

Student experiences of Equality and Diversity on the Bar Training Courses

Technical report prepared by YouGov for the Bar Standards Board

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Research objectives and background

The Bar Standards Board (BSB) is the regulator for barristers in England and Wales and is overseen by the Legal Services Board. The Bar Standards Board is a public body for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 and is bound by, and committed, to meeting the requirements of the General Public Equality Duty. This role includes paying due regards to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and foster good relations between persons.

The Bar Standards Board regulate all stages of Bar training as well as ensuring that there is fair access to the overall profession. In 2017, the Bar Standards Board published *Exploring differential attainment at BPTC and Pupillage* (BSB 2017)¹ the research examined varying attainment levels between certain groups, both on the Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC)² and in obtaining pupillage following graduation. The findings of this research indicated that ethnicity had a significant predictive value for Bar Professional Training Course average module scores (with candidates from minority ethnic backgrounds scoring lower than White candidates), and that ethnicity and socio-economic status both have a significant predictive value for success at obtaining pupillage (with minority ethnic background and low Socio-Economic Status (SES) candidates less likely to obtain pupillage).

This study was accompanied by qualitative research with trainees that identified several themes that underpinned participants' perceptions and experiences of the Bar Professional Training Course, the pupillage application process, and their interaction with the Inns of Court. The *Barriers to training for the Bar* (BSB 2017)³ found that key aspects of trainees'

¹ Exploring differential attainment at BPTC and Pupillage (BSB 2017)

<https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/uploads/assets/f69a9410-c170-4f82-b4b500d5b9e0df8a/Differential-Attainment-at-BPTC-and-Pupillage-analysis.pdf>

² The BPTC was the previous name for the vocational stage of training, prior to the introduction of a number of reforms to vocational training for the Bar in 2020.

³ *Barriers to training for the Bar* (BSB 2017) <https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/uploads/assets/5fadd1cf-19b8-49df-bf2c25a32fa29fd2/Barriers-to-Training-for-the-Bar-research.pdf>

experiences are impacting differently on various groups on the course, in particular those from minority ethnic and lower socio-economic status backgrounds. A lack of information and clarity were identified as key issues, particularly in relation to:

- The Bar Training Course application process;
- The requirements in relation to time commitment, workload, and attendance requirements;
- The content of the course, and tutor and peer-to-peer interactions; and
- Financial challenges, including high course fees, the lack of suitable loans, and the lack of awareness of available funding opportunities.

Participants also identified issues around course delivery and content, including:

- Lack of flexibility in course delivery affecting those with outside commitments and limiting opportunities for work placements and mini-pupillages;⁴
- Poor experience of peer interaction, including the composition of the groups, segmentation of the groups into cliques, and competitive culture that inhibited interaction between groups and individuals;
- Time commitment and the independent nature of study affecting those with outside commitments or less experience of self-directed study;
- The attitude of some tutors, including negative messaging about chances of success on the course and perceived preferential treatment.

As part of the action plan developed in response to the findings from the quantitative and qualitative research reports, the Bar Standards Board made a commitment to undertake further qualitative research to assess how vocational training providers' Equality and Diversity policies impact on student experience. From September 2020, the new Bar training courses were introduced, with quality assurance being monitored against the principles of the Authorisation Framework by newly recruited subject external examiners.

⁴ Mini-pupillages are short work experience placements (ranging from one day to two weeks) that involve shadowing or working with a Barrister

The specific research questions for this qualitative study included:

- **To what extent do training providers' Equality and Diversity Policies have a positive or negative impact on student experience?**
 - What is the students' overall perception of their training providers' Equality and Diversity Policies?
 - How well-informed do students feel about their training providers' E&D Policies and Strategies?
 - Have the students' expectations been met by the training providers?
 - Are there any areas that need improvement?
 - Has students' feedback been sought by the training providers on E&D policies/E&D issues?
- **Are there any key differences in students' perceptions and experience of equality and diversity issues in Bar Training?**
 - What are the key factors that can explain the differences?
- **To what extent do training providers' Equality and Diversity Policies and Practices have a positive impact on student experience?**
 - To what extent do students feel the training providers' E&D support initiatives address their needs?
 - How well-informed do students feel about their training providers' E&D support initiatives?
 - What initiatives go particularly well?
 - What areas need improvement from the students' perspective?
- **Do students feel that the training providers' teaching and learning approaches address the needs of diverse groups of students?**

- Do students feel that learning materials are easily accessible for them? Do they have access to Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)?
- How well-informed do students feel about teaching and learning options that are available to them at their training provider?
- How well-informed are students about reasonable adjustments provided by their course providers?
- How well are reasonable adjustments met?

