

**BAR
STANDARDS
BOARD**

REGULATING BARRISTERS

**THE BAR STANDARDS BOARD
CENTRAL EXAMINATIONS BOARD
CHAIR'S REPORT
PART 2**

**Bar Training, BTT, BPTC & BTR
April 2025 Sitting**

This report should be read in conjunction with Part 1 of the Chair's report

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Bar Training course is the successor to the Bar Professional Training Course ('BPTC') as the vocational training component to be successfully completed prior to call to the Bar. The Bar Training Course saw its first intake of students at nine Authorised Education and Training Organisations (AETOs) in September 2020. Depending on the course structure offered at each AETO, candidates will have had their first opportunity to attempt the centralised assessments in Civil and Criminal Litigation in December 2020.

1.1 April 2025 Examination dates

The April 2025 Bar Training exam dates were as follows:

Criminal Litigation: Monday 28 April 2025 at 14:00
Civil Litigation (Paper 1): Wednesday 30 April 2025 at 14:00
Civil Litigation (Paper 2): Friday 2 May 2025 at 14:00

1.2 Passing rates

The confirmed post-intervention outcomes for the fourteenth iteration of examinations attempted by Bar Training course candidates in April 2025, which are as follows:

All AETOs (Post-Intervention Results)							
		Dec-20	Apr-21	Aug-21	Dec-21	Apr-22	Aug-22
Civil Litigation	No. of Candidates	407	989	738	824	1517	791
	Passing Rate	56%	49%	41%	53%	60%	46%
Criminal Litigation	No. of Candidates	383	1104	827	824	1653	802
	Passing Rate	60%	46%	42%	56%	64%	52%
		Dec-22	Apr-23	Aug-23	Dec-23	Apr-24	Aug-24
Civil Litigation	No. of Candidates	929	1671	890	833	1748	987
	Passing Rate	56%	60%	45%	53%	60%	45%
Criminal Litigation	No. of Candidates	596	1583	842	799	1754	1008
	Passing Rate	50%	66%	40%	55%	61%	48%
		Dec-24	Apr-25	Aug-25	Dec-25	Apr-26	Aug-26
Civil Litigation	No. of Candidates	937	1728				
	Passing Rate	61%	54%				
Criminal Litigation	No. of Candidates	887	1811				
	Passing Rate	50%	60%				

1.2.1 In comparing results across the fourteen iterations of assessment it should be noted that for the December 2020 sit, only nine AETO centres presented cohorts of candidates for assessment. For April 2021 the figure was 19 AETO centres, which explains why there were significantly more candidates for that sitting compared to December 2020. From April 2021 onwards, sittings will have comprised a mix of first sit (new and deferred) and resitting candidates (ie candidates who had previously failed an assessment without extenuating circumstances). The April 2022 sitting saw the first cohorts entered by ULaw Liverpool, the December 2022 sitting the first cohorts entered by the University of Hertfordshire, and the April 2023 sitting the first candidates entered by ULaw Newcastle.

1.2.2 For the April 2025 sitting there were 21 AETO assessment centres providing candidate cohort results. As can be seen in the above table, the April 2025 passing rates for both Criminal Litigation and Civil Litigation are largely in line with previous April sitting outcomes. See further on candidate numbers at 1.3 and 1.4 below.

1.3. Candidate numbers by AETO centre: Civil Litigation

Civil Litigation: Candidate Numbers						
AETO	Dec-20	Apr-21	Aug-21	Dec-21	Apr-22	Aug-22
BPP Birmingham	28	31	28	40	47	32
BPP Bristol	19	16	14	19	7	9
BPP Leeds	27	32	20	35	16	5
BPP London	151	179	150	263	274	173
BPP Manchester	58	54	35	89	49	37
Cardiff	51	39	15	60	35	14
City	22	208	132	59	378	136
Hertfordshire	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
ICCA	28	34	5	56	33	14
MMU	23	9	11	24	7	8
Northumbria	N/A	64	36	15	64	36
NTU	N/A	50	37	23	53	34
Ulaw Birmingham	N/A	34	41	17	82	51
Ulaw Bristol	N/A	13	4	1	18	5
Ulaw Leeds	N/A	22	17	7	43	26
Ulaw Liverpool	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	16	5
Ulaw London	N/A	89	106	65	216	137
Ulaw Manchester	N/A	19	18	7	54	20
Ulaw Newcastle	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ulaw Nottingham	N/A	7	1	2	16	7
UWE	N/A	89	68	41	109	42
TOTAL	407	989	738	823	1517	791

AETO	Dec-22	Apr-23	Aug-23	Dec-23	Apr-24	Aug-24
BPP Birmingham	56	42	55	35	38	61
BPP Bristol	8	9	6	5	17	5
BPP Leeds	16	18	9	24	15	13
BPP London	260	299	244	217	257	222
BPP Manchester	73	73	79	72	74	89
Cardiff	72	25	13	81	37	19
City	75	397	105	46	429	132
Hertfordshire	13	6	7	1	2	5
ICCA	89	38	14	117	82	34
MMU	23	12	7	37	5	11
Northumbria	14	69	24	10	78	27
NTU	24	74	42	25	70	45
Ulaw Birmingham	30	89	46	12	61	51
Ulaw Bristol	3	33	9	N/A	31	5
Ulaw Leeds	12	60	31	9	73	48
Ulaw Liverpool	2	56	22	14	100	30
Ulaw London	101	197	96	57	169	102
Ulaw Manchester	7	44	18	11	74	18
Ulaw Newcastle	N/A	9	5	N/A	11	6
Ulaw Nottingham	6	12	3	N/A	13	6
UWE	45	109	55	60	112	58
TOTAL	929	1671	890	833	1748	987

AETO	Dec-24	Apr-25	Aug-25	Dec-25	Apr-26	Aug-26
BPP Birmingham	36	28				
BPP Bristol	6	15				
BPP Leeds	29	28				
BPP London	253	302				
BPP Manchester	61	61				
Cardiff	92	27				
City	47	343				
Hertfordshire	2	20				
ICCA	165	81				
MMU	29	5				
Northumbria	14	70				
NTU	37	91				
Ulaw Birmingham	18	54				
Ulaw Bristol	4	29				
Ulaw Leeds	20	78				
Ulaw Liverpool	15	82				
Ulaw London	54	156				
Ulaw Manchester	9	69				
Ulaw Newcastle	3	18				
Ulaw Nottingham	2	11				
UWE	41	160				
TOTAL	937	1728				

- 1.3.1 The December 2020 sit was the first opportunity for candidates to attempt the centralised assessments for the Bar Training course, hence the lower volume of candidates. As can be seen, for the April 2025 sit, City University had the largest cohort, accounting for 19.8% of the Civil Litigation candidate entries, and BPP London has also provided 21.6% of the total number of candidate entries across the thirteen sittings offered thus far.

1.4 Candidate numbers by AETO centre: Criminal Litigation

Criminal Litigation: Candidate Numbers						
AETO	Dec-20	Apr-21	Aug-21	Dec-21	Apr-22	Aug-22
BPP Birmingham	28	30	29	43	64	22
BPP Bristol	20	16	13	26	5	7
BPP Leeds	20	25	24	35	20	7
BPP London	137	202	174	270	261	199
BPP Manchester	52	62	47	91	60	34
Cardiff	54	37	19	19	70	21
City	20	247	154	77	425	141
Hertfordshire	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
ICCA	32	31	7	56	31	13
MMU	20	14	11	20	11	7
Northumbria	N/A	40	25	13	64	24
NTU	N/A	51	36	23	55	32
Ulaw Birmingham	N/A	46	49	20	88	56
Ulaw Bristol	N/A	15	2	N/A	18	5
Ulaw Leeds	N/A	38	20	8	47	25
Ulaw Liverpool	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	17	2
Ulaw London	N/A	107	127	73	234	129
Ulaw Manchester	N/A	23	19	7	61	9
Ulaw Newcastle	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ulaw Nottingham	N/A	5	1	2	14	3
UWE	N/A	115	70	41	108	66
TOTAL	383	1104	827	824	1653	802

AETO	Dec-22	Apr-23	Aug-23	Dec-23	Apr-24	Aug-24
BPP Birmingham	36	32	33	60	33	36
BPP Bristol	N/A	1	9	4	4	13
BPP Leeds	5	14	20	5	23	19
BPP London	120	184	249	214	207	256
BPP Manchester	35	65	49	68	74	51
Cardiff	20	68	15	37	65	17
City	61	408	114	73	419	142
Hertfordshire	15	9	10	1	4	3
ICCA	92	37	9	129	69	24
MMU	24	8	7	35	21	12
Northumbria	14	75	14	9	77	25
NTU	24	69	38	27	77	51
Ulaw Birmingham	19	80	40	12	67	54
Ulaw Bristol	2	32	7	N/A	31	5
Ulaw Leeds	9	60	30	10	76	50
Ulaw Liverpool	2	59	20	12	96	35
Ulaw London	76	174	103	52	167	111
Ulaw Manchester	3	43	13	10	75	28
Ulaw Newcastle	N/A	9	1	N/A	11	6
Ulaw Nottingham	3	13	3	N/A	13	8
UWE	36	143	58	41	145	62
TOTAL	596	1583	842	799	1754	1008

AETO	Dec-24	Apr-25	Aug-25	Dec-25	Apr-26	Aug-26
BPP Birmingham	58	32				
BPP Bristol	6	3				
BPP Leeds	8	30				
BPP London	238	258				
BPP Manchester	64	58				
Cardiff	21	84				
City	69	376				
Hertfordshire	1	21				
ICCA	177	70				
MMU	48	16				
Northumbria	15	67				
NTU	37	93				
Ulaw Birmingham	18	66				
Ulaw Bristol	2	30				
Ulaw Leeds	16	83				
Ulaw Liverpool	15	81				
Ulaw London	47	159				
Ulaw Manchester	8	71				
Ulaw Newcastle	1	17				
Ulaw Nottingham	5	13				
UWE	33	183				
TOTAL	887	1811				

- 1.4.1 As with the data for Civil Litigation, the December 2020 sit was the first opportunity for candidates to attempt the centralised assessments for the Bar Training course, hence the lower volume of candidates. As can be seen, for the April 2025 sit, City University had the largest cohort, accounting for 20.8% of the Criminal Litigation candidate entries, whilst BPP London has provided 20% of the total number of candidate entries across the thirteen sittings offered thus far.

2. BAR TRAINING CRIMINAL LITIGATION RESULTS APRIL 2025 SIT

2.1 Exam Board decisions in relation to selected questions

- 2.1.1 For the April 2025 Criminal Litigation assessment, requests for intervention from AETOs were received in relation to 3/75 questions (see 2.1.2, below).

