

# Lexcel Matters



JULY 2025

[www.recognisingexcellence.co.uk/lexcel/](http://www.recognisingexcellence.co.uk/lexcel/)

## WELCOMING OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS

As we bid a fond farewell to two valued team members who recently retired, we're pleased to introduce their successors who will be continuing the excellent work they started. Liz Morris joins us, taking over from John Edwards. With 25 years of experience in quality assurance across legal, non-profit, and private sectors, Liz brings a passion for supporting clients with compliance and certification, combining expertise with a dedicated focus

on building trusted client relationships.

Emma Westbury is taking over from Marian Moir.

Emma has many years' experience in project managing

assessments for Quality Standards, with a strong focus on organisation and client support. She brings a fresh perspective while maintaining the high standards our team is known for.



[Liz.morris@recognisingexcellence.co.uk](mailto:Liz.morris@recognisingexcellence.co.uk)

[emma.westbury@recognisingexcellence.co.uk](mailto:emma.westbury@recognisingexcellence.co.uk)

## COMING NOVEMBER 2026: LEGAL ADVANTAGE

Don't miss Legal Advantage - The conference for risk and compliance leaders. Join us in a central UK location for expert led sessions with high profile guest speakers, on topics including Lexcel, best practice, cyber security and AML. Stay tuned for details!

LEGAL  
ADVANTAGE



ELEVATE BEST PRACTICE

The conference  
for risk and  
compliance leaders



## **STREAMLINE YOUR ASSESSMENTS** **WITH A DUAL LEXCEL & ISO APPROACH**

Recognising Excellence is proud to partner with Atlas Certification, a UKAS accredited certification body, to deliver joint Lexcel and ISO assessments designed specifically to support organisations in the legal sector. Together, we offer a seamless and efficient assessment experience, combining expertise in Lexcel and a wide range of ISO standards, including:

ISO 9001:2015 (Quality Management) and ISO/IEC 27001:2022 (Information Security)

Our dual-qualified assessors can conduct Lexcel and ISO assessments simultaneously. This means: Less disruption to your team, reduced assessment time, lower overall costs, and a smoother, more confident assessment process.

Whether you're due for a Lexcel Review or an ISO Surveillance Visit, our flexible approach adapts to where you are in your assessment cycle.

### **ALREADY ISO CERTIFIED?**

No problem. Transferring your current ISO certification is a simple, stress-free process. Once done, you'll benefit from a streamlined, combined approach going forward.

If you're new to ISO, we can incorporate it into your cycle at any point. If you'd like to explore how this combined assessment approach can benefit your organisation, please contact Liz Morris: [lexcelmatters@recognisingexcellence.co.uk](mailto:lexcelmatters@recognisingexcellence.co.uk)

### **DEMONSTRATE YOUR ACHIEVEMENT WITH PRIDE!**

**Remember to use the correct logo when promoting your certification.**

**It's a great way to celebrate your success and show your commitment to quality.**

**Need the latest version? Contact The Law Society at [lexcel@lawsociety.org.uk](mailto:lexcel@lawsociety.org.uk)**



## **SHARING OUR REPORT TAKEAWAYS**

Recognising Excellence

### **Business Continuity – Have you tested your BCP this year?**

The Business Continuity Institute offers resources on planning, reputational risk, resilience, and emergency comms. Explore their guidelines and webinars at their website: [Business Continuity Institute](#)

### **AI – The Risks & Your Policy**

Unverified AI output and sharing confidential data pose serious risks. The links below highlight why a strong AI policy matters now more than ever: [Legal Futures](#), [LexisNexis](#), [LexisNexis](#).

### **LOCS:23 – Privacy Certification for Legal Services**

The ICO-approved LOCS:23 Standard helps legal providers demonstrate best practice in client data protection and UK GDPR compliance. [Services Operational Privacy Certification Scheme](#)

### **Wellbeing – How Effective Is Your Strategy?**

Firms should set clear, measurable goals for staff wellbeing, covering health, culture, inclusion, safety, and digital balance. See the CIPD factsheet for guidance. [CIPD](#)

### **Neurodiversity – Is Your Firm Doing Enough?**

Consider implementing a wellbeing policy that supports neurodiversity and client vulnerability. The Law Society's guide on inclusive language offers useful insight: [The Law Society](#). ACAS has published advice to help employers support neurodivergent staff, covering awareness, communication, performance, and workplace adjustments. [ACAS - Neuro Diversity](#)

### **A Goodbye from Marian...**

*I expect some of you are already aware that I have retired from Recognising Excellence. I wanted you all to know I am retiring with mixed feelings, happy to retire and enjoy more time in the garden and with my family but sad to be leaving a great Company where I have enjoyed working with wonderful clients and really great colleagues for a number of years. I did not want to miss this opportunity to say how I loved working with you all on Lexcel and I wish you all every success for the future and your association with Recognising Excellence.*

*Kindest Regards  
Marian*

### **Mind Your Language – Complaints Handling**

The Legal Ombudsman offers resources on how language affects complaint outcomes. Their training highlights best practices to improve communication and support early resolution. [Legal Ombudsman](#)

### **Vulnerable Clients – Dementia Awareness**

Training from the Alzheimer's Society can support your work with elderly clients and strengthen community and social responsibility efforts. [Alzheimer's Society](#)

## **BOOST FINANCIAL STABILITY**

### **Now may be the time to act! - 4 complimentary Tools in 1 Hour**

Profit alone isn't enough, many law firm failures stem from poor cash flow and weak internal practices. Now's the time to act. This article shares four expert tools to strengthen your firm's financial resilience.