Method and sample frame

As the study was exploratory and the topic was sensitive, in-depth one on one interviews were deemed the most appropriate method. All interviews were conducted over Zoom by dedicated qualitative experts at YouGov during the months of July, August and September 2021. The interviews lasted 30 – 45 minutes and respondents choose to have their cameras on or off.

40 interviews were conducted with students who were about to or had just finished their Bar Training Course. The sample was identified by the BSB from their contact database. The BSB sent out invites across multiple waves to randomised students who were studying a Bar Training Course at 8 providers, consisting of a mix of some large / medium / small providers, as well as those inside and outside of London. Those with less than 50 students were classified as small by the BSB, those with between 50-149 students were classified as medium and those with 150 or more were classified as large.

The invite text explained the objectives of the research, that the study was being conducted by YouGov, the data protection guidelines followed, timings of the fieldwork and how to take part. Interested contacts were asked to click on a link to an online recruitment survey designed by, and hosted on, YouGov's secure survey platform. The recruitment screener collected the following information from the interested respondents:

- Demographics (including gender, age, sexuality, disability status, ethnicity, parents education level)
- Bar Training Course provider
- Whether they studied full or part time
- Whether they were a home or overseas student
- Their awareness of their providers' Equality and Diversity policies
- An open-ended question to capture their views on the policies
- GDPR compliant research opt-in question
- Their contact details and availability to take part in an interview.

All students who opted into the study were invited to take part in an interview⁵. The interviews were scheduled in by YouGov's recruitment administrator. Bar Standards Board were not informed who had opted into the study. We spoke to students from a mix of educational, demographic and socio-economic backgrounds. An anonymous breakdown of the sample is provided in the annex and the technical report.

The recruitment invite text, screener and discussion guide were designed in partnership with the Bar Standards Board team and can be found in the technical report. The Bar Standards Board briefed the YouGov team on the context of the study and shared draft versions of their internal research on Bar Training Course providers to ensure the guide was relevant and covered similar questions. The discussion guide was made up of a series of open questions focused on the research objectives. Key parts of the Equality and Diversity policies from their Bar Training Course provider were shown to the respondents to aid the discussion, as not all had seen the policy previously.

⁵ Not all respondents who RSVP'd took part in an interview due to competing priorities or changing their mind.

