Part 6 - Authorised Education and Training Organisations

6A: Overview

This section includes information on the Authorisation Framework and the definition of Authorised Education and Training Organisations (AETOs).

The Authorisation Framework

1 To coincide with the introduction of the new Bar Qualification Rules, we published the Authorisation Framework .

2 All organisations seeking to offer one or more components of training for the Bar must apply to be authorised under the Authorisation Framework.

3 The purpose of the Authorisation Framework is to explain to training providers what they must do to meet our requirements to be authorised to deliver Bar training.

4 The Authorisation Framework sets out the mandatory requirements for a training provider to become an **Authorised Education and Training Organisation** (AETO), including adherence to the four principles of flexibility, accessibility, affordability and maintaining high standards.

5 The term 'AETO' applies to:

Higher education institutions – eg providers of new Bar Training Courses (formerly, the Bar Professional Training Course).

Pupillage training providers, such as existing Pupillage Training Organisations (PTOs) – eg chambers, BSB entities and other organisations (including solicitors' firms, commercial organisations, government bodies and not-for-profit organisations).

6 The Bar Qualification Rules permit AETOs to offer training under a limited number of permissible training pathways (see **Part 1C** of this Bar Qualification Manual). The choice of training programmes under these pathways will depend on the applications received from prospective AETOs.

Bar Qualification Rules

BSB Handbook

Rule Q29 Providers of vocational training and pupillage must be authorised by the BSB as an AETO.

Rule Q30 An application to become an AETO must be made in such form and be accompanied by payment of such fee or fees as may be prescribed by the BSB.

Rule Q31 In determining an application from an applicant to become an AETO, the BSB will have regard to the Authorisation Framework and in particular the mandatory criteria. The BSB will not approve an application to become an AETO unless it is satisfied that it is:

.1 able to meet the mandatory criteria set out in the Authorisation Framework relevant to the application; and

.2 a suitable provider for the purposes of the Authorisation Framework.

Rule Q32 The BSB may grant authorisation to an AETO on such terms and conditions as it considers appropriate including the period of authorisation.

Rule Q33 The BSB may vary, amend, suspend or withdraw authorisation of an AETO in the following circumstances:

.1 the AETO has applied for such variation, amendment, suspension or withdrawal;

.2 the AETO ceases to exist, becomes insolvent or merges;

.3 the AETO fails to comply with conditions imposed upon its authorisation;

.4 the BSB is of the view that the AETO has failed or will fail to fulfil the mandatory requirements set out in the Authorisation Framework;

.5 the BSB is of the view that the AETO is not providing the training for which it was authorised to an adequate standard or there has been a material change in the training provided; or

.6 the BSB is of the view that the continued authorisation of the AETO would inhibit the Regulatory Objectives.

Rule Q34 An AETO which is dissatisfied by a decision in relation to Rule Q31 – Q 33 above may apply to the BSB for a review.

The authorisation process

7 Prospective AETOs have been able to apply for authorisation since **1 April 2019** .

8 To support the Authorisation Framework, we have published guidance for prospective providers of vocational training and work-based learning (pupillage) .

9 These separate guidance documents explain the different sets of evidence which we require from the two types of AETO to reflect the different components of training which they will provide. For example, the evidence sought from a training provider offering vocational training to a large number of students will be of a different scope and nature to that required from a chambers with only one or two pupils. This reflects our risk-based approach to Bar Training.

10 For further guidance on the authorisation process for providers of vocational training or work-based learning (including information on fees and charges), please see **Part 6B** of this Bar Qualification Manual.

11 For further guidance on the transitional process for current PTOs (including information on fees and charges), please see **Part 6C** of this Bar Qualification Manual.

Training agreements

12 Once an AETO has been authorised under the Authorisation Framework, they must sign a training agreement with us. This agreement will set out our responsibilities and those of the AETO, including their obligations regarding data sharing, as well as the pathways the AETO has been authorised to deliver and any conditions which may have been imposed at the time of authorisation.

13 The agreement also sets out the basis on which the AETO has been authorised. This is the provision as outlined in their application to become an AETO. If an AETO wishes to make significant changes to their authorised provision at any time after they have been authorised, they must contact the Authorisations Team .

Supervision

14 All AETOs will be subject to ongoing supervision by the Supervision Team. This supervision is risk-based and could include a range of activities (such as site visits) to monitor whether the AETO is continuing to satisfy the four principles of the Authorisation Framework, as well as any other conditions or recommendations set out at the time of authorisation.

