

# **Upholding Professional Standards - Diversity Monitoring Annual Report 2022/23**

20 December 2024

## **About this report and key findings**

This is the fifth year where we have published findings on the diversity characteristics of people in our enforcement processes. Monitoring the diversity of people in our enforcement processes and taking action on the findings is a vital part of embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in the work we do. We not only do this because we have a public duty to do so, as set out under the Equality Act and Legal Services Act, but because it is the right thing to do.

This report sets out the diversity breakdown of individuals in our investigation and enforcement processes over our business year 2022/23 (from 1 November 2022 to 31 October 2023). We draw a comparison with the practising population and we use the term 'individuals', which includes practising solicitors but also lawyers from overseas, paralegals, legal secretaries and non-lawyer managers. We provide a breakdown by sex, ethnicity, age and, where numbers are sufficient, by disability, in two main areas. These are:

- individuals subject to our investigations and enforcement processes
- individuals who had a condition imposed on their practising certificate.

This report can be read in conjunction with our [Upholding Professional Standards report for the 2022/23 year](https://consultations.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/upholding-professional-standards-2022-23/1) (<https://consultations.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/upholding-professional-standards-2022-23/1>). The Upholding Professional Standards report explains our approach to our investigation and enforcement work and provides current and historical data on this work, including the action we have taken against the firms, solicitors and individuals we regulate.

## **Key findings**

### **Individuals subject to our investigation and enforcement processes**

For the analysis in this report, we have looked at the numbers of individuals subject to our investigation and enforcement processes. The numbers involved at the four key stages of these processes in 2022/23 are set out below:

- Stage 1 – 7,885 individuals named on concerns reported to us which are considered by our Assessment and Early Resolution Team (AERT).
- Stage 2 – 1,432 individuals named on concerns which passed our assessment threshold test and which we took forward for an investigation.
- Stage 3 – 265 individuals named on cases where we took regulatory action (either by AERT or as a result of an investigation) (path A). \*
- Stage 4 – 111 individuals named on cases which were concluded at the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT) by way of a hearing or an agreed outcome (path B).

\* Please note that the practising conditions we imposed as a result of an investigation are dealt with in a separate section.

The diagram below illustrates these stages and paths.



The report sets out our analysis for 2022/23 and highlights key trends and patterns over the past five years, starting with practising year 2018/19.

The data shows that there are some differences in the percentage of individuals from different groups in stages of our investigation and enforcement processes when compared with the percentage of those groups in the practising population.

We need to be cautious in drawing conclusions from the data where the numbers of individuals involved are low. This applies, in particular, to analysis of disability at all stages and our analysis of sex, ethnicity and age at stages 3 and 4 (which involves 265 and 111 individuals, respectively). Because of the larger numbers involved, we can draw more reliable conclusions from the analysis at stages 1 and 2 (involving 7,885 and 1,432 individuals, respectively). The key findings from these two stages from our analysis of sex, ethnicity and age are:

- For all five years, both individuals from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background and men are overrepresented in the concerns reported to us (stage 1) compared to the practising population. The overrepresentation is higher at stage 2, when cases pass our assessment threshold test and we decide to investigate them.
- For all five years, there is underrepresentation of the younger age categories (individuals aged 44 and under) in concerns reported to us (stage 1) compared with the practising population. The opposite is true for those in the older age categories (45 and over), who are overrepresented in concerns reported to us when compared with the practising population. For all five years, the age breakdown at stage 2 is broadly consistent with the breakdown at stage 1.

We have, for the first time this year, included a breakdown of the individuals whose practice we intervened into at stage 3 by diversity characteristic.

### Individuals with a condition on their practising certificate

For the first time, we have also included a breakdown of the conditions we imposed on individuals' practising certificates for 2022/23. There are typically three situations in which we may impose conditions on solicitors, firms and other individuals we regulate:

- A condition as part of an outcome where we have made a finding of misconduct.
- An interim condition, which we impose during an investigation, pending the final outcome of the investigation. This is imposed to limit risk of harm to the public. We will monitor these conditions as we progress an investigation.
- A practising certificate with existing conditions. When a practising certificate has existing conditions and an application is made to renew it, we will decide whether the previous conditions should be reimposed, varied, or removed from the new practising certificate.

The SDT can also impose conditions on firms or solicitors as part of its final outcome. It has a wide discretion as to what conditions it can impose.

The patterns of overrepresentation seen in the practising conditions data is similar to that seen in investigation and enforcement. Again, we need to be cautious in drawing conclusions from the data where the numbers of individuals involved are low. This applies, in particular, to our analysis of disability and our analysis of the conditions imposed by the SDT.

The key findings from our analysis of sex, ethnicity and age of the individuals on whom we imposed conditions are:

- Men are overrepresented in the population with practising conditions that we imposed compared to the practising population.
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals are overrepresented in the population with practising conditions that we imposed compared to the practising population.
- Individuals in the younger age categories (aged 44 and under) are underrepresented in the population with practising conditions that we imposed, compared to the practising population.

We will continue to report our findings concerning the diversity breakdown in relation to practising conditions annually.

## **Our response**

Given the patterns seen in the annual monitoring reports concerning Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals, we commissioned research to provide insight into the factors driving this overrepresentation.

We focused on the reports received and the reports which passed our assessment threshold test and were referred for investigation. The research was carried out by an independent consortium of the universities of York, Cardiff and Lancaster.

The research undertook an in-depth analysis of our datasets and explored the experiences of solicitors and behaviours among legal service users. It found a complex picture behind overrepresentation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic solicitors in the SRA's enforcement processes. It found that some factors intersect with ethnicity, including the size of the firm where the solicitor works and the firm's practice area. These affect, but do not fully account for, the overrepresentation seen and the relationship between these factors is complex and difficult to unpick.

In their review of our assessment processes, the universities concluded that our approaches are, for the most part, as robust as they can be and are designed to make sure there is fairness and consistency in decision making.

[An overview of the research, key findings and the measures we are proposing to take to address the underlying issues are available to read](#)

[\[https://publications.sra.org.uk/overrepresentation-of-black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-solicitors/1\]](https://publications.sra.org.uk/overrepresentation-of-black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-solicitors/1)

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## **About the data**

We receive reports raising concerns about the conduct of law firms we regulate as well as the conduct of individuals. The diversity monitoring data in this report is based on the individuals subject to our investigation and enforcement work. It covers the period from 1 November 2022 to 31 October 2023. It does not include any data about the reports or regulatory action we take in relation to law firms.

Our focus for this annual report is the regulatory activity taken in the reporting year. It does not follow the progress of a single cohort of individuals through the various stages of our investigation and enforcement processes. Many, but not all, of the individuals reported to

us in 2022/23 (captured in the stage 1 analysis) will also be in the stage 2 analysis of investigations. This is because we generally decide whether to investigate a reported concern within two months of receiving it.

However, the nature of an investigation means it may take longer than one year for it to be concluded and an outcome be reached. This means it is unlikely that many of the individuals who were reported to us in 2022/23 are represented in the regulatory action we take in the same year (captured in the stage 3 analysis), or in the decisions made by the SDT (captured in the stage 4 analysis).

Similarly, in relation to the practising conditions, the report covers the decisions made over the reporting period. This is the first time we have reported on this data and we will continue to do so annually. We have reported on both the decisions that we make and those that the SDT makes in relation to practising conditions. We have compared both sets of data concerning practising conditions with the practising population.

## Comparison with the practising population

For context, in this report we refer to the breakdown of the practising population, which is set out in the ['Diversity profile of the people we regulate' \[#heading\\_d018\]](#) section.