Figure 1: Sample overview

Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Sexuality	Disability	BTC course	BTC time	Overseas
36	Male	English / British	Heterosexual	Yes, limited a lot	London, Large	Full time	Home student
40	Female	English / British	Heterosexual	Yes, limited a little	London, Large	Full time	Home student
24	Female	Indian	Heterosexual	No	London, Large	Full time	Home student
23	Male	Chinese	Heterosexual	No	London, Large	Full time	Overseas (non-EU) student
23	Male	English / British	Heterosexual	No	London, Large	Full time	Home student
27	Female	English / British	Heterosexual	No	London, Large	Full time	Home student
23	Female	English / British	Heterosexual	No	London, Large	Full time	Home student
51	Female	Any other Mixed ethnic background	Heterosexual	No	London, Large	Full time	Home student
23	Female	Indian	Heterosexual	No	London, Large	Full time	Overseas (non-EU) student
22	Female	Indian	Prefer not to say	No	Outside of London, Medium	Full time	Overseas (non-EU) student
24	Female	Indian	Heterosexual	No	Outside of London, Medium	Full time	Overseas (non-EU) student
31	Male	Any other Mixed ethnic background	Heterosexual	No	Outside of London, Medium	Full time	Home student
22	Female	Pakistani	Heterosexual	Yes, limited a little	Outside of London, Medium	Full time	Home student
31	Male	English / British	Prefer not to say	Prefer not to say	Outside on London, Medium	Full time	Home student
28	Male	Bangladeshi	Other	No	Outside on London, Medium	Full time	Overseas (non-EU) student
21	Male	Chinese	Heterosexual	No	Outside on London, Medium	Full time	Overseas (non-EU) student
28	Female	Chinese	Heterosexual	No	Outside on London, Medium	Full time	Overseas (non-EU) student
23	Male	Arab	Heterosexual	No	Outside on London, Medium	Full time	Overseas (non-EU) student
22	Female	Chinese	Bisexual	No	Outside on London, Medium	Full time	Home student
32	Female	English / British	Heterosexual	Yes, limited a lot	London, Large	Full time	Home student
25	Male	Any other ethnic group	Heterosexual	No	London, Large	Full time	Home student
23	Female	Chinese	Heterosexual	No	London, Large	Full time	Overseas (non-EU) student
26	Male	Any other Mixed ethnic background	Prefer not to say	No	London, Large	Full time	Overseas (non-EU) student
27	Female	Any other Black background	Heterosexual	Yes, limited a lot	London, Large	Full time	Home student
22	Male	Chinese	Heterosexual	No	London, Large	Full time	Overseas (non-EU) student
27	Female	English / British	Heterosexual	No	London, Large	Part time	Home student
40	Female	Caribbean	Heterosexual	No	London, Large	Full time	Home student
27	Female	English / British	Bisexual	Prefer not to say	Outside of London, Medium	Full time	Home student
28	Male	English / British	Heterosexual	No	Outside of London, Medium	Full time	Home student
35	Male	English / British	Bisexual	No	Outside of London, Medium	Full time	Home student
22	Male	English / British	Heterosexual	No	Outside of London, Medium	Full time	Home student
29	Male	English / British	Gay or lesbian	Yes, limited a little	Outside of London, Small	Full time	Home student
38	Male	English / British	Gay or lesbian	Yes, limited a little	Outside of London, Small	Full time	Home student
25	Female	Irish	Heterosexual	No	Outside of London, Small	Full time	Home student
23	Female	English / British	Bisexual	No	Outside of London, Large	Full time	Home student
28	Female	Any other White background	Heterosexual	Yes, limited a little	Outside of London, Large	Full time	EU student
23	Male	Chinese	Heterosexual	No	Outside of London, Large	Full time	Overseas (non-EU) student
34	Male	Bangladeshi	Heterosexual	No	Outside of London, Large	Full time	Overseas (non-EU) student
23	Female	Chinese	Heterosexual	No	Outside of London, Large	Full time	Overseas (non-EU) student
27	Male	Chinese	Heterosexual	No	Outside of London, Large	Full time	Home student

Invite text

Below is a copy of the invite text that BSB emailed to students on their contact database, inviting them to take part in a short online screener hosted by YouGov to determine if they were eligible for the study and willing to take part.

Invitation to take part - Bar Training Research

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are invited to take part in a key piece of research on Equality and Diversity in training for the Bar.

There is more information about the research below - please click on this link to complete a few questions to determine if you are eligible for this study:

[LINK TO SCREENER](#)

Please note that the deadline to complete the form is Tuesday, 10th August. If you are selected and take part in an interview, we would be delighted to offer you a £30 Love to Shop retail voucher to thank you for your time.

As part of their work to promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion on the Bar Training Course, the BSB has commissioned YouGov (an independent market research agency) to conduct **one on one interviews with students** who started the Bar Training Course in 2020. The interview will explore your perceptions of Equality and Diversity policies and the extent to which you feel your provider took account of students' views.

We would like to **invite you to take part in a short online survey (2 – 3 minutes) to confirm if you are eligible or not to take part in a 45-minute Zoom (audio only or video) or telephone interview** on this topic. If you are

eligible and willing to take part in an interview, YouGov will then contact you directly to schedule in the interview at a time that suits you between **28th of July and the 20th of August 2021 (Monday – Friday, 9am – 7pm)**.

Please note that the BSB are contacting you on behalf of YouGov to ensure your details are not passed to YouGov without your consent. However, if you decide to participate, **YouGov will not share your contact details with the BSB**, they will not inform the BSB who has taken part in the study, and your anonymity will be preserved.

If you have any queries about this research, you can contact the BSB's research team at research@barstandardsboard.org.uk or Olivia Joyner (Qualitative Director, YouGov) at Olivia.joyner@yougov.com.

Many thanks and kind regards,
BSB and YouGov

Confidentiality

YouGov will manage all aspects of this research to ensure objectivity and confidentiality. On completion of the research a written report – including anonymised quotes – will be produced by YouGov for the Bar Standards Board. Your feedback will not be directly attributed to you / your organisation.

