

Bar Training Civil Litigation Syllabus 2026-2027

Summary of Changes

Introduction

We have been asked by the Bar Standards Board to provide a short document summarising the main changes to the Bar Training Civil Litigation Syllabus in 2026-2027. This document is particularly intended to enable continuing students to understand which areas of the 2025-2026 syllabus will form part of the centrally set assessments in 2026-2027, and which parts of the 2025-2026 syllabus will not be assessed.

This document provides a summary of the main changes to the syllabus. Students should also refer to the new syllabus, which includes full updated references to 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 and The Jackson ADR Handbook (Fourth Edition, 2025), to understand the detailed requirements of the 2026-2027 syllabus.

Marc Howe, Oxford Brookes University
Philip Turton, Ropewalk Chambers
24 June 2026

1 General Matters

1. the overriding objective
2. the duty of the court to manage cases
3. general principles of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)
4. timing the use of ADR

Summary of Changes

References to Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 have been updated by reference to the latest edition.

The following material has been removed from the updated syllabus: the commentary at paragraph 1.4.11 of Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2025. This has been incorporated into paragraph 1.4.9 of Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026.

2 Limitation

1. accrual of causes of action
2. limitation periods in cases of tort, latent damage, personal injury, fatal accident, contract, and contribution claims

Summary of Changes

No changes in the updated syllabus.

3 Pre-action Conduct

1. the Practice Direction (Pre-Action Conduct and Protocols)
2. the Pre-Action Protocol for Personal Injury Claims
3. consequences of non-compliance
4. ADR prior to the issue of proceedings

Summary of Changes

No changes in the updated syllabus.

4 Alternative Dispute Resolution: Adjudicative Options

1. arbitration
2. expert (or neutral) determination

Summary of Changes

Under the updated syllabus, examinable material on arbitration includes section 9 of the Arbitration Act 1996 at paragraph 2E-104 of Volume 2 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026.

The reference to paragraph 2E-107 of Volume 2 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 has been updated by reference to the latest edition.

5 Alternative Dispute Resolution: Non-Adjudicative Options

1. early neutral evaluation
2. conciliation and mediation

Summary of Changes

No changes in the updated syllabus.

6 Commencing Proceedings

1. the Part 7 procedure
2. validity, extension and service of claim forms
3. service of other court documents within the jurisdiction
4. the Part 8 procedure

Summary of Changes

The reference to paragraph 7.6.3 of Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 has been updated by reference to the latest edition.

7 Parties

1. partnerships, sole traders, LLPs and companies, trusts and deceased persons
2. children and persons suffering from mental incapacity

Summary of Changes

No changes in the updated syllabus.

8 Statements of Case

1. claim forms and particulars of claim
2. acknowledgement of service, defences, replies, counterclaims

Summary of Changes

No changes in the updated syllabus.

9 Multiple Causes of Action, Counterclaims and Other Additional Claims

1. multiple causes of action and multiple parties
2. counterclaims against the claimant or an additional party
3. contribution notices and claims against third parties and fourth parties

Summary of Changes

The reference to paragraph 19.6.5 of Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 has been updated by reference to the latest edition.

10 Amendment

1. permission or consent to amend
2. costs consequences of amendment

Summary of Changes

The reference to paragraph 17.3.5 of Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 has been updated by reference to the latest edition.

The examinable commentary at paragraph 17.3.6 of Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 now excludes the final sub-paragraph beginning "Care must be taken to assess ...".

The examinable commentary at paragraph 17.3.8 of Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 is now limited to first five sub-paragraphs ending "... would be much delayed" (at [44]).")

11 Further Information

1. requests for further information
2. responding to a request for further information

Summary of Changes

No changes in the updated syllabus.

12 Default Judgment and Summary Judgment

1. default judgment
2. applications to set aside
3. summary judgment

Summary of Changes

CPR 24.5(2) has been removed from the updated syllabus.

The reference to paragraph 24.3.2.3 of Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 has been updated by reference to the latest edition.

The references to paragraphs 24.6.8 and 24.6.9 of Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 have been updated by reference to the latest edition.

13 Case Management, Sanctions, Striking Out and Discontinuance

1. the small claims track, fast track, intermediate track and multi-track
2. allocation and assignment
3. case management
4. costs management
5. directions
6. relief from sanctions
7. striking out a claim
8. discontinuance

Summary of Changes

Under the updated syllabus it has been made clear that CPR 3.15A is examinable.

Additional commentary in the first sub-paragraph of 3.9.5.1 (no good reason for breach) of Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 is part of the updated syllabus.

References to Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 have been updated by reference to the latest edition.

14 Disclosure and Inspection of Documents

1. disclosure and inspection of documents
2. specific disclosure
3. collateral use of disclosed documents
4. pre-action disclosure
5. disclosure against non-parties
6. legal professional privilege and without prejudice communications in civil cases

Summary of Changes

The examinable commentary at paragraph 31.17.2.1 of Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 is now limited to first two sub-paragraphs ending "... for some other reason."

References to Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 have been updated by reference to the latest edition.

15 Interim Applications

1. with notice and without notice applications
2. documentation required in interim applications
3. periods of notice in interim applications
4. the duty of full and frank disclosure in without notice applications

Summary of Changes

CPR 25.9(6)-(9) has been removed from the updated syllabus.

16 Interim Payments and Security for Costs

- interim payments
- security for costs

Summary of Changes

No changes in the updated syllabus.

17 Interim Injunctions

1. interim injunctions
2. *American Cyanamid* principles
3. exceptions and variations to *American Cyanamid*
4. usual undertakings and cross-undertakings

Summary of Changes

No changes in the updated syllabus.

18 Settlement (including offers to settle)

1. negotiation and joint settlement meetings
2. *Calderbank* offers and offers to settle under Part 36
3. withdrawing, reducing and increasing offers to settle
4. consequences of accepting Part 36 offers
5. consequences of failing to obtain judgment more advantageous than offer to settle

Summary of Changes

No changes in the updated syllabus.

19 Evidence of Fact

1. evidence of fact in civil proceedings
2. witness statements and witness summonses
3. notices to admit facts and notices to prove documents

Summary of Changes

No changes in the updated syllabus.

20 Expert Evidence

1. the adducing of expert evidence in civil proceedings
2. the main exceptions to the general exclusionary rule in relation to evidence of opinion
3. expert opinion evidence in civil proceedings

Summary of Changes

References to Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 have been updated by reference to the latest edition.

21 Civil Trial and Evidence

1. the trial of civil cases
2. hearsay evidence in civil proceedings
3. convictions as evidence in civil proceedings

Summary of Changes

No changes in the updated syllabus.

22 Judgments, Orders and Enforcement

1. judgment and orders, including Tomlin orders
2. enforcing money judgments
3. recording and enforcement of settlements following ADR

Summary of Changes

No changes in the updated syllabus.

23 Costs

1. costs orders in civil cases
2. costs on the standard basis and costs on the indemnity basis
3. summary and detailed assessment of costs
4. interim costs orders

Summary of Changes

CPR 44.11 has been removed from the updated syllabus.

The commentary at paragraph 44.2.14 of Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 is not part of the updated syllabus.

The reference to the examinable commentary at paragraph 44.2.12 of Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 has been updated by reference to the latest edition.

References to Volume 1 of 'Civil Procedure' (the White Book) 2026 have been updated by reference to the latest edition.

24 Appeals

1. Civil appeals in England and Wales (excluding appeals to the Supreme Court)

Summary of Changes

No changes in the updated syllabus.