Our analysis looks at the known population among those groups – that is, the people for whom we hold diversity information. This varies at each stage of the process, but we have diversity information on:

- 84% of the population in relation to sex
- 99.96% of the population (this is shown as 100% due to rounding) concerning age
- 68% of the population in relation to ethnicity.

## Data concerning individuals

We use the term 'individuals' when discussing the people subject to our investigation and enforcement processes. This includes practising solicitors, lawyers from overseas, paralegals, legal secretaries and non-lawyer managers. We have a role in regulating everyone working in a law firm, so we can and do investigate concerns about all the individuals working in law firms – not just solicitors. However, those that are not solicitors are not on the roll of solicitors, do not hold a practising certificate and do not have mySRA accounts, so we do not have and cannot report on diversity information for these individuals.

### Data on disability

Because of the way we have collected disability data in the past, we can only identify the proportion of individuals who have declared a disability, which is 1% of the practising population. We are not able to differentiate, with certainty, between people who have actively declared they do not have a disability and those who have simply not answered the question. We suspect there is sizeable underreporting of disability data within this data set, given that [the diversity data we collected in 2023 from law firms showed that 6% of lawyers in law firms were disabled \[https://consultations.sra.org.uk/sra/equality-diversity/diversity-profession/diverse-legal-profession/#heading\\_f1a51\]](https://consultations.sra.org.uk/sra/equality-diversity/diversity-profession/diverse-legal-profession/#heading_f1a51).

## Ethnicity groups

We break ethnicity down into five main groups: White, Black, Asian, Mixed and Other ethnic group. Where the numbers in each group are large enough to report without the risk of identifying individuals, we will report data about each group separately. Where the numbers get too small (at stages 3 and 4 and where we report on practising conditions), we will compare the White group (which includes minority White groups) to the other four groups, which we refer to as the Black, Asian and minority ethnic group.

## Drawing conclusions based on small numbers

The number of individuals against whom we took regulatory action (stage 3), or who were named on cases concluded at the SDT (stage 4) over the reporting period is small, there may be an impact on the validity of the conclusions we can draw. This is also the case for where we report on conditions we impose and conditions the SDT imposes, where numbers are also small.

And, as percentage breakdowns can be misleading with small groups, we have also provided the numbers of individuals involved.

## **Investigation and enforcement - overview and trends 2018/19-2022/23**

This section sets out an overview of the diversity breakdown of individuals at four key stages of the investigation and enforcement process. We have included data from earlier years so we can highlight any trends. There is more detail about the data for 2022/23 at each stage in later sections of this report.

The diversity breakdown is by sex, ethnicity, age and disability (where there was sufficient data to allow us to do this).

### **Breakdown by sex across key stages of our enforcement process**

	Sex	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>Practising population</b>	<b>Men</b>	49% (74,657)	48% (71,933)	48% (70,928)	47% (69,512)	47% (68,244)
	<b>Women</b>	51% (77,539)	52% (77,769)	52% (78,011)	53% (76,987)	53% (76,136)
<b>Stage 1: Concerns reported to us and considered by AERT</b>	<b>Men</b>	67% (4,440)	65% (3,959)	62% (3,913)	63% (3,894)	63% (4,290)
	<b>Women</b>	33% (2,161)	35% (2,088)	38% (2,365)	37% (2,336)	37% (2,536)
<b>Stage 2: Concern passes test for investigation</b>	<b>Men</b>	73% (1,800)	75% (1,166)	68% (820)	70% (804)	72% (822)
	<b>Women</b>	27% (661)	25% (380)	32% (393)	30% (352)	28% (323)
<b>Stage 3 (path A): Cases where we took regulatory action (either by AERT or as a result of an investigation)</b>	<b>Men</b>	70% (159)	73% (144)	66% (105)	74% (139)	75% (151)
	<b>Women</b>	30% (67)	27% (53)	34% (55)	26% (49)	25% (50)
<b>Stage 4 (path B): Cases concluded at the SDT</b>	<b>Men</b>	85% (119)	80% (99)	73% (75)	75% (61)	78% (86)
	<b>Women</b>	15% (21)	20% (25)	27% (28)	25% (20)	22% (24)

For all five years, men are overrepresented in the concerns we receive (stage 1) compared to the practising population. For each year, the proportion of men is higher at stage 2, when a case passes our assessment threshold test and we take it forward for investigation.

Compared to the investigation stage, the proportion of individuals we took regulatory action against (stage 3) who were men was lower in the three years from 2018/19 to 2020/21. In 2021/22 and 2022/23 it was higher than at the investigation stage.

For all five years, the proportion of individuals where the case concluded at the SDT and which involved men (stage 4) was higher than the proportion who were investigated (stage 2).

### **Breakdown by ethnicity across key stages of our enforcement process**

In this section, we have set out data for the White and the Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups to allow comparison across all stages. A more detailed analysis across all five ethnic groups can be seen in the ['Stages 1 and 2 - concerns reported to us, considered by AERT and taken forward for investigation' section](#) [[#heading\\_2d73](#)]. This is not possible for stages 3 and 4 because of the small number of individuals involved.

	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
<b>Practising population</b>	<b>White</b>	82% (99,098)	82% (96,835)	82% (99,078)	81% (97,326)	81% (95,626)
	<b>Black, Asian and minority ethnic</b>	18% (21,085)	18% (20,930)	18% (22,223)	19% (22,266)	19% (22,313)
<b>Stage 1: Concerns reported to us and considered by AERT</b>	<b>White</b>	74% (4,273)	74% (3,864)	75% (4,138)	76% (4,172)	76% (4,558)
	<b>Black, Asian and minority ethnic</b>	26% (1,486)	26% (1,327)	25% (1,376)	24% (1,307)	24% (1,442)
<b>Stage 2: Concern passes test for investigation</b>	<b>White</b>	68% (1,441)	65% (870)	67% (722)	71% (727)	71% (702)
	<b>Black, Asian and minority ethnic</b>	32% (691)	35% (460)	33% (356)	29% (295)	29% (291)
<b>Stage 3 (path A): Cases where we took regulatory action (either by AERT or as a result of an investigation)</b>	<b>White</b>	65% (129)	71% (114)	64% (90)	69% (116)	71% (127)
	<b>Black, Asian and minority ethnic</b>	35% (68)	29% (46)	36% (51)	31% (52)	29% (52)
<b>Stage 4 (path B): Cases concluded at the SDT</b>	<b>White</b>	65% (81)	72% (81)	66% (59)	64% (47)	59% (60)
	<b>Black, Asian and minority ethnic</b>	35% (43)	28% (31)	34% (31)	36% (26)	41% (42)

For all five years, Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals are overrepresented in the concerns we receive (stage 1) compared to the practising population. And this overrepresentation is higher at stage 2, when cases pass our assessment threshold test and we take them forward for investigation.

There is no consistent pattern when comparing the investigation stage with the individuals we took regulatory action against at stage 3. In 2022/23, the proportion of Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals at each stage was the same.

With the exception of 2019/20, the proportion of Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals in cases concluded at the SDT (stage 4) is higher than the proportion who are investigated (stage 2).

## Breakdown by age across key stages of our enforcement process

Because of low numbers, we have combined the two youngest age groups, showing data at each stage for individuals aged 16-34.