Interviews will be audio recorded for note taking purposes. The recording will not be shared with the Bar Standards Board or any other third parties.

YouGov will store your data securely. The data will not be kept for longer than necessary and won't be used for any other purpose than that stated above. The project is being conducted within the market research industry's codes and guidelines, and in compliance with the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 and all other applicable data protection regulations.

You can read the Bar Standards Board privacy statement here:

<https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/privacy-statement.html>

You can read YouGov's privacy statement here:

<https://yougov.co.uk/about/client-privacy-and-cookies-notice/>

To find out more about YouGov please visit yougov.co.uk.



Recruitment survey questions

Please note these recruitment questions were hosted on YouGov's secure online survey platform.

Introduction:

Thank you for expressing an interest to take part in this research conducted by YouGov (independent market research agency).

As part of their work to promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion on the Bar Training Course, the Bar Standards Board (BSB) has commissioned YouGov to conduct one on one interviews with students who started the Bar Training Course in 2020. The interview will explore your views and any experiences of the provider's Equality and Diversity policies.

YouGov will manage all aspects of this research to ensure objectivity and confidentiality. On completion of the research a written report – including anonymised quotes – will be produced by YouGov for Bar Standards Board. The interview will be recorded for note taking purposes only, the recording will not be shared with any third party. Your feedback will not be directly attributed to you or your Bar Training Course provider by name.

If you are selected and take part in an interview, we would be delighted to offer you a £30 Love to Shop retail voucher to thank you for your time.

So we (YouGov) know who we are speaking to and to assess if you are suitable for this study, we need to ask you for some personal details and questions.

Please note that by submitting your details in this short survey you are giving consent for YouGov to have your personal contact information and to communicate with you for the purpose of this research project only.

YouGov will store your data securely. The data won't be kept for longer than necessary and won't be used for any other purpose than that stated above. The project is being

conducted within the market research industry's codes and guidelines, and in compliance with the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 and all other applicable data protection regulations.

If you have any questions about this research please contact Olivia Joyner (YouGov Qualitative Director) at olivia.joyner@yougov.com.

Demographic screening:

YouGov ask standard demographic questions on the following. People can say 'prefer not to say' as is personal data / sensitive

Please tell us your current age

Are you...?

<1> Male

<2> Female

<3> Other

<4> Prefer not to say

What ethnic group best describes you? Please select one option only.

<1> English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British

<2> Irish

<3> Gypsy or Irish Traveller

<4> Any other White background

<5> White and Black Caribbean

<6> White and Black African

<7> White and Asian

<8> Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background

<9> Indian

<10> Pakistani

<11> Bangladeshi

<12> Chinese

- <13> Any other Asian background
- <14> African
- <15> Caribbean
- <16> Any other Black / African / Caribbean background
- <17> Arab
- <18> Any other ethnic group
- <19> Prefer not to say

Which of the following best describes your sexuality?

- <1> Heterosexual
- <2> Gay or lesbian
- <3> Bisexual
- <4> Other
- <5> Prefer not to say

Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

- <1> Yes, limited a lot
- <2> Yes, limited a little
- <3> No
- <4> Prefer not to say

Which of these best applies to your current employment status?

- <1> Working full time (30 or more hours per week) – either from home or at my work place
- <2> Working part time (8-29 hours a week) – either from home or at my work place
- <3> Working part time (Less than 8 hours a week) – either from home or at my work place
- <4> I have been temporarily furloughed by my employer
- <5> I have taken temporary unpaid leave
- <6> I am currently unemployed
- <7> Full time student
- <8> Retired
- <90> Other

Which, if any, of the following types of school did you attend during your secondary, upper, high school education or equivalent? Please select all that apply.

<1> State school (i.e government funded, following the national curriculum)

<2> Private school (i.e fee-paying, does not need to follow the national curriculum)

<3> Independent school (i.e private school that are overseen by a board of governors or trustees)

<4> Grammar school (i.e requires an 11 plus entrance exam)

<5> Academy / free school (i.e independent from local authorities, run by not-for-profit academy trusts)

<6> Foundation / voluntary school (i.e local authority funded with more freedom over the curriculum)

<7> Faith school (i.e has links with a religion or faith organisation)

<97> Other

<98 xor> Don't know

<99 xor> None of these

#Record for social grade

What is the highest level of education either one of your parents has achieved?