2.1.2 Summary of Exam Board deliberations

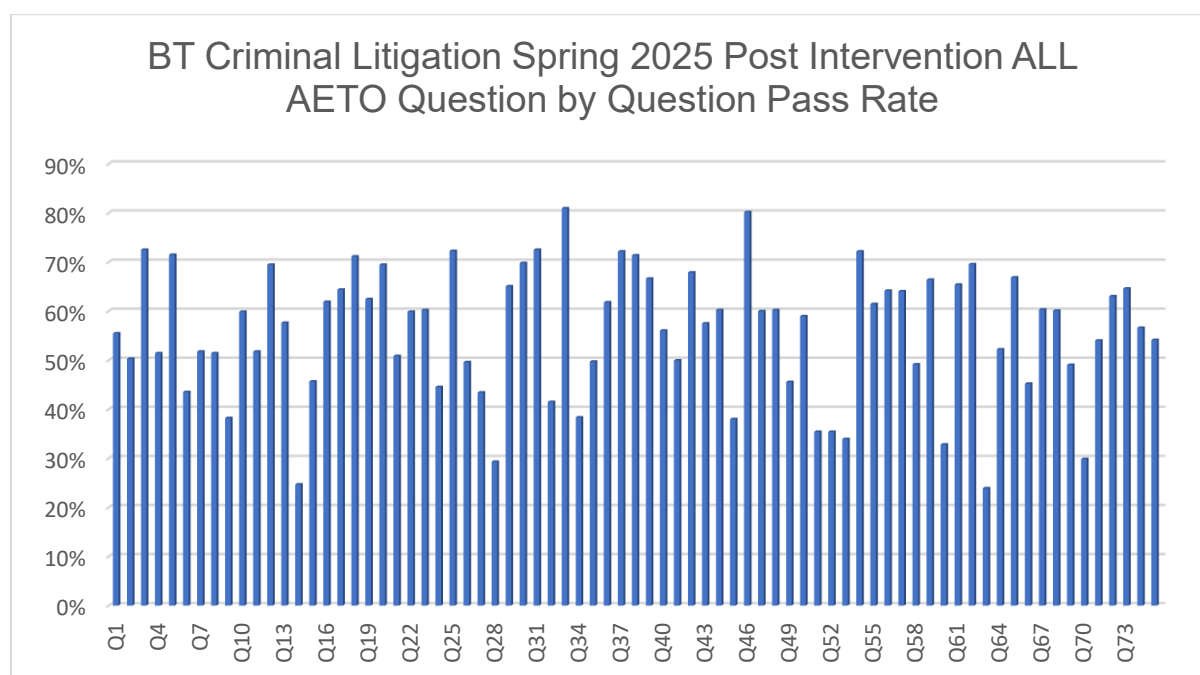
The table below provides a summary of the Exam Board deliberations where interventions (if any) were agreed, and instances where, although no intervention was agreed, points for future reference were raised in the Board's deliberations.

Item	Number of AETOs requesting an intervention	Exam Board decision and rationale
Q.7	1	Passing rate 46%. Point Biserial 0.40 AETO Feedback was to credit distractor [A]. The team disagreed with the feedback, commenting that the fact pattern was set out quite clearly. <i>The board decided not to intervene.</i>
Q.22	1	Passing rate 50%. Point Biserial 0.24 AETO Feedback was to credit distractors [A] and [B]. The team disagreed with the feedback, commenting that the fact pattern was set out clearly and that the candidates should have been able to get to the best answer from the facts. <i>The board decided not to intervene.</i>

Item	Number of AETOs requesting an intervention	Exam Board decision and rationale
Q.61	1	Passing rate 69%. Point Biserial 0.34. AETO Feedback was to credit distractor [A]. The examination team disagreed with the feedback and noted that the question was on syllabus, and the statistics were very good for the question. <i>The board decided not to intervene.</i>

2.2 Post-intervention pass rate of MCQs

The bar chart below shows the facility score (% of Bar Training candidates answering correctly) for each of the questions in the April 2025 Criminal Litigation examination.



There were no interventions, and the data shows 9 MCQs with an all-AETO cohort pass rate below 40% (compared to 11 for the December 2024 sit). There is no significant evidence suggesting a fall-off in candidate performance during the examination (assuming most candidates attempted the 75 MCQs in the order presented). Across the first 25 MCQs the average pass rate was 57%, across MCQs 26 to 50 it increased to 62%, and across MCQs 51 to 75 increased further to 63%. The Final Board did not feel that the word count of the assessment was an issue.

2.3 Standard setting and reliability of the assessment

2.3.1 The pass standard reported to the Criminal Litigation Subject Board was 42 out of 75. The outcome of the standard setting process is a recommended pass standard rather than a determined outcome of what the pass standard should be. The Final Board endorsed that recommendation and confirmed the pass standard as 42/75.

2.3.2 Data supplied to the Final Exam Board by the psychometrician indicated that, with a KR-20 Reliability score of 0.89, the assessment had exceeded the benchmark KR-20 Reliability of 0.80. The Exam Board noted that all other data suggested an assessment operating as expected.

	Dec-23	Apr-24	Aug-24	Dec-24	Apr-25
No. of Candidates	799	1754	1007	961	1811
No. of Scored Items	75	75	75	75	75
Pass Standard	42	41	41	41	42
Pass Rate (%)	55.3	60.5	47.7	49.1	60
Mean Score	43.6	44.0	40.5	41.6	45
Standard Deviation	11.7	11.2	9.9	11.6	11.7
Range of Scores	13 to 73	14 to 72	5 to 69	15 to 71	15 to 75
Reliability (KR-20)	0.89	0.88	0.84	0.88	0.89
Reliability Equivalent 90-item test	0.91	0.90	0.86	0.90	0.91
Standard Error of Measurement	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.8

2.4 Chief Examiner's Report

The Chief Examiner for Criminal Litigation reported that she was satisfied that this assessment was fair to candidates and allowed them to demonstrate their competence to the required threshold, noting that comments from AETOs were generally positive.

2.5 Independent Observer confirmation

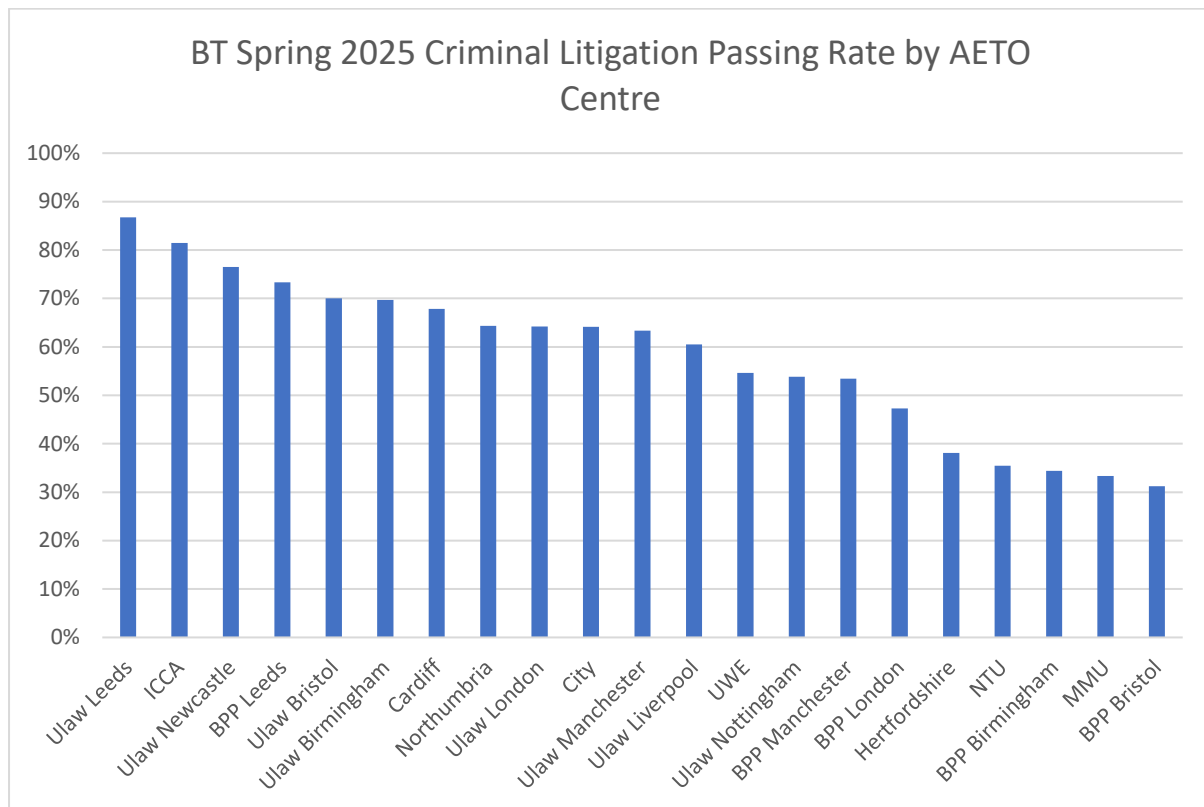
The Independent Observer endorsed the proceedings in respect of the Criminal Litigation assessment.

2.6 Criminal Litigation post-intervention pass rate April 2025

All AETO Post-Intervention	Criminal Litigation April 2023	Criminal Litigation August 2023	Criminal Litigation December 2023
No. of Candidates	1583	842	799
Passing Rate	66%	40%	55%
All AETO Post-Intervention	Criminal Litigation April 2024	Criminal Litigation August 2024	Criminal Litigation December 2024
No. of Candidates	1754	1008	887
Passing Rate	61%	48%	50%
All AETO Post-Intervention	Criminal Litigation April 2025	Criminal Litigation August 2025	Criminal Litigation December 2025
No. of Candidates	1811		
Passing Rate	60%		

The table above shows the all-AETO April 2025 post-intervention Bar Training cohort pass rate of 60% for Criminal Litigation, based on a passing standard recommended to the Final Board of 42/75. Although the post-intervention passing rate is a little lower than some recent April sittings for Criminal litigation, it is in line with the average passing rate across the five April sittings of the current exam format, which is 59% (see Executive Summary).

2.7 April 2025 Criminal Litigation pass rates by AETO centre



2.7.1 In the above graph the 21 AETO centre cohorts are ranged left to right in declining order of their April 2025 pass rates in the Criminal Litigation assessment. ULaw Leeds achieved the highest passing rate of 87% based on a cohort of 78 candidates. BPP Bristol had the lowest passing rate at 31%, but this was based on a cohort of only four candidates, three of whom were resitting.