**Age 2018/19 2019/20 2020/21 2021/22 2022/23**

<b>Practising population</b>	<b>16-34</b>	25% (39,593)	24% (39,016)	24% (38,927)	23% (38,997)	24% (40,628)
	<b>35-44</b>	32% (50,885)	33% (52,124)	33% (53,371)	33% (54,372)	32% (55,305)
	<b>45-54</b>	24% (38,033)	24% (39,146)	24% (39,788)	25% (41,220)	25% (42,734)
	<b>55-64</b>	14% (21,378)	14% (22,284)	14% (22,787)	14% (23,698)	14% (25,009)
	<b>65+</b>	5% (7,280)	5% (7,736)	5% (8,001)	5% (8,485)	5% (9,037)
	<b>16-34</b>	12% (826)	13% (799)	14% (911)	14% (954)	13% (1,042)
	<b>35-44</b>	26% (1,776)	27% (1,680)	26% (1,766)	26% (1,794)	26% (2,023)
	<b>45-54</b>	30% (1,992)	28% (1,754)	28% (1,915)	27% (1,864)	28% (2,188)
	<b>55-64</b>	22% (1,501)	22% (1,403)	21% (1,420)	21% (1,439)	21% (1,593)
	<b>65+</b>	10% (250)	10% (616)	11% (717)	13% (867)	12% (919)
<b>Stage 1: Concerns reported to us and considered by AERT</b>	<b>16-34</b>	11% (283)	12% (190)	10% (137)	12% (165)	12% (157)
	<b>35-44</b>	26% (659)	29% (479)	25% (335)	26% (337)	25% (334)
	<b>45-54</b>	30% (751)	28% (447)	29% (386)	27% (349)	29% (390)
	<b>55-64</b>	23% (567)	22% (358)	23% (304)	21% (275)	20% (269)
	<b>65+</b>	10% (250)	9% (150)	12% (162)	14% (187)	14% (195)
	<b>16-34</b>	13% (34)	14% (34)	19% (44)	12% (28)	11% (25)
	<b>35-44</b>	25% (64)	28% (66)	26% (60)	22% (51)	20% (47)
	<b>45-54</b>	27% (69)	24% (56)	25% (58)	32% (73)	25% (59)
	<b>55-64</b>	22% (55)	20% (48)	18% (43)	16% (36)	20% (48)
	<b>65+</b>	13% (33)	14% (34)	13% (30)	18% (41)	24% (57)
<b>Stage 2: Concern passes test for investigation</b>	<b>16-34</b>	9% (13)	5% (6)	7% (8)	25% (21)	22% (24)
	<b>35-44</b>	27% (38)	25% (31)	19% (21)	*	*
	<b>45-54</b>	31% (44)	30% (38)	31% (34)	33% (28)	31% (34)
	<b>55-64</b>	20% (28)	25% (31)	28% (31)	24% (20)	27% (30)
	<b>65+</b>	13% (18)	16% (20)	14% (15)	18% (15)	21% (23)
	<b>16-34</b>	13% (34)	14% (34)	19% (44)	12% (28)	11% (25)
	<b>35-44</b>	25% (64)	28% (66)	26% (60)	22% (51)	20% (47)
	<b>45-54</b>	27% (69)	24% (56)	25% (58)	32% (73)	25% (59)
	<b>55-64</b>	22% (55)	20% (48)	18% (43)	16% (36)	20% (48)
	<b>65+</b>	13% (33)	14% (34)	13% (30)	18% (41)	24% (57)
<b>Stage 3 (path A): Cases where we took regulatory action (either by AERT or as a result of an investigation)</b>	<b>16-34</b>	9% (13)	5% (6)	7% (8)	25% (21)	22% (24)
	<b>35-44</b>	27% (38)	25% (31)	19% (21)	*	*
	<b>45-54</b>	31% (44)	30% (38)	31% (34)	33% (28)	31% (34)
	<b>55-64</b>	20% (28)	25% (31)	28% (31)	24% (20)	27% (30)
	<b>65+</b>	13% (18)	16% (20)	14% (15)	18% (15)	21% (23)
<b>Stage 4 (path B): Cases concluded at the SDT</b>	<b>16-34</b>	9% (13)	5% (6)	7% (8)	25% (21)	22% (24)
	<b>35-44</b>	27% (38)	25% (31)	19% (21)	*	*
	<b>45-54</b>	31% (44)	30% (38)	31% (34)	33% (28)	31% (34)
	<b>55-64</b>	20% (28)	25% (31)	28% (31)	24% (20)	27% (30)
	<b>65+</b>	13% (18)	16% (20)	14% (15)	18% (15)	21% (23)

Please note, numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

\* For 2021/22 and 2022/23, due to low numbers we have combined the 16-34 and 35-44 age categories.

For all five years, there is underrepresentation of the two younger age categories shown here (16-34 and 35-44) in concerns reported to us compared with the practising



population. The opposite is true for those in the older age categories (45 and over) who are overrepresented in concerns reported to us when compared with the practising population.

Broadly speaking, there are minor differences in the proportions across all age groups between stages 1 and 2 for all five years.

Looking at stages 3 and 4, it is difficult to identify patterns over time for the age data.

## Breakdown by disability across key stages of our enforcement processes

Because of the very small numbers involved there are limitations in what we can report – the table is marked with an asterisk where the numbers with a disability recorded are too small to report for that year. We have also removed the 'no disability recorded' figures for these years, as to include them could reveal the number where disability was recorded. This is because the totals are noted elsewhere in this report.

	Disability	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>Practising population</b>	<b>No disability recorded</b>	99% (155,686)	99% (158,835)	99% (160,662)	99% (164,480)	99% (170,373)
	<b>Disability recorded</b>	1% (1,673)	1% (1,663)	1% (2,293)	1% (2,362)	1% (2,402)
<b>Stage 1: Concerns reported to us and considered by AERT</b>	<b>No disability recorded</b>	99% (6,719)	98% (6,187)	99% (6,622)	98% (6,842)	98% (7,722)
	<b>Disability recorded</b>	2% (141)	2% (106)	3% (181)	2% (149)	37% (2,536)
<b>Stage 2: Concern passes test for investigation</b>	<b>No disability recorded</b>	98% (2,517)	98% (1,609)	97% (1,320)	97% (1,316)	98% (1,409)
	<b>Disability recorded</b>	2% (62)	2% (38)	3% (37)	3% (34)	2% (23)
<b>Stage 3 (path A): Cases where we took regulatory action (either by AERT or as a result of an investigation)</b>	<b>No disability recorded</b>	*	*	97% (251)	98% (262)	97% (256)
	<b>Disability recorded</b>	*	*	3% (7)	2% (5)	3% (9)
<b>Stage 4 (path B): Cases concluded at the SDT</b>	<b>No disability recorded</b>	*	95% (123)	*	*	*
	<b>Disability recorded</b>	*	5% (6)	*	*	*

Due to the small numbers of individuals involved, it is not possible to apply meaningful commentary on trends over time.

## Stages 1 and 2 – concerns reported to us, considered by AERT and taken forward for investigation

This section covers the profile of individuals named on concerns reported to us and considered by our Assessment and Early Resolution Team (stage 1) and the individuals named on reports which passed our assessment threshold test and were taken forward for investigation (stage 2). This is set in the context of the profile of the practising population.

We focus on the reports received and decisions made in 2022/23. Any patterns identified over the past five years at stages 1 and 2 are highlighted in the: ['Investigation and enforcement – overview and trends 2018/19–2022/23' section](#). [[#heading\\_d908](#)]



## About the data

In 2022/23, 10,963 concerns were reported to us. Of these, 6,594 (60%) named one or more individuals. We counted an individual each time they appeared on a concern reported to us, so some individuals may be reported more than once. There were 7,885 individuals named on these concerns at stage 1. Because our focus is on the diversity breakdown of individuals in our enforcement processes, concerns relating to firms have been excluded.