<1> No formal qualifications

<2> Youth training certificate/skillseekers

<3> Recognised trade apprenticeship completed

<4> Clerical and commercial

<5> City & Guilds certificate

<6> City & Guilds certificate - advanced

<7> ONC

<8> CSE grades 2-5

<9> CSE grade 1, GCE O level, GCSE, School Certificate

<10> Scottish Ordinary/ Lower Certificate

<11> GCE A level or Higher Certificate

<12> Scottish Higher Certificate

<13> Nursing qualification (e.g. SEN, SRN, SCM, RGN)

- <14> Teaching qualification (not degree)
- <15> University diploma
- <16> University or CNAAB first degree (e.g. BA, B.Sc, B.Ed)
- <17> University or CNAAB higher degree (e.g. M.Sc, Ph.D)
- <18> Other technical, professional or higher qualification
- <19> Don't know
- <20> Prefer not to say

Which of the following UK universities did you attain your undergrad qualification from? If you received qualifications from multiple universities, please select all that apply.

List of UK universities

- <995 fixed> Other
- <999 xor fixed> None of the above

Have you completed the Bar Training Course or are you still studying?

- <1> Yes, I have recently completed the course
- <2> No, I am still studying
- <3> Other, please specify
- <4> I never started the course

#Screen out if 4

Where did or are you studying the Bar Training Course course?

Was your Bar Training Course part time or full time?

- <1> Part time
- <2> Full time
- <3> Other (please specify)

How aware are you of your Bar Training Course provider's policies and strategies around Equality and Diversity?

- <1> Very aware

- <2> Somewhat aware
- <3> Not sure
- <4> Somewhat unaware
- <5> Totally unaware

Please tell us about your views on your provider's Equality and Diversity policies. Did / do you feel supported by their policies and approaches? Why or why not?

Were or are you currently involved in any of the following activities or roles as a Bar Training Course student? Please select all that apply.

- <1> Student rep
- <2> Part of student union
- <3> Part of an equality and diversity network or forum
- <4> Mentoring
- <5> Reviewed / formally contributed to the provider's Equality and Diversity policies and strategies
- <6> Other (please specify)
- <7> None of the above

Whilst studying have you ever made a complaint or been involved in a complaint process in relation to Equality and Diversity (e.g. bullying, discrimination and harassment)?

- <1> Yes
- <2> No
- <3> Prefer to not say

Invite text:

Thank you for completing the questions, which will enable us to see if you are suitable for this particular research project. We will be in touch via email in the next few weeks, if you are eligible for this study.

The interviews will take place between the XXXX. The duration of the interviews will be 45 minutes long either over the phone or on Zoom. If you are still interested in taking part then please complete the following questions.

Please tell us your name

What is the best email address to contact you on to arrange the interview?

YouGov will be conducting these interviews both as telephone calls and zoom interviews.

Please confirm which method of interview you would prefer:

<1> Telephone interview

<2> Zoom interview (video can be on or off)

<3> Either method

What is the best telephone number to reach you on for the telephone interview?

Please tell us your availability to complete a telephone or Zoom interview between DATES (Monday – Friday, 9am – 7pm). If possible, we'd appreciate it if you could provide a minimum of three times / dates to support us with scheduling.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. If you are eligible for an interview, a member of the YouGov research team will be in touch with you soon to schedule a date / time.

Discussion guide and stimulus

The guide (below) was designed in partnership with the BSB. Key parts of the Bar Training Course Provider's Equality and Diversity policy were included in a stimulus PPT deck, which was shown to respondents to aid the discussion where needed.

Introduction and warm up (4 minutes)

Thank you for taking part in this interview. Today we're going to be talking about your experiences on your Bar Training Course (BTC) – particularly your views on Equality and Diversity policies and implementation. I understand this is a sensitive topic, please feel free to take a break at any stage.

We will **audio record** the interview for note taking purposes but this will not be shared outside of YouGov and will be destroyed within 6 months of the project completing. Your **anonymised comments** will be published as part of a report for the Bar Standards Board but will **not be directly attributed to you**.

There are no right or wrong answers, it's your honest feedback that I'm hoping for today.

Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

- To start with could you please can you **tell me a little bit about you** – your age and educational history (*Confirm their BTC provider, if FT or PT and if completed or still studying*). Probe on motivation for undertaking BTC course.
- How would you briefly describe the **general culture on your BTC?** (Explore positive and negatives)
 - What / who is driving this culture do you think?

