

# BAR STANDARDS BOARD

REGULATING BARRISTERS

## Consultation on proposed amendments to the definition of Academic Legal Training and related exemptions

January 2024

### About Us

1. The Bar Standards Board (BSB) is the professional regulator of barristers and specialised legal services in England and Wales. Our vision is to regulate the Bar in the public interest by promoting high standards, equality and access to justice.<sup>1</sup>
2. We are responsible for:
  - setting the standards of education and training to become a barrister;
  - setting the standards of continuing professional development to ensure that barristers' skills are maintained throughout their careers;
  - setting the standards of conduct for barristers;
  - authorising organisations that deliver education and training (referred to as “Authorised Education and Training Organisations”);
  - authorising organisations that focus on advocacy, litigation, and specialist legal advice;
  - monitoring the service provided by barristers and the organisations we authorise to assure quality; and
  - dealing with reports about barristers and organisations we authorise and taking action where appropriate.

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<sup>1</sup> See [Our Strategy 2022-2025](#)

3. Approved regulators have a duty to promote the regulatory objectives when discharging their regulatory functions.<sup>2 3</sup> We also act in a way that is transparent, accountable, proportionate, consistent, and targeted where action is needed.<sup>4</sup>
4. In addition to our own regulatory framework, the Legal Services Board, our oversight regulator, has published [statutory guidance](#) under the Legal Services Act 2007 to which we must have regard. This statutory guidance is specific to legal education and training and one of its stated outcomes is that regulators place no inappropriate direct or indirect restrictions on the numbers entering the profession.
5. We are a values-based organisation. We aim to act with:
  - fairness and respect;
  - independence and integrity; and
  - excellence and efficiency.

## Executive summary

6. Barristers play a vital role in the administration of justice and a high level of trust is placed in them by the public and other professionals. Our role in the regulatory oversight of the training and qualification of barristers is therefore important. We set the standards that prospective barristers must meet to be called to the Bar, and the standards that barristers must meet to be authorised to practise. Through our Authorisation Framework, we set the standards that vocational Authorised Education and Training Organisations (universities and other education providers) must meet to provide education and training. We also set standards for Authorised Education and Training Organisations offering a pupillage (barristers' Chambers and organisations that employ barristers). The Authorisation Framework additionally provides for the ongoing supervision and renewal of the authorisation of Authorised Education and Training Organisations.
7. Our programme of reform to Bar training (the "Future Bar Training Programme") which commenced in 2015 was in response to the findings of the Legal Services Board's [Legal Education and Training Review of 2013](#). The proposals set out below are in keeping with the earlier reforms which sought to modernise and simplify our approach to regulation, to remove unnecessary barriers and to put in place only those requirements that are proportionate and necessary, whilst upholding the four key principles of training reform: accessibility, flexibility, affordability and sustaining high standards.
8. We are committed to ensuring that only those who are capable of becoming competent barristers qualify as such, and that entry to the profession is open to capable people from all backgrounds.

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<sup>2</sup> Legal Services Act S28(2) states that an approved regulator must, so far as is reasonably practicable, act in a way which is compatible with the regulatory objectives, and which the approved regulator considers most appropriate for the purpose of meeting those objectives.

<sup>3</sup> The regulatory objectives are: protecting and promoting the public interest; supporting the constitutional principle of the rule of law; improving access to justice; protecting and promoting the interests of consumers; promoting competition in the provision of legal services; encouraging an independent, strong, diverse and effective legal profession; increasing public understanding of citizens' legal rights and duties; promoting and maintaining adherence to the professional principles, and promoting the prevention and detection of economic crime.

<sup>4</sup> See the Better Regulation Principles – s28(2)(a)(b) Legal Services Act 2007.

