



The Recorder

Issue 24 Supplement September 1998

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From October 1998, the form ACC/CRIM/1 (account synopsis in criminal and children's proceedings) will be replaced by a new two part form. Part A of this form remains largely the same as the current form, but a new Part B must also be completed for all summary cases.

The information to be provided in Part B is required to assist the Board in monitoring compliance by firms and solicitors with the Code of Practice in relation to Criminal Legal Assistance. It will also assist in the evaluation of the pilot Public Defence Solicitors' Office and for this purpose it may be passed by the Board to independent researchers commissioned by the Secretary of State.

Part B will provide the Board with more information than it presently receives about the nature and outcome of cases. The information requested is generally straightforward, but guidance is included on the form where appropriate.

Where a solicitor represents multiple accused, he may at present include all work in one account and submit only one account synopsis form. It should be noted that Part B must be completed **for each accused**, even where Part A is completed only once.

Advice and Assistance

A slight change has also been made to form AA/ACC/1 (acknowledgement of advice and assistance and account synopsis). Again, the change relates only to summary criminal cases. A box has been added for client date of birth and another for court type and location. Date of birth will automatically be pre-entered on the form by the Board's computer system. Where the solicitor provides details of a summary complaint when the application for advice and assistance is submitted to the Board, the relevant information will automatically be pre-entered on the account synopsis form. This will usually include Procurator Fiscal's reference number and court location. Where this information has not been pre-entered, but the relevant information is known to the solicitor when the account is submitted (i.e. where no complaint had been received when the application was submitted to the Board, but proceedings have subsequently been brought), the solicitor should enter the details in the appropriate boxes. In all cases, the solicitor should indicate the court type by deleting as appropriate.

Both of these new forms will automatically be issued in all relevant cases and should be used immediately where appropriate. Until then, solicitors should continue to use the current computer generated forms for both advice and assistance and criminal legal aid.