. We need to be better at collecting and using data and intelligence to deepen our insight into the market we regulate, allowing us to better identify and respond to risk. We need to embrace efficiencies that can be offered by a better use of data, for instance in enabling us to operate effectively, identify risks quickly, and make the best possible decisions. We also hope this strategy will support change in our industry, by modelling good data practices that stakeholders of the Bar could also benefit from, and by sharing data and insights to inform these stakeholders and drive innovation.

Why is the BSB now issuing a Data & Intelligence Strategy?

As we enter the final year of our 2022-25 BSB Strategic Plan, much of our work, either directly or indirectly, involves our data and intelligence capabilities.

As we transition to our new Strategic Plan from 2025, this Data & Intelligence Strategy will help us set the data and intelligence foundations for our commitments; take a more coherent, sophisticated approach to our use of data to support our work and decision-making; and communicate to our stakeholders how our data activities fit together. This improved capability will help us deliver our strategic goals from 2025 onwards.

This document lays out our strategy over the next three years to achieve these improvements. It sets out our vision and objectives for data and intelligence at the BSB, our implementation roadmap, and the outcomes we seek to achieve. We invite feedback to inform our approach.

Supporting our current strategic aims

Strategic Aims 2022-2025

| Efficiency | Standards | Equality | Access | Independence |

Data and Intelligence Strategy

Operate efficiently by fully harnessing our data assets and developing ways that data and analytics can assist processes.	Ensure we understand whether barristers are providing a high quality and responsive service and, if not, the areas for improvement.	Continue and develop our understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion at the Bar and at the BSB, and the profession's ability to serve diverse consumers.	Assess consumer understanding of legal services and choice, and identify evidence-based understanding of way to improve.	Fully harness the BSB's independent ability to understand the market and monitor emerging trends and issues.

Our Data Vision and our objectives

Our vision for data and intelligence is:

To continuously improve the BSB's data capabilities and skills in order to better understand the Bar and the consumers they serve, make efficient and effective decisions and drive technology and innovation in the public interest.

To realise our data vision we have four strategic objectives.

Operational

To operate efficiently and effectively by fully harnessing our data assets and developing ways that data and analytics can assist processes.

Analysis

To identify trends and emerging risks in the market for barristers and specialised legal services businesses by sourcing effective data and intelligence and reviewing regularly.

Strategic Objectives

External Impact

To support change in our industry and model best practices by sharing data and insights to inform stakeholders of the Bar, promote transparency, drive innovation, and support the development of new, data-enabled products and services.

Decision-making

To enable data-driven decision-making across the organisation by improving the timeliness, quality, and accessibility of data and intelligence.

Delivering our strategy

We will implement our vision and deliver on our objectives by establishing projects to improve and refine our capabilities. In the last year, we have been carefully considering and reviewing our capabilities in data and intelligence.

We have identified those areas of our capability that we consider most require attention in the next three years. We will focus on ensuring the BSB has adequate structures in place to develop our work with data and intelligence, ensure that data management and governance is operating as effectively as possible, and promote an effective culture for data and intelligence issues at the BSB.

Foundations (2024)

To deliver the strategy, the BSB must have confidence that it has the right people, structures, processes and technology in place to ensure that the strategy can be delivered, and is effective, sustainable and in line with the BSB's broader goals.

In year one of the strategy, we will take steps to deliver the foundations required to improve our data and intelligence capability. We will review and consider whether we have these capabilities required to do the work that we need to do. Where there are gaps, we will consider how best to invest to remedy this, doing so in a way that is proportionate, targeted and supports best possible regulatory practice.

Developing our Capability 2025-2027

In year two to three, we will build upon this first year of work and seek to develop our capability further by focusing on two areas:

Data governance: Ensuring the collection, accessibility and governance of data and intelligence across the BSB is at an acceptable standard and guided by an appropriate framework.

Developing our capability (2025-2027)

Data culture: Promote an effective data and intelligence culture of the BSB, embedding the importance of data and intelligence in the BSB's ethos and decision-making processes.

It is important that we consider these two areas together. Considering these at the same time ensures that data and intelligence is not only managed well but is actively and effectively used across the BSB.

Scale and evolve our capability (2027 onwards)

As we come to the end of the strategy cycle, we aim to explore new technologies that can help the BSB improve its efficiency and effectiveness as a regulator. Our ability to do so will depend on the insights from the previous projects we implement, and the BSB's strategic requirements at this time. In any event, we will look explore these technologies further as part of a renewed Data & Intelligence Strategy from 2027 onwards.

From 2027, we will consider the success of this strategy and other relevant developments for the BSB. We will then consider how we will evolve our capability further in future years.

The outcomes we are seeking to achieve

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This implementation roadmap will improve and refine our data and intelligence capabilities. We seek to deliver the following outcomes, while also continuously reviewing our work to ensure that it reflects any new or emerging priorities, as well as the BSB's strategic needs from 2025. These desired outcomes reflect a range of areas including data collection, workforce and culture, stakeholder engagement, infrastructure and data governance.

Objective	Outcomes
Operational	Greater staff engagement in data and intelligence issues. **Workforce & Culture**
	Strong and effective data governance. **Data Governance**
	Process and structural improvements to improve our efficiency, for example automated reporting to track sector developments in near real time. **Infrastructure**
Analysis	Improved levels of analytical capabilities and uptake of tools in our workforce. **Workforce & Culture**
	Increased stakeholder engagement in analytics. **Stakeholder Engagement**
	Increased quantity, variety and quality of data sources. **Data collection**
	Experiment with advanced analytical technologies that could improve our regulatory capabilities. **Infrastructure**
Decision-making	Increased awareness and adoption of data and intelligence in decision-making. **Workforce & Culture**
	Comprehensive feedback mechanisms to monitor and respond to decision outcomes. **Infrastructure**
External Impact	Strengthen governance structure and capabilities for regulatory data we share. **Data Governance**
	Design data and reports we share for external impact and reuse. **Infrastructure**
	Leverage our regulatory data to support our Equality & Diversity Strategy commitments. **Stakeholder Engagement**
	Improve data collection processes to ensure data is collected efficiency and effectively. **Data collection**

Conclusion

This document summarises our strategy for data and intelligence at the BSB. It sets out our vision and objectives, and approach towards delivering these to improve the BSB's capability in data and intelligence.

If you have feedback on this strategy, please send this by email to **contactus@barstandardsboard.org.uk**, using the subject line *Data and Intelligence Strategy*. We particularly invite any feedback from parties interested in our work to develop and encourage innovation relating to data.

BAR STANDARDS BOARD

REGULATING BARRISTERS

Contacting us

We are committed to providing a high standard of service and dealing with everyone in a way that is fair, transparent, and proportionate. We welcome your feedback on our services, particularly where the level of service has exceeded or fallen below your expectations.

Your comments and suggestions are important to us as they will help us to meet our obligations to you and to improve our performance.

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