

Research Specification: Quantitative study into consumers understanding of the legal services market

Purpose

To provide evidence to support the launch of the Legal Services Board (LSB) highlighting issues around consumers' understanding and access to the legal services market.

Background

The LSB has been set up to oversee the reform and modernisation of the legal services market place in the interests of consumers, enhancing quality, ensuring value for money and improving access to justice across England and Wales. On 2 January 2010 the legislation formally hands over regulatory powers to the LSB and the LSB takes its formal role as oversight regulator of the legal services market.

As part of the formal launch of the LSB we would like to publish data illustrating the key issues facing consumers that the LSB has been set up to help address. This data would be used in press-releases, speeches and potentially later reports.

Aims and Objectives

The LSB has been set up to address a variety of challenges facing the legal services market, but for consumers in particular the LSB hopes to increase access to justice, protect and promote the interests of consumers and promote competition helping ensure affordable high quality legal services for all.

This research project aims to capture the views of consumers in a number of areas. In particular the research should explore:

- What consumers understand of the legal services market?
- Who would they turn to if they had a legal issue and in what circumstances?
- What types of legal services consumers have used and why?
- What consumers thought of their experiences of the legal services market?
- How much trust they have in legal services?
- What changes consumers would like to see in the legal services market?

Issues and scope

The research should produce a nationally robust data set splitting consumer views by age, gender, income, region and experience of using legal services. The legal services market is extremely diverse, from asylum seekers to home-owners to multinational businesses. For this research we would like to focus on retail users of legal services. Even so, the potential scope of the research is extremely wide and includes many hard to reach groups. We would welcome views on your approach to the research.

Tender Evaluation Criteria

All projects commissioned by the LSB are subject to our standard terms of contract. Tenders will be evaluated on best value for money and will be assessed on the basis of:

1. Overall cost. Please include appropriate breakdowns
2. The extent to which tenders are clearly written and meet the specified objectives, present a sound methodology, identifying any potential problems, and proposing suitable solutions
3. Address outputs and ensure these are in line with requirements and the required timing of the project
4. Proposed team composition, expertise and management and the organisation's diversity policy
5. How diversity issues would be addressed in the research.

Deliverables

Output

The output for this research should be an Excel database containing all of the data produced. It is essential that the research is sufficiently robust for that the LSB can use this in discussions with external stakeholders.

The LSB will retain ownership of the underlying data in the format presented in the research findings.

Project plan

Tenders should include a project plan and time schedule for the work that identifies the main task and key milestones that will be used to monitor progress. The plan should be accompanied by a resource profile, giving a breakdown of the resources in person days allocated to each task.

Duration

The research should commence in XXXX 2009. Tenders should set out dates for completing key milestones such as information gathering, analysis, synthesis and report writing. Interviews with consultants will take place on Xth X. The data should be submitted to the LSB by 11 December 2009.

Legal Services Board Contact Details

Tenders with any queries about the research specification should contact:

Research team: Alex Roy 020 7271 0060

Tenders must be submitted by 5pm on Monday 16 November 2009