2.7.2 Distribution of first sit candidates across the AETO centres for Criminal Litigation April 2025 sitting

AETOs ranked by % of cohort first sitting			
AETO	Cohort Size	# First Sit	% First Sit
BPP Birmingham	32	15	47%
BPP Bristol	3	0	0%
BPP Leeds	30	23	77%
BPP London	258	95	37%
BPP Manchester	58	43	74%
Cardiff	84	77	92%
City	376	337	90%
Hertfordshire	21	19	90%
ICCA	70	61	87%
MMU	16	3	19%
Northumbria	67	66	99%
NTU	93	61	66%
ULaw Birmingham	66	46	70%
ULaw Bristol	30	28	93%
ULaw Leeds	83	75	90%
ULaw Liverpool	81	70	86%
ULaw London	159	134	84%
ULaw Manchester	71	60	85%
ULaw Newcastle	17	17	100%
ULaw Nottingham	13	13	100%
UWE	183	159	87%
OVERALL	1811	1402	77%

Seventeen of the 21 AETO centres entering candidates for the April 2025 Criminal Litigation assessment had a preponderance of first sit candidates. Whilst all AETOs had some first sit candidates in the April 2025 Criminal Litigation assessment, both ULaw Newcastle and ULaw Nottingham each had cohorts that were 100% first sit candidates.

2.7.3 Comparison of first sit and resit candidate passing rates at each AETO for Criminal Litigation April 2025 sitting

First Sit Pass Rates and Resit Pass Rates CRIMINAL LITIGATION		
AETO	First Sit % Pass	Resit % Pass
BPP Birmingham	56%	19%
BPP Bristol	0%	33%
BPP Leeds	79%	43%
BPP London	65%	29%
BPP Manchester	68%	7%
Cardiff	73%	14%
City	67%	41%
Hertfordshire	42%	0%
ICCA	84%	67%
MMU	33%	31%
Northumbria	65%	50%
NTU	44%	24%
Ulaw Birmingham	78%	50%
Ulaw Bristol	71%	50%
Ulaw Leeds	89%	63%
Ulaw Liverpool	60%	64%
Ulaw London	67%	48%
Ulaw Manchester	65%	55%
Ulaw Newcastle	76%	N/A
Ulaw Nottingham	54%	N/A
UWE	55%	54%
OVERALL	66%	35%

Data presented to the exam boards for the April 2025 sitting showing the split between first sit and resit candidates for Criminal Litigation revealed that 67% were attempting on a first sit basis (ie first ever attempt at the examination, or previous attempts discounted on the basis of accepted extenuating circumstances), and 23% as resit candidates (ie candidates who had previously failed the examination without mitigating circumstances having been submitted or accepted). First sit cohorts tend to be stronger than resit cohorts, and with this in mind it should be noted that, for the April 2025 Criminal Litigation examination, for the 19 AETO centres with first sit and resit candidates, only ULaw Liverpool reported a higher passing rate for their resit cohort compared to their first sit cohort.

2.7.4 Passing rates of first sit cohorts at each AETO for Criminal Litigation April 2025 sitting

AETOs Ranked by First Sit Pass Rate CRIMINAL LITIGATION	
AETO	First Sit % Pass
ULaw Leeds	89%
ICCA	84%
BPP Leeds	83%
ULaw Birmingham	78%
ULaw Newcastle	76%
BPP London	75%
Cardiff	73%
ULaw Bristol	71%
BPP Manchester	70%
ULaw London	67%
City	67%
Northumbria	65%
ULaw Manchester	65%
ULaw Liverpool	60%
UWE	55%
ULaw Nottingham	54%
BPP Birmingham	53%
NTU	44%
Hertfordshire	42%
MMU	33%
BPP Bristol	N/A

There were three AETO centres where fewer than 50% of first sit candidates managed to pass the April 2025 Criminal Litigation assessment (BPP Bristol having no first sit candidates).

2.8 Criminal Litigation trend data – how AETO cohorts have performed over the last 6 sittings

	Aug-23 % Pass	Dec-23 % Pass	Apr-24 % Pass	Aug-24 % Pass	Dec-24 % Pass	Apr-25 % Pass	Average Over Six sits
ICCA	78%	91%	90%	88%	92%	81%	87%
Cardiff	53%	78%	74%	59%	67%	68%	66%
Ulaw Newcastle	100%	N/A	45%	83%	0%	76%	61%
Ulaw Leeds	57%	40%	74%	60%	38%	87%	59%
Ulaw Nottingham	100%	N/A	46%	25%	60%	54%	57%
Ulaw London	54%	44%	60%	61%	38%	64%	54%
City	39%	55%	68%	46%	43%	64%	53%
BPP Leeds	60%	60%	65%	26%	25%	73%	52%
Northumbria	36%	44%	66%	36%	53%	64%	50%
Ulaw Liverpool	40%	50%	54%	60%	33%	60%	50%
BPP Manchester	53%	54%	55%	37%	42%	53%	49%
BPP Birmingham	52%	52%	58%	47%	47%	34%	48%
Ulaw Manchester	38%	40%	59%	57%	25%	63%	47%
Ulaw Birmingham	35%	33%	57%	46%	39%	70%	47%
Ulaw Bristol	43%	N/A	77%	40%	0%	70%	46%
MMU	14%	49%	38%	67%	63%	31%	44%
UWE	29%	46%	52%	40%	36%	55%	43%
BPP London	32%	44%	50%	42%	37%	47%	42%
Hertfordshire	0%	100%	50%	33%	0%	38%	37%
BPP Bristol	11%	25%	25%	62%	17%	33%	29%
NTU	32%	26%	32%	29%	8%	35%	27%

2.8.1 AETO centre cohorts are listed in order of the average of their Criminal Litigation passing rates across the last six sittings of the centralised assessments. Greyed out cells indicate other instances in the table above where an AETO centre did not enter any candidates. The calculation of AETO centre averages have been adjusted to reflect this. The data shows that the ICCA currently has the highest average passing rate (87%), having entered candidates in each of the last six sittings of the Criminal Litigation assessment. The ICCA cohort has also achieved the highest passing rate in three of the last six sittings. NTU has the lowest average passing rate at 27%, that figure driven in part by a very low passing rate in the December 2024, 2023, sitting. Again, it should be borne in mind that low candidate numbers can sometimes have a distorting effect in terms of pass rates.

- 2.8.2 An alternative way of assessing the success of each AETO across all the sittings to date (ie ten sittings in total) is to consider the cumulative total of attempts at the exam by candidates at that AETO made over all sittings thus far, and to compare this with the number of those attempts which were passing attempts. Note that a candidate who, for example, passes on their third attempt, will be recorded in the second column (“total number of attempts”) three times, but will only appear in the third column (“total number of passes”) once, the final column should not therefore be taken as the “percentage of candidates at each AETO who have passed,” but should instead be understood as the “percentage of attempts at this assessment which were successful.”

BT Criminal Litigation December 2020 to Spring 2025 (14 Sits)			
AETO	Total Number of Attempts	Total Number of Passes	% Pass
ICCA	777	702	90%
Ulaw Newcastle	45	32	71%
Ulaw Bristol	149	102	68%
Ulaw Leeds	472	321	68%
Cardiff	547	348	64%
City	2726	1685	62%
Ulaw Manchester	370	221	60%
Ulaw London	1559	912	58%
Ulaw Nottingham	83	48	58%
Northumbria	462	263	57%
Ulaw Liverpool	339	182	54%
Ulaw Birmingham	615	328	53%
BPP Leeds	255	135	53%
BPP Manchester	810	423	52%
MMU	254	117	46%
BPP London	2969	1367	46%
UWE	1101	506	46%
BPP Birmingham	536	246	46%
BPP Bristol	127	57	45%
NTU	613	203	33%
Hertfordshire	64	17	27%
OVERALL	14873	8215	55%

As can be seen from the above table Criminal Litigation assessments have been passed 8,215 times since the first sitting in December 2020, based on 14,873 attempts – thus the aggregate passing rate to date is 55%. There are 11 AETOs whose cumulative percentage of passing attempts is lower than this. The range between the AETO with the highest rate of passing attempts and that with the lowest is 63%. Seven AETO centres have a cumulative rate of passing attempts below 50%. As discussed above, this does not necessarily mean that less than half of that AETO's candidates pass this exam, but it does mean that the exam is passed less than 50% of the times it is attempted at that AETO.

3. BAR TRAINING CIVIL LITIGATION RESULTS APRIL 2025 SIT

3.1 Exam Board decisions in relation to selected questions

3.1.1 For the April 2025 Civil Litigation assessment, requests for intervention from AETOs were received in relation to 8/90 questions (see 3.1.2, below).

3.1.2 Summary of Exam Board deliberations

The table below provides a summary of the Exam Board deliberations where interventions (if any) were agreed, and instances where, although no intervention was agreed, points for future reference were raised in the Board's deliberations.

Item	Number of AETOs responding	Exam Board decision and rationale
Paper 1		
Q.6	1	Passing rate 64%. Point Biserial 0.49 AETO feedback was to the effect that the item should be removed from the question paper on the basis that it would not be reasonable to expect knowledge of prescribed interest percentage calculations in paper 1. The Board decided that this was rote knowledge of the usual Part 36 consequences under 36.17 and therefore, there were no basis for the question to be removed from the examination. <i>The Board decided not to intervene.</i>
Q.8	1	Passing rate 38%. Point Biserial 0.25 Lower than desired discrimination, but negative correlation on all distractors other than the intended best answer.

Item	Number of AETOs responding	Exam Board decision and rationale
		AETO feedback to the effect that distractor [D] should be credited in addition to correct answer [B]. This question assessed knowledge of expert determination. [D] was incorrect because it provided that the expert's decision would be binding, which was not the case. [D] was also too limited in excluding other reasons for the Court's intervention as covered in Jackson 24.05. <i>The Board decided not to intervene.</i>
Q.12	1	Passing rate 75%. Point Biserial 0.17 Low Discrimination, but negative correlation on all distractors other than the intended best answer. AETO feedback that distractor [C] should be credited in addition to correct answer [B], on the basis that, to make the distinction, candidates would need to refer to off-syllabus paragraphs. This question aimed to assess a candidate's ability to distinguish between claim amendments and substitutions and candidates should have been able to answer this question correctly based solely on materials on syllabus. <i>The Board decided not to intervene.</i>
Q. 21		Passing rate 29%. Point Biserial 0.12 This was a new MCQ in which the assessment point was whether candidates understood the provision of CPR 23.7(1)(b), which requires that a copy of the interim application notice must be served as soon as practicable and at least three days before the court is to deal with the application. The wording of the rule does not use the word "clear". AETO feedback was received suggesting that the words "clear", as in "3 clear days", should have been included in options [A] and [B] to distinguish them from "business days" presented in options [C] and [D]. However, after some consideration of whether that may have led to any confusion, the board agreed that no intervention was appropriate. The computation of time set out in CPR 2.8(2) provides that a period of time expressed as a number of days, as it is in Part 23, shall be computed as clear days. A specific example is given of service of an application notice at 2.8(3). Part 6 sets out provisions relating to service generally which apply except where another provision applies (such as Part 23 and Part 2). Part 6 defines "business day" as any day