6B: Authorisation of education and training organisations

This section explains the authorisation process for prospective education and training organisations. Chambers/organisations that currently train pupils should refer to Part 6C of this Bar Qualification Manual.

Bar Qualification Rules

BSB Handbook

Rule Q29 Providers of vocational training and pupillage must be authorised by the BSB as an AETO.

Rule Q30 An application to become an AETO must be made in such form and be accompanied by payment of such fee or fees as may be prescribed by the BSB.

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.1 able to meet the mandatory criteria set out in the Authorisation Framework relevant to the application; and

.2 a suitable provider for the purposes of the Authorisation Framework.

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.1 the AETO has applied for such variation, amendment, suspension or withdrawal;

.2 the AETO ceases to exist, becomes insolvent or merges;

.3 the AETO fails to comply with conditions imposed upon its authorisation;

.4 the BSB is of the view that the AETO has failed or will fail to fulfil the mandatory requirements set out in the Authorisation Framework;

.5 the BSB is of the view that the AETO is not providing the training for which it was authorised to an adequate standard or there has been a material change in the training provided; or

.6 the BSB is of the view that the continued authorisation of the AETO would inhibit the Regulatory Objectives.

Rule Q34 An AETO which is dissatisfied by a decision in relation to Rule Q31 – Q 33 above may apply to the BSB for a review.

The application process

1 Prospective AETOs have been able to apply for authorisation since **1 April 2019** . Courses to be delivered by providers of the vocational component will be advertised as "subject to authorisation" during the application process.

2 AETOs may need to go through further internal approval processes to set up new training pathways, in addition to their applications to us.

Providers of the vocational component (and/or integrated academic and vocational components)

Application

3 Prospective providers of the vocational component (and/or integrated academic and vocational component) will need to apply for authorisation by means of the Online Portal , available via MyBar.

4 Prospective vocational AETOs will need to be able to demonstrate that they meet the criteria in the Authorisation Framework .

5 Prospective vocational AETOs should refer to the Guidance document , when completing their applications.

6 For further guidance on the vocational component of Bar training, please see **Part 3** of this Bar Qualification Manual.

7 Unsuccessful vocational AETO applicants may apply for a review of their application. For further guidance on the process of applying for a review, please see **Part 8A** of this Bar Qualification Manual.

Fees and charges

8 Prospective vocational AETOs will be charged an application fee of £250 .

9 We anticipate that in many cases, the application itself will suffice with no further steps (or assessment costs) required. Should we require more information from a prospective vocational AETO (due to the complexity or scale of its proposed training pathway) indicative costs for the steps we will need to take to help us to assess the proposal include:

Staff time @ up to £500 per day;

Expert Advisor (**APEX**) time @ up to £400 per day;

Travel and other costs actually incurred.

10 AETOs providing training for the academic and vocational (integrated) or vocational components will be charged a per-capita fee of **£705** for initial authorisation and, in subsequent years, a per-capita charge for each intake of students, for authorisation to deliver the vocational component of training and to cover our operational and ongoing costs.

11 Where the proposal is for a **four-step pathway** (eg the academic component, followed by the vocational component in two parts, followed by the pupillage or work-based component), the per-capita fee will be split - **£470** for part one and **£235** for part two of the vocational component.

From September 2025, the per capita fee will change to **£840** and where the vocational component is split into two parts, £560 for part one and £280 for part two.

From September 2026 , the per capita fee will be **£1,145** (plus any further increase due to inflation) and where the vocaitonal component is split into two parts it will be £763 for part one (plus inflation) and £382 for part two (plus inflation).

12 AETOs providing vocational training (and/or integrated academic and vocational training) will be subject to a **renewal process** on a five-year cyclical basis, mirroring that for initial authorisation.

13 We will review our fees at least every two years and take mitigating action to address over/under-recovery of our costs.

Providers of work-based learning (pupillage)

Application

14 Prospective providers of work-based learning (pupillage) will need to apply for authorisation by means of the Online Portal, available via MyBar. If you encounter any technical difficulties in making your application, please contact authorisations@barstandardsboard.org.uk

15 Prospective work-based learning AETOs will need to be able to demonstrate that they meet the criteria in the Authorisation Framework .

16 Prospective work-based learning AETOs should refer to the Guidance document , when completing their applications.

17 For further guidance on the work-based learning component of Bar training (pupillage), please see **Part 4** of this Bar Qualification Manual.

