

**Important information for Transferring Qualified Lawyers**

This is to set out changes that will come into effect from August 2021 for Transferring Qualified Lawyers (TQLs) who are seeking admission to the Bar of England and Wales. These arrangements will replace what has to date been known as the Bar Transfer Test (BTT). The last sitting of the Bar Transfer Test in its present form took place in spring 2021. The new arrangements described below replace all arrangements previously described in the Bar Transfer Test Handbook or on any webpages referring to the Bar Transfer Test.

From August 2021, the arrangements for TQLs will align closely with new Bar training courses in order to preserve consistency of outcomes and standards in all who train for the Bar of England and Wales, and to enable TQLs to benefit from the reforms of Bar training in which assessments have been mapped to the requirements of the [Professional Statement](https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/uploads/assets/0279b209-dab6-40c9-a554af54994e2566/bsbprofessionalstatementandcompetences2016.pdf). As before, TQLs will need to submit an application to the BSB’s Authorisations team. The application form is available online via the MyBar portal. Prospective TQLs should contact the Authorisations Team in order to set up a MyBar profile and gain access to the application form. The team will assess a TQL’s experience against the requirements of the Professional Statement. Where a TQL cannot demonstrate that a requirement has been met from previous experience or alternative training, they may be required to take appropriate examinations and/or to complete a period of pupillage.

If a TQL completes *only* the examinations which are part of the vocational component of Bar Training, they will be able to be Called to the Bar of England and Wales. If they wish to qualify to practise as a barrister in England and Wales, they may *also* need to complete any prescribed period of pupillage and to pass the BSB centralised examination in Professional Ethics during pupillage if required.

The examinations which are part of the vocational component are the same as those taken by students of Bar Training at Authorised Education and Training Organisations (AETOs). All vocational AETOs are able to apply to the BSB to be authorised to register TQLs for these examinations. The only AETO currently authorised to do so is BPP University. TQLs cannot take the examinations without being registered for them at an authorised AETO.

The Professional Ethics exam that is taken during pupillage is administered by the BSB, and the BSB will provide information for all pupils about the exam and how to apply to take it. The first presentation of this exam will be in January 2022.

Should an AETO offer any additional training to assist TQLs to prepare for the vocational component exams, this will be advertised by them. TQLs will take their exams under arrangements specified by AETOs. Fees for taking the exams and for any additional training or resources offered will be advertised by the AETO.

All assessments will be set and marked by AETOs apart from Civil and Criminal Litigation during the vocational component, and Professional Ethics during pupillage/work-based learning; these three assessments will be set and marked by the BSB.

**Summary of how a TQL may complete the three components of Bar Training**

*Academic component*

* In the rare instances where it is determined by the BSB’s Authorisations Team that TQLs cannot demonstrate all of the requirements of the Professional Statement that would normally be fulfilled by a law degree or GDL, the applicant will be advised to submit an application for partial exemption from the foundations of legal knowledge subjects in respect of the subjects which they have completed in prior academic study. The applicant may then complete any outstanding subjects specified in the authorisation letter in a GDL course before progressing to the vocational component of Bar training. Thus, there is no longer an equivalent of what was previously known as “Part A” of the Bar Transfer Test.

*Vocational component*

* In instances where it is determined by the BSB’s Authorisations Team that the TQL must complete all or part of the vocational component of training, the TQL must be registered with a vocational component AETO to take vocational component assessments.
* The TQL will come under the AETO’s assessment regulations.
* TQL candidates will be considered through the Examination Boards of the AETO(s) delivering the assessments, including consideration of any mitigating circumstances applications and any review processes; the BSB plays no part in these decisions or processes.
* TQLs will have unlimited resit attempts at each required element within 5 years.
* All required assessments must be completed within 5 years of the Authorisations Team decision on what requirements need to be met.
* A minimum of two opportunities to take assessments will be offered each year. AETOs will specify whether they offer more.
* TQLs who are required to demonstrate competence in Professional Ethics will, in line with vocational component candidates, have to pass an AETO-set assessment in Professional Ethics to be called to the Bar, and then go on to take the centralised assessment in Professional Ethics during pupillage in order to qualify to practise as a barrister in England and Wales. There is no longer a BSB centralised examination in Professional Ethics during the vocational component.

*Pupillage component*

* In instances where it is determined by the BSB’s Authorisations Team that the TQL must complete all or part of the work-based learning/pupillage component of training, the TQL must be registered with a work-based learning/pupillage component AETO to take work-based learning assessments.
* TQLs needing to undertake work-based learning/pupillage may be required to demonstrate competence in Professional Ethics and will, in line with other pupils, have to pass the centralised assessment in Professional Ethics during pupillage in order to gain a full practising certificate.
* TQLs needing to undertake work-based learning/pupillage may be required to demonstrate competence in Advocacy and will, in line with other pupils, have to pass an assessment provided in accordance with the Curriculum and Assessment Strategy in order to progress to the practising period of pupillage.
* TQLs needing to undertake work-based learning/pupillage may be required to demonstrate competence in Negotiation and will, in line with other pupils, have to pass an assessment provided in accordance with the Curriculum and Assessment Strategy in order to progress to the practising period of pupillage.
* TQLs needing to undertake work-based learning/pupillage may be considered for exemption from any, or all, of the above requirements in relation to Professional Ethics, Advocacy and Negotiation as part of their initial application to the Authorisations Team for admission to the Bar. Any exemptions granted will be based on the applicant’s ability to demonstrate equivalent training and/or experience in line with the Professional Statement and Curriculum and Assessment Strategy.

**Information for those who are already authorised to take the BTT but who have yet to complete it once the final sit of the BTT has taken place in spring 2021**

* Please see [our guidance](https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/training-qualification/becoming-a-barrister/transferring-lawyers/tqls-with-outstanding-btt-requirements.html) for applicants who have been required to undertake the BTT and who have not yet been Called to the Bar. The guidance sets out the appropriate equivalent assessments that will need to be taken in place of any outstanding BTT requirements. Details of the individual assessments can be found in the [Curriculum and Assessment Strategy](https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/uploads/assets/0426fe70-72e5-48be-8618f7af3a28f1b0/curriculumandassessmentstrategy1april2019.pdf). Details of the Bar Training [syllabus](https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/training-qualification/bar-qualification-manual-new.html?part=94844A47-08D8-437D-A17440AD1A7C596C&q=3B%3A+BPTC+and+Bar+Training+Syllabi) for the centralised examinations in Civil and Criminal Litigation can be found on our website.
* Anyone with outstanding BTT requirements after April 2021 may apply afresh to the Authorisations Team for admission to the Bar (at no additional cost) and will be reassessed for exemptions from all components of Bar training at that stage. They will then need to comply with any conditions of their new application decision within five years.
* Anyone currently part way through the BTT and required to take the Professional Ethics exam will, after April 2021, need to take an AETO-set assessment in order to be called to the Bar and the BSB-set assessment during pupillage in order to qualify to practise as a barrister.