In the same period, 1,432 individuals were taken forward for investigation (stage 2). Many but not all these individuals will be included in the group of individuals making up stage 1. This is because we generally decide whether to investigate a reported concern within two months of receiving it. However, some of those considered at stage 2 will have been reported to us in the previous year.

Broken down by four diversity characteristics (sex, ethnicity, age, and disability), the tables in this section show:

- the practising population
- stage 1 – individuals named on concerns reported to us in 2022/23
- stage 2 – individuals taken forward for investigation in 2022/23.

## Our findings

### Sex

There is an overrepresentation of men named on the concerns we receive (63%) when compared with the practising population (47%). This is higher when we look at the individuals named on cases which passed our assessment threshold test and which we took forward for investigation, where 72% are men.

### Stages 1 and 2 – breakdown by sex

	Men	Women
<b>Practising population</b>	47% (68,244)	53% (76,136)
<b>Stage 1: Concerns reported to us</b>	63% (4,290)	37% (2,536)
<b>Stage 2: Concern passes test for investigation</b>	72% (822)	28% (323)

The proportions in the table are based on the following data:

- Practising population – sex was known for 144,380 of the 172,775 in the practising population (84%).
- Stage 1 – sex was known for 6,826 of the 7,885 individuals named on concerns we received (87%).
- Stage 2 – sex was known for 1,145 of the 1,432 individuals named on cases which passed our assessment threshold test and which were taken forward for investigation (80%).

### Ethnicity

The number of individuals counted at stages 1 and 2 of the process is large enough for us to show all five ethnic groups separately. This is not the case for stages 3 and 4, where the numbers are too small. So, we have also shown the total for the Black, Asian and minority ethnic group in the table below, to allow for comparison across all stages of our processes.

Looking at the Black, Asian and minority ethnic group as a whole, there is overrepresentation of individuals from this group reported to us at stage 1 (24%) and at stage 2 (29%) compared to the practising population (19%). The proportions for the Asian and Black groups are:

- 12% of the practising population, 17% of the individuals at stage 1 and 23% of individuals at stage 2 are Asian
- 3% of the practising population, 4% of individuals at stage 1 and 4% of the individuals at stage 2 are Black.

There is an underrepresentation of White individuals at stage 1 (76%) compared with the practising population (81%). This is lower when looking at White individuals at stage 2 (71%).

#### Stages 1 and 2 - ethnicity breakdown

	White	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
<b>Practising population</b>	81% (95,626)	12% (14,606)	3% (3,466)	2% (2,304)	2% (1,937)
<b>Stage 1: Concerns reported to us</b>	76% (4,558)	17% (1,025) 24% (1,442)	4% (262)	1% (62)	2% (93)
<b>Stage 2: Concern passes test for investigation</b>	71% (702)	23% (228) 29% (291)	4% (38)	1% (10)	2% (15)

Please note, percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

The proportions in the table are based on the following data:

- Practising population – ethnicity was known for 117,939 of the 172,775 in the practising population (68%).
- Stage 1 – ethnicity was known for 6,000 of the 7,885 individuals named on concerns we received (76%).
- Stage 2 – ethnicity was known for 993 of the 1,432 individuals named on cases which passed our assessment threshold test and which were taken forward for investigation (69%).

#### Age

Because the number of individuals aged 16–24 was too small to show separately, they have been grouped with the 25–34 age group.

Individuals in this group (16–34) are underrepresented in the concerns reported to us at stage 1 (13%) and at stage 2 (12%) compared with their proportion of the practising population (24%). This pattern is also seen for those in the 35–44 age group, which makes up 32% of the practising population, 26% at stage 1 and 25% at stage 2.

The opposite is true for those in the older age categories, who are overrepresented in reports compared with the practising population. Those aged 55–64 made up 14% of the practising population, 21% of those at stage 1 and 20% of those at stage 2. Those aged 65+ made up 5% of the practising population, 12% of those at stage 1 and 14% of those at stage 2.

#### Stages 1 and 2 - age breakdown

	16-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
<b>Practising population</b>	24% (40,628)	32% (55,305)	25% (42,734)	14% (25,009)	5% (9,037)
<b>Stage 1: Concerns reported to us</b>	13% (1,042)	26% (2,023)	28% (2,188)	21% (1,593)	12% (919)

**Stage 2: Concern passes test for investigation** 12% (157) 25% (334) 29% (390) 20% (269) 14% (195)

The proportions in the table are based on the following:

- Practising population – age was known for 172,713 of the 172,775 individuals in the practising population (100%).
- Stage 1 – age was known for 7,765 of the 7,885 individuals named on concerns we received (98%).
- Stage 2 – age was known for 1,345 of the 1,432 individuals named on cases which passed our assessment threshold test and which were taken forward for investigation (94%).

## Disability

We can see there is a higher proportion of disabled individuals at stage 1 (2%) compared to the practising population (1%). The proportion at stage 2 is also 2%. However, we are not able to draw any reliable conclusions in relation to disability because the numbers are so small.

### Stages 1 and 2: disability recorded

	No disability recorded	Disability recorded	Total
<b>Practising population</b>	99% (170,373)	1% (2,402)	100% (172,775)
<b>Stage 1: Concerns reported to us</b>	98% (7,722)	2% (163)	100% (7,885)
<b>Stage 2: Concern passes test for investigation</b>	98% (1,409)	2% (23)	100% (1,432)

## Stage 3 (path A) – cases where we took regulatory action

This section concerns the individuals at stage 3 – those against whom we have taken regulatory action (either by AERT or as a result of an investigation) in the reporting year.

To provide context, we compare the breakdown at this stage with the breakdown of individuals named on cases which passed our assessment threshold test and which we took forward for investigation (stage 2). The individuals considered at stage 2 will not be the same individuals considered at stage 3. This is because investigations may not all be concluded within the same year.

We focus on the cases closed within 2022/23 and where we took regulatory action. Any meaningful patterns identified over the past five years at stage 3 are highlighted in the ['Key findings and trends 2018/19–2023/24' section](#) [[#heading\\_d9081](#)].

## Cases where we took regulatory action – about the data

### Number of individuals against whom we took regulatory action

There are two tables for each diversity characteristic in this section. The first table shows the profile of the individuals at each of the following stages:

- stage 1 – individuals named on concerns reported to us in 2022/23
- stage 2 – individuals named on concerns which passed our assessment threshold test and which we took forward for an investigation in 2022/23
- stage 3 – individuals named on cases where we took regulatory action (either by AERT or as a result of an investigation).

There were 265 individuals against whom we took regulatory action at stage 3. Regulatory action includes:



- closing a matter with a letter of advice or warning
- imposing a sanction, such as a rebuke or a fine
- intervening into an individual's practice
- imposing practising conditions
- making a section 43 or section 99 order
- cases where an individual agrees to be removed from the roll of solicitors.

A definition of the different types of regulatory action referred to in this section can be found in the [glossary of our Upholding Professional Standards report](https://consultations.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/upholding-professional-standards-2022-23/#heading_f9fe) [[https://consultations.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/upholding-professional-standards-2022-23/#heading\\_f9fe](https://consultations.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/upholding-professional-standards-2022-23/#heading_f9fe)].

Please note, the 'letter of warning or advice' action shown in the tables below used to be named 'finding/finding and letter of warning'. We have now updated the name in line with changes to our revised Enforcement Strategy and Standards and Regulations.

