

Bar Standards Board's Strategy

Comments from the Bar Association for Commerce Finance and Industry

1. Terminology

You use the words “consumer”, “client” and “the public”. It should be made clear that the term “consumer” includes business clients.

2. Training

You have identified this as a Key Challenge and as an Objective (under Excellence and Quality)

We would like to see a firm commitment to review the whole training structure for the Bar to make the profession more accessible to those with the right qualities. We will be making this proposal as part of our submission on Deferral. I understand that part-time pupillages have already been canvassed and the situation on employed pupillages remains unsatisfactory. We would also like to see a more fundamental change in allowing a more modular approach by which periods spent in Law centres, solicitors' offices and other approved places could count towards training, whilst including appropriate safeguards to maintain the high standards of the profession.

3. Diversity

There should be a clearer statement that the BSB should be charged with taking account of the interests of all barristers whether in chambers, in employment or “non-practising”. Even after deferral there will be large body of barristers who may not have been able to comply with the training requirements. Sir Paul Kennedy (writing in Graya News) suggests that both the Bar Council and the BSB may be required to represent and regulate a much wider group than those with practising certificates.

4 Competition

One of the regulatory objectives in the Legal Services Bill which the LSB and front line regulators are required to adopt is the promotion of competition in the provision of legal services. We believe that this should be one of the objectives of the BSB.

BACFI

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