

Overrepresentation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic solicitors in reports to the SRA: the impact of socio-cognitive bias on the likelihood that people will complain about potential misconduct to the SRA

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1. Introduction

The universities of York, Lancaster, and Cardiff were commissioned by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) to understand the reasons why there is overrepresentation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic solicitors in reports to the SRA. There are two main components to the research. The first looks at the factors, present in the legal sector and wider society, which may explain the overrepresentation in complaints of potential misconduct made to the SRA. The second looks at decision making at the assessment stage, when the SRA decides which complaints to take forward for investigation. The reason for this focus is that the overrepresentation is particularly evident at these two early stages of the SRA's processes. It is present in the complaints received and increases further at the assessment stage. The research uses multiple complementary research methods, including both quantitative and qualitative analyses, to shed further light on this subject.

The overall findings from the research, including an overview of the component parts of the project, are published separately. This supporting report is part of the first component of the project and tests the theory identified in the earlier literature, that there may be a greater likelihood that Black, Asian and minority ethnic solicitors have complaints about potential misconduct raised about them with the SRA, due to potential socio-cognitive biases that influence decision-making by the complainant.

[Read the report \(PDF 65 pages, 1.2MB\)](https://guidance.sra.org.uk/globalassets/documents/sra/research/overrepresentation-sra-potential-misconduct.pdf)
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