

Legal Services Council Strategic Plan 2022 – 2023

This Strategic Plan sets out the strategies that the Legal Services Council (**Council**) is focussed on, consistent with our role, goals and objectives and our commitment to working with our stakeholders in the Legal Profession Uniform Law (**Uniform Law**) scheme.

This Plan was issued in January 2022 and updated in January 2023 ahead of the issue of a new Plan for 2023-2024.

Our role

The Council and Commissioner for Uniform Legal Services Regulation (**Commissioner**) oversee the operation of the Uniform Law scheme – a regulatory framework to promote the efficient administration of justice and an effective Australian legal profession. The Uniform Law has applied to legal practitioners in New South Wales (**NSW**) and Victoria since 1 July 2015 and in Western Australia (**WA**) since 1 July 2022.

Our vision

Our vision is to achieve uniform regulation of a national legal profession and legal services in Australia, to meet community needs and to balance the interests of the legal profession with the protection of clients of law practices.

Goals

- 1 Achieve national implementation of the Uniform Law
- 2 Ensure that the Uniform Law is a responsive regulatory regime for the legal profession in Australia
- 3 Build awareness of the benefits of the Uniform Law
- 4 Continue to administer a well-governed organisation

Objectives of the Council

The objectives of the Council are to:

- monitor the implementation of the Uniform Law and ensure its consistent application across participating jurisdictions
- ensure that the Uniform Law remains efficient, targeted and effective, and promotes the maintenance of high professional standards
- ensure that the Uniform Law appropriately accounts for the interests and protection of the clients of law practices

Objectives of the Commissioner

The objectives of the Commissioner are to:

- promote compliance with the requirements of the Uniform Law and the Uniform Rules
- ensure the consistent and effective implementation of the provisions of Chapter 5 of the Uniform Law and supporting Uniform Rules, through the development and making of appropriate guidelines
- raise awareness of the Uniform Law and its objectives

Our stakeholders

Our close partnerships and collaborative working relationships in NSW, Victoria and WA, with their respective Departments of Justice, local regulatory authorities, professional associations, consumer groups and members of the legal profession, have been and continue to be critical to our success.

Strategies supporting goals

1. Achieve national implementation of the Uniform Law

- 1.1 Work with the Standing Committee and Departments of Justice in NSW, Victoria and WA to achieve national implementation
- 1.2 Continued engagement with the participating jurisdictions to collaborate on the operation of the Uniform Law
- 1.3 Continued engagement with the non-participating jurisdictions to understand their perspectives, address any issues and promote the Uniform Law

2. Ensure that the Uniform Law scheme is a responsive regulatory regime for the legal profession in Australia

- 2.1 Ensure the Uniform Law remains an effective regulatory regime
- 2.2 Recommend Uniform Law changes, as appropriate
- 2.3 Recommend Uniform Law Rules and Guidelines, as appropriate
- 2.4 Undertake Uniform Law projects

3. Build awareness of the benefits of the Uniform Law

- 3.1 Provide stakeholders, legal practitioners and consumers with timely and accurate information about the Uniform Law scheme
- 3.2 Enhance the profile of the Council and the Admissions Committee in the legal profession
- 3.3 Promote the Uniform Law scheme in non-participating jurisdictions
- 3.4 Identify, develop and realise opportunities to raise awareness of the Uniform Law scheme

4. Continue to administer a well-governed organisation

- 4.1 Support the Council, Admissions Committee, Law Admissions Consultative Committee and Audit and Risk Committee
- 4.2 Comply with statutory reporting requirements
- 4.3 Review and implement the Council's governance and business arrangements
- 4.4 Foster a productive and collegiate workplace

Our Strategic Plan

Goal 1 Achieve national implementation of the Uniform Law	
1.1 Work with the Standing Committee and Departments of Justice in NSW, Victoria and WA to achieve national implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Six monthly and annual reports to the Standing Committee - Regular liaison with the NSW, Victorian and WA Departments of Justice
1.2 Continued engagement with the participating jurisdictions to collaborate on the operation of the Uniform Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular liaison with designated local regulatory authorities
1.3 Continued engagement with the non-participating jurisdictions to understand their perspectives, address any issues and promote the Uniform Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular liaison with non-participating jurisdictions and stakeholders
Goal 2 Ensure that the Uniform Law scheme is a responsive regulatory regime for the legal profession in Australia	
2.1 Ensure the Uniform Law remains an effective regulatory regime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor and receive feedback from stakeholders on the effectiveness of the Uniform Law
2.2 Recommend Uniform Law changes, as appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progress amendments approved, in principle, by the Standing Committee - Consider proposed amendments in relation to foreign lawyers - Consider any amendments proposed by the Victorian Government arising from the Royal Commission into the Management of Police Informants
2.3 Recommend Uniform Rules and Guidelines, as appropriate	<p>Uniform General Rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider expanding categories of proceedings in which conditional costs agreements are prohibited - Review the effectiveness and regulatory impact of the costs disclosure thresholds referred to in section 174(4) and (5) of the Uniform Law - Make consequential amendments following changes to the definition of litigation funding schemes in the <i>Corporations Act 2001</i> (Cth) - Update and publish indexation amounts <p>Uniform Admission Rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progress proposed amendments in relation to foreign lawyers <p>Uniform Conduct, Practice and Continuing Development Rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider proposed amendments developed by the Law Council of Australia and the Australian Bar Association
2.4 Undertake Uniform Law projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor and review the effectiveness of reports from the Uniform Law database - Maintain an electronic register of legal practitioner details in the Uniform Law jurisdictions

Goal 3 Build awareness of the benefits of the Uniform Law	
3.1 Provide stakeholders, legal practitioners and consumers with timely and accurate information about the Uniform Law scheme	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regularly update the Council website and advise stakeholders of Uniform Law developments - Hold regular liaison meetings with local regulatory authorities
3.2 Enhance the profile of the Council and the Admissions Committee in the legal profession	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage with the legal profession to discuss the role of the Council and Admissions Committee - Regular meetings with stakeholders to discuss the Council, Admissions Committee and the Uniform Law
3.3 Promote the Uniform Law scheme in non-participating jurisdictions	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage and consult with stakeholders in non-participating jurisdictions about joining the Uniform Law scheme
3.4 Identify, develop and realise opportunities to raise awareness of the Uniform Law scheme	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use Council website to consult and advise of Uniform Law developments - Publish a quarterly newsletter - Monitor media regarding the Uniform Law
Goal 4 Continue to administer a well-governed organisation	
4.1 Support the Council, Admissions Committee, Law Admissions Consultative Committee and Audit and Risk Committee	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Convene five Council meetings per year - Convene three Admissions Committee and Law Admissions Consultative Committee meetings per year - Convene three Audit and Risk Committee meetings per year
4.2 Comply with statutory reporting requirements	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submit and publish annual reports for the Council and Commissioner - Monitor and review the Council triennial budgets - Comply with NSW Audit Office requirements
4.3 Review and implement the Council's governance and business arrangements	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and update the Council's governance documents on an annual basis - Monitor the Corporate Services Agreement arrangements
4.4 Foster a productive and collegiate workplace	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage effective teamwork and staff development - Implement performance review process and staff training/development