9. Training for the Bar is comprised of three components – Academic, Vocational and Pupillage/ work-based learning. The training reforms of the last ten years have touched on all three components but to a lesser extent the first. The key reform to the academic component was that from 2019, the concept of the Qualifying Law Degree fell away when the Bar Standards Board and the Solicitors Regulation Authority ceased to jointly validate undergraduate degrees. The Solicitors Regulation Authority developed the Solicitors Qualifying Examination part one, to demonstrate that candidates have competence in “functional legal knowledge”. We do not have an equivalent to this, but we set out the requirements for the completion of academic legal training in the [Bar Standards Board Handbook](#) (part 4), the [Bar Qualification Manual](#) (part 2) and the [Curriculum and Assessment Strategy](#) (page 2).
10. As the first phase of a wider review of our decision-making processes relating to our Authorisations function, we recognise that the rules and decision-making processes for the academic component of training are overly complex and in need of simplification and modernisation to bring them fully in line with our outcomes-focused approach to regulation and with other training reforms we have already implemented.
11. We think that the way we set the standards for academic legal training is overly prescriptive and difficult to understand. This, in turn, has created a complex system of applications for exemptions from and waivers of, those requirements. Our Authorisations team currently makes the decisions on those applications. The Authorised Education and Training Organisations currently make decisions about who may start the vocational component of training.
12. We want to simplify and modernise our approach to academic legal training and to remove unnecessary barriers to entry into the profession without any compromise to the principle of sustaining high standards.
13. The proposals in this paper specifically relate to updating the definition of academic legal training, which in turn would almost entirely dispense with applications for exemptions and waivers as they currently exist. Where someone applies to an Authorised Education and Training Organisation for a place on the vocational course, we think that the Authorised Education and Training Organisation should consider all available information and make a decision about whether that person meets the standard for having completed academic legal training and should therefore be admitted onto the course.
14. We intend that changes resulting from this consultation will be implemented from September 2025.
15. We are now seeking your views on these proposals and have set out questions below related to the proposals.

## Our current approach

16. In order to practise as a barrister, a person must currently successfully complete the following components of Bar training which are set out in the BSB Handbook:<sup>5</sup>
- academic legal training;
  - vocational training. This is completed after the academic component, with an Authorised Education and Training Organisation;
  - call to the Bar (following qualifying sessions); and
  - pupillage.

## Academic legal training

17. Academic legal training is currently made up of a complex list of requirements, which are spread across the BSB Handbook, the Curriculum and Assessment Strategy and the Bar Qualification Manual.<sup>6</sup>
18. The requirements, collectively, provide that an applicant must:
- i hold a law degree or a non-law degree together with the Graduate Diploma in Law that covers the seven Foundations of Legal Knowledge;<sup>7</sup> and
  - ii meet the statement of competences set out in section one of the Curriculum and Assessment Strategy. This sets out that:

*In order to complete the requirements of the academic component of training for the Bar, prospective barristers will have to have demonstrated the following Competence from the Professional Statement:*

*....Have a knowledge and understanding of the key concepts and principles of public and private law. They will have a good understanding of the general principles of law underpinning the legal system of England and Wales, including the implications of EU law, and be able to apply this as necessary.*

*Barristers should:*

*a) Be able to recall and comprehend and accurately apply to factual situations the principles of law and rules of procedure and practice specified by the Bar Standards Board.*

*b) Be able to keep up to date with significant changes to these principles and rules.*

*The above Competence incorporates the need for prospective barristers to have covered the “seven foundations of legal knowledge” subjects: Criminal Law, Equity and Trusts, Law of the European Union, Obligations 1 (Contract), Obligations 2 (Tort), Property/Land Law, Public Law (Constitutional Law, Administrative Law and Human Rights Law).*

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<sup>5</sup> Part 4 rQ3-rQ6 of the Bar Standards Board Handbook

<sup>6</sup> The BQM forms part of the Bar Standards Board Handbook at Part 4B

<sup>7</sup> “Academic legal training is defined in Part 6 of the Bar Standards Board Handbook and also requires that the degree was awarded at level 6 or above of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, by a recognised degree-awarding body and which contains Contract, Property, Tort, Criminal Law, Constitutional and Administrative Law, Equity and Trusts and the Law of the European Union (the seven ‘Foundations of Legal Knowledge.’)

