



The Bar Council

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Bar Council online support services

[Ethics and Practice](#)
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News

Lawyers unite for #LegalPride 2019

The legal professions of England and Wales - solicitors, barristers and Chartered Legal Executives are joining together to mark Pride events in Birmingham, Bristol, Newcastle, Leeds, Manchester, Cardiff and London. The Law Society of England and Wales, the Bar Council of...

24 APRIL 2019 | INFORMATION TYPE

New support for barristers seeking judicial careers

Responding to the launch today of the Pre-Application Judicial Education (PAJE) programme by the Judicial Diversity Forum (JDF), of which the Bar Council is a member, Chair of the Bar...

24 APRIL 2019 | INFORMATION TYPE

Bar Council responds to Criminal Bar Association survey on CPS fees

Responding to Criminal Bar Association (CBA) survey results out today showing discontent amongst criminal barristers over fees paid by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Richard...

24 APRIL 2019 | INFORMATION TYPE

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BarTalk

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Publications

The Bar Council regularly publishes publications around the many topics related to law and barristers and their livelihood.

01 Barristers' Working Lives 2019: Harassment and bullying

This report released by the Bar Council examines the trends around harassment and bullying in 2019.

24 APRIL 2019 | INFORMATION TYPE

02 The Case for Justice - Party Conference Briefing 2019

The Bar Council's briefing to policy-makers on administrative detention and the implications for the Rule of Law.

24 APRIL 2019 | INFORMATION TYPE

03 Bar Council Briefing - Administrative Detention and the Rule of Law

The Bar Council's briefing to policy-makers on administrative detention and the implications for the Rule of Law.

24 APRIL 2019 | INFORMATION TYPE

[See all publications](#)

Events

18 April
Annual and Young Bar Conference 2019

CONFERENCE | YOUNG BARRISTERS | LONDON

19 May
Employed Bar Awards 2018

AWARDS | ACHIEVEMENTS | MANCHESTER

29 June
Practical Ethics in Criminal Law

LECTURE | ETHICS | BIRMINGHAM

14 July
Young Barristers' Annual Workshop 2019

WORKSHOP | YOUNG BARRISTERS | LONDON

[See all events](#)



Support the Bar Council

Much of our work would not be possible without funding from the Bar Representation Fee (BRF): a £12.50 per month voluntary subscription.

[Find out about the BRF](#)



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What is the Bar?

The Bar of England and Wales is a unique legal profession of specialist advocates and advisers. Barristers are independent and objective and their highly competitive training, together with their specialist knowledge and experience in and out of court, can make a substantial difference to the outcome of a case.

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Self-Employed Bar

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Self-Employed Bar

There are approximately 13,000 barristers in self-employed practice in England and Wales. Broad areas of specialisation include: Construction, Commercial, Company, Criminal (including extradition), Defamation, Employment, Environment, Family, Housing, Immigration, Insolvency, Insurance, Personal Injury, Property, Equity, Wills and Trusts. These can be subdivided further into more than 300 categories of expertise.

Through their grouping in chambers, or in some cases working as sole practitioners, barristers are able to operate with low overheads and can offer competitive rates. Legal aid will often cover the services of a barrister, even at the most senior level.

Employed Bar

Employed barristers might work for the Government or in industry and play an increasingly important role. Since the implementation of the Access to Justice Act 1999, which amended the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990, employed barristers have been permitted by the Bar Council to conduct litigation. There are around 3,000 employed barristers registered with the Bar Council, bringing the practising Bar to approximately 16,000 in number.

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Instructing barristers

The Bar remains predominantly a referral profession, with barristers usually 'instructed' by solicitors. Barristers who have completed appropriate training are, however, able to take instructions directly from members of the public (the Public Access Scheme). In addition, members of certain professional bodies, some overseas clients and organisations with licences from the Bar Council are able to seek advice directly from barristers and may instruct them in non-court litigation (the Licensed Access Scheme).

Pro bono

Members of the Bar often provide their services on a pro bono basis; for example through the Free Representation Unit or the Bar Pro Bono Unit. For more information, visit: www.barprobono.org.uk

Legal Services Act 2007

The Legal Services Act 2007 has precipitated further liberalising changes to the Bar's Code of Conduct and the ways in which barristers are permitted to practise. Since 2010, barristers have been permitted to become managers and partners with other lawyers and non-lawyers in Legal Disciplinary Practices (LDPs) regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA), in other 'recognised bodies' regulated by the Council for Licensed Conveyancers (CLC) and can act in a 'dual capacity' as both self-employed and employed simultaneously (though not in the same case), subject to certain provisos. They may investigate or collect evidence and take witness statements, conduct correspondence, share premises and office facilities with any other person (subject to certain conditions) and attend on clients at police stations. Further reforms may follow as other sections of the Act are implemented.

Also of interest

Discover more about the Bar's specialist advocacy and advisory services, fair access to justice for all, the highest standards of ethics, equality and diversity across the profession, and the development of opportunities for barristers.

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[Why instruct a barrister?](#)

[How to instruct a barrister](#)

[Why instruct a barrister?](#)

[Public Access](#)

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