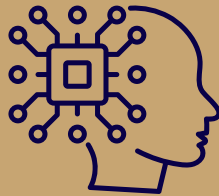




**Law Society
of Ireland**

**SAFE USE
PATTERNS BY
PRACTICE AREA**





SAFE USE PATTERNS BY PRACTICE AREA



The question this tool puts you in a position to answer:

“Where can I legitimately use AI in my practice — and how do I avoid creating a problem?”

How to use this guide:

- Find your primary practice area in the sections below
- Review the Approved Uses column — these are pre-cleared patterns where AI assistance is appropriate with standard controls
- Review the Data Handling, Verification, and Disclosure rules — these apply every time
- Any use case not listed in Approved Uses requires case-by-case approval from your AI
- Check the Prohibited Uses list — these are absolute restrictions, not guidelines

This document does not constitute legal advice. Governance-approved patterns reflect current Law Society guidance and best practice — they are not a guarantee that any specific use will be compliant in every circumstance. Review outputs against your professional obligations before use.

Updated: 2026 | Based on: Law Society of Ireland Guidelines for the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence by Solicitors (2025)

01 — What It Does

Safe Use Patterns by Practice Area is a reference guide that gives solicitors clear, governance-approved starting points for using AI in their day-to-day work. Rather than leaving practitioners to assess each potential use case from first principles, this tool provides curated patterns — vetted against Law Society guidance and professional obligations — that can be adopted with standard controls.

The patterns are organised by practice area because the data risks, verification requirements, and disclosure considerations vary significantly across litigation, conveyancing, corporate, family, employment, and other areas of practice. A use case that is low-risk in one context may be high-risk in another.

The Underlying Principle

AI is a capable assistant in legal practice — and a poor substitute for professional judgement. The patterns in this guide identify where AI provides genuine value with manageable risk, and establish the controls that make that value safe to capture. They are not a framework for automation — they are a framework for augmentation.

Every approved pattern in this guide requires human verification before the output is used. This is not a quality control recommendation — it is a professional obligation. AI tools do not understand what they produce. Verification is the mechanism by which the solicitor exercises the professional judgement that clients and courts require.

RESEARCH — CRITICAL RULE

AI is not suitable as a standalone source for Irish or EU case law. Subscription legal databases (Westlaw IE, LexisNexis, BAILII, etc.) remain essential for legal research. AI can assist with structuring research and initial issue-spotting, but case citations must always be verified against primary sources.

02 — How to Read Each Practice Area Card

Each practice area section contains:

Column	What it means
Approved Uses	AI tasks that are cleared for use with standard controls. These are pre-assessed as low-to-medium risk within this practice area. Human review and verification always applies.
Data Handling Rules	What data can and cannot be processed through which tier of AI tool. Consumer tools and enterprise tools have different permissions.
Verification Requirements	The minimum verification steps required before the output can be used. These are non-negotiable.
Disclosure	When disclosure of AI use is required or recommended — to the client, to the court, or to a counterparty.
Prohibited Uses	Absolute restrictions for this practice area. These are not subject to case-by-case approval.

03 — Litigation & Dispute Resolution

3.1A Litigation & Dispute Resolution

High verification requirement — court submissions and privileged communications require the most stringent controls

AI may assist with research, document review, and drafting in litigation matters. All AI-assisted content used in court documents or correspondence with courts must be verified by the responsible solicitor. Privilege risk in AI processing of client communications must be actively managed.

APPROVED USES	PROHIBITED USES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue-spotting and preliminary legal research (with database verification) • Summarising lengthy pleadings, affidavits, or discovery documents for internal use • Drafting routine correspondence (not to courts or counterparties without review) • Structuring arguments and identifying weaknesses in the client’s position • Preparing case chronologies and document indices from provided materials • Drafting instructions to counsel (with full review before issue) • Checking precedent documents against current legal standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processing privileged client communications through consumer AI tools • Generating case citations without primary source verification • Using AI-generated content in affidavits, pleadings, or court submissions without thorough verification • Allowing AI to assess litigation risk or advise on settlement without solicitor review • Processing discovery materials containing third-party personal data through consumer tools
DATA HANDLING RULES	VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client instructions and privileged communications: enterprise tools only, with DPA in place • Counterparty documents already in proceedings: enterprise tools only • Publicly available case law and legislation: any approved tool • Factual case summaries without client identifiers: enterprise tools • Court documents filed on the record: enterprise tools, verify all content before use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All case citations must be verified against primary source (Westlaw IE, LexisNexis, BAILII) • All AI-assisted court documents reviewed line-by-line by responsible solicitor before filing • Argument structures checked against current case law independently • Factual summaries cross-referenced against original documents • Any legal proposition AI describes as settled must be independently confirmed

COURT DISCLOSURE — LITIGATION

Irish courts have encountered AI-generated content in submissions (2025 case law). The duty not to mislead the court is absolute. Where a court expects or requires disclosure of AI assistance in preparing documents, that disclosure must be made. Confirm current court practice before relying on AI in proceedings.