Item	Number of AETOs responding	Exam Board decision and rationale
		except Saturday, Sunday, a bank holiday, Good Friday or Christmas Day. The data showed that 29% of candidates identified option [A] as the correct answer, and 47% incorrectly selected option [B] (with a marginally negative correlation). Taken cumulatively, the reference to business days did not appear to have distracted or confused the candidates. It was concluded that candidates were choosing the wrong answer because they did not know the correct timescale for service of the application notice, possibly because of the nature of the application, and candidates wrongly thinking that the nature of that application allowed for a longer timescale. It was agreed that the correct answer could only be [A] and that the absence of any reference to “clear” days was entirely justifiable given its presentation in Part 23 (explained in Part 2) in the context of service of an application notice (and not service generally), and with which candidates should be familiar. <i>The Board decided not to intervene.</i>
Q.25	2	Passing rate 33%. Point Biserial -0.01 This was a new question and, whilst there were no AETO requests for intervention, it was suggested by way of improvement that, if used again, the question should make it clear that the claim occurred within the jurisdiction. Although the question had been regarded as mainstream at both the paper confirmation meeting and at standard setting, it was evident from the performance data that candidates had not performed as well as we had anticipated. The assessment point of the question was in relation to the timescale for a defendant to send a letter of response to a letter of claim sent under the Personal Injury Protocol. This was intended as a straightforward recall of knowledge with no application, as reflected in the relative simplicity of the question and the brevity of the explanations. Option [C] was the only correct answer. A defendant has three months from the acknowledgment of the letter of claim to send a letter of response. This is specifically

Item	Number of AETOs responding	Exam Board decision and rationale
		provided for in paragraph 6.3 of the protocol. The data showed that 33% of candidates correctly selected option [C] albeit with very slightly negative correlation. Slightly stronger candidates had opted for option [B] (55%). There was very extensive discussion at the Subject Board as to why candidates had experienced such difficulty with the question: • There was no basis to suppress the question as flawed because an entirely correct answer was presented at option [C]. Some members of the examining team were unwavering in the view that the question was an entirely valid assessment of candidates' knowledge. The Board also considered that suppressing the question would impact candidates and potentially penalise those candidates who had answered this question correctly. • Crediting option [B], which provided for the correct timescale but the wrong trigger point, was not possible as it was not a correct answer. • There was some debate as to whether or not there should be a recommendation to the Board to redesignate the question as an SBA on an ex post facto basis, but option [B] did not provide an answer which was equal to, or better than, the designated best answer [C] as the course of action offered in [B] would deny the client a further 21 days to investigate and respond. After much debate, and despite some keenness to intervene in order to be fair to candidates, it was agreed that there was no valid basis for any intervention as the question itself was sound. The Board noted that very few candidates appear to have been drawn to either options [A] or [D] which presented an alternative timescale of six months which is applicable for accidents occurring outside the jurisdiction. <i>The Board decided not to intervene but did carry this discussion forward to its consideration of the recommended pass standard for the examination.</i>

Item	Number of AETOs responding	Exam Board decision and rationale
Q.37	1	Passing rate 61%. Point Biserial 0.43 There was an AETO recommendation that the Board should act to suppress the item on the basis that it was more appropriate for Paper 2 (open book). The Board noted that the item had performed well and distinguished between stronger and weaker candidates. <i>The Board decided not to intervene.</i>
Q.46	1	Passing rate 32%. Point Biserial 0.29 36% of candidates chose incorrect answer option [A]. AETO Feedback recommended [B] be credited in addition to correct answer [D]. Option [B] stated that the Court would not award summary judgement if there was a possibility of further evidence arising which might support the defendant's case "irrespective of how remote that possibility is" Although the likelihood of further evidence arising can be a reason to deny a request for summary judgement, that likelihood must be higher than what was stated in option [B]. Option [B] attracted only 9% of candidates with negative correlation. Option [A] described the wrong test despite a larger group of candidates selecting it. Option [A] also had a negative correlation. The item performed as it had done in previous sittings, with candidates split across the four options. This was a difficult item but not flawed and the discrimination values were all within the expected range. <i>The Board decided not to intervene.</i>
Q.50	1	Passing rate 75%. Point Biserial 0.31 The Board considered an AETO request that the item should be removed on the basis that the correct answer should have been "to serve the notice by email". The Board noted that service may not be done by email unless the recipient has explicitly stated they are willing to accept service this way. The fact pattern explicitly stated that the method of service was not specified, therefore serving the notice by email would not have been appropriate. <i>The Board decided not to intervene.</i>

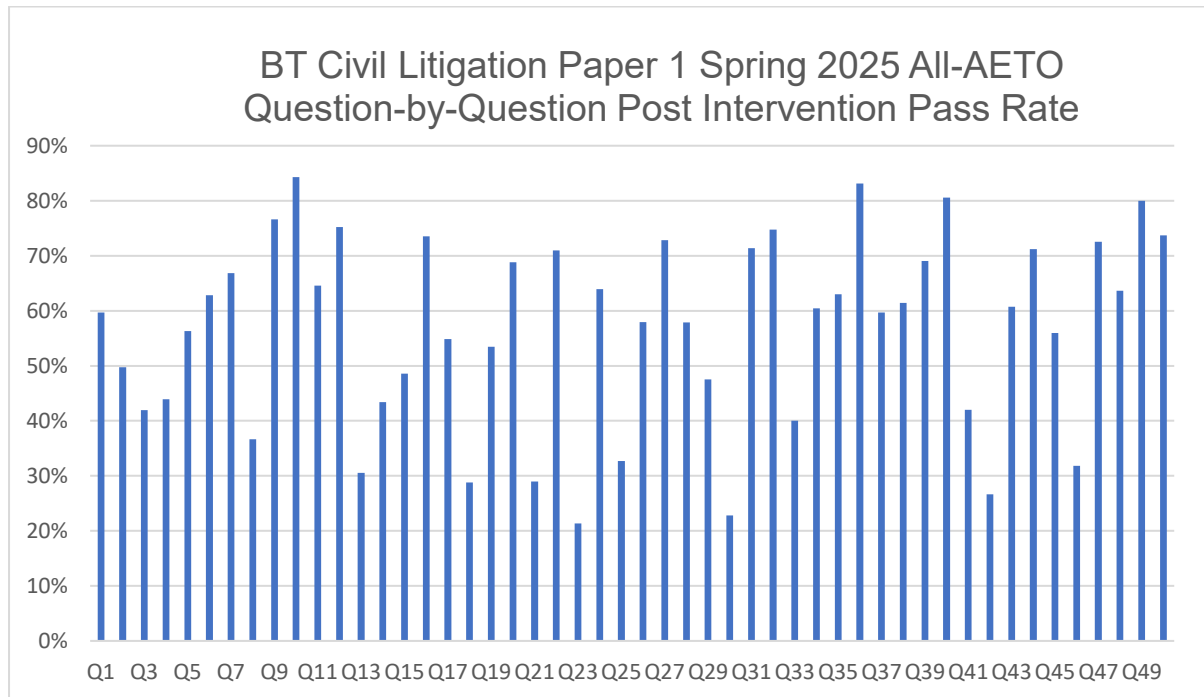
Item	Number of AETOs responding	Exam Board decision and rationale
Paper 2		
Q.6	1	Passing rate 42%. Point Biserial 0.14 This question asked for the best advice as to “what should be set out in, and, where appropriate, what should be included with, the letter of claim at this stage”. This was in an open book assessment with readily accessible syllabus reading. The best answer, [A], comprised detail from both paragraphs 6(a) and 6(c) of the Practice Direction – Pre-Action Conduct and Protocols. The AETO request for intervention was based on the assertion that the wording of option [C] could have rendered it as plausible an answer as preferred option [A]. The AETO submission was found by the Board to be unpersuasive because of the careful wording of the stem and the need to bring para 6(c) into play in order to provide the best advice to a client as to how to present their case to the defendant at an early stage in order to maximise the potential for settlement. Option [C] could not be a better answer because acting as suggested in that option would result in the withholding of useful and supportive evidence which, if provided, would enable the defendant to consider the claim being made. With such evidence available, there was no sound rationale for advising a client to limit the scope of what should be included in, and with, the letter of claim <i>The Board decided not to intervene.</i>
Q.26	1	Passing rate 62%. Point Biserial 0.47 There was an AETO suggestion on drafting, but no request for intervention. One AETO suggested that the fact pattern should refer to the Part 36 Offer as a “purported Part 36 Offer” or as an offer “expressed to be made under Part 36.” The Board noted that often exam questions do not specify if a Part 36 offer is valid or not as that point will then go on to form the basis of the question. In this scenario, the validity of the Part 36 offer was not the basis of the following question, but the Board felt that flagging the offer as “purported” could have made

Item	Number of AETOs responding	Exam Board decision and rationale
		candidates unnecessarily concerned that that point was to be considered in the question. <i>The Board decided not to intervene.</i>

3.2 Post-intervention pass rate of MCQs

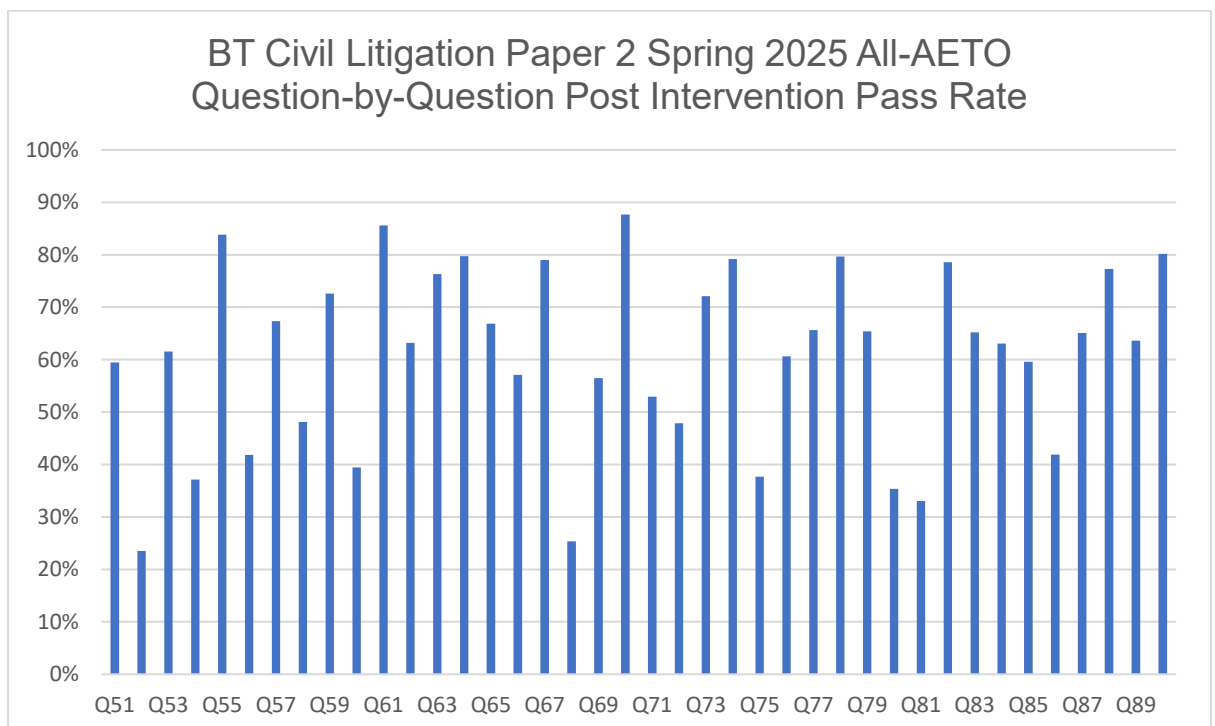
The bar charts below show the facility scores (% of Bar Training candidates answering correctly) for each of the questions in the April 2025 Civil Litigation examination (following any agreed interventions detailed at 3.1.2).