### **Rising Standards for Financial Governance**

With firm failures on the rise, regulators are tightening expectations. The SRA Code of Conduct for Firms (section 2.4) requires firms to maintain financial stability, and Lexcel v7 is set to place greater emphasis on documented financial governance and monitoring procedures.

### **Practical Support for Financial Stability**

Many law firms struggle to keep up with evolving financial regulations, as daily operations often take precedence. This reactive approach, combined with limited forward-looking insights, can hinder long term stability. Gemstone Legal offers four free tools designed for law firms to enhance financial oversight, identify risks, and turn habits into actionable improvements, complementing existing reports and forecasts.

### **Arrange a 1:1 Discussion**

Structured financial planning is more important than ever. Our tools are designed to save time, clarify your firm's financial position, and support strategic decision-making. Start with any of the resources above or book a one-to-one session to explore how we can help meet your financial goals.

#### **✓ Book here**

**Paul McCluskey is Managing Director of Gemstone Legal, a consultancy specialising in law firm finance and risk management. An approved Lexcel assessor and Law Society consultant, Paul is also a regulated finance broker with expertise in legal sector compliance. His practical, insight led approach helps firms improve financial performance while meeting regulatory obligations.**

#### 1. Financial Stability Scorecard

A quick five-minute tool to assess your firm's financial controls, highlight gaps, and support planning and PII applications. Access the Financial Stability Scorecard: <https://www.gemstonelegal.co.uk/financialstabilityscorecard>

Estimated time: 5 minutes

#### 2. Client Money Interest Scorecard

With low interest from high street banks, this quick assessment helps your firm explore compliant options to boost returns using secondary banking providers. Access the Client Money Interest Scorecard: <https://www.gemstonelegal.co.uk/cminterestscorecard>

Estimated time: 3 minutes

#### 3. Deposit Marketplace

Many firms keep office funds in low-interest accounts. Our platform, in partnership with Akoni Hub, lets you manage surplus funds across multiple institutions easily, boosting returns with minimal admin. Access the Deposit Marketplace: <https://www.gemstonelegal.co.uk/deposit-marketplace>

Estimated time: 12 minutes

#### 4. Financial Benchmarking Scorecard

Compare your firm's performance to industry standards with this in-depth tool. Gain insights into key financial metrics, identify improvement areas, and receive a follow-up consultation to guide next steps. Access the Financial Benchmarking Scorecard: <https://www.gemstonelegal.co.uk/financialbenchmarking>

Estimated time: 40 minutes

## ASSESSOR SPOTLIGHT - MEET AN ASSESSOR

### Christine Tallon

**Experience:** Qualified as a solicitor in 1991 and spent over 25 years in private practice including at equity partnership level in a medium sized firm in London where she was a member of the Risk & Compliance Committee and involved in applying for Lexcel accreditation and subsequent reaccreditation. Christine specialised in claimant catastrophic personal injury work whilst in private practice.

**Specialisms:** Risk & Compliance Consultancy, client care, file reviews, gap analysis, AML, complaints handling, training presentations on various aspects of practice including SRA Principles and Codes of Conduct, Client Care, AML, COLP/COFA training etc. Having had extensive involvement in private practice, Christine understands the issues which arise in practice and is able to provide a practical and pragmatic approach. She also has experience of assessing various in-house local authority legal departments and firms offering a wide range of services including volume conveyancing and publicly funded criminal and family work.

**Based:** South Wales also covering Mid Wales, South West England, London, Midlands, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire.

### Q&A with Christine

- **What do you enjoy most about being an assessor?** Working with firms to ensure that compliance becomes second nature. Seeing how different firms work, meeting new people.
- **What's one piece of advice you give clients preparing for assessment?** If you aren't sure where things are then I have no chance! The self assessment checklist helps you to understand what is where and that it includes all the information required by the Lexcel Standard.
- **What's the most rewarding part of your job?** Working with firms over the years and seeing how they develop and how compliance becomes increasingly part of the culture of the firm - love it when we can see the reduction in non compliances overall (there will almost always be some non compliances simply due to oversight on matter files but overall it's great to see these coming down) and it becomes almost a 'fun' challenge for the firm to achieve as few as possible
- **If you weren't an assessor, what would you be doing?** Enjoying riding, skiing, travelling (assuming I don't need to work obviously!)
- **What is your favourite book to read?** Love historical fiction – currently reading The Shadow Sister by Lucinda Riley (the third book in Lucinda's Seven Sisters series)

**Thank you for your continued custom, see you in the next edition...**