19. Additional requirements are contained in Part 2 of the Bar Qualification Manual, which sets out a number of provisions that must be met in relation to a prospective barrister's law degree, or non-law degree and Graduate Diploma in Law. These are:
- the degree was awarded at Level six (or above) of the [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#);
  - the degree was awarded by a recognised (UK/ROI) degree-awarding body;
  - the degree met the Quality Assurance Agency's [subject benchmarks](#) in force at the time it was awarded;
  - the degree award was at least lower second-class honours (2:2);
  - a law degree is not "stale" (more than five years since completion);
  - a law degree was completed within a six-year time limit;
  - the degree covered the seven Foundations of Legal Knowledge;
  - each module identified as contributing to the coverage of any element of Foundations of Legal Knowledge was passed with a mark of at least 40%; and
  - any condoned or compensated Foundations of Legal Knowledge module pass was:<sup>8</sup>
    - permitted under the course provider's assessment regulations;
    - justified because of exceptional circumstances likely to have impacted on the candidate's performance;
    - not based on an actual mark of less than 35%; and
    - the decision to condone or compensate was supported by evidence of academic strength across the candidate's course studies.
20. In addition, prospective barristers who are either non-graduates or overseas applicants, must obtain a Certificate of Academic Standing from the BSB before they can start a GDL course.
21. The problems with the current arrangements include:
- there is no clear description of level of competence or outcome;
  - the Curriculum and Assessment Strategy refers to "coverage" of the Foundations of Legal Knowledge subjects rather than specifying the means by which or the level at which they must be "covered";

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<sup>8</sup> **Condonation:** Where failure of one module in an undergraduate degree is permitted if certain conditions are met. See [BQM 2A \(2-4\)](#). The module mark will show on a transcript as being below the pass mark but the student will not fail the degree overall.

**Compensation:** Where the overall performance on an undergraduate degree can compensate for failure in one area if certain conditions are met. See [BQM 2A \(2-4\)](#). A mark which is an average of overall performance may be awarded and the module will show on a transcript as a pass.

- the BSB Handbook definition of Academic Legal Training expressly refers to prospective barristers having a “UK degree” – either law degree or non-law degree plus Graduate Diploma in Law; it does not deal with overseas degrees (reference needs to be made to the Bar Qualification Manual for this);
- the existing definition does not address the issue of qualifications that can be regarded as equivalent to a UK law degree or non-law degree and Graduate Diploma in Law, the most obvious perhaps being successful completion of the Solicitors Qualifying Examination part one;
- part 2 of the Bar Qualification Manual contains a complex network of rules relating to undergraduate degrees which in turn generates a scheme of exemptions and permissions that have to be applied for by prospective barristers if the requirements are not met; and
- the requirement for a non-graduate or overseas graduate to obtain a Certificate of Academic Standing prior to commencing a Graduate Diploma in Law is illogical when we place no admissions requirements on those commencing an undergraduate law degree.

## **Exemptions from academic legal training**

22. Where a prospective barrister does not meet all the requirements of academic legal training, they can apply to us for an exemption.<sup>9</sup> We will then consider the applicant’s knowledge and experience and decide whether they need any further training to be competent in academic legal training.<sup>10</sup> The evidential burden is on the applicant to show that they do not need to meet some or all of the requirements. An exemption can be complete or partial and can be made subject to conditions.
23. If a prospective barrister is granted an exemption from academic legal training, they can go on to apply to an Authorised Education and Training Organisation for a place on a vocational course.
24. There are also a number of possible waivers in relation to the requirements in Part 2 of the Bar Qualification Manual. These include:
  - allowing a prospective barrister to study any outstanding Foundations of Legal Knowledge subjects as part of a Graduate Diploma in Law course. An individual has to apply to the BSB for a Certificate of Partial Exemption in order to do this;
  - we have the discretion to allow a prospective barrister to take the Graduate Diploma in Law where they have been awarded an unclassified law degree;
  - we have the discretion to allow a prospective barrister to take the Graduate Diploma in Law where a prospective barrister has a third-class degree;
  - we can grant permission to commence the vocational component of Bar training before confirmation of completion of the academic component; and
  - we can grant individuals permission to reactivate “stale qualifications”, which is where a qualification is over five years old.