04 — Conveyancing & Property

3.1B Conveyancing & Property	
<p><i>Moderate risk — high document volume, standard transactions, but title issues and client financial exposure require human judgement</i></p>	
GOVERNANCE POSITION	
APPROVED USES	PROHIBITED USES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing standard contract for sale terms against current Law Society conditions • Drafting standard requisitions on title from provided information • Summarising title documents and folio entries for client advice • Drafting routine client correspondence and reporting letters • Checking planning permissions and conditions against development descriptions • Preparing Land Registry and Registry of Deeds application checklists • Drafting standard lease terms from instructions (with full review before issue) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processing client financial details (purchase price, mortgage amounts, account details) through consumer AI tools • Allowing AI to assess title defects or advise on title insurance without solicitor review • Using AI to communicate directly with mortgage lenders, estate agents, or counterparty solicitors • Generating requisitions on title without review — AI does not know what it does not know about title • Processing personal data of vendors, purchasers, or tenants through consumer tools
DATA HANDLING RULES	VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client personal and financial data: enterprise tools only, with DPA in place • Title documents and folio extracts: enterprise tools (may contain personal data) • Publicly available planning records: any approved tool • Draft contracts and standard Law Society conditions: enterprise tools • Mortgage or lender instructions: enterprise tools; confirm lender panel rules on AI use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All title analysis reviewed by responsible solicitor before client advice • Requisitions on title reviewed against actual folio and title documents • Reporting letters checked for accuracy against client instructions and title • Any AI-generated clause or condition reviewed against current Law Society precedents • Stamp duty, registration fees, and financial calculations verified independently

05 — Corporate & Commercial

3.1C Corporate & Commercial	
<p><i>Moderate to high risk — complex transactions, third-party confidentiality, and multi-party document sets require careful data controls</i></p>	
GOVERNANCE POSITION	
APPROVED USES	PROHIBITED USES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing and redlining standard commercial agreements (NDA, supply agreements, service terms) • Summarising board minutes, shareholder agreements, and constitutional documents • Drafting routine corporate secretarial documents from instructions • Identifying issues in due diligence materials for internal review • Preparing due diligence checklists and request lists • Summarising disclosure letters and warranty schedules • Drafting regulatory filing narratives from prepared instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processing confidential deal information, pricing, or transaction terms through consumer AI tools • Allowing AI to assess material adverse change provisions or warranty exposure without solicitor review • Processing third-party confidential information obtained under NDA through any AI tool without checking confidentiality terms • Using AI in place of legal judgment on regulatory approval requirements • Processing personal data from due diligence targets through consumer tools
DATA HANDLING RULES	VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deal-specific confidential information: enterprise tools only, with DPA confirmed • Third-party information subject to NDA: check NDA terms on AI processing before use • Publicly filed company information (CRO): any approved tool • Draft agreements in negotiation: enterprise tools only • Personal data of directors, shareholders, employees in due diligence: enterprise tools only; DPIA likely required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All substantive legal analysis reviewed by responsible solicitor before reliance • Redlined documents reviewed clause-by-clause; AI may miss context or commercial intent • Due diligence summaries checked against source materials before client report • Regulatory filing content verified for accuracy and completeness before submission • Any AI identification of “standard” terms verified — standard in one jurisdiction may not apply in Ireland

06 — Family Law

3.1D Family Law	
<i>High sensitivity — special category personal data, vulnerable clients, and emotionally complex matters require the most conservative data handling</i>	
GOVERNANCE POSITION	
APPROVED USES	PROHIBITED USES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarising procedural requirements and court rules from publicly available sources Drafting routine correspondence that does not contain client personal information Researching case law on maintenance, custody, or asset division principles (with verification) Preparing court checklists and procedural guidance for client information Drafting standard clauses for separation agreements from instructions (with full review) Preparing asset schedule templates from provided anonymised information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Processing any client personal information — including names, addresses, financial details, or relationship information — through consumer AI tools Processing information about children through any AI tool without explicit consideration of data protection obligations Using AI to assess or recommend custody, access, or maintenance arrangements without solicitor review Processing health, mental health, or other special category data through any AI tool without DPIA Allowing AI to draft communications with a vulnerable or distressed client without full solicitor review
DATA HANDLING RULES	VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All client personal data in family matters: enterprise tools only, with DPA; consider DPIA for sensitive cases Children’s data: enterprise tools only; apply most conservative data handling Special category data (health, finances, relationships): enterprise tools only; DPIA required Court orders and publicly filed documents: enterprise tools (may contain personal data) Anonymised hypothetical fact patterns for research: any approved tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All case law research verified against primary sources before reliance All AI-drafted documents reviewed in full before issue — family matters involve significant personal and financial consequences Any financial analysis or asset valuation cross-checked against provided evidence Communications with clients reviewed for tone, accuracy, and appropriateness before issue
DATA PROTECTION — FAMILY LAW	
<p><i>Family law matters frequently involve special category personal data under GDPR Article 9 (health, financial circumstances, relationship status). A Data Protection Impact Assessment is likely required before using AI tools in family matters involving sensitive client information. Seek DPO guidance.</i></p>	