18 Unsuccessful work-based learning AETO applicants may apply for a review of their application. For further guidance on the process of applying for a review, please see **Part 8A** of this Bar Qualification Manual.

Fees and charges

19 Prospective work-based learning AETOs will be charged an **application fee of £250** but will not be charged a per-capita **authorisation** or an **intake fee.**

20 We anticipate that in most cases, the application itself will suffice with no further steps (or assessment costs) required. Should we require more information from a prospective work-based learning AETO (due to the complexity or scale of its proposed training pathway) indicative costs for the steps we will need to take to help us to assess the proposal include:

Staff time @ up to £500 per day;

Expert Advisor (**APEX**) time @ up to £400 per day;

Travel and other costs actually incurred.

21 Successful work-based learning applicants for AETO status will not be subject to a renewal process as the majority of those providing the training will be paying a **Practising Certificate Fee** (PCF) which already covers the associated costs of our supervision activities. This supervision will be risk-based and targeted only where it is necessary to ensure standards are being met. Work-based learning AETOs must, however, notify us of any material change in their pupillage arrangements.

22 We will review our fees at least every two years and take mitigating action to address over/under-recovery of our costs.

6C: Authorisation of current pupillage training organisations (PTOs) as AETOs

This section explains the process for current Pupillage Training Organisations to gain authorisation as an AETO.

Bar Qualification Rules

BSB Handbook

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Rule Q30 An application to become an AETO must be made in such form and be accompanied by payment of such fee or fees as may be prescribed by the BSB.

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.1 the AETO has applied for such variation, amendment, suspension or withdrawal;

.2 the AETO ceases to exist, becomes insolvent or merges;

.3 the AETO fails to comply with conditions imposed upon its authorisation;

.4 the BSB is of the view that the AETO has failed or will fail to fulfil the mandatory requirements set out in the Authorisation Framework;

.5 the BSB is of the view that the AETO is not providing the training for which it was authorised to an adequate standard or there has been a material change in the training provided; or

.6 the BSB is of the view that the continued authorisation of the AETO would inhibit the Regulatory Objectives.

Rule Q34 An AETO which is dissatisfied by a decision in relation to Rule Q31 – Q 33 above may apply to the BSB for a review.

Overview

1 All current pupillage providers (ie those granted Pupillage Training Organisation (PTO) or Approved Training Organisation (ATO) status by us) intending to provide pupillage after **31 March 2024** must meet the criteria for authorisation set out in the Authorisation Framework .

2 To support the Authorisation Framework, we have published guidance for prospective AETOs providing the work-based learning (pupillage) component. More recently, we have published separate guidance for prospective AETOs in the Employed Bar .

3 We have contacted all existing pupillage providers to confirm the need to apply to be authorised as Authorised Education and Training Organisations (AETOs).

4 Current PTOs can continue to provide pupillage and advertise for new pupils, in line with the requirements set out in the BSB Handbook and this Bar Qualification Manual (**Part 4D**) while their AETO authorisation applications are being processed.

The application process

5 The application for AETO status requires prospective AETOs to submit details of their pupillage training programme, setting out how they will ensure that those whom they train satisfy the Threshold Standard and Competences of the Professional Statement , as well as details of how their training will meet the principles of flexibility, accessibility, affordability and maintaining high standards.

6 Detailed guidance on the application process for AETO status may be found in **Part 6B** of this Bar Qualification Manual.

7 Existing pupillage providers will **not** be charged an application fee to become an AETO.

8 Authorisation as an AETO is a one-off process; however, AETOs must notify us of any material change in their pupillage arrangements.

9 Unsuccessful applicants may apply for a review of their application. For further guidance on the process of applying for a review, please see **Part 8A** of this Bar Qualification Manual.

10 It is our intention to work with all prospective AETOs to address any areas of concern and ensure that they meet the required standards.

Organisations no longer providing pupillages

11 Current PTO authorisation will expire on **31 March 2024** . Only organisations authorised as an AETO will be able to continue to deliver pupillage, and recruit new pupils, after this date.

12 If you are authorised as a PTO but do not have any pupils currently (and do not intend to have any in the foreseeable future) please tell us – your authorisation to provide pupillages will then be withdrawn.

13 If your authorisation to provide pupillages is withdrawn, as you are not intending to take on any pupils in the foreseeable future, you can apply afresh for authorisation as an AETO at a later date, but this will attract an application fee.

14 If you have current pupils who will not complete their pupillages until after 31 March 2024, and you have decided not to seek authorisation as an AETO, please contact us for guidance on how these pupillages may be affected.