### **Breakdown of individuals by type of regulatory action**

The second table provides a diversity breakdown of individuals by the type of regulatory action taken. There are 221 actions in the second table, covering:

- Individuals whose case was closed with a letter of advice or letter of warning.
- Those who we sanctioned with a rebuke or a fine.
- Individuals whose practice we intervened into. Please note, these decisions relate only to interventions into a person's individual practice and not any firm types (including 'sole practices', which are a category of firm type). They also concern the interventions recorded on cases closed in 2022/23. This means some are likely to have been carried out in previous years, but they are accounted for here because the case was closed in 2022/23.

Some individuals covered in the second table may have more than one of these actions recorded against them and will therefore appear more than once in the analysis. We could not provide this breakdown for all types of regulatory action. The individuals who are not included in the second table are:

- those who had a practising condition imposed, because they are included in the section: '[Conditions imposed on practising certificates](#)' [[#heading\\_a573](#)]
- those who had a section 43 or section 99 order made against them, because these orders are imposed on non-lawyers working in the law firms and businesses we regulate, and we do not hold diversity data for these individuals
- those who agreed to be removed from the roll of solicitors by way of a regulatory settlement agreement, because the numbers are too small to report on.

### **Action once a case passes the assessment threshold test**

Most cases which pass our assessment threshold test are referred for an investigation, which will determine whether regulatory action is warranted.

In some cases, regulatory action can be taken once the assessment threshold test has been completed. We will typically send these letters where there has been a breach of our rules, but circumstances indicate there is no underlying concern in terms of the public interest. Six individuals were issued with a letter of warning or advice after their related matter passed our assessment threshold test, but we did not find it necessary to refer these cases for an investigation. These six individuals are therefore included in the stage 3 analysis (because regulatory action was taken against them), but not in the stage 2 analysis (because they were not taken forward for an investigation).

### **Limits in the data we can report**

To avoid the risk of individuals being identified from this analysis, there are limitations in what we have been able to report in this section due to the low numbers involved:

- We have not been able to report separately on the groups making up the Black, Asian and minority ethnic group.
- We have not been able to include a breakdown of the regulatory action that we have taken (stage 3) by disability (so this section does not have a second table).
- We have grouped together the 16-24 and 25-34 age categories in the stage 3 analysis (set out in the first table concerning age). We have also grouped together the 16-24, 25-34 and 35-44 age groups when looking at actions taken (set out in the second table concerning age).
- We have grouped together the letters of warning or advice categories.
- We have grouped together the rebukes and fines categories.

### Limits on the conclusions we can draw

Because of the low numbers involved at stage 3 (265 individuals), there may be an impact on the validity of the conclusions we can draw. Any differences between groups should, therefore, be treated with caution.

## Cases where we took regulatory action - our findings

### Sex

The overrepresentation of men and corresponding underrepresentation of women continues to increase between stages 2 and 3. Between these two stages, the proportion of cases concerning men increases from 72% to 75%.

#### Path A: Stages 1, 2 and 3 - breakdown by sex

	Men	Women
<b>Stage 1: Concerns reported to us</b>	63% (4,290)	37% (2,536)
<b>Stage 2: Concern passes test for investigation</b>	72% (822)	28% (323)
<b>Stage 3 (path A): Cases where we took regulatory action (either by AERT or as a result of an investigation)</b>	75% (151)	25% (50)

Of the 265 individuals named on cases where we took regulatory action at stage 3, sex was known for 201 (76%).

#### Path A: Regulatory actions taken - breakdown by sex

The proportion of individuals at stage 3 who were men was 75%. The proportion of men represented across the actions is lower for letters of warning or advice and rebukes and fines (74%) and higher for interventions (78%), compared to those at stage 3.

The proportion of individuals at stage 3 who were women was 25%. The proportion of women across the actions is higher for letters of warning or advice and rebukes and fines (26%) and lower for those whose practice we intervened into (22%), compared to those at stage 3.

	Men	Women
<b>Stage 3 (path A): Cases where we took regulatory action (either by AERT or as a result of an investigation)</b>	75% (151)	25% (50)
<b>Letters of warning or advice</b>	74% (66)	26% (23)
<b>Rebuke or fine</b>	74% (46)	26% (16)
<b>Intervention</b>	78% (36)	22% (10)

Sex was known for:

- 89 of 105 individuals who received letters of advice or warning (85%)
- 62 of 67 individuals who received rebukes and fines (93%)
- 41 of the 49 individuals where an intervention took place into their practice (84%).

## Ethnicity

The proportion of cases which involved Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals at stage 3 is 29%, which is the same as those at stage 2 (29%). White individuals made up 71% of cases at stage 3, which is also the same proportion as those at stage 2 (71%).

### Path A: Stages 1, 2 and 3 - breakdown by ethnicity

	White	Black, Asian and minority ethnic
<b>Stage 1: Concerns reported to us</b>	76% (4,558)	24% (1,442)
<b>Stage 2: Concern passes test for investigation</b>	71% (702)	29% (291)
<b>Stage 3 (path A): Cases where we took regulatory action (either by AERT or as a result of an investigation)</b>	71% (127)	29% (52)

Of the 265 individuals named on cases where we took regulatory action at stage 3, ethnicity was known for 179 (68%).

### Path A: Regulatory actions taken - breakdown by ethnicity

Thirty-one per cent of individuals who received a letter of warning or advice were from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background. This is slightly higher than at stage 3 (29%), and the proportion falls again for individuals who received a rebuke or fine (24%). The proportion of those whose practice we intervened into (29%) is the same as the proportion represented at stage 3 (29%).

The breakdown by ethnicity of individuals who received a letter of warning or advice shows that 69% are White. This is slightly lower than is the case at stage 3 (71%). There is a higher proportion of individuals who received a rebuke or fine and are White (76%) compared to those at stage 3. The proportion of those whose practice we intervened into (71%) is the same as the proportion represented at stage 3 (71%).

	White	Black, Asian and minority ethnic
<b>Stage 3 (path A): Cases where we took regulatory action (either by AERT or as a result of an investigation)</b>	71% (127)	29% (52)
<b>Letters of warning or advice</b>	69% (56)	31% (25)
<b>Rebuke or fine</b>	76% (41)	24% (13)
<b>Intervention</b>	71% (29)	29% (12)

Ethnicity was known for:

- 81 of 105 individuals who received letters of advice or warning (77%)
- 54 of 67 individuals who received rebukes and fines (81%)
- 41 of the 49 individuals where an intervention took place into their practice (84%).

## Age

Those aged 54 and under made up a declining proportion of individuals through stages 1 to 3. For the 65+ age group, the proportion increased through stages 1 to 3, from 12% at stage 1 to 14% at stage 2 and to 24% at stage 3.

### Path A: Stages 1, 2 and 3 - breakdown by age

	16-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
<b>Stage 1: Concerns reported to us</b>	13% (1,042)	26% (2,023)	28% (2,188)	21% (1,593)	12% (919)
<b>Stage 2: Concern passes test for investigation</b>	12% (157)	25% (334)	29% (390)	20% (269)	14% (195)
<b>Stage 3 (path A): Cases where we took regulatory action (either by AERT or as a result of an investigation)</b>	11% (25)	20% (47)	25% (59)	20% (48)	24% (57)

Of the 265 individuals named on cases where we took regulatory action at stage 3, age was known for 236 individuals (89%).