07 — Employment Law

3.1E Employment Law	
<p><i>Moderate to high risk — employee personal data, discrimination risk in AI tools, and regulatory sensitivity require careful controls</i></p>	
GOVERNANCE POSITION	
APPROVED USES	PROHIBITED USES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researching employment law principles and WRC/Labour Court decisions (with verification) • Reviewing and commenting on standard contracts of employment and policies • Summarising lengthy WRC or Labour Court decisions for client advice • Drafting routine HR correspondence templates from instructions • Preparing settlement agreement checklists and standard terms • Identifying potential issues in disciplinary procedures against known standards • Drafting employment tribunal submissions from provided instructions and facts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processing employee personal data through consumer AI tools • Allowing AI to assess discrimination risk or advise on protected characteristics without solicitor review — AI tools themselves carry bias risks in this area • Processing payroll data, sick leave records, or performance management records through consumer tools • Using AI to draft communications with a claimant employee without full review • Allowing AI to assess whether disciplinary action is warranted without solicitor review
DATA HANDLING RULES	VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee personal data: enterprise tools only, with DPA confirmed • Special category data (health, trade union membership, ethnicity): enterprise tools only; DPIA required • Anonymised fact patterns for research: any approved tool • WRC/Labour Court decisions (publicly available): any approved tool • Settlement terms and compromise agreements: enterprise tools only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WRC and Labour Court decisions verified on official WRC/courts.ie databases before citation • AI assessment of discrimination risk reviewed carefully for bias — AI tools may reflect patterns that are themselves discriminatory • All employment documents reviewed by responsible solicitor before issue • Any AI analysis of “standard practice” verified against current Irish law — employment law changes frequently
<p>AI BIAS RISK — EMPLOYMENT LAW</p> <p><i>AI tools trained on broad datasets may reflect patterns in employment decisions that are themselves discriminatory. When using AI to analyse disciplinary, dismissal, or discrimination matters, the solicitor must apply independent critical judgement and not assume AI outputs are neutral.</i></p>	

08 — In-House Solicitors – Additional Considerations

In-house solicitors operate within a different governance environment from private practice — they are part of the organisations they advise rather than external service providers. This creates both different risk profiles and different opportunities for AI use.

Approved Patterns — In-House Context	In-House Specific Data Controls
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contract management: AI-assisted review of incoming commercial contracts, identification of non-standard terms, preparation of redlines for negotiation• Regulatory monitoring: AI-assisted tracking of legislative and regulatory developments relevant to the organisation’s sector• Policy review: AI-assisted review of internal policies against regulatory changes or benchmarks• M&A support: AI-assisted due diligence review, with all outputs verified before reliance• Training materials: AI-assisted development of legal training content for internal audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organisational confidential information (trade secrets, strategic plans, M&A activity) must never be entered into consumer AI tools• Board papers and management information carry high confidentiality obligations — enterprise tools only• In-house AI deployment for operational decisions (HR, credit, insurance) may fall within the EU AI Act’s high-risk categories — assess before deployment• Check whether your organisation’s IT/ data governance policies permit the use of external AI tools with organisational data — in-house solicitors operate under organisational data governance as well as professional obligations

09 — Regulatory Context

Law Society Guidelines (2025)

The Guidelines for the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence by Solicitors (Law Society of Ireland, 2025) establish that existing professional obligations — competence, confidentiality, supervision, and the duty not to mislead — apply in full to AI-assisted work. This guide gives those obligations practical expression across practice areas.

EU AI Act (August 2026 Deadline)

The EU AI Act's high-risk provisions are scheduled to apply from August 2026. AI systems used in legal proceedings, employment decisions, or processing of sensitive personal data may fall within high-risk categories. Review EU AI Act applicability for your AI deployments before August 2026.

Verification as Competence

The duty of competence requires that solicitors understand the tools they use. Using AI without understanding its limitations — and without adequate verification — is a competence issue, not just a quality control issue. The verification requirements in each practice area card are minimum standards, not optional extras.

LAW SOCIETY CPD PROGRAMME

For hands-on training on AI in legal practice, see the Law Society's Introduction to AI workshops (CPD accredited) and the AI in Legal Practice Summit. Details at lawsociety.ie/tech-hub.

See Also

- Tool 1.1 — Shadow AI Audit: Inventory the AI tools currently in use across your practice
- Tool 2.1 — AI Use Policy for Solicitors: Establish the governance framework for approved tool use
- Guidelines for the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence by Solicitors (Law Society, 2025)

Visit www.lawsociety.ie/Practice-Essentials to access additional resources.



This resource was developed by Acuity AI Advisory in consultation with the Law Society of Ireland.

Acuity AI Advisory
Buttermilk Lane,
Downings North, Prosperous,
Kildare, W91 K2N7
E hello@acuityai.co
W www.acuityai.co

Law Society of Ireland,
Blackhall Place,
Dublin 7,
D07 VY24
E solicitorservices@lawsociety.ie
W www.lawsociety.ie