Bar Professional Training Course

Part Time Study from September 2017

Programme Demands Document

Produced by the Academic Registry

V2.0 – November 2016
Introduction

This document is produced by The University of Law for the information of prospective students. It explains the demands of the course in order that applicants with special needs can assess their ability to undertake the course. Detailed questions about the extent of adjustments which may be made should be addressed to the Disability Support Service. This form may be made available to medical practitioners who may be asked to provide a professional judgement on the ability of an applicant to complete the course.

The information included is an indicative guide for 2016 intake only. Students who enrol on the course will be subject to the course regulations in force at that time.

Details of the Bar Professional Training Course, including subject coverage can be found on the University web-site (Our Courses; Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC))
http://www.law.ac.uk/postgraduate/bptc/.

Summary of Key Learning Outcomes

Development of the legal knowledge and skills required to commence practice as a barrister.

Preliminary Knowledge and Skills

The Bar Standards Board expects students starting the BPTC to have a basic knowledge of crime, contract, tort, property, equity and trusts, the structure of the court system, remedies, offences, causes of action and defences, property interests and EU law and constitutional law. It is also assumed that students should be able to:

- Listen effectively
- Engage in oral discussion in a clear and concise fashion
- Record or summarise a discussion in clear and concise notes
- Write clearly and precisely with attention to spelling, grammar, style, organisation, bibliographies and citations
- Work co-operatively with others in small groups
- Work effectively alone
- Extract, analyse and apply up to date law from primary sources, including case reports, primary and delegated legislation.
- Use electronic means to produce work, complete research and for the purpose of email.

Bar Course Aptitude Test

The Bar Standards Board have produce an aptitude test (the Bar Course Aptitude Test – “BCAT”) which all new applicants intending to commence the BPTC from September 2013 onwards must take and pass.
Full details can be obtained via the Bar Standards Board website.
Disability Support Agreements

The University has a dedicated Disability Support Service to assist students in accessing the programme. To utilise the Disability Support Service medical evidence must be provided within the first week to ensure reasonable adjustment are put in place promptly. On receipt of the medical evidence the Disability Support Service will create an individual Disability Support Agreement detailing the course and exam adjustments. These are then communicated to tutors and assessments.

For more information please visit our disability microsite http://www.law.ac.uk/disability-support-service/ or contact http://disabilitysupportservice@law.ac.uk

Bar Professional Training Course Learning Environment

- Independent learning and preparation for training group sessions, including research, writing, drafting and preparation of advice and preparation for conference, negotiation, mediation and advocacy (including by way of i-Tutorials and podcasts).
- Training Group (TG) sessions of 12 students or fewer, facilitated by a tutor, for essentially the whole day with appropriate breaks and a lunch hour.
- Very occasional large group sessions of more than 12 students, delivered by a tutor, up to one and a half hours in length.

Students are expected to participate fully in all activities and carry out independent learning and preparation as directed.

Attendance requirements

- Attendance usually on two days per study weekend, for up to 15 study weekends per year, for two years. Attendance at all timetabled sessions (see below) is compulsory. (Please note that there may be up to two optional additional study days at the weekend in year two to enhance the Mock Trial experience)
- Standard study weekend: up to eight training group sessions.
- Students will, from time to time, have additional sessions such as court visits and assessments which could be scheduled at any time in the week. However if required these are likely, where possible, to be scheduled on a Friday preceding a study weekend.
- Students may also, from time to time, have to attend in the evening on study weekends to participate in practitioner events.

The attendance requirement is strictly enforced and is required by the regulator (the BSB). Students who miss more than 10% of classes or other timetabled activities calculated on a yearly basis will fail the course unless they can demonstrate that there were exceptional circumstances and that the work has been made up. Students who miss more than 20% of classes or other timetabled activities calculated on a yearly basis will fail the course.
Indicative Week (without a study weekend)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning format</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent learning and preparation for TGs</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TGs</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indicative Week (including study weekend)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning format</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent learning and preparation for TGs</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TGs</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subject Coverage

The BPTC is divided into four areas:

1. Knowledge areas:
   - Criminal Litigation and Sentencing,
   - Civil Litigation and Criminal and Civil Evidence;

2. Skills areas –
   - Casework skills: Fact management, Legal research;
   - Written word skills: Opinion Writing, Drafting;
   - Interpersonal skills: Advocacy, Conference skills, Resolution of Disputes out of Court;

3. Professional ethics and conduct;
4. The Options.

On the part time course all of these areas are taught throughout both years with the exception of the options which are taught at the end of the second year. Apart from the options, the syllabus comprises the core knowledge and legal skills required to practice at the Bar.