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<sup>9</sup> rQ7 of the Bar Standards Board Handbook says that ‘The Bar Standards Board may grant exemptions from all or part of the requirements set out in rQ3 to rQ5’

<sup>10</sup> rQ8 of the Bar Standards Board Handbook

## Proposals for change

25. Through the course of our review, we have identified four key changes that will help us to achieve our aims of modernising and simplifying our approach to academic legal training and removing unnecessary barriers to entry into the profession.
26. The first key change relates to the definition of academic legal training. In light of the problems and complexities identified above, we are proposing to amend the definition of academic legal training by consolidating the various requirements into one definition.
27. Successful completion of academic legal training would still be a requirement of qualification, as set out in the BSB Handbook. We are proposing to move the detail of what constitutes academic legal training, to the Curriculum and Assessment Strategy.
28. We propose to amend the definition of academic legal training in Part 6 of the BSB Handbook, to remove the prescriptive detail. The revised definition would read as follows:

*“The requirements for satisfactory completion of academic legal training (the academic component for training for the Bar) are as stated from time to time in the Curriculum and Assessment Strategy.”*

29. The **second key change** is that we propose to amend section one of the Curriculum and Assessment Strategy to read as follows:

*“In order to complete the requirements of academic legal training (academic component of training for the Bar), prospective barristers will have to have successfully completed one of the following:*

*(i) a degree awarded at level 6 (or above) of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications; or*

*(ii) a degree and a degree conversion programme (e.g., Graduate Diploma in Law) awarded at level 6 (or above) of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications; or*

*(iii) a qualification equivalent to one awarded at level 6 (or above) of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications,*

*that demonstrates the following Competence from the Professional Statement:*

<b>1. Barristers’ distinctive characteristics</b>
Legal knowledge, skills and attributes
<p><i>Barristers will:</i></p> <p><i>1.2 Have a knowledge and understanding of the key concepts and principles of public and private law.</i></p> <p><i>They will have a good understanding of the general principles of law underpinning the legal system of England and Wales, including the implications of EU law, and be able to apply this as necessary.</i></p> <p><i>Barristers should:</i></p> <p><i>a) Be able to recall and comprehend and accurately apply to factual situations the principles of law and rules of procedure and practice specified by the Bar Standards Board.</i></p> <p><i>b) Be able to keep up to date with significant changes to these principles and rules.</i></p>

*Competence in respect of the academic component incorporates the need for prospective barristers to be able to demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the “seven foundations of legal knowledge” subjects: Criminal Law, Equity and Trusts, Law of the European Union, Obligations 1 (Contract), Obligations 2 (Tort), Property/Land Law, Public Law (Constitutional Law, Administrative Law and Human Rights Law).”*