### Path A: Regulatory actions taken - breakdown by age

Looking at action taken across age categories, there is a higher proportion of people who received a rebuke or a fine who are aged 65+ (26%) or whose practice we intervened into (45%), than those at stage 3 from the same age group (24%).

	16-44	45-54	55-64	65+
<b>Stage 3 (path A): Cases where we took regulatory action (either by AERT or as a result of an investigation)</b>	31% (72)	25% (59)	20% (48)	24% (57)
<b>Letters of warning or advice</b>	27% (26)	28% (27)	26% (25)	19% (18)
<b>Rebuke or fine</b>	32% (21)	24% (16)	18% (12)	26% (17)
<b>Intervention</b>	18% (9)	18% (9)	18% (9)	45% (22)

Please note that:

- some total percentages do not add up to 100%, due to rounding
- there were no individuals in the 16-24 age group who were issued a rebuke or a fine or whose practice we intervened into.

Age was known for:

- 96 of 105 individuals who received letters of advice or warning (91%)
- 66 of 67 individuals who received rebukes and fines (99%)
- 49 of the 49 individuals where an intervention took place into their practice (100%).

## Disability

The findings at stage 3 relate to nine disabled individuals. The low numbers involved at this stage and the low declaration rates concerning disability make it difficult to draw any meaningful conclusions.

	No disability recorded	Disability recorded	Total
<b>Stage 1: Concerns reported to us</b>	98% (7,722)	2% (163)	100% (7,885)



<b>Stage 2: Concern passes test for investigation</b>	98% (1,409)	2% (23)	100% (1,432)
<b>Stage 3: Cases where we took regulatory action (either by AERT or as a result of an investigation)</b>	97% (256)	3% (9)	100% (265)

## **Stage 4 (path B) – cases concluded at the SDT**

This section concerns individuals at stage 4 – those named on cases concluded at the SDT – in the reporting year. We prosecute the most serious cases at the SDT. It is the SDT that makes the decisions in the cases referred to in this section. It is independent of us and can impose more severe sanctions than we can.

In the first part of this section, we compare the breakdown of cases concluded at the SDT (stage 4), with the breakdown of individuals named on cases which passed the assessment threshold test and which we took forward for investigation (stage 2). The individuals considered at stage 2 will not be the same individuals considered at stage 4. This is because cases will not all be investigated, referred to the SDT and be concluded by the SDT within the same year. We also look at the breakdown of SDT sanctions where we can, covering individuals who were fined, suspended or struck off.

In the second part of this section, we look at how these outcomes were reached. Some were reached through an agreed outcome, and some through a hearing at the SDT. Agreed outcomes are agreements to settle a case reached between us and the individual accused of misconduct. Agreed outcomes have to be approved by the SDT. The SDT rules allow either us or the respondent to propose that a case should be resolved by way of an agreed outcome. We let all respondents know that an agreed outcome is a possible resolution to resolve their case. More cases are being resolved this way as it can provide a proportionate and cost-effective way to conclude a matter.

We focus on the data for 2022/23 in this section. Any meaningful changes over the past five years at stage 4 are highlighted in the key findings section.

## **Cases concluded at the SDT – about the data**

### **Number of individuals on cases concluded at the SDT**

We prosecuted 99 cases which were concluded at the SDT in 2022/23. These cases involved 111 individuals.

There are two tables for each diversity characteristic in this section. The first shows the profile of individuals at each of the following stages:

- stage 1 – individuals named on concerns reported to us in 2022/23
- stage 2 – individuals named on cases which passed our assessment threshold test and which we took forward for investigation in 2022/23
- stage 4 – individuals named on cases concluded at the SDT.

### **Breakdown of individuals by type of SDT action**

The second table provides a diversity breakdown of individuals where the SDT imposed the following sanctions: fines, suspensions and strike offs. Some individuals covered in the second table may have more than one of these actions recorded against them and will therefore appear more than once in the analysis.

We have not presented data on six individuals against whom there was no order because we have focused on SDT action which resulted in a sanction. We have not included those who had a practising condition imposed as a result of a case at the SDT, because they are included in the section: '[Conditions imposed on practising certificates \[1\]](#)'.

## Limits in the data we can report

To avoid the risk of individuals being identified from this analysis, there are limitations in what we have been able to report in this section due to the low numbers involved:

- We have not been able to report separately on the groups making up the Black, Asian and minority ethnic group.
- We have not been able to include a breakdown of the cases concluded at the SDT (stage 4) by disability.
- We have not been able to show all the sanctions for all diversity characteristics. For sex, we have not been able to report on fines, for ethnicity we have not been able to report on suspensions, and for age we have only been able to report on strike offs.
- We have grouped together the 16-24, 25-34 and 35-44 age categories.
- We have not included data relating to six individuals against whom there were 'other' decisions – which include, for example, a reprimand or a section 43 order.

## Limits on the conclusions we can draw

Because of the low numbers involved at stage 4 (111 individuals), there may be an impact on the validity of the conclusions we can draw. Any differences between groups should, therefore, be treated with caution.

## Cases concluded at the SDT - our findings

### Sex

#### Path B: Stages 1, 2 and 4 - breakdown by sex

	Men	Women
<b>Stage 1: Concerns reported to us</b>	63% (4,290)	37% (2,536)
<b>Stage 2: Concern passes test for investigation</b>	72% (822)	28% (323)
<b>Stage 4 (path B): Cases concluded at SDT</b>	78% (86)	22% (24)

Sex was known for 110 of the 111 individuals named on cases concluded at the SDT (99%).

#### Path B: SDT sanctions - breakdown by sex

The proportion of individuals struck off by the SDT across men and women is the same as the proportion at stage 4. For both stage 4 and strike offs, men made up 78% and women 22%. Looking at the proportion of individuals who the SDT suspended, men made up 54% and women made up 46%.

	White	Black, Asian and minority ethnic
<b>Stage 1: Concerns reported to us</b>	76% (4,558)	24% (1,442)
<b>Stage 2: Concern passes test for investigation</b>	71% (702)	29% (291)
<b>Stage 4 (path B): Cases concluded at SDT</b>	59% (60)	41% (42)

Ethnicity was known for 102 of the 111 individuals named on cases concluded at the SDT (92%).

#### Path B: SDT sanctions - break down by ethnicity

The breakdown by ethnicity of the individuals who received a fine at the SDT is similar to the breakdown at stage 4. Fifty-nine per cent of individuals at stage 4 are White (as are 59% of those who were fined). Forty-one per cent at stage 4 are Black, Asian and minority

ethnic (as are 41% of those who were fined). However, compared to stage 4, a slightly higher proportion of people who were struck off are White (62%) and a slightly lower proportion are Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals (38%).

	White	Black, Asian and minority ethnic
<b>Stage 4 (path B): Cases concluded at SDT</b>	59% (60)	41% (42)
<b>Fine</b>	59% (13)	41% (9)
<b>Strike off</b>	62% (36)	38% (22)

Ethnicity was known for 22 of the 23 individuals who were given a fine (96%) and 58 of 63 individuals who were struck off (92%).

## Age

Those aged 44 and under made up a declining proportion of decisions through stages 1, 2 and 4, with 39% at stage 1, 37% at stage 2 and 22% at stage 4. That is largely the opposite for the other groups, who accounted for a larger proportion at each stage.

### Path B: Stages 1, 2 and 4 - breakdown by age

	16-44	45-54	55-64	65+
<b>Stage 1: Concerns reported to us</b>	39% (3,065)	28% (2,188)	21% (1,593)	12% (919)
<b>Stage 2: Concern passes test for investigation</b>	37% (491)	29% (390)	20% (269)	14% (195)
<b>Stage 4 (path B): Cases concluded at SDT</b>	22% (24)	31% (34)	27% (30)	21% (23)

Please note the percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding. There were no individuals from the 16-24 age group at stage 4.

