



The Bar Council

Legal aid (Form CRM 14) – signing an application

Purpose:	To draw barristers' attention to the practicalities relating to this topic
Scope of application:	All practising criminal barristers
Issued by:	The Ethics Committee
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Status and effect:	Please see the notice at end of this document. This is not “guidance” for the purposes of the BSB Handbook I6.4.

General approach

1. This document provides clarification in relation to the permissibility of you completing and signing, as the legal representative, Part 31 of form CRM 14, "Application for Legal Aid in Criminal Proceedings" (formerly form "CDS 14"), issued by the Legal Aid Authority ("LAA").

2. The Legal Services Commission, the predecessor to the LAA confirmed, in 2006, that barristers could sign form CDS 14 and it was always their intention that they should be able to, as agents of the solicitor. The Ethics Committee has considered the replacement form CRM 14 and the guidance notes thereto. These are available on the Ministry of Justice's website via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-legal-aid-application-forms>

3. The form (and the equivalent e-form) requires the applicant's legal representative to complete and sign Part 31, and declare that you 'have been instructed to provide representation by a firm which holds a contract issued by the Legal Aid Agency (LAA); or a solicitor employed by the LAA in the Public Defender Service who is authorised to provide representation'; and to provide the relevant

LAA account number. It does not require you to verify or attest to the accuracy of the information submitted.

4. The Ethics Committee considers that it is permissible under the BSB Handbook for barristers to complete and sign Part 31 form CRM 14.

Important Notice

This document has been prepared by the Bar Council to assist barristers on matters of professional conduct and ethics. **It is not “guidance” for the purposes of the BSB Handbook I6.4, and neither the BSB nor a disciplinary tribunal nor the Legal Ombudsman is bound by any views or advice expressed in it.** It does not comprise – and cannot be relied on as giving – legal advice. It has been prepared in good faith, but neither the Bar Council nor any of the individuals responsible for or involved in its preparation accept any responsibility or liability for anything done in reliance on it. For fuller information as to the status and effect of this document, please see [here](#).