

What are your clients saying about you?



Legal Service Expectations

Part 1-of-6

In 2016 LexisNexis commissioned a research to provide an overview of the current perceptions and delivery of legal services in New Zealand. LexisNexis commissioned this update of the research in early 2023 to evaluate changes over time and include new insights on expectations on the role of technology in client relationships and the impact of the global pandemic. The research results were gathered from over 420 respondents across five client groups.

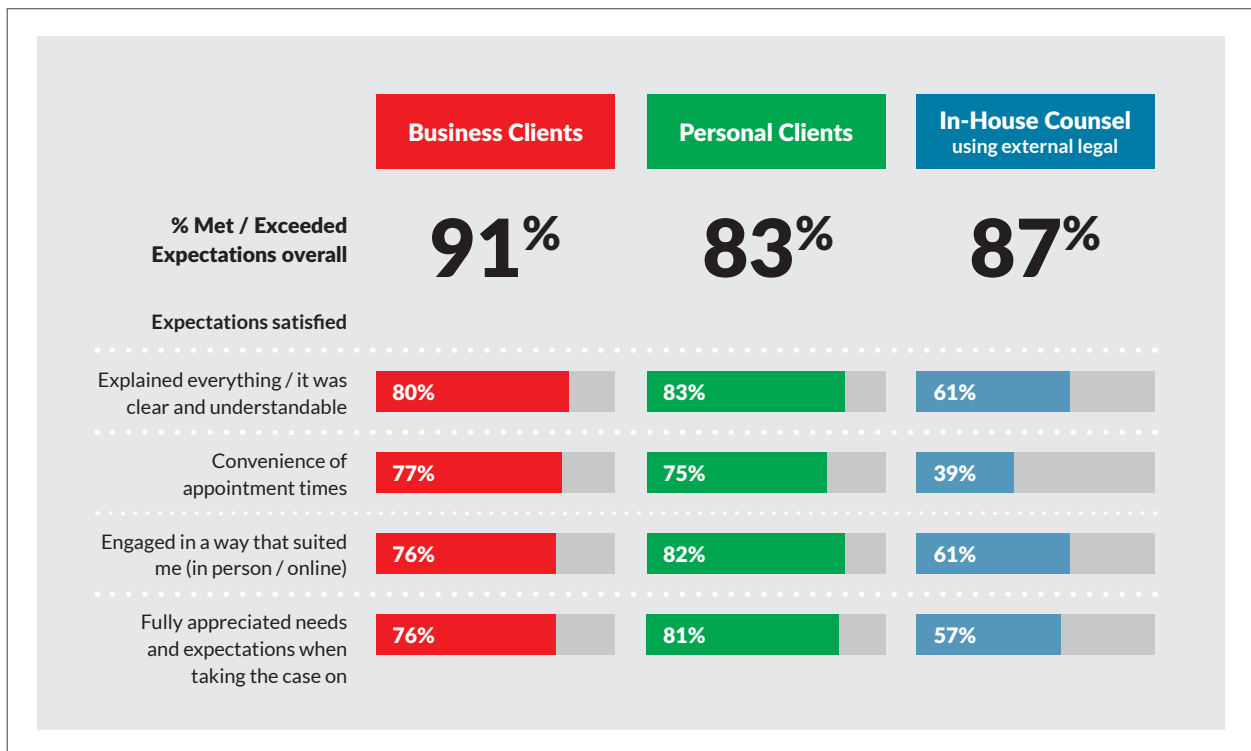
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The report was commissioned by LexisNexis New Zealand and prepared by Kantar, a member of the Research Association NZ. All the information provided in the report is confidential.



Legal Service Level Expectations

This first insight will cover business, personal and in-house counsel expectations in relation to the service level they received from their lawyer/law firm.



Satisfaction levels

Overall satisfaction levels are high across all client groups ranging from 83% for personal clients through to 91% for business clients.

The big question here is Exceeded Expectations only made up a small percentage of the above data. For Business Clients, it was 14%, Personal Clients 20% and In-House 9%. Research shows that clients who cited Exceeded Expectations were more likely to refer friends and family and retain services for future matters.

Lawyers and firms should find ways to understand their client's needs on what does Exceeded Expectations look like to them.

2023 Insights

"Wrote a strong argument and constantly fact checked and sought my approval"

"Took the time to explain everything well and understood my needs"

Satisfaction levels as compared to 2016

Business Clients**6%**

Fully appreciated needs and expectations when taking the case on

**6%**

Kept to the agreed timeline

**11%**

Personally responded to emails / calls within 24 hours

**6%**

Provided clear indication of likely cost of work or fixed fee

Business clients Despite a slight decrease of 6% compared to 2016, lawyers are focused on making things clear and understandable. Lawyers are actively engaging with clients in a suitable manner, appreciating their needs, and offering convenient appointment times. The greatest opportunity is in the area of fee structure clarity and costs, and there is room for improvement in providing updates and responding to queries in a timely fashion.