Age was known for all 111 individuals named on cases concluded at the SDT (100%).

### Path B: SDT sanctions - breakdown by age

The proportion of individuals struck off who were aged 44 and under is higher than the proportion at stage 4. Of those who were struck off, 25% were aged between 16-44 (compared to 22% of the population at stage 4) and 32% were aged between 45-54 (compared to 31% of the population at stage 4).

The opposite is true for the two older age groups shown here. Twenty-five per cent of those struck off were aged between 55-64 (compared to 27% of the population at stage 4) and 17% of those struck off were aged 65+ (compared to 21% of the population at stage 4).

	16-44	45-54	55-64	65+
<b>Stage 4 (path B): Cases concluded at SDT</b>	22% (24)	31% (34)	27% (30)	21% (23)
<b>Strike off</b>	25% (16)	32% (20)	25% (16)	17% (11)

## Agreed outcomes - about the data

The tables in this section compare the diversity breakdown of those individuals whose case was concluded by agreed outcome and those whose case was concluded by a hearing. Of the 99 cases concluded at the SDT in 2022/23, 43 were resolved by agreed outcome involving 48 individuals (with 56 cases concluded following a hearing involving 63 individuals).

## Limits in the data we can report

To avoid the risk of the individuals being identified from this analysis, there are limitations in what we have been able to report in this section:

- We have not been able to report separately on the groups making up the Black, Asian and minority ethnic group.
- We have grouped together the 25–34 to 35–44 age groups. There were no individuals in the 16–24 age group at this stage.
- We have not been able to include a breakdown by disability.

## Limits on the conclusions we can draw

Because of the low numbers involved in agreed outcomes (48 individuals), there may be an impact on the validity of the conclusions we can draw. Any differences between groups should, therefore, be treated with caution. And we have not been able to draw any meaningful conclusions based on the changes to this data over the past five years.

## Agreed outcomes – our findings

### Sex

A higher proportion of women concluded their SDT case by way of an agreed outcome (54% made up of 13 individuals) rather than by a hearing (46% made up of 11 individuals). The reverse was true for men: a lower proportion concluded their SDT case by way of an agreed outcome (41% made up of 35 individuals) compared with cases concluded by a hearing (59% made up of 51 individuals).

### Agreed outcomes – breakdown by sex

	Cases concluded at SDT hearing	Cases concluded by SDT agreed outcome	Total
<b>Men</b>	59% (51)	41% (35)	100% (86)
<b>Women</b>	46% (11)	54% (13)	100% (24)

Sex was known for all individuals named on cases concluded at the SDT by way of an agreed outcome (100%). It was known for 62 of the 63 individuals where a case was concluded by an SDT hearing (98%).

### Ethnicity

A lower proportion of Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals concluded their SDT case by way of an agreed outcome (36% made up of 15 individuals) compared with cases concluded by a hearing (64% made up of 27 individuals). The reverse was true for White individuals: a higher proportion concluded their SDT case by way of an agreed outcome (53% made up of 32 individuals) compared with cases concluded by a hearing (47% made up of 28 individuals).

### Agreed outcomes – breakdown by ethnicity

	Cases concluded at SDT hearing	Cases concluded by SDT agreed outcome	Total
<b>White</b>	47% (28)	53% (32)	100% (60)
<b>Black, Asian and minority ethnic</b>	64% (27)	36% (15)	100% (42)

Ethnicity was known for 47 of the 48 individuals named on cases concluded at the SDT by way of an agreed outcome (98%). It was known for 55 of the 63 individuals where a case was concluded by an SDT hearing (87%).

## Age

A higher proportion of individuals aged 64 and under concluded their SDT case by way of a hearing rather than by an agreed outcome:

- 58% made up of 14 individuals for those aged 25–44
- 71% made up of 24 individuals for those aged 45–54
- 60% made up of 18 individuals for those aged 55–64.

The opposite is true for the 65+ age group, where there is a lower proportion of individuals who concluded their SDT case by way of a hearing (30% made up of seven individuals) rather than an agreed outcome (70% made up of 16 individuals).

### Agreed outcomes - breakdown by age

	Cases concluded at SDT hearing	Cases concluded by SDT agreed outcome	Total
<b>25–44</b>	58% (14)	42% (10)	100% (24)
<b>45–54</b>	71% (24)	29% (10)	100% (34)
<b>55–64</b>	60% (18)	40% (12)	100% (30)
<b>65+</b>	30% (7)	70% (16)	100% (23)

Age was known for all 48 individuals named on cases concluded at the SDT by way of an agreed outcome (100%). It was known for all 63 individuals where a case was concluded by an SDT hearing (100%).

## Conditions imposed on practising certificates

This section sets out the diversity breakdown of individuals where we or the SDT imposed a condition on their practising certificate between 1 November 2022 and 31 October 2023. As this report is about the diversity breakdown of individuals, we have not included data about the conditions imposed on firms. Information related to the conditions imposed on firms can be found in our Upholding Professional Standards 2022/23 report.

This is the first year we have published this data, and we will look to report on it annually.

This data in this section is in two parts:

- the conditions we imposed on practising certificates in the 2022/23 year
- the conditions imposed in the 2022/23 year on practising certificates as a result of an SDT hearing.

## About the data

In 2022/23, there were 205 cases where we imposed a condition on an individual's practising certificate. These cases involved 202 individuals. If an individual had conditions applied on their practising certificate more than once during the year, we have only counted them once for the purposes of this analysis. This is why there are fewer individuals when compared to cases.

In 2022/23, there were 18 cases where a condition was imposed on an individual's practising certificate as the result of an SDT hearing. This is made up of:

- Nine SDT cases concluded within the year where a condition was imposed.
- Nine SDT cases concluded in previous years. In these cases, the SDT will have decided to suspend the individuals. At the end of the suspension period, the SDT will have ordered that the individuals' practising certificates should be subject to practising conditions.

These 18 cases involved 18 individuals.

Because we can impose conditions when a practising certificate is renewed or as a result of an investigation, and the SDT can impose conditions that may or may not come into effect immediately, we have compared this data against the practising population, rather than one of the four key stages set out earlier in the report.

To avoid the risk of the individuals being identified from this analysis, there are limitations in what we have been able to report in this section:

- We have not been able to report separately on the groups making up the Black, Asian and minority ethnic group for either the conditions we imposed or the conditions the SDT imposed, due to the low numbers.
- Concerning age:
  - There were no individuals aged 16–24 who had practising conditions imposed by either us or the SDT.
  - There were no individuals aged 25–34 who had practising conditions imposed by the SDT.
  - We have grouped together the 35–44 and 45–54 age categories and the 55–64 and 65+ age categories in the conditions the SDT imposed table, due to low numbers.
- We have not been able to include a breakdown by disability concerning conditions the SDT imposed, due to low numbers.

## Limits on the conclusions we can draw

Because of the low numbers involved concerning conditions we imposed and conditions the SDT imposed (202 and 18 individuals, respectively), there may be an impact on the validity of the conclusions we can draw. Any differences between groups should, therefore, be treated with caution.

