

Topic Guide to interviews with judicial review solicitors

Background information

The project seeks to investigate how statistical court data can help laypeople gain or improve their understanding of the judicial processes involved in judicial review (JR) litigation. It is expected to demonstrate how the information needs of lay people for procedural knowledge of JR can be met using information from statistical court data. To achieve this, it is important to identify and contextualise the level of lay understanding of the JR litigation process and the particular information needs and challenges that lay people face in understanding these processes. Judicial review lawyers are in a unique position to provide the necessary empirical data, as they are at the forefront of communicating with lay clients, explaining and advising them on the litigation process and related matters.

Thematic topics:

The primary aim of the interviews is to gather lawyers' insights into lay understanding of the JR process and the information lay people need to understand it. Semi-structured interviews will provide insights into lawyers' work in explaining the JR process and clients' common questions and problems.

To this end, the structure of the interview consists of five thematic topics:

- 1) the level and general features of lay understanding of the JR litigation process prior to consultation;
- 2) information which lawyers regard as essential and provide to their clients;
- 3) common questions asked by lay people during the consultations;
- 4) challenges lay people face in trying to understand the JR process;
- 5) and sources of information commonly used by the general public to obtain information about JR litigation.

Accordingly, the main questions are (roughly) as follows:

- 1) Could you please describe how well your lay clients usually understand the JR litigation process prior to your consultation?;
- 2) What information do you think your lay clients most need to understand the JR process?;
- 3) What are the most common questions your lay clients ask you about the JR litigation process?;
- 4) What do lay clients find most difficult to understand about the JR litigation process? Why do you think that is?;
- 5) Where do lay people usually look for information about JR litigation before the consultation? What particular sources of information (internet, media, friends, etc.) do clients tend to use and what do you recommend?

Each theme is complemented by a series of follow-up questions/prompts to explore the topic in more depth or to seek additional clarification. Spontaneous or clarifying questions can also be used if the interviewee raises an interesting question or if there is a need to clarify a point or an example.