30. This change would mean that applicants without a degree could apply for entry onto a vocational course. All applicants would be assessed against the same criteria, that is, whether they are competent in respect of academic legal training.
31. The **third key change** relates to Part 2 of the Bar Qualification Manual. We are proposing to remove Part 2 of the Bar Qualification Manual in its entirety. Authorised Education and Training Organisations would instead decide whether an applicant is competent in academic legal training and whether they should be admitted onto the vocational training course based on the revised definition of academic legal training above. We would develop guidance for Authorised Education and Training Organisations to assist them in applying the definition. Details of the proposed changes are set out in [Appendix One](#).
32. During the process of authorisation or re-authorisation as an Authorised Education and Training Organisation, we would require clear evidence of how the guidance would be applied and how organisational policies (particularly those relating to equality, diversity and inclusion) would inform the Authorised Education and Training Organisation’s application of the guidance.
33. The guidance that we would expect Authorised Education and Training Organisations to follow would contain the following key provisions:
  - Authorised Education and Training Organisations will assess whether the qualification put forward by prospective barristers, evidences that they have successfully completed academic legal training as defined in Part 6 of the BSB Handbook and the Curriculum and Assessment Strategy;
  - Authorised Education and Training Organisations will assess whether the level of degree or qualification put forward by prospective barristers evidences that they have successfully completed academic legal training;
  - the minimum standard for a degree will no longer be a 2:2. Authorised Education and Training Organisations will decide whether a prospective barrister is ready to start the vocational training, taking into account a holistic view of their training, experience and academic record;
  - foundations of Legal Knowledge subjects will no longer have minimum pass marks. Authorised Education and Training Organisations will take into account the marks achieved and the number of attempts when considering whether a prospective barrister is competent in academic legal training; and
  - there will be no time limit to complete academic legal training. Authorised Education and Training Organisations will take a holistic view of the person’s training, experience and academic record.
34. The restriction on “stale qualifications” will be removed. Authorised Education and Training Organisations will decide, where there is a gap in time between the completion of academic legal training and the proposed start date of the vocational course, whether the applicant can start the vocational course.



35. Before authorising or re-authorising, we would need to be assured that an Authorised Education and Training Organisation had a clear understanding of the guidance and the principles on which it was based. We would expect Authorised Education and Training Organisations' admissions policies and processes to be neither too permissive nor too restrictive and to clearly demonstrate an approach that would balance considerations of flexibility and accessibility with those of sustaining high standards. This would be a mandatory requirement of authorisation.
36. We would then, through our supervision function, monitor Authorised Education and Training Organisations against what they had committed to do at the point of authorisation or reauthorisation to make sure that they were following our guidance and continuing to meet our standards. Where we had concerns that an Authorised Education and Training Organisation was not meeting our standards, we would have the power to vary, amend, suspend or withdraw authorisation.<sup>11</sup>
37. Where an Authorised Education and Training Organisation took the view that an applicant was not competent in academic legal training and refused them admission onto the vocational training, the individual could still apply to the BSB for an exemption from academic legal training. We would strongly encourage applicants to only apply to the BSB once they had exhausted all applicable processes within the Authorised Education and Training Organisation.
38. The **fourth key change** is that we would like to move away from our current practice of requiring certain types of applicants to obtain a Certificate of Academic Standing from the BSB. The current provisions mean that prospective barristers who are either non-graduates or overseas applicants, must obtain a Certificate of Academic Standing from the BSB before starting a Graduate Diploma in Law course.
39. This is inconsistent with our approach to the undergraduate law degree, where we do not prescribe any admissions requirements. The Graduate Diploma in Law is effectively the equivalent of a law degree for certain types of applicants, and we do not think that we should prescribe any requirements for them either. Higher Education Institutions offering the Graduate Diploma in Law are subject to significant internal and external quality assurance processes and are well-placed to decide themselves who should be admitted onto their undergraduate and postgraduate courses.
40. An outcomes-focused approach to training for the Bar should focus on successful completion of the Graduate Diploma in Law as the indicator of whether the requirements of academic legal training have been met. We therefore think that the current approach has little value.<sup>12</sup>

## Benefits of the proposals for change

41. We think that introducing these four key changes, would bring about the following benefits:
  - i Modernising and rationalising our approach to the academic stage of training, aligning it more closely with that of other legal professional regulators;
  - ii promoting the Future Bar Training principles of flexibility and accessibility through enabling a wider group of suitably qualified applicants to meet the definition of academic legal training, and therefore support the principle of high standards. In so doing it will promote the regulatory objectives in general, and in particular protecting and promoting the public interest, promoting competition in the provision of services, encouraging an independent, strong, diverse and effective legal profession, and

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<sup>11</sup> rQ33 of the Bar Standards Board Handbook

<sup>12</sup> The Bar Standards Board grants around 90% of these applications which supports the contention that they hold limited value.

