Terms of Reference

1. Officers

Purpose

The Officers are responsible for the leadership, oversight and day-to-day administration of the Association.

Responsibilities

The Officers shall:

(a) oversee the work and direction of the Association;

(b) supervise implementation of decisions of the Executive Committee;

(c) oversee governance, communications and operational matters;

(d) approve public statements, publications, podcasts, media engagement and external communications made or issued in the name of the Association;

(e) work collaboratively with the Administrator and the Director of Communications;

(f) oversee Subcommittees and Working Groups;

(g) maintain consistency of policy, standards and public representation across the Association;

(h) protect the operational integrity, systems, infrastructure and reputation of the Association, in cooperation with the Administrator, and respecting the personal ownership of any externally maintained infrastructure in accordance with Part 5 of the Constitution.

2. Executive Committee

Purpose

The Executive Committee is the governing body of the Association.

Responsibilities

The Executive Committee shall:

(a) oversee the direction of the Association;

(b) approve significant governance and financial decisions;

(c) approve amendments to these Terms of Reference;

(d) approve the creation, variation or dissolution of Subcommittees and Working Groups;

(e) consider strategic, operational and financial matters;

(f) receive reports from the Officers, Subcommittees and Working Groups;

(g) oversee the proper administration of the Association.

3. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Membership

The Committee shall consist of no more than twelve members unless otherwise approved by the Officers.

Responsibilities

The Committee shall:

(a) advise upon equality, diversity and inclusion matters;

(b) support consultation responses;

(c) support initiatives and events;

(d) liaise with other Subcommittees where appropriate.

4. Social Mobility Committee

Membership

The Committee shall consist of no more than twelve members unless otherwise approved by the Officers.

Responsibilities

The Committee shall:

(a) support outreach initiatives;

(b) support recruitment and access work;

(c) support educational engagement;

(d) promote access to the criminal Bar.

5. RASSO Committee

Membership

The Committee shall consist of no more than twelve members unless otherwise approved by the Officers.

The Chair shall be King's Counsel.

Responsibilities

The Committee shall:

(a) monitor developments affecting RASSO practitioners;

(b) contribute to consultation responses;

(c) support training and professional engagement;

(d) advise the Officers and Executive Committee.

6. Remuneration Committee

Membership

The Committee shall consist of no more than twelve members unless otherwise approved by the Officers.

The Chair shall be King's Counsel.

Responsibilities

The Committee shall:

(a) consider remuneration and funding matters affecting the criminal Bar;

(b) advise on consultation responses;

(c) support engagement with Government and representative bodies;

(d) report significant developments to the Executive Committee.

7. Wellbeing Committee

Membership

The Committee shall consist of no more than twelve members unless otherwise approved by the Officers.

Responsibilities

The Committee shall:

(a) support wellbeing initiatives across the criminal Bar;

(b) support engagement concerning bullying, harassment and welfare matters;

(c) maintain and review wellbeing guidance and the CBA Wellbeing Protocol;

(d) work collaboratively with the Officers, the Administrator and other Subcommittees as appropriate.

8. Education and Training Committee

Membership

The Committee shall consist of no more than twelve members unless otherwise approved by the Officers.

The Chair shall be:

(a) King’s Counsel; or

(b) a barrister of not fewer than ten years’ call.

Responsibilities

The Committee shall:

(a) support educational and training initiatives;

(b) support continuing professional development activity;

(c) identify training needs among members;

(d) coordinate with other Subcommittees where appropriate.

9. Young Bar Committee

Status

The Young Bar Committee is a Subcommittee of the Association. The Chair of the Young Bar Committee is appointed by the Executive Committee in accordance with clause 9.5 of the Constitution and shall sit as a member of the Executive Committee.

Membership

The Committee shall consist of no more than twelve members unless otherwise approved by the Officers.

No more than two pupil barristers may serve on the Committee at any one time.

The quorum shall be four members.

Eligibility

The Chair shall:

(a) have not fewer than four years' call;

(b) be under eight years' call at the date of appointment;

(c) sit as a member of the Executive Committee.

The Secretary of the Committee shall:

(a) have not fewer than two years' call;

(b) be under eight years' call at the date of appointment.

Responsibilities

The Committee shall:

(a) represent junior members of the Association;

(b) identify issues affecting junior practitioners;

(c) support retention and collegiate engagement;

(d) liaise with the Assistant Secretary and the Administrator in the first instance.

10. Black Barristers Committee

Status

The Black Barristers Committee is a Subcommittee of the Association established by the Executive Committee in 2026 under clause 9.1 of the Constitution.

Membership

The Committee shall consist of no more than twelve members unless otherwise approved by the Officers.

Responsibilities

The Committee shall:

(a) represent and support Black barristers practising at the criminal Bar;

(b) identify issues affecting Black practitioners and bring them to the attention of the Officers and the Executive Committee;

(c) support outreach, retention and progression initiatives;

(d) liaise with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Social Mobility Committee where appropriate.

11. Meetings and Governance

Subcommittees shall ordinarily meet not fewer than three times per year.