Personal Clients**8%**

Fully appreciated needs and expectations when taking the case on

**8%**

Kept to the agreed timeline

**4%**

Provided you with regular updates on progress

**4%**

Provided clear indication of likely cost of work or fixed fee

Personal clients Lawyers are successfully engaging and explaining in a clear and understandable way to their personal clients. More clarity is needed on fees structure and costs, as well as timely updates and communications.

In-House Counsel using external legal - satisfaction Levels

No data available from 2016

65%

Fully appreciated needs and expectations when taking the case on

65%

Were good at listening

39%

Ease of making an appointment

35%

Waiting time for appointments

In-house counsel using external legal Lawyers positively appreciate in-house counsel needs and listen and engage appropriately. However, there seems to be an issue with timeliness, with ease, and convenience of making appointments that needs to be addressed.

Letter of Engagement

For their most recent legal engagement, 17% of business clients and 13% of personal clients were without a Letter of Engagement, with 1 in 10 and 1 in 4 respectively unsure or couldn't remember if they had received such a document.

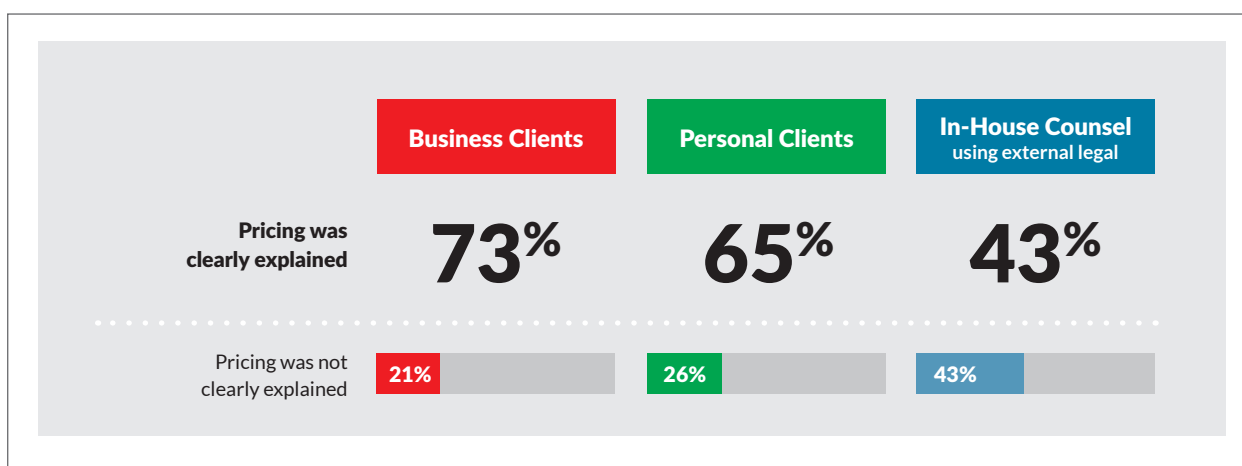


2023 Insight

"There is room for improvement in ensuring all clients receive a Letter of Engagement and understand its content."

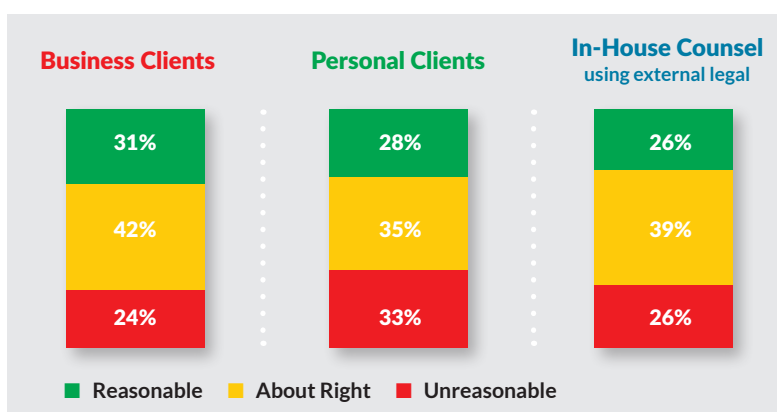
Pricing Clearly Explained

The majority of business and personal clients say pricing was explained clearly, and this has increased since 2016. However, this is not the case for in-house counsel, where 43% say the pricing was not clearly explained.