3.2.1 Paper 1



For Civil Litigation paper 1 the post-intervention data shows ten MCQs with an all-AETO cohort pass rate below 40% (compared to 5 out of 50 for the December 2024 sit). Assuming candidates attempted the questions in the order presented there is no evidence of candidate fatigue being a factor. The average passing rate was 54% across the first 25 MCQs and 61% across MCQs 26 to 50 (see discussion on pass standard below).

3.2.2 Paper 2



For Civil Litigation paper 2 the post-intervention data shows seven MCQs with an all-AETO cohort pass rate below 40% (compared to 3 out of 50 for the December 2024). Across both papers 1 and 2 there were, therefore, 17/90 questions with a passing rate of 40% or below (compared to 8/90 in the December 2024 sitting). Assuming candidates attempted the paper 2 questions in the order presented there is no evidence of candidate fatigue being a factor. The passing rate for the various sections of the paper were as follows:

Civil Litigation Paper 2 Passing Rate By Section	
Section/RCS	Passing Rate
Paper 2 first five questions (standalone MCQs)	53%
Paper 2 RCS 1 (questions 56-62)	60%
Paper 2 RCS 2 (questions 63-69)	63%
Paper 2 RCS 3 (questions 70-76)	63%
Paper 2 RCS 4 (questions 77-83)	60%
Paper 2 RCS 5 (questions 84-90)	64%

3.3 Standard setting and reliability of the assessment

3.3.1 The standard setting exercise was undertaken without incident and the Chair for that exercise commended the recommended pass standard to the Board. The recommended pass standard was reported to the Civil Subject Board as being 52/90, however, following the discussion of question 25 on paper 1, the Board determined that, in order to allow some margin of appreciation to candidates (short of intervening in that question – a action for which there was no proper basis) the proposal to agree a passing standard of 51/90 would be approved. The intervention was later revealed to the Board to have resulted in a 3% increase in the passing rate for the Civil Litigation assessment.

3.3.2 Data supplied to the final Exam Board by the psychometrician indicated that the assessment had achieved a KR-20 Reliability score of 0.92, exceeding the benchmark of 0.8. The Exam Board noted that all other data suggested an assessment operating as expected.

	Dec-23	Apr-24	Aug-24	Dec-24	Apr-25
No. of Candidates	817	1738	975	937	1728
No. of Scored Items	90	90	90	89	90
Pass Standard	49	51	49	50	51
Pass Rate (%)	44.2	60.2	45.9	61.5	54.3
Mean Score	51.6	54.8	48.0	54.8	52.8
Standard Deviation	14.7	14.7	12.1	13.7	14.3
Range of Scores	15 to 87	14 to 88	18 to 87	23 to 87	16 to 87
Reliability (KR-20)	0.92	0.92	0.87	0.91	0.92
Standard Error of Measurement	4.1	4.1	4.3	4.1	4.2

3.4 Chief Examiner's Report

The Chief Examiner for Civil Litigation confirmed that she was satisfied that this assessment was fair to candidates and allowed them to demonstrate their competence to the required threshold.

3.5 Independent Observer confirmation

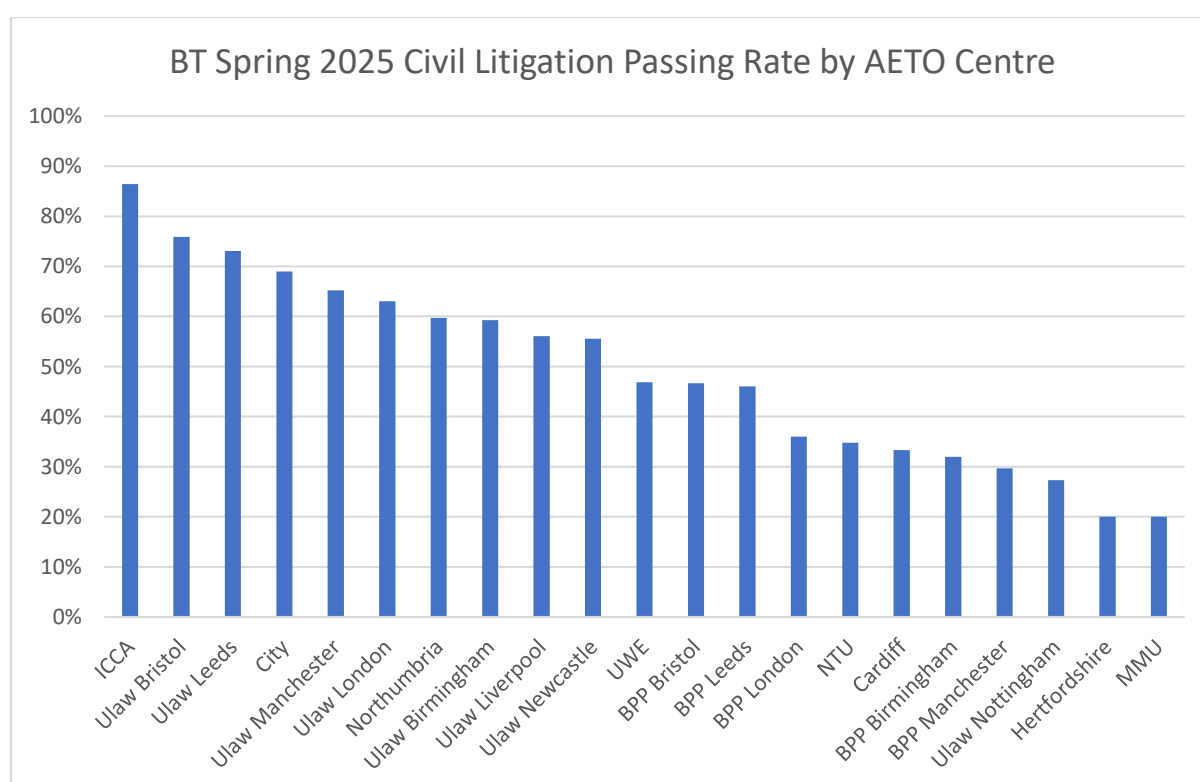
The Independent Observer endorsed the proceedings in respect of the Civil Litigation assessment.

3.6 Civil Litigation post-intervention pass rate April 2025

All AETO Post-Intervention	Civil Litigation April 2023	Civil Litigation August 2023	Civil Litigation December 2023
No. of Candidates	1671	890	833
Passing Rate	60%	45%	53%
All AETO Post-Intervention	Civil Litigation April 2024	Civil Litigation August 2024	Civil Litigation December 2024
No. of Candidates	1748	987	937
Passing Rate	60%	45%	61%
All AETO Post-Intervention	Civil Litigation April 2025	Civil Litigation August 2025	Civil Litigation December 2025
No. of Candidates	1728		
Passing Rate	54%		

The table above shows the all-AETO April 2025 post-intervention Bar Training cohort pass rate of 54% for Civil Litigation, based on a passing standard recommended to the Final Board of 51/90. The post-intervention passing rate is slightly below the average for April sittings (56%) and is the second lowest April sit pass rate since the new form of assessment was introduced in 2020.

3.7 April 2025 Civil Litigation pass rates by AETO



3.7.1 The 21 AETO centre cohorts entering candidates for the Civil Litigation assessment are ranged left to right in descending order of their April 2025

pass rates. The ICCA cohort achieved the highest passing rate at 86%. ULaw Bristol had the second highest passing rate, some way behind on 76%. MMU had the lowest passing rate at 20%, but this must be seen in the context of a very small cohort size for Civil Litigation (five), of whom only one was attempting on a first-sit basis.

3.7.2 Distribution of first sit candidates across the AETO centres for Civil Litigation April 2025 sitting

AETOs ranked by % of cohort first sitting			
AETO	Cohort Size	# First Sit	% First Sit
BPP Birmingham	28	15	54%
BPP Bristol	15	13	87%
BPP Leeds	28	21	75%
BPP London	302	149	49%
BPP Manchester	61	41	67%
Cardiff	27	9	33%
City	343	313	91%
Hertfordshire	20	19	95%
ICCA	81	76	94%
MMU	5	1	20%
Northumbria	70	69	99%
NTU	91	59	65%
ULaw Birmingham	54	46	85%
ULaw Bristol	29	28	97%
ULaw Leeds	78	70	90%
ULaw Liverpool	82	68	83%
ULaw London	156	142	91%
ULaw Manchester	69	60	87%
ULaw Newcastle	18	17	94%
ULaw Nottingham	11	11	100%
UWE	160	140	88%
OVERALL	1728	1367	79%

Eighteen of the 21 AETO centres entering candidates for the April 2025 Civil Litigation assessment had a preponderance of first sit candidates.

3.7.3 Comparison of first sit and resit candidate passing rates at each AETO for Civil Litigation April 2025 sitting

First Sit Pass Rates and Resit Pass Rates CIVIL LITIGATION		
AETO	First Sit % Pass	Resit % Pass
BPP Birmingham	33%	31%
BPP Bristol	46%	50%
BPP Leeds	57%	14%
BPP London	43%	29%
BPP Manchester	34%	20%
Cardiff	67%	17%
City	72%	47%
Hertfordshire	21%	0%
ICCA	88%	60%
MMU	100%	0%
Northumbria	61%	0%
NTU	44%	19%
ULaw Birmingham	67%	13%
ULaw Bristol	75%	100%
ULaw Leeds	76%	50%
ULaw Liverpool	62%	29%
ULaw London	65%	43%
ULaw Manchester	67%	56%
ULaw Newcastle	59%	0%
ULaw Nottingham	27%	N/A
UWE	49%	30%
OVERALL	61%	30%

Data presented to the exam boards for the April 2025 sitting showing the split between first sit and resit candidates for Civil Litigation revealed that 79% were attempting on a first sit basis (ie first ever attempt at the examination, or previous attempts discounted on the basis of accepted extenuating circumstances), and 21% as resit candidates (ie candidates who had previously failed the examination without mitigating circumstances having been submitted or accepted). First sit cohorts tend to be stronger than resit cohorts, and with this in mind it should be noted that, for the April 2025 Civil Litigation examination, only two of the 20 AETO centres with both first sit and resit candidates reported higher passing rates for their resit cohorts compared to their first sit cohorts.

