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Dear Catherine

As you will be aware, the PM Forum recently organised a survey of our law firm members to ascertain market reaction towards the new UK deadlines introduced by Chambers.

Over 260 members responded, including 17 managing partners. 74% of respondents are responsible for completing directory submissions. It is clear that our members are highly critical of the new deadlines:

- 73% commented that the new guidelines have made their life more difficult with only 9% seeing them as making life easier.
- 80% reported that their fee earners have given them feedback on the guidelines with 80% of that feedback being negative and only 2% positive.
- 72% were unable to devote as much time to the October 2009 submission as to those in prior years, with 53% reporting that the quality of submissions had suffered.
- 94% commented that it was a problem submitting material before the 2010 guide was published.
- 80% requested that Chambers should revert to the old deadlines.

We also asked our members whether they had specific feedback to pass on to Chambers. The full unedited set of comments is attached, attributed if permission was given by the author.

This letter will be shared with all our members, but not until 5 January 2010 as we appreciate that you may wish to review your strategy in the light of the overwhelmingly negative reaction. Should you be interested in engaging in dialogue with the respondents, our survey software enables filtered subsets to be contacted on an anonymous basis?

Yours sincerely

Richard Chaplin

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## **Chambers PM Forum Survey Response**

We are very grateful to all of you who took the time to fill in the PM forum survey. We found the results very interesting. What became clear to us was that it might be helpful to explain and give some further insight into our reasons for the deadline change.

### **Why were the submissions due earlier this year?**

This was because we have moved to a longer research period, starting in November and finishing in June. It will further improve and extend our research into the UK legal market.

### **Why are the deadlines staggered?**

This was to remove the January rush which some firms had told us they found difficult. Staggered deadlines also allow us to conduct research with both lawyers and clients, at a point closer in time to receiving the submission.

### **Why have we asked for client references on a spreadsheet?**

We are not insisting on the use of a spreadsheet. Firms can still submit client referees in other formats and in any kind of spreadsheet they like. Our spreadsheet is there for those who would like to use it.

### **Quotes in the UK Guide**

We are still committed to the use of quotes. Our main focus is client research and we will use quotes to illustrate our findings.

### **Why *Chambers Confidential*?**

The introduction of *Chambers Confidential* is not an incentive to us to reduce quotes in the directory. Law firms cannot use quotes from *Confidential* in their own marketing as they do with the directory quotes. *Chambers Confidential* is an additional business development product for firms.

### **Are we cutting costs?**

Over the last few months we have substantially increased the research team on the UK guide. As a result, the UK research team is now bigger and has a whole year to complete its research cycle. Far from cutting our costs, we have increased them.

I hope that this statement clarifies these issues for your members and I am happy to answer any further questions they may have.

Yours,

Catherine McGregor  
***Managing Editor***  
**Chambers and Partners**