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Bar kicks off alternative business structure licensing

By [Max Walters](#) | 3 April 2017

The Bar Standards Board today announced it that has become the fifth front-line legal regulator empowered to license alternative business structures under the Legal Services Act.

The regulator will join the Solicitors Regulation Authority and the regulators for IP professionals, chartered accountants and licensed conveyancers in licensing legal services businesses that are owned by non-professionals. In a statement today, the BSB said 'an order recently approved by parliament designated the General Council of the Bar as a licensing authority for ABS'.

A new edition of the BSB Handbook, which contains the rules of professional conduct for barristers and entities, is published today.



Oliver Hanmer

Oliver Hanmer (pictured), director of regulatory assurance at the BSB, said: 'We are pleased to announce that we are able to start regulating ABSs. Although we are cautious about the number of ABSs that may choose to be regulated by us, we believe this development encourages further innovation in the provision of legal services.'

A BSB spokesperson said: 'Prior to today's launch, we ran a pilot with a number of potential ABSs to test our application processes. From that pilot, we expect to license four ABSs subject to fee payment and them confirming that they have appropriate insurance arrangements in place.'