3.7.4 Passing rates of first sit cohorts at each AETO for Civil Litigation April 2025 sitting

AETOs Ranked by First Sit Pass Rate CIVIL LITIGATION	
AETO	First Sit % Pass
MMU	100%
ICCA	88%
ULaw Leeds	76%
ULaw Bristol	75%
City	72%
ULaw Birmingham	67%
Cardiff	67%
ULaw Manchester	67%
ULaw London	65%
ULaw Liverpool	62%
Northumbria	61%
ULaw Newcastle	59%
BPP Leeds	57%
UWE	49%
BPP Bristol	46%
NTU	44%
BPP London	43%
BPP Manchester	34%
BPP Birmingham	33%
ULaw Nottingham	27%
Hertfordshire	21%

Eight AETO centres had fewer than 50% of their first sit candidates passing the April 2025 Civil Litigation assessment. For contextualisation it should be noted that MMU had only one first sit candidate who was, nevertheless, successful.

3.8 Civil Litigation trend data – how AETO cohorts have performed over the last 6 sits

	Aug-23 % Pass	Dec-23 % Pass	Apr-24 % Pass	Aug-24 % Pass	Dec-24 % Pass	Apr-25 % Pass	Average Over Six sits
ICCA	79%	91%	87%	88%	95%	86%	88%
Ulaw London	100%	N/A	62%	50%	50%	63%	65%
Ulaw Bristol	65%	35%	69%	60%	61%	76%	61%
Ulaw Leeds	65%	33%	75%	54%	40%	73%	57%
Ulaw Nottingham	67%	N/A	74%	40%	75%	27%	57%
Ulaw Birmingham	31%	70%	51%	47%	77%	59%	56%
City	80%	N/A	45%	50%	33%	69%	55%
Northumbria	39%	42%	52%	55%	61%	60%	52%
UWE	48%	53%	34%	54%	66%	47%	50%
Cardiff	50%	46%	71%	47%	45%	33%	49%
Ulaw Liverpool	33%	49%	45%	49%	61%	56%	49%
Ulaw Manchester	44%	42%	60%	45%	39%	65%	49%
Ulaw Newcastle	50%	36%	57%	43%	47%	56%	48%
BPP Manchester	54%	50%	63%	48%	29%	30%	46%
BPP Leeds	44%	54%	27%	31%	62%	46%	44%
BPP Birmingham	61%	27%	73%	39%	22%	32%	43%
BPP Bristol	29%	54%	80%	0%	48%	47%	43%
Hertfordshire	14%	100%	50%	0%	50%	20%	39%
BPP London	33%	40%	53%	20%	50%	36%	38%
MMU	32%	43%	39%	34%	53%	20%	37%
NTU	43%	36%	34%	16%	27%	35%	32%

3.8.1 AETO centre cohorts are listed in order of the average of their Civil Litigation passing rates across the last six sittings of the Bar Training centralised assessments. The data shows that the ICCA has achieved the highest average passing rate (88%), being the best performing AETO centre across the last 4 sittings of the Civil Litigation assessment. NTU has the lowest average at 32%.

3.8.2 An alternative way of assessing the success of each AETO centre across all the sittings to date is to consider the cumulative total of attempts at the exam by candidates at that AETO made over all sittings thus far, and to compare this with the number of those attempts which were passing attempts. As discussed in section 2.8.2 above, note that individual candidates may attempt an assessment multiple times before making a passing attempt, and so the data below does not represent the percentage of candidates who pass, it represents the percentage of attempts made at the exam which were passing attempts.

BT Civil Litigation December 2020 to Spring 2025 (14 Sits)			
AETO	Total Number of Attempts	Total Number of Passes	% Pass
ICCA	790	701	89%
ULaw Bristol	155	106	68%
ULaw Leeds	446	293	66%
City	2509	1643	65%
ULaw Manchester	368	216	59%
Cardiff	580	336	58%
ULaw London	1545	881	57%
ULaw Newcastle	52	27	52%
ULaw Liverpool	342	176	51%
ULaw Nottingham	86	44	51%
BPP Manchester	904	462	51%
ULaw Birmingham	586	297	51%
Northumbria	521	254	49%
BPP Leeds	287	137	48%
UWE	989	465	47%
BPP Bristol	155	72	46%
BPP London	3244	1471	45%
BPP Birmingham	557	236	42%
MMU	211	86	41%
NTU	605	185	31%
Hertfordshire	56	13	23%
OVERALL	14988	8101	54%

As can be seen from the above table, Civil Litigation assessments have been passed 8,101 times since the first sitting in December 2020, based on 14988 attempts – thus the aggregate passing rate to date is 54%. There are 14 AETOs whose cumulative percentage of passing attempts is lower than this. The range between the highest rate of passing attempts and lowest rate of passing attempts is 66%. Nine AETO centres have a cumulative rate of passing attempts below 50%. As noted above with regard to the Criminal Litigation data, this does not imply that less than 50% of candidates ultimately pass this exam, but it does mean that the Civil Litigation exam is passed less than 50% of the times it is attempted at that AETO. The ICCA is,

cumulatively, the best performing AETO centre in terms of its passing rate for Civil Litigation candidates, with a gap of over 20% between it and the next most successful AETO centre. The University of Hertfordshire drops to the bottom of this table, with a cumulative passing rate of 23% for Civil Litigation candidates, as opposed to the averaged calculations reflected in the table at 5.8 (above).

4. FURTHER COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

4.1 Comparing performance in Criminal and Civil Litigation examinations

At 54%, the passing rate for the April 2025 Civil Litigation assessment was 6% lower than the passing rate for the April 2025 Criminal Litigation assessment. Both assessments had similar levels of first sit candidates; Criminal Litigation 77% versus Civil Litigation 79%. A total of 1165 candidates attempted both Litigation assessments at the April 2025 sitting and the cross-tabulated outcomes, are as follows:

(a) All candidates attempting both papers:

All BT Candidates Sitting Both Exams (1165)		
	Pass Crime	Fail Crime
Pass Civil	568	88
Fail Civil	116	393

	Pass Crime	Fail Crime
Pass Civil	49%	8%
Fail Civil	10%	34%

(b) All candidates attempting both papers as first sit candidates:

All BT Candidates First Sitting Both Exams (938)		
	Pass Crime	Fail Crime
Pass Civil	529	69
Fail Civil	87	253

	Pass Crime	Fail Crime
Pass Civil	56%	7%
Fail Civil	9%	27%

(c) All candidates attempting both papers as resit candidates:

All BT Candidates Resitting Both Exams (133)		
	Pass Crime	Fail Crime
Pass Civil	13	13
Fail Civil	16	91

	Pass Crime	Fail Crime
Pass Civil	10%	10%
Fail Civil	12%	68%

The key cells (on the shaded background) are those which show the number of candidates who passed one subject but failed the other. If the two subjects were equally difficult to pass (making allowances for the fact that the examinations in Civil and Criminal Litigation have different formats), the number of candidates in these two cells should be approximately equal. To the extent that this data provides a reliable means of evidencing whether the two assessments (notwithstanding their differing formats) provided a similar level of challenge, some comfort can be drawn from the relative closeness of the figures in the shaded boxes at (b) in respect of the performance of first sit candidates. As the tables below indicate, using the Pearson correlation coefficient ('Pearson R' analysis of correlation) suggest a strong correlation in terms of the performance of all candidates attempting both examinations.

Bar Training Candidates Sitting Both Exams Correlation of Criminal Litigation and Civil Litigation Post-Intervention Scores			
Group	Number of Candidates	Pearson's R	Interpretation
All BT Candidates Sitting Both Exams	1165	0.84	Very Strong Correlation
BT Candidates First Sitting Both Exams	938	0.84	Very Strong Correlation
BT Candidates Resitting Both Exams	133	0.66	Strong Correlation

Pearson's R Interpretation Index	
Pearson's R	Interpretation
0.80 --- 1.00	Very Strong Correlation
0.60 --- 0.799	Strong Correlation
0.40 --- 0.599	Moderate Correlation
0.20 --- 0.399	Weak Correlation
0.01 --- 0.199	Very Weak Correlation
0.00	No Correlation

It should be noted that whilst there were 1165 candidates attempting both assessments – as represented in table (a), not all candidates were first sitting both assessments or resitting both assessments (some may have been first sitting one and resitting another) – hence the sum of tables (b) and (c) does not equal 1165.

4.2 Centralised assessment post-intervention pass rates compared December 2020 to April 2025

All-AETO BT Post-Intervention	Dec-20		Apr-21		Aug-21	
	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation
No. Of Candidates	383	407	1104	989	827	738
Passing Rate	60%	56%	46%	49%	42%	41%
Pass Standard	44/75	50/90	41/75	52/89	46/75	50/89
Reliability Score	0.91	0.91	0.86	0.90	0.85	0.88
All-AETO BT Post-Intervention	Dec-21		Apr-22		Aug-22	
	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation
No. Of Candidates	824	824	1653	1517	802	791
Passing Rate	56%	53%	64%	60%	52%	46%
Pass Standard	44/75	50/90	44/75	49/89	42/75	52/90
Reliability Score	0.87	0.89	0.89	0.90	0.85	0.85
All-AETO BT Post-Intervention	Dec-22		Apr-23		Aug-23	
	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation
No. Of Candidates	596	929	1583	1671	842	890
Passing Rate	50%	56%	66%	60%	40%	45%
Pass Standard	44/75	48/90	43/75	51/89	43/75	50/89
Reliability Score	0.89	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.88	0.90
All-AETO BT Post-Intervention	Dec-23		Apr-24		Aug-24	
	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation
No. Of Candidates	799	833	1754	1748	1008	987
Passing Rate	55%	53%	61%	60%	48%	45%
Pass Standard	42/75	49/90	41/75	51/90	41/75	49/90
Reliability Score	0.91	0.92	0.90	0.92	0.84	0.87
All-AETO BT Post-Intervention	Dec-24		Apr-25		Aug-25	
	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation
No. Of Candidates	887	937	1811	1728		
Passing Rate	50%	61%	60%	54%		
Pass Standard	41/75	50/89	42/75	51/90		
Reliability Score	0.88	0.92	0.89	0.92		

For Criminal Litigation, candidate numbers for April 2025 were the highest for an April sitting since the new format for the centralised assessments was introduced in December 2020. The passing rates for both assessments are largely in line with previous April sittings, although the passing rate in Civil Litigation is at the lower end for April sittings. The April 2023 passing rate for Criminal Litigation (66%) remains the highest recorded for either subject across the 14 sittings to date, and the August

2023 passing rate for Criminal Litigation (40%) is the lowest. The variations in cohort size tends to reflect the course structures adopted by AETOs, which in turn determines when most of their candidates will be attempting each of the centralised assessments for the first time. Cohort numbers are also impacted by the approval of additional AETOs and additional AETO centres. Nine cohorts were entered for December 2020, this figure increasing to 18 for April 2021, and then to 21 by the time of the April 2023 sitting.