- promoting and maintaining adherence to the professional principles;
- iii reflecting the various routes to qualification now open to prospective barristers;
  - iv ensuring that the BSB Handbook and Curriculum and Assessment Strategy use appropriate and consistent terminology in explaining what a prospective barrister needs to establish to demonstrate successful completion of academic legal training;
  - v removing the additional list of prescriptive, complex requirements in Part 2 of the BQM, which we think are no longer necessary. This would significantly reduce the number of requests for exemptions and waivers;
  - vi empowering Authorised Education and Training Organisation's to make admissions decisions, taking into account our standards of flexibility, accessibility, affordability and sustaining high standards which are set out in the Authorisations Framework;
  - vii enabling admissions decisions to be made in the right way by those best able to make these decisions in the first instance i.e. the Authorised Education and Training Organisations; and
  - viii enabling consistency between our approaches to the Graduate Diploma in Law and the undergraduate law degree, where we do not prescribe any admissions requirements.

## Equality impacts

- 42. We have carried out an initial Equality Impact Assessment to inform our thinking about the potential impact of the proposed changes. Assessing the impact is an ongoing process and the public consultation will play an important part in developing our thinking further. We have consulted with the BSB's Equality and Diversity member of the Advisory Pool of Experts and with the BSB's Policy Manager (Equality and Access to Justice). The Equality Impact Assessment has identified some ways that the proposed changes have the potential for beneficial impact and others that have the potential for adverse impact unless appropriately mitigated.
- 43. If the new definition of successful completion of academic legal training means that more people meet that definition, this could potentially increase access to the profession by removing unnecessary barriers to entry. This would be in line with the "flexibility" and "accessibility" principles of training reform and would further our strategic aim of promoting equality, diversity and inclusion at the Bar. It would not be at odds with the "high standards" principle because a threshold of competence would still need to be met, so there is no lowering of standards.
- 44. A focus on degree equivalence allows for relevant training and experience that has been undertaken outside an academic degree programme to be taken into account, so is potentially a more inclusive approach. However, interpretation of the new definition could potentially lead to adverse impacts unless there is a robust means of mitigating the risk that Authorised Education and Training Organisations apply the guidance in a way that potentially excludes groups of people who share certain protected characteristics.

45. The potential beneficial impacts include the following:

- the proposal to focus on degree equivalence rather than specifying a 2:2 degree minimum classification could have either positive or negative impacts on applicants from some backgrounds depending on how Authorised Education and Training Organisations choose to interpret it. Research shows that graduates who are more likely to achieve a degree classification of lower than a 2:2 are more likely to be from Black, and Asian backgrounds,<sup>13</sup> which under the current requirements could negatively impact such applicants;
- by removing this requirement, Authorised Education and Training Organisations may be more willing to admit those with lower degree classifications, or with equivalent level 6 (ie equivalent to undergraduate degree level) qualifications if applicants can demonstrate wider experience that strengthens their application, which could have a positive impact on applicants from Black and Asian backgrounds;
- the proposals could also positively impact graduates from overseas, and non-law graduates as the proposals contain a suggestion to remove the requirement for such graduates to apply for a Certificate of Academic standing prior to commencing a Graduate Diploma in Law; this would be both an efficiency and a cost saving thus more generally having a potential positive impact on broadening access;
- research shows that women are more likely to have caring responsibilities. This could mean that women are more likely to take breaks during a degree or after completion of an undergraduate degree. Under the existing rules, those taking career breaks need to apply for an exemption from the requirement to complete a law degree within six years, or for “stale” degrees. The removal of the requirements on the time limits to complete a law degree and stale degree could positively impact those who take breaks due to parental leave as it will be open to Authorised Education and Training Organisations to be more flexible in terms of how they assure themselves that someone is ready to commence a Bar training course;
- there could be positive impacts on people who have taken career breaks which have been interrupted for medical treatment or due to medical reasons, perhaps related to a disability or pregnancy, as they will no longer need to apply for exemptions for this and it will be open to Authorised Education and Training Organisations to be more flexible in terms of how they assure themselves that someone is ready to commence a Bar training course; and
- one aspect of the proposals appears to have only positive potential impact, and that is the removal of the requirement for a Certificate of Academic Standing to be required for those with a non-law degree wishing to commence a Graduate Diploma in Law.