## Practising conditions we imposed in 2022/23

To protect the public, there are typically three situations in which we may impose practising conditions:

- As part of an outcome where we have made a finding of misconduct.
- During an investigation and pending the final outcome of the investigation. This is an interim condition, and we will monitor these conditions as we progress our investigations.
- When a practising certificate has existing conditions and an application is made to renew it, we will decide whether the previous conditions should be reimposed, varied, or removed from the new practising certificate. Reimposed or varied conditions made at renewal are counted in the analysis reported here.

## Breakdown by sex

Men made up 77% of individuals on whom we imposed a practising condition, compared to 47% of men in the practising population. Conversely, women made up 23% of individuals on whom we imposed a practising condition, compared to 53% of women in the practising population.

	Men	Women
<b>Practising population</b>	47% (68,244)	53% (76,136)
<b>Practising conditions we imposed</b>	77% (155)	23% (46)

- Practising population – sex was known for 144,380 of the 172,775 in the practising population (84%).
- Practising conditions we imposed – sex was known for 201 of the 202 individuals who had a condition imposed (99.5%).

### Breakdown by ethnicity

It is difficult to draw meaningful conclusions because the numbers involved are small. Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals made up 46% of individuals on whom we imposed a practising condition, compared to 19% of Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals in the practising population. Conversely, White individuals made up 54% of individuals on whom we imposed a practising condition, compared to 81% of White individuals in the practising population.

	<b>White</b>	<b>Black, Asian and minority ethnic</b>
<b>Practising population</b>	81% (95,626)	19% (22,313)
<b>Practising conditions we imposed</b>	54% (93)	46% (79)

The proportions in the table are based on the following data:

- Practising population – ethnicity was known for 117,939 of the 172,775 in the practising population (68%).
- Practising conditions we imposed – ethnicity was known for 172 of the 202 individuals who had a condition imposed (85%).

### Breakdown by age

It is difficult to draw meaningful conclusions because the numbers involved are small.

The proportion of individuals on whom we imposed a practising condition and who are over 45 was higher compared to their respective proportions in the practising population.

The reverse is true for the two younger age groups shown here (16-34 and 35-44). The proportion of individuals in these groups on whom we imposed a practising condition is lower than their respective proportions in the practising population. Please note, no individuals from the 16-24 age group had conditions imposed.

	<b>16-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>65+</b>
<b>Practising population</b>	24% (40,628)	32% (55,305)	25% (42,734)	14% (25,009)	5% (9,037)
<b>Practising conditions we imposed</b>	3% (7)	12% (24)	29% (59)	37% (75)	18% (37)

The proportions in the table are based on the following:

- Practising population – age was known for 172,713 of the 172,775 practising population (100%).
- Practising conditions we imposed – age was known for 202 of the 202 individuals who had a condition imposed (100%).

### Breakdown by disability

It is difficult to draw meaningful conclusions because the numbers involved are small.

Disabled individuals made up 4% of those upon whom we imposed a practising population, compared to 1% of disabled people in the practising population.

<b>No disability recorded</b>	<b>Disability recorded</b>	<b>Total</b>
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<b>Practising population</b>	99% (170,373)	1% (2,402)	100% (172,775)
<b>Practising conditions we imposed</b>	96% (194)	4% (8)	100% (202)

### Practising conditions the SDT imposed in 2022/23

The SDT can impose conditions as part of its final outcome. It has a wide discretion as to what conditions it can impose.

#### Breakdown by sex

Men made up 67% of individuals on whom the SDT imposed a practising condition, compared to 47% of men in the practising population. Conversely, women made up 33% of individuals on whom the SDT imposed a practising condition, compared to 53% of women in the practising population.

	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
<b>Practising population</b>	47% (68,244)	53% (76,136)
<b>Practising conditions the SDT imposed</b>	67% (12)	33% (6)

- Practising population – sex was known for 144,380 of the 172,775 in the practising population (84%).
- Practising conditions the SDT imposed – sex was known for 18 of the 18 individuals who had a condition imposed (100%).

#### Breakdown by ethnicity

It is difficult to draw meaningful conclusions because the numbers involved are small. Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals made up 59% of individuals on whom the SDT imposed a practising condition, compared to 19% of Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals in the practising population. Conversely, White individuals made up 41% of individuals on whom the SDT imposed a practising condition, compared to 81% of White individuals in the practising population.

	<b>White</b>	<b>Black, Asian and minority ethnic</b>
<b>Practising population</b>	81% (95,626)	19% (22,313)
<b>Practising conditions the SDT imposed</b>	41% (7)	59% (10)

The proportions in the table are based on the following data:

- Practising population – ethnicity was known for 117,939 of the 172,775 in the practising population (68%).
- Practising conditions the SDT imposed – ethnicity was known for 17 of the 18 individuals who had a condition imposed (94%).

#### Breakdown by age

The proportion of individuals on whom the SDT imposed a practising condition and were 55+ was higher compared to their respective proportion in the practising population.

The reverse is true for the combined 35–44 and 45–54 age groups. The proportion of individuals in these groups on whom the SDT imposed a practising condition is similar to their respective proportion in the practising population.

<b>16–34</b>	<b>35–54</b>	<b>55+</b>
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<b>Practising population</b>	24% (40,628)	57% (98,039)	20% (34,046)
<b>Practising conditions we imposed</b>	0% (0)	56% (10)	44% (8)

Please note, percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

The proportions in the table are based on the following:

- Practising population – age was known for 172,713 of the 172,775 practising population (100%).
- Practising conditions the SDT imposed – age was known for 18 of the 18 individuals who had a condition imposed (100%).

## Diversity profile of the people we regulate

The charts in this section show the diversity breakdown of the practising population, made up of:

- solicitors on the roll who hold a current practising certificate
- registered European lawyers, registered foreign lawyers or exempt European lawyers
- depending on the role, some non-lawyers, such as managers and compliance officers.

The data is based on a 'snapshot' taken on 1 November 2023 from data provided by individuals through their mySRA accounts. The practising population as of this date was made up of 172,775 people.

As the reports and cases considered in this report are from 2022/23, this was the most appropriate data source against which to compare the diversity profile of people represented in our enforcement processes.

## Disclosure rates

When looking at the practising population, the known population for each of the four diversity characteristics ranges from 68% (for ethnicity) to 100% (for age). Please note that we have age data for 99.96% of the practising population but this is shown as 100% due to rounding. Except data about age, diversity data is taken from individual mySRA accounts, where it is not mandatory for people to declare their diversity characteristics.

## Sex

The table below shows the breakdown of 144,380 of the practising population where sex was known. It represents 84% of the practising population as of 1 November 2023.

	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
<b>Practising population</b>	47% (68,244)	53% (76,136)

Please note, the data used in this report is based on a self-reported response to the following question: 'What is your sex: male, female, other preferred description or prefer not to say'. Solicitors answering this question are not required to answer in accordance with their legal sex.

## Ethnicity

The table below shows the breakdown of 117,939 members of the practising population where ethnicity was known. It represents 68% of the practising population as of 1 November 2023.

	<b>White</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Mixed</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Practising population</b>	81% (95,626)	12% (14,606)	3% (3,466)	2% (2,304)	2% (1,937)

## Age

The table below shows the breakdown of 172,713 members of the practising population where age was known. It represents 100% of the practising population as of 1 November 2023.

	<b>16-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>65+</b>
<b>Practising population</b>	0% (397)	23% (40,231)	32% (55,305)	25% (42,734)	14% (25,009)	5% (9,037)

### **Disability**

The table below shows the 2,402 practising solicitors who have declared a disability (of 172,775).

	<b>No disability recorded</b>	<b>Disability recorded</b>
<b>Practising population</b>	99% (170,373)	1% (2,402)