4.3 April 2025 post-intervention pass rates for both Criminal Litigation and Civil Litigation by AETO

AETO	Civil Litigation % Pass	Criminal Litigation % Pass	AVERAGE
ICCA	86%	81%	84%
Ulaw Leeds	73%	87%	80%
Ulaw Bristol	76%	70%	73%
City	69%	64%	67%
Ulaw Newcastle	56%	76%	66%
Ulaw Birmingham	59%	70%	64%
Ulaw Manchester	65%	63%	64%
Ulaw London	63%	64%	63%
Northumbria	60%	64%	62%
BPP Leeds	46%	73%	60%
Ulaw Liverpool	56%	60%	58%
UWE	47%	55%	51%
Cardiff	33%	68%	51%
BPP London	36%	47%	42%
BPP Manchester	30%	53%	41%
Ulaw Nottingham	27%	54%	41%
BPP Bristol	47%	33%	40%
NTU	35%	35%	35%
BPP Birmingham	32%	34%	33%
Hertfordshire	20%	38%	29%
MMU	20%	31%	26%

4.3.1 AETO cohorts are listed in descending order of the average of their passing rates across the two April 2025 Litigation examinations. The ICCA, therefore, had the highest average passing rate across both Litigation subjects at 84%, with ULaw Leeds next on 80%. MMU recorded the lowest average at 26%. Overall, 8 of the 21 AETO centres entering candidates failed to achieve an average passing rate of 50% across the two Litigation subjects. These figures need to be viewed in the context of low cohort numbers at some AETO centres.

4.3.2 An alternative way of looking at the extent to which AETO centres were successful in supporting their candidates in the April 2025 Litigation assessments is to aggregate the total number of candidates entered for each exam at an AETO centre and compare this with the aggregate number of candidates passing at that AETO centre.

AETO	Apr-25 Number of Criminal Candidates	Apr-25 Number of Civil Candidates	Total Apr-25 Instances of Assessment	Apr-25 Number Passing Criminal	Apr-25 Number Passing Civil	Total Apr-25 Passing Results	Overall % of Criminal and Civil Litigation Examinations Passed Apr-25
ICCA	70	81	151	57	67	124	82%
Ulaw Leeds	83	78	161	72	55	127	79%
Ulaw Bristol	30	29	59	21	20	41	69%
City	376	343	719	242	233	475	66%
Ulaw Newcastle	17	18	35	13	10	23	66%
Ulaw Birmingham	66	54	120	46	31	77	64%
Ulaw Manchester	71	69	140	45	42	87	62%
Ulaw London	159	156	315	102	93	195	62%
Northumbria	67	70	137	43	40	83	61%
BPP Leeds	30	28	58	22	12	34	59%
Cardiff	84	27	111	57	8	65	59%
Ulaw Liverpool	81	82	163	49	44	93	57%
UWE	183	160	343	100	69	169	49%
Ulaw Nottingham	13	11	24	7	3	10	42%
BPP Manchester	58	61	119	31	17	48	40%
BPP Bristol	3	15	18	1	6	7	39%
NTU	93	91	184	33	30	63	34%
BPP Birmingham	32	28	60	11	8	19	32%
BPP London	258	302	560	81	96	177	32%
MMU	16	5	21	5	1	6	29%
Hertfordshire	21	20	41	8	3	11	27%

As the table above shows, the ICCA was the most successful AETO in terms of the percentage of candidates entered for any of the April 2025 examinations achieving a pass, in either examination, with a figure of 82%. At the other extreme, at Hertfordshire, only 27% of its candidates managed to get through either exam. For this April 2025 sitting, out of 21 AETO centres, 9 failed to achieve a 50% progression rate calculated on this basis.

4.3.3 The extent to which these outcomes reflect the impact of resitting candidates remains, to some extent, a matter of conjecture. If there is a correlation between lower passing rates and the number of resitting candidates, it might be reasonable to expect any AETO centre with an above average percentage of first sit candidates to be able to achieve a higher-than-average passing rate across both Litigation subjects taken together. For the April 2025 sitting, there were 3,539 candidates across the two Litigation subjects, of which 770 (22%) were resitting. The data shows a broad correlation between percentage of first sit candidates and combined passing rates as set out in the table at 6.3.2 (above), but there are outliers. ULaw Nottingham had no resit candidates in either assessment but only rank 14th in terms of the passing rate. Similarly, Hertfordshire ranked 5th in terms of percentage of first sit candidates but 21st in terms of passing rates. By contrast, ULaw Birmingham, despite ranking only 13th in terms of percentage of first sit candidates, ranked 6th in terms of passing rates. Again, the usual caveats apply when considering any analysis involving small cohort numbers.

4.3.4 Looking across the last fourteen cycles of Bar Training centralised Litigation assessments there is no compelling evidence to suggest AETO cohorts have found the Civil Litigation assessment more challenging than those in Criminal

Litigation, although the outcomes for specific sittings are quite marked. The table below shows the variance in passing rates between the two Litigation subjects for each AETO centre at each of the fourteen sittings for the current assessment format (AETOs without cohorts for a sitting have blank data cells). The blue shading (negative) indicates that candidates have performed better on Crime than on Civil, hence, at BPP Birmingham in December 2020 the Civil Litigation passing rate was 3.6% below that for Criminal Litigation.

AETO	Average Across All Sits To-Date		Dec-20	Apr-21	Aug-21	Dec-21	Apr-22	Aug-22
BPP Birmingham	-3%		-4%	12%	8%	-14%	-14%	9%
BPP Bristol	-2%		-3%	6%	12%	-1%	-11%	-2%
BPP Leeds	-5%		-27%	21%	-27%	9%	-1%	-3%
BPP London	0%		-4%	13%	-10%	-7%	8%	-1%
BPP Manchester	0%		-3%	16%	-16%	0%	-2%	-13%
Cardiff	-8%		-2%	-35%	1%	21%	-3%	-19%
City	3%		12%	14%	7%	-9%	3%	-5%
Hertfordshire	6%		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
ICCA	-2%		0%	-20%	14%	-5%	-5%	-7%
MMU	-5%		-13%	-21%	9%	16%	-26%	-18%
Northumbria	-3%		N/A	-28%	8%	4%	-13%	7%
NTU	-2%		N/A	-41%	5%	9%	-9%	2%
Ulaw Birmingham	1%		N/A	13%	9%	-22%	-20%	-6%
Ulaw Bristol	9%		N/A	-3%	-25%	N/A	-6%	0%
Ulaw Leeds	2%		N/A	13%	8%	18%	-9%	-2%
Ulaw Liverpool	5%		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-8%	10%
Ulaw London	0%		N/A	0%	-5%	-8%	-8%	-13%
Ulaw Manchester	4%		N/A	16%	-2%	0%	-16%	6%
Ulaw Newcastle	-13%		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ulaw Nottingham	-6%		N/A	-23%	-100%	0%	-28%	-5%
UWE	3%		N/A	13%	5%	-7%	-5%	-19%
		AVERAGE	-5%	-2%	-5%	0%	-9%	-4%

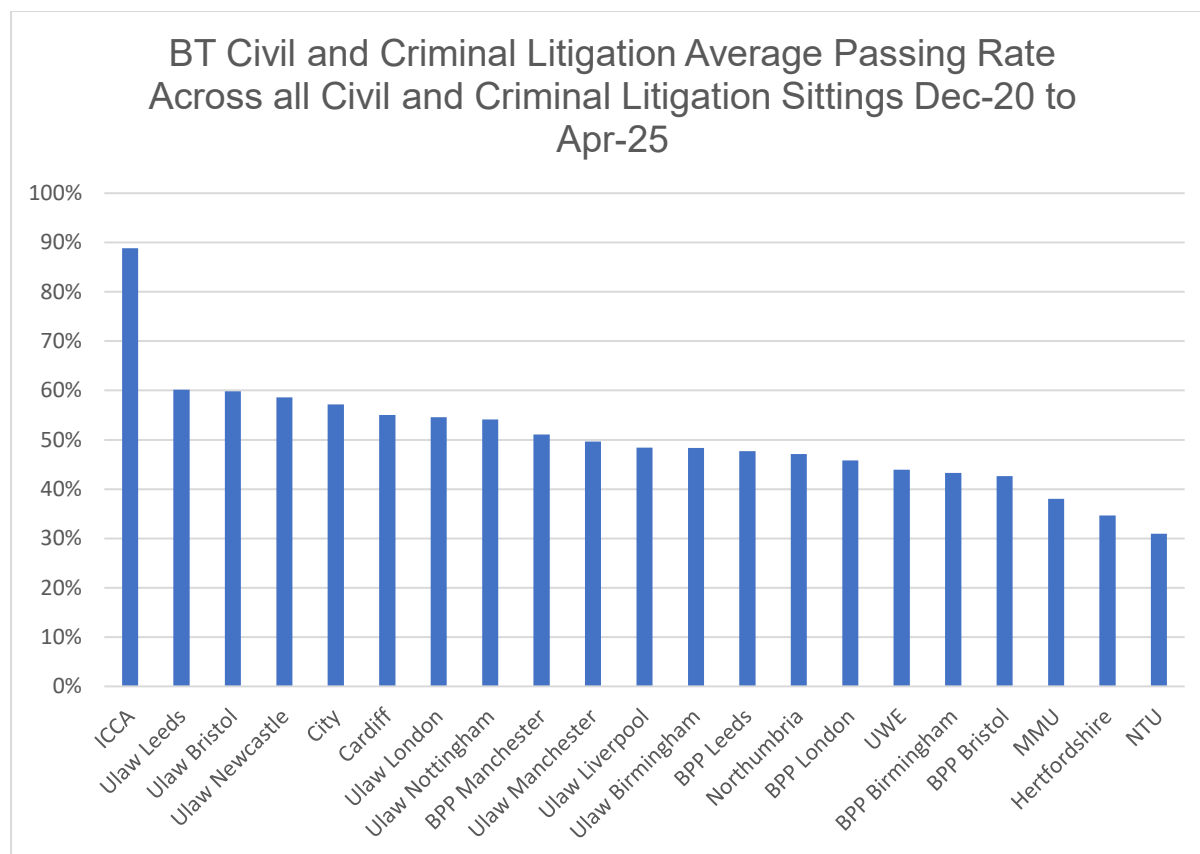
	Dec-22	Apr-23	Aug-23	Dec-23	Apr-24	Aug-24
BPP Birmingham	1%	-21%	-19%	-3%	-13%	2%
BPP Bristol	N/A	-78%	22%	15%	28%	-42%
BPP Leeds	-4%	-11%	-16%	-6%	-39%	4%
BPP London	11%	-10%	1%	-1%	-11%	-8%
BPP Manchester	13%	-8%	-5%	-2%	-22%	17%
Cardiff	18%	-28%	-23%	-8%	-22%	-11%
City	9%	0%	11%	-9%	3%	0%
Hertfordshire	3%	11%	14%	0%	0%	-33%
ICCA	-3%	-5%	1%	-1%	-3%	1%
MMU	-11%	17%	14%	5%	42%	-67%
Northumbria	-14%	-11%	18%	6%	-3%	12%
NTU	-17%	2%	11%	10%	2%	-14%
Ulaw Birmingham	0%	2%	4%	8%	-4%	9%
Ulaw Bristol	33%	-8%	24%	N/A	-3%	0%
Ulaw Leeds	-3%	0%	8%	-7%	2%	-6%
Ulaw Liverpool	50%	-6%	10%	-14%	3%	-17%
Ulaw London	7%	-4%	10%	-9%	9%	-1%
Ulaw Manchester	57%	-17%	23%	-13%	14%	-18%
Ulaw Newcastle	N/A	-44%	-20%	N/A	0%	-33%
Ulaw Nottingham	67%	-10%	0%	N/A	15%	25%
UWE	28%	0%	14%	-5%	7%	5%
AVERAGE	13%	-11%	5%	-2%	0%	-8%