The Executive Committee shall ordinarily meet not fewer than six times per year, and shall not ordinarily meet during August, in accordance with clause 6.8 of the Constitution.

The Officers may convene urgent meetings on shorter notice where reasonably necessary.

Agendas and minutes for Executive Committee meetings and Subcommittee meetings shall be retained within the Association's dedicated storage systems and shall be the responsibility of the Administrator to maintain.

Subcommittee Secretaries shall arrange meetings through the Administrator where appropriate.

12. Communications and Podcasts

All public statements, podcasts, publications and media engagement undertaken in the name of the Association require Officer approval.

The Association shall aim to maintain a structured programme of professional podcasts and media engagement.

Listening and engagement data shall be provided to the Officers and Executive Committee not less frequently than every six months.

The Young Bar Committee, the RASSO Committee and the Remuneration Committee may each contribute podcast content annually where appropriate.

13. Administrator

Purpose

The Administrator is responsible for the operational administration, systems management and organisational coordination of the Association. The role provides the institutional memory and operational continuity of the Association across changes of leadership.

Term

The role of Administrator is a continuing operational appointment and is not subject to annual rotation, in accordance with clause 5.2 of the Constitution.

Reporting

The Administrator reports to the Chair and Vice Chair, in accordance with clause 5.4 of the Constitution.

Responsibilities

The Administrator shall:

(a) oversee the operational administration of the Association;

(b) maintain systems, infrastructure, equipment and records, including the historical archive;

(c) coordinate governance processes and meeting administration;

(d) maintain operational continuity across Officer terms;

(e) oversee digital infrastructure, operational technology and dedicated drives and storage systems;

(f) oversee data protection and information governance;

(g) liaise with third-party service providers on operational matters;

(h) work alongside the Officers, the Executive Committee and the Subcommittees;

(i) act as the first point of operational contact for new Officers and Subcommittee Chairs.

Authority

The Administrator shall have authority to act on operational matters within their remit without requiring the approval of any individual Officer in each instance.

Election officials

The Administrator, together with the Secretary, acts as election official of the Association in accordance with Part 8 of the Constitution.

Engagement terms

The detailed terms of the Administrator's engagement are set out in the Administrator's Terms of Engagement. The arrangements covering the Association's digital estate are set out in the Digital Estate Terms of Engagement.

14. Director of Communications

Purpose

The Director of Communications is responsible for the communications, media and public engagement work of the Association. The role provides continuity in the public-facing communications of the Association across changes of leadership.

Term

Where appointed, the role of Director of Communications is a continuing operational appointment and is not subject to annual rotation, in accordance with clause 5.2 of the Constitution.

Reporting

The Director of Communications reports to the Chair and Vice Chair, in accordance with clause 5.5 of the Constitution.

Responsibilities

The Director of Communications shall:

(a) assist with communications strategy and delivery;

(b) coordinate podcasts and digital communications;

(c) support press engagement and publications;

(d) provide engagement and listening data not less frequently than every six months;

(e) work collaboratively with the Officers and the Administrator in relation to public communications and strategic engagement.

Authority

The Director of Communications shall have authority to act on communications matters within their remit, subject to the approval of the Officers in respect of public statements, publications, podcasts and media engagement made or issued in the name of the Association.

15. External Appointments and Representation

Purpose

The Association maintains representation on a number of external bodies and committees relevant to the work of the criminal Bar. Appointments to those bodies are made by the Executive Committee in accordance with Part 11 of the Constitution.

Standing external appointments

The Executive Committee shall appoint Voting Members of the Association to sit as the Association's nominated barrister on, at minimum, the following external bodies:

(a) the Criminal Procedure Rule Committee;

(b) the Bar Council General Management Committee;

(c) the Forensic Science Regulator's panels and any successor body, as appropriate.

Other appointments

The Executive Committee may from time to time appoint Voting Members to such other external committees, bodies or working groups as it considers appropriate, including consultative bodies of the Ministry of Justice, the Sentencing Council, the Bar Standards Board and other regulatory and professional bodies.

Term and reporting

Appointees shall serve for such term as the Executive Committee determines at the time of appointment, and shall report to the Executive Committee on a regular basis on the work of the body to which they are appointed. The Administrator shall maintain a current register of the Association's representatives on external bodies.

Endorsement of bar council candidates

The procedure for endorsement of candidates in Bar Council elections is set out in Part 11 of the Constitution.

16. Conduct and Code of Conduct

The standards of behaviour expected of members, Officers, employees and contractors of the Association are governed by Part 12 of the Constitution and by the Code of Conduct of the Association published from time to time.

Members are expected to conduct themselves professionally and respectfully at all times, including in person, in writing, and on social media. Aggressive or abusive behaviour is not tolerated and may result in termination of membership in accordance with clauses 3.12 and 3.13 of the Constitution. The Wellbeing Committee, in cooperation with the Officers, shall keep under review the practical operation of the Code of Conduct in respect of bullying, harassment and welfare matters.

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