

Bar Standards Board
Centralised Exam Board
Professional Ethics Pupillage/Work Based Learning Assessment Syllabus 2026-27
Issued October 2026

Introduction

This syllabus has been prepared for the Professional Ethics pupillage/WBL assessment (“the Assessment”) for the academic year 2026-27. The Assessment aims to:

- identify pupils who are ready to receive their Full Practising Certificate;
- safeguard the public by ensuring that those who are authorised to practise (by having received their Full Practising Certificates) have fulfilled the ethical requirements set out in the Professional Statement; and
- ensure a strong, ethical profession.

The Assessment will be devised with reference to the source materials identified in this syllabus. Careful study of those materials will provide candidates with a comprehensive understanding of the principles underpinning the Professional Statement and prepare them fully for the Assessment.

Navigation

The syllabus is divided into two parts, A and B.

Part A relates to subject matter which **WILL** be examinable and form the basis of assessment questions. When sections of the Handbook are referred to, the material included comprises all rules and guidance within those sections. Where other documents are referred to, unless otherwise stated, the entirety of that text will be examinable.

Where a rule or guidance paragraph contains references to other materials, unless otherwise indicated, candidates will not be required to study the additional materials referenced.

Part B refers to material which **WILL NOT** be examined as part of the Assessment; however, candidates will be required to understand the principles contained in that material to meet the outcomes of the Professional Statement.

PART A

The BSB Handbook version **5.0**

Part 1: Introduction

Part 1 A-D

Part 2: The Code of Conduct

A – Application

B – Core Duties

C – The Conduct Rules

C1 – You and the Court

C2 – Behaving Ethically

C3 – You and Your Client*

*Candidates **WILL** be expected to be familiar with the principles that arise in the cases set out in gC86, namely:

English & American Insurance Co Ltd & Others -v- Herbert Smith, ChD 1987; (1987) NLJ 148; and,

Ablitt -v- Mills & Reeve (A Firm) and Another, ChD (Times, 24-Oct-1995).

C4 – You and Your Regulator **

Candidates **WILL NOT be expected to go beyond the principles set out within gC93 in referring to the cases contained therein.

C5 – You and Your Practice

D – Rules Applying to Particular Groups of Regulated Persons

D1 – Self-employed barristers, chambers and BSB entities

D2 – Barristers undertaking public access and licensed access work

D4 – Unregistered barristers

D6 – Price and service transparency rules for self-employed barristers, chambers and BSB entities

Part 3: Scope of Practice, Authorisation and Licensing Rules

B – Scope of Practice

B1 – No practice without authorisation

B2 – Provision of reserved legal activities and of legal services

B3 – Scope of practice as a self-employed barrister

B4 – Scope of practice as a BSB Entity

B5 – Scope of practice as a manager of a BSB Entity or Employed Barrister

B6 – Scope of practice as a manager of an authorised (non-BSB) body or as an employed barrister (authorised non-BSB body)

B7 – Scope of practice as an employed barrister (non authorised body)

B9 – Legal Advice Centres

B10 – Barristers authorised by other approved regulators

Equality Rules

[Supporting Information for Chambers BSB Handbook Equality Rules](#) (BSB Document) *Updated 3 December 2021*

- Sections 1, 2, 8, 9, 12

[Supporting Information for BSB Authorised Bodies](#) BSB Handbook Equality Rules (BSB Document 2019)

- Sections 1, 2, 8, 9, 12

Code Guidance*

**Not to include appendices unless otherwise stated*

Guidance: Practising Rules and Requirements

[Unregistered Barristers Guidance](#) (Oct 2019)

[Public Access Guidance for Barristers](#) (Oct 2019)

[Conducting Litigation Guidance](#) (September 2024)

Guidance on the Transparency Rules

- [Introduction to the Guidance](#)
- [Mandatory transparency rules for all self-employed barristers, chambers and BSB entities Mandatory rules on price, service and redress transparency for everyone \(Updated November 2023\)](#)
- [Additional mandatory transparency rules for those undertaking Public Access work](#)

Guidance: Administration of a Barrister's practice

[First Tier Complaints Handling Guidance](#) (June 2026)

[Referral and Marketing Arrangements Guidance](#) (October 2019)

[Confidentiality Guidance](#) (October 2019)

[Investigating and Collecting Evidence and Taking Witness Statements Guidance](#) (September 2020)

[Guidance on the use of artificial intelligence and other technologies \(May 2026\)](#)

*Candidates **WILL** be expected to be familiar with the principles that arise in the case of *Ayinde v London Borough of Haringey and Al Haroun v Qatar National Bank* [2025] EWHC 1383 (Admin).

Guidance: Professional Conduct of Barristers

[Reporting Serious Misconduct of Others Guidance](#) (October 2019)

[Clash of Hearing Dates Guidance](#) (October 2019)

[Guidance for barristers using social media](#) (September 2023)

[Guidance on the regulation of non-professional conduct](#) (September 2023)

Crown Prosecution Service Publications

[The Code for Crown Prosecutors, 8th edition](#) – October 2018 (CPS)

[Farquharson Guidelines: Role of Prosecuting Advocates](#), January 2020 (CPS)

Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing

[Part 2A \(Specific Guidance for Barristers & Advocates\) of the Legal Sector Affinity Group Anti-Money Laundering Guidance for the Legal Sector](#) (Executive Summary only) and [Addendum to the LSAG Part 2A Guidance](#) (Executive Summary section only)

Vulnerability

[Youth Proceedings Competences](#) (Updated April 2025)

[Identifying Vulnerability in Witnesses](#) – March 2017 (The Advocate's Gateway)

Bar Council Guidance

[Documents disclosed to Counsel by mistake](#) (March 2023)

PART B

Candidates are expected to have an understanding of the principles contained within the following provisions in order to properly deal with issues that may arise in practice. However, these provisions will not be examined as part of the Assessment.

PART B
The BSB Handbook version 5.0
Part 3: Scope of Practice, Authorisation and Licensing Rules
C – Practising Certificate Rules
C1 – Eligibility for practising certificates and litigation extensions C2 – Applications for practising certificates and litigation extensions by barristers and registered European lawyers C3 – Practising certificate fees and litigation extension fees C4 – Issue of practising certificates and litigation extensions C5 – Amendment and revocation of practising certificates and litigation extensions C6 – Applications for review
Part 4: Qualification Rules
C – The CPD rules
Part 6: Definitions
Definitions
Code Guidance – Transparency Rules
<u>Additional best practice on transparency for everyone</u>

<u>Data Protection</u>
GDPR Bar Council Guide for Barristers and Chambers (December 2020)
<u>Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing</u>
Part 2A (Specific Guidance for Barristers & Advocates) of the Legal Sector Affinity Group Anti-Money Laundering Guidance for the Legal Sector (main text) and Addendum to the LSAG Part 2A Guidance (main text)