AETO	Dec-24	Apr-25	Aug-25	Dec-25	Apr-26	Aug-26
BPP Birmingham	15%	-2%				
BPP Bristol	33%	13%				
BPP Leeds	37%	-27%				
BPP London	16%	-12%				
BPP Manchester	23%	-24%				
Cardiff	11%	-35%				
City	1%	5%				
Hertfordshire	50%	-18%				
ICCA	3%	5%				
MMU	-14%	-11%				
Northumbria	-25%	-4%				
NTU	19%	0%				
Ulaw Birmingham	22%	-10%				
Ulaw Bristol	75%	6%				
Ulaw Leeds	3%	-14%				
Ulaw Liverpool	13%	-4%				
Ulaw London	23%	-1%				
Ulaw Manchester	-3%	2%				
Ulaw Newcastle	33%	-21%				
Ulaw Nottingham	-10%	-27%				
UWE	3%	-8%				
AVERAGE	16%	-9%				

The biggest average differential is recorded by the ULaw Newcastle – 13% higher in Criminal Litigation (albeit across only six sittings). For the eight AETO centres with results across all 14 sittings, the biggest average differential is at Cardiff with an 8% better outcome in respect of Criminal Litigation. For the April 2025 sitting, the higher passing rate in Criminal Litigation is reflected in the fact that only five out of 21 AETO cohorts performed more strongly in Civil Litigation compared to Criminal Litigation.

4.4 AETO average passing rates since December 2020

An analysis of passing rates achieved by each AETO cohort in both Litigation subjects across all 14 Bar Training Course examination sittings to date (adjusted to allow for the fact that some AETOs may not have had candidates for some sittings) shows the following:



The ICCA has the highest average passing rate across both Litigation subjects and all sittings to date at 89%, and NTU the lowest at 31%. The ICCA is, thus far, some way ahead of the other AETO centres in terms of cohort performance, the gap between it and second placed ULaw Leeds being 29%. There are 11 AETO centres where the average passing rate across both Litigation subjects and all sittings to date is below 50%. Again, it is important to bear in mind the caveats flagged in Part 1 of the Chair's report at 3.1.1 when considering these results.

4.5 Overall passing rates across both subjects December 2020 to April 2025

4.5.1 Cumulative passing rate to date disaggregated by AETO centre

BT Civil and Criminal Litigation December 2020 to April 2025 (14 Sits)			
AETO	Total Number of Attempts	Total Number of Passes	% Pass
ICCA	1567	1400	89%
Ulaw Bristol	304	206	68%
Ulaw Leeds	918	612	67%
City	5235	3323	63%
Ulaw Newcastle	97	59	61%
Cardiff	1127	683	61%
Ulaw Manchester	738	434	59%
Ulaw London	3104	1788	58%
Ulaw Nottingham	169	92	54%
Northumbria	983	515	52%
Ulaw Liverpool	681	356	52%
Ulaw Birmingham	1201	624	52%
BPP Manchester	1714	884	52%
BPP Leeds	542	271	50%
UWE	2090	965	46%
BPP Bristol	282	128	45%
BPP London	6213	2785	45%
BPP Birmingham	1093	481	44%
MMU	465	203	44%
NTU	1218	386	32%
Hertfordshire	120	29	24%
OVERALL	29861	16224	54%

This table aggregates all the attempts by candidates at both the Criminal Litigation and Civil Litigation examinations across all 14 sittings from December 2020 to April 2025. In total there have been 29,861 attempts at the centralised assessments by Bar Training candidates, of which 16,224 have been successful (54%). As can be seen, 12 AETO centres have a cumulative rate of passing attempts lower than this overall passing rate, with seven AETO centres seeing less than 50% of all attempts being passing attempts since the introduction of the Bar Training course in 2020. As discussed at sections 2.8.2 and 3.8.2, this does not equate to less than 50% of candidates passing because individual candidates may be recorded as having multiple failing attempts before ultimately making a single passing attempt. Similarly, overall pass rates from the table above (derived by dividing the total number of passes by the total number of attempts) are not the same as the simple average of pass rates shown at 4.4; however, both pieces of data provide insights into how successful each AETO centre has been in supporting its candidates to pass the centralised Litigation assessments within fewer attempts.

4.5.2 Cumulative passing rate disaggregated by AETO group – 14 sittings to date

The table below takes the data used for table 4.5.1 but aggregates the cumulative totals for the six University of Law centres and the five BPP centres, to produce an aggregate cumulative score for each of those AETOs across all of their centres.

BT Civil and Criminal Litigation December 2020 to April 2025 (14 Sits)			
AETO	Total Number of Attempts	Total Number of Passes	% Pass
ICCA	1567	1400	89%
City	5235	3323	63%
Cardiff	1127	683	61%
ULaw Group	7212	4171	58%
Northumbria	983	515	52%
UWE	2090	965	46%
BPP Group	9844	4549	46%
MMU	465	203	44%
NTU	1218	386	32%
Hertfordshire	120	29	24%

Presenting the data this way shows that the ICCA remains the most successful AETO in terms of the percentage of attempts at a centralised assessment being deemed a pass, 26% ahead of the second placed AETO, City University. Of the two largest AETOs, ULaw is ahead of BPP, although ULaw has not entered cohorts for all sittings. Five AETO groups have not, to date, managed to exceed the 50% overall success level for centralised Litigation assessments.

5. BAR TRAINING RESIT RESULTS APRIL 2025

For the December 2023 sitting the BSB decided to pilot a scheme to allow candidates, who commenced their Bar training from September 2020 onwards, to take further re-sits of the elements of assessment that are necessary to be Called to the Bar (which the BSB regulates), even if they had reached the maximum number of permitted re-sits for the academic award at their training provider such as a Postgraduate Diploma or LLM (which the BSB does not regulate). For the December 2023 pilot scheme this facility was made available for BPP students only. From April 2024 this facility was extended to students from all AETOs. Candidates attempt the same assessments as other Bar Training and BTT candidates. Candidates were again offered this resit facility for the April 2025 sitting, the results for which were as follows:

Bar Training Resit Post-Intervention					Dec-23	
					Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation
					n	n
No of Candidates					8	6
Passing Rate					50%	33%
Bar Training Resit Post-Intervention	Apr-24		Aug-24		Dec-24	
	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation
	n	n	n	n	n	n
No of Candidates	19	31	26	26	38	41
Passing Rate	26%	52%	42%	46%	24%	44%
Bar Training Resit Post-Intervention	Apr-25		Aug-25		Dec-25	
	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation
	n	n	n	n	n	n
No of Candidates	60	47				
Passing Rate	32%	11%				

6. BAR TRANSFER TEST RESULTS APRIL 2025

The results for Bar Transfer Test ('BTT') candidates attempting the April 2025 BTT assessments were considered by the Litigation Subject Exam Boards and the Final Board. For the April 2025 sit, all BTT candidates attempted the same centrally assessed exam papers as the Bar Training Course candidates. See sections 2 and 3 (above) for details of the exam board discussion of interventions etc. The BTT passing rates in April 2025 for both Litigation subjects fall within the range of previous sittings but are some way below the 'to date' average passing rates.

Bar Transfer Test Post-Intervention	Apr-22		Aug-22		Dec-22	
	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation
No of Candidates	70	62	65	51	41	39
Passing Rate	43%	45%	39%	33%	29%	62%
Bar Transfer Test Post-Intervention	Apr-23		Aug-23		Dec-23	
	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation
No of Candidates	24	18	42	54	40	33
Passing Rate	50%	44%	24%	39%	43%	46%
Bar Transfer Test Post-Intervention	Apr-24		Aug-24		Dec-24	
	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation
No of Candidates	58	31	25	24	25	21
Passing Rate	48%	52%	44%	50%	52%	43%
Bar Transfer Test Post-Intervention	Apr-25		Aug-25		Dec-25	
	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation
No of Candidates	22	14				
Passing Rate	23%	36%				

7. BPTC RESULTS APRIL 2025

7.1 Unification of assessment regimes

7.1.1 There are no longer any discrete BPTC assessments, the final opportunity to take an 'old style' BPTC 75 MCQ Civil Litigation paper was the April 2022 sit. See sections 2 and 3 (above) for details of the exam board discussion of interventions etc.

7.2 BPTC Passing rates December 2021 to April 2025

BPTC Post-Intervention	Apr-22		Aug-22		Dec-22	
	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation
No of Candidates	167	229	70	43	45	31
Passing Rate	49%	31%	44%	26%	40%	45%
BPTC Post-Intervention	Apr-23		Aug-23		Dec-23	
	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation
No of Candidates	36	57	29	37	15	12
Passing Rate	42%	53%	17%	30%	40%	25%
BPTC Post-Intervention	Apr-24		Aug-24		Dec-24	
	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation
No of Candidates	24	18	19	17	11	40
Passing Rate	29%	22%	16%	29%	36%	55%
BPTC Post-Intervention	Apr-25		Aug-25		Dec-25	
	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation	Criminal Litigation	Civil Litigation
No of Candidates	10	8				
Passing Rate	60%	38%				

As the above table shows, although the number of BPTC candidates is steadily declining, the April 2025 sitting, with a total of 18 candidate entries (across the two Litigation assessments) saw the lowest number of candidates of any sitting covered by the above table. Understandably, given the cohort composition and distance in time between the delivery of tuition and attempting the assessment, the BPTC outcomes do not normally compare favourably with those for the main Bar Training cohort, however the April 2025 passing rate of 60% for Criminal Litigation actually exceeds the main Bar Training cohort passing rate, and the best yet achieved by a BPTC cohort during this legacy period.

Professor Mike Molan
Chair of the Central Examination Board
29 August 2025