Perception of fees

The perception of fees by business clients are mostly stable between 2016 and 2023, while personal clients felt fees were more unreasonable in 2023. There is room for being clear on pricing, with 1 in 4 to 1 in 3 finding pricing unreasonable in 2023.



42%

Payment terms

Over 40% of business and personal clients agreed to a fixed fee for their legal services. From 2016 to 2023 there has been a move to fixed fees instead of hourly fees. In-house counsel using external legal services were predominately on an hourly fee.

2023 Insight

“Providing a clear picture of what services the client will receive for their payment is a good way to set expectations and show the value. Due to the Covid pandemic and the current inflationary economic climate there seems to be a move to more fixed fee pricing to obtain more certainty for budgeting purposes.”

Meeting Expectations

2023 Insight

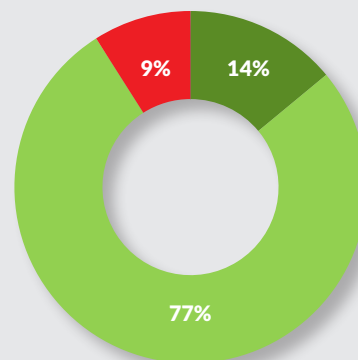
"Research shows Exceeding Expectations drives better referral and repeat business."

Business Clients

Business clients – the delivery of service is in line with their expectations for the majority of clients, and those who say their expectations were not met fell from 14% to 9% compared to 2016. Constant communication was a key factor in delighting clients.

↑
4%

Exceeded Expectations vs 2016

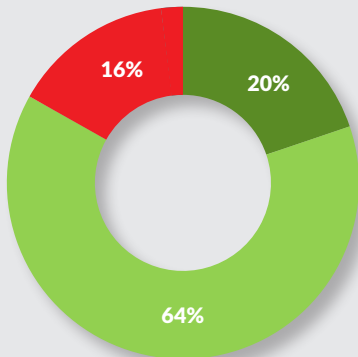


Personal Clients

Personal clients - the level of service is mostly meeting their expectations and is similar to levels in 2016. Communication, being down to earth and delivery in the agreed timeframe were factors in exceeding expectations. Poor delivery of these same areas resulted in an experience falling below expectations.

—
0%

Exceeded Expectations vs 2016

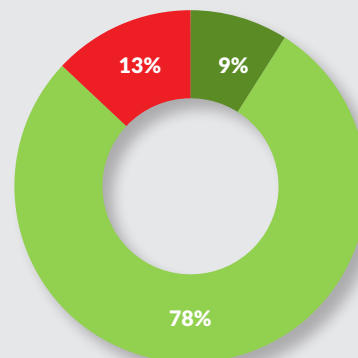


In-House Counsel using external legal

In-house counsel – service delivery is in line with initial expectations. Communication features strongly, as well as having the required knowledge. Timeliness needs to be improved with frequent summaries and updates on progress required so the work status is always known.

—
0%

Exceeded Expectations vs 2016



■ Exceeded my expectations ■ Met my expectations ■ Fell below my expectations

Action Checklist

Key learnings to help raise service levels

To stay at the forefront of legal service delivery we have put together a checklist of the items clients want to see highlighted for an enhanced legal experience. Think about the items on the checklist and how you can add these into your current processes to deliver a great customer experience every time.



Business & Personal Clients

- ☐ Explain clearly fee and charging structure
- ☐ Provide a clear indication of the likely cost or the fixed fee for the work
- ☐ Explain how regularly you will be sending updates
- ☐ Set response expectations by explaining the timeframe for responding to queries by email or phone
- ☐ Send a Letter of Engagement and ensure you get a confirmation/agreement reply

In-house Counsel Clients

- ☐ Ease of making an appointment - online, by phone?
- ☐ Are appointment time/wait times convenient?
- ☐ Explain clearly your fee structure
- ☐ Provide a clear indication of the likely cost or the fixed fee for the work
- ☐ Explain how regularly you will be sending updates

This is the first in series of discerning research summary insights.

Are you taking advantage of new technological developments to allow you to work smarter and invest more of your time with your clients to exceed their expectations? LexisNexis has developed many legal tools that can help you streamline your service, giving you back the time to enhance your client relationships.

TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE LEGAL TOOLS AND SERVICES OR DISCUSS THE FINDINGS IN THIS RESEARCH, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR RELATIONSHIP MANAGER OR EMAIL US AT CUSTOMERSUPPORT@LEXISNEXIS.CO.NZ

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