46. Potential adverse impacts include the following:

- Authorised Education and Training Organisations may choose to maintain a minimum 2:2 standard and this would have no impact on any groups as it would not be a change from the current position. In any event, the number of students in Higher Education overall getting a third-class degree is very low. However, an Authorised Education and Training Organisation may in fact set more stringent requirements than the minimum currently set by the BSB, thus potentially adversely impacting certain groups, depending on how Authorised Education and Training Organisations choose to apply the guidance. This risk already exists as Authorised Education and Training

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<sup>13</sup> [Research into undergraduate degree results by ethnicity over time](#)

Organisations may set entry requirements that are higher than the current prescribed minimum we set. Alternatively, an adverse impact could result if an Authorised Education and Training Organisation were to have admissions requirements that were not stringent enough and were to encourage those to apply who had no real prospect of success;

- The risk of Authorised Education and Training Organisations being either over stringent or not stringent enough in their approach to admissions would need to be mitigated through (i) the nature of the guidance provided to Authorised Education and Training Organisations, and (ii) the requirements in the Authorisation Framework that must be met by Authorised Education and Training Organisations at the point of authorisation or re-authorisation and that are monitored through ongoing supervision. These requirements, relate to the policies and processes that the Authorised Education and Training Organisations have around admissions and should enable us to identify and take action, if necessary, in relation to how an Authorised Education and Training Organisation is meeting the requirements and providing assurances that their policies and processes will not adversely discriminate against any particular groups; and
- it should be noted that Authorised Education and Training Organisations already make admissions decisions so some of the risks that exist around unconscious bias already exist and must be mitigated by our approach to authorisation and supervision.

## Our consultation questions

47. This section contains the questions we are seeking your views on.
48. The responses we receive to these questions will inform our thinking and help our Board to decide whether and how we should change our current approach to academic legal training and making decisions about exemptions and waivers.

**Question 1:** Do you agree with our proposals for changing the definition of academic legal training as described in above in the first key change?

**Question 2:** Do you agree with our proposal to remove Part 2 of the Bar Qualification Manual?

**Question 3:** Do you agree with our proposal that Authorised Education and Training Organisations make admissions decisions based on the revised definition of academic legal training and in accordance with our guidance?

**Question 4:** Do you agree with our proposal to no longer require Certificates of Academic Standing?

**Question 5:** Are there any potential equality impacts that you think we have not considered?

**Question 6:** If there is anything else you would like to comment on in relation to these proposals, please do so here.

## How to respond to this consultation

49. This consultation is open for comment from 9 January 2024 until 5pm on 8 April 2024. You do not need to wait until the deadline to respond to this consultation. Responses can be submitted via the [online form](#) or using the [Word document version](#) and submitted to [AuthorisationsReview@BarStandardsBoard.org.uk](mailto:AuthorisationsReview@BarStandardsBoard.org.uk).
50. If you have a disability and need to access this consultation in an alternative format, such as larger print or audio, please let us know. Please let us know if there is anything else we can do to facilitate feedback other than via written responses.
51. Whatever response your form takes, we will normally want to make it public and attribute it to you, or your organisation, and publish a list of respondents. If you do not want to be named as a respondent to this consultation, please let us know in your response.