



BAR  
STANDARDS  
BOARD

REGULATING BARRISTERS

# Regulatory Update

Monthly update from the Bar Standards Board

February 2016

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**Blog: Monthly message from our Chair Sir Andrew Burns KCMG**

As you can read in this issue, last month we published our draft Strategic Plan for 2016-19.

The next few years are likely to be critical to how a modern Bar adapts to changes in how consumers access the justice system and how their expectations of high-quality advocacy manifest themselves. The way in which the profession is regulated will be fundamentally important to this. We would very much like to know what you think of our strategic priorities for the BSB.

Our strategic vision has evolved. We propose to work on three themes we will deal with strategically: consumer needs, diversity and the economic pressures that you face.

## [Complete authorisation to practise now/diversity data reminder](#)

The 2016 Authorisation to Practise process is now open and you can renew your practising certificates online by logging in to the [Barrister Connect portal](#).

While you are logged in please take a couple of minutes to update your diversity monitoring information, if you have not done so recently. The monitoring questionnaire can be found under the

"Monitoring Information" on the [Barrister Connect homepage](#). There is currently a fairly low response rate to this monitoring section of the portal; although provision of diversity information is voluntary the data is extremely important to us as it helps us assess the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at tackling inequality.

The data you provide will inform policies aimed at widening access to the profession and promoting diversity and social mobility. The analysed data will enable us to identify any trends and is key to meeting our statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. Your data is completely confidential and will never be passed to third parties. We will only ever publish aggregated, anonymised data showing the diversity of the profession as a whole.

[Read more on our website.](#)

**New consumer content added on our website**

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## [Give us your views on our draft 2016-19 Strategic Plan](#)

We have published a [draft version of our new Strategic Plan](#) and we are seeking feedback about the strategic priorities that we have identified.

The strategy sets out our view of the context for legal services over the next three years and indicates how we plan to respond, including to potential proposals for change in the regulatory landscape and its underpinning legislation, on which the Ministry of Justice intends to consult.

Our work over 2016-2019 is intended to be organised into three programmes:

- Regulating in the public interest
- Supporting those we regulate to face the future
- A strong and sustainable regulator

[Read more on our website.](#)

We have created a new section of our website, designed to help inform the public about barristers. It includes easy to understand information on when someone might need a barrister, how they can find one, and what they can expect from a barrister they have instructed.

We hope this new information will help members of the public and clients to make informed decisions and understand more about what a barrister can do for them and how.

This new content can be found on our website under the heading "[Using a barrister](#)".

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## [Responses to the Future Bar Training consultation published](#)

We have published [the summary of initial responses](#) we received to our consultation launched in the summer of 2015 on the academic, vocational and pupillage requirements to become qualified as a barrister.

[The Future Bar Training consultation was open between July and October 2015.](#) The consultation set out the reasons for reassessment of training, asked for views and evidence on the

**Women's experiences survey – thank you!**

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the women at the practising Bar who participated in our recent survey, which closed on Monday, 8

functioning of the current system, and explored some initial approaches for each of the current stages.

Fifty-eight responses were received. These came from a range of individuals (including legal academics and practising barristers) and organisations (including the Council of the Inns of Court, the Bar Council and several training providers).

[Read more on our website.](#)

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## What is the purpose of the BSB Regulatory Update email?

A year ago, we renamed our monthly email to barristers, “BSB Regulatory Update”. To celebrate the relaunch, we thought it would be helpful to remind you of the purpose of these emails.

It is important to note that, as your regulator, we have a duty to communicate with you on a regular basis. We do this monthly via this channel. From time to time, we send out additional emails to all barristers in any given month. However, as a general rule, we try to limit ourselves to contacting the entire profession just once a month.

The regulatory nature of this email means that we cannot permit you to “unsubscribe” from receiving these emails.

Although occasionally we might use the BSB Regulatory Update to invite you to one of our events or to let you know about our consultations, its main purpose is to let you know about the rules in the BSB Handbook. This is particularly true if there are any changes to the rules.

We aim to make the content in the emails varied and as easy to digest as possible. We try to include the most important points in the body of the email itself, and then use links to our website to provide further information. If you have any feedback on how well (or otherwise), you think we do this, we would like to hear from you. Please reply to [contactus@barstandardsboard.org.uk](mailto:contactus@barstandardsboard.org.uk)

You can read past issues of BSB Regulatory Update on our website; both [2015 issues](#) and [2016 issues](#).

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## Reminder: Changes to the provision of the Forensic Accounting course

During pupillage, all pupils must attend certain compulsory courses including the Forensic Accounting Course. The Pupillage Handbook 2015 states that “the Forensic Accounting Course must be undertaken either in pupillage or within the first three years of practice”.

February. We had more than 1,300 responses, which exceeded our expectations and shows that many of you were keen to have your say about how the equality rules in the BSB Handbook are working to assist in the career progression of women at the Bar.

We will now be analysing what you've told us and will publish a report on the responses in the near future.

Currently, the Forensic Accounting Course is provided by BPP Professional Education and is delivered as a (consecutive) two day attendance-based training course offered in five set locations. We are now making changes to the format and delivery of the course, which will be delivered online from 2016.

The current face-to-face, attendance-based course ceased in December 2015, to make way for a more flexible approach to training, designed to be more affordable and accessible.

Further details can be found [on our website](#).

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## Regulatory Requirements



### **BSB Handbook Explained – Police Station Attendance**

Have you ever been asked to attend a police station on behalf of a client?

Previous rules prevented barristers from doing this. That absolute ban has now been removed, however barristers should pay attention to gC39 of the BSB Handbook, which states “you should not attend a police station to advise a suspect or interviewee as to the handling and conduct of police interviews unless you have complied with such training requirements as may be imposed by the Bar Standards Board in respect of such work”.

Barristers undertaking publicly funded police station work under a criminal contract must comply with the training requirements specified by the Legal Aid Agency. Barristers undertaking privately funded police station work must complete the Police Station Qualification and (if they do not hold higher rights of audience) the Magistrates Court Qualification. More information on this qualification can be found on the [Solicitors Regulation Authority's website](#).



### **Have we got correct details of your primary practice address?**

Please ensure that you have informed us of your

correct primary practice address in accordance with rS69 of our Handbook. If your practice address changes, you must inform our Records Department within 28 days.

**Give us your feedback**

If you have any thoughts about how we can improve the Regulatory Update or what content you would like to read, please email [contactus@barstandardsboard.org.uk](mailto:contactus@barstandardsboard.org.uk).

*Please let us know ([records@barcouncil.org.uk](mailto:records@barcouncil.org.uk)) about any changes to your contact and practising details so that we can work together to maintain accurate records as per the requirements set out within our Handbook (rC64.1).*



**Bar Standards Board**  
289-293 High Holborn, London WC1V 7HZ  
Phone: 020 7611 1444

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You work for The General Council of the Bar.

**Our mailing address is:**  
The Bar Standards Board  
289-293  
High Holborn  
London, Lnd wc1v 7hz  
United Kingdom

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