Assessment Demands

A summary of the assessment schedule for all part time modes of study is shown at the end of this document.

We do not normally provide additional time for coursework, as the time provided already incorporates considerable flexibility.

In accordance with the Bar Standards Board and the University requirements, we operate a fit to sit policy, which means that students who attend an Assessment are deeming themselves to be fit to sit that Assessment. It is therefore not possible to submit a concession application for impaired performance for an assessment that has been sat, unless there was a procedural defect in the conduct of the assessment.
Adjustments

Please contact the Disability Support Service for advice on the possible adjustments made for the programme and assessments.

Please note, that in the light of the requirements of professional bodies with respect to the maintenance of professional standards, we are unable to make the following adjustments:

- Replacing examinations taken under supervised conditions with take-away assessments/courseworks;
- Shortening the overall length of examinations; and
- Splitting examinations into shorter units such that a different paper is taken from the rest of the cohort.

These restrictions reflect guidance given on equivalence of assessment regimes for all students and the need to provide adequate coverage of required material.

The University is able to provide needs assessments for students suspecting a SpLD. The student will incur a small contribution fee of £75. Once completed the Disability Support Service can put in place a Disability Support Agreement detailing the relevant adjustments.

We are able to provide access to a Study Skills tutor. We do provide Skills4 study Campus access via our interactive learning environment, Elite, this service is available for all students. We are not, at this time, offering one-to-one SpLD specific tutoring. However Disabled Student Allowance funding should be sought if a Specialist Study Skills Tutor is required. The Disability Support Service can advise you in how to obtain DSA.

Coursework extensions are not automatic but granted if applied for and supported by a good case as with all extenuating circumstances. A specific learning difficulty is generally not considered a sole justification for granting coursework extensions and coursework extensions are only granted in exceptional, evidenced circumstances.

Please contact the Disability Support Service to discuss the process if you believe you require this provision, disabilitiesupportservice@law.ac.uk. The team will contact you to discuss your case and to assist you in deciding whether to make an application. The option of extensions can be a reasonable adjustment even though most students wish to avoid them and many will not need them.

Time limits

Irrespective of any special arrangements made, in order successfully to complete the BPTC, all students are required under the regulations to pass all elements of the course within 3 years of the expected completion date of the of the course.

Summary of Assessment Demands

The following table sets out the duration, style and date of assessments during the course.
### Year One Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oral Assessments</th>
<th>Style and duration of assessments</th>
<th>Date of Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resolution of Disputes out of Court</td>
<td>Combined Multiple Choice Test and Short Answer Question assessment</td>
<td>April, Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>Preparation: one hour supervised preparation 20 minute assessment</td>
<td>June, Year 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Year Two Assessments Written

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written Assessments</th>
<th>Style and duration of assessments</th>
<th>Date of Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drafting</td>
<td>Open book assessment 3 hours</td>
<td>February, Year 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Litigation</td>
<td>Closed book Multiple Choice Test assessment</td>
<td>May, Year 2¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Three hours in total</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ The dates of the centralised assessments have not yet been confirmed and are therefore subject to change.
### Written Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written Assessments</th>
<th>Style and duration of assessments</th>
<th>Date of Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Criminal Litigation | Closed book Multiple Choice Test assessment  
Three hours in total | May, Year 2<sup>2</sup> |
| Opinion Writing     | Open book assessment  
4 hours | March, Year 2 |
| Professional Ethics | Closed book Short Answer Question assessment  
Two hours in total | March, Year 2<sup>2</sup> |

### Oral Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oral Assessments</th>
<th>Style and duration of assessments</th>
<th>Date of Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Civil Advocacy                    | Preparation: take-away paper (one week permitted)  
25 minute assessment | February, Year 2 |
| Criminal Advocacy Examination in Chief | Preparation: take-away paper (one week permitted)  
15 minute assessment | April / May, Year 2 |
| Criminal Advocacy Cross Examination | Preparation: 45 minutes supervised followed by  
15 minutes assessment | April / May, Year 2 |

### Option Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option Assessments</th>
<th>Style and duration of assessments</th>
<th>Date of Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A choice of two from nine subjects</td>
<td>A minimum of one written or oral assessment including the use of a reflective journal, depending on the subject</td>
<td>June, Year 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Potential Resit Assessments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resit Assessments</th>
<th>Style and duration of assessments</th>
<th>Date of Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All formats</td>
<td>Assessed as the in-course assessments</td>
<td>2 week period in August</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>2</sup> The dates of the centralised assessments have not yet been confirmed and are therefore subject to change.

<sup>3</sup> As above.