Top level awareness of E+D policies and their development and implementation (10-15 minutes)

- **What, if anything, do you know** about your BTC provider's approach to Equality and Diversity (E&D)?
 - How **knowledgeable** do you feel you are? Why is this?
 - Do you **know who to contact** if you had any issues (e.g. if you experienced harassment or discrimination) related to E&D?
- Are you aware how the provider's E&D policies **were developed (and updated)**? *Probe on student involvement, E&D Board / team and their personal involvement*
 - How would / did you feel about contributing to the development of these policies?
 - *If not involved*, would you have liked to have been? Why or why not? If so, how?
- What role do you think your **BTC provider** plays with regards to **implementing the E&D** policies?
 - *Probe roles of E&D board vs. team*
 - Do you have any examples of how they try to imbed the policies and approaches e.g. into teaching, learning and other initiatives?
 - How effective are they at doing this do you feel? Is there anything more you would like them to do? Why?
 - What role would you like them to play? Why?
 - What role do / should students play in this process? How about you personally?
- Have you been offered any **E&D training** by your BTC provider e.g. workshops or webinars?
 - If so, did you attend?
 - How effective was the training? Was it mandatory?
 - Did you give feedback on the training? Why / why not?
 - Would you have wanted to be been offered training? If so, what on specifically and via what method?

Implementation of specific policy elements (15 minutes)

We will now discuss some common elements of Equality and Diversity policies to understand your awareness and perceptions of how they are implemented within your BTC provider organisation.

- What, if anything, do you know about your provider's; approach to **recruitment of students when thinking of equality and diversity policies?**
 - Then show stimulus if available and required to aid the discussion
 - Does this align with your experience?
 - Is anything missing or inadequate?
 - How transparent and fair do you think the recruitment process is? Why do you say this?
 - *Please do share any personal experiences if relevant*

- Are you aware of any **outreach activities** undertaken by your provider to attract a broad demographic of students?
 - Have you, or anyone you know, had any personal experience of these initiatives either before or after enrolling on the BTC course?
 - What role do you think those in the admissions team play / should play?

- Are you aware of any E&D **support initiatives** provided by your BTC provider?
 - Do you have any experience taking part in some of these initiatives? If so, how effective / helpful do you think they are? *Probe on pastoral care, disability support, diversity networks, financial support, career support*
 - What about support for pupillage? Do you think there is enough support for applications?
 - Then show stimulus if available and required to aid the discussion
 - Do you perceive any of these initiatives / adjustments from your provider to be more or less helpful? Why?

- Do you know what **reasonable adjustments** (*Employers must make reasonable adjustments to make sure workers with disabilities, or physical or mental health conditions, are not substantially disadvantaged when doing their jobs*) your provider offers to students who have a long-term health condition / disability? What are your views / experiences of these?

- Is it clear or not what adjustments and supports they do offer?
 - Are the adjustments sufficient or not? What is missing if anything?
 - Then show stimulus if available and required to aid the discussion
- How supportive or not do you think your provider is in offering **flexible learning (e.g. flexible fees, FT / PT courses, discount and refund policies)**? What makes you say this?
 - What are you aware your provider offers (if anything)?
 - Then show stimulus if available and required to aid the discussion
 - How does this make you feel? *E.g. supported or not?*
 - Is anything missing or inadequate?
 - What do you think about flexible learning (e.g. undertaking the course full time or part time and virtual learning)? *Probe on benefits and drawbacks*
How supportive is your provider in offering flexible learning opportunities and tailoring delivery of the course to the needs of different students?

Evaluation / feedback and impacts (10 – 15 minutes)

(Please note some topics may have come out earlier – do not ask again if not needed)

- How do you think **success is monitored and measured** when it comes to E&D initiatives with the provider organisation? *Probe on monitoring and evaluation*
 - Have you been asked to share **feedback on your BTC course**?
 - What form of feedback was it? How frequently was it requested?
 - What impact, if any, do you think sharing your feedback has had? *Probe on whether they feel if it was valued / taken into account*
 - Have you been asked to share **feedback on the E&D policies**?
 - If not, would they like to share their feedback and why so?
 - If yes, what impact, if any, do you feel this had? *Probe on whether they feel if it was valued / taken into account*
- What **impact**, if any, has the equality and diversity policy and practices had on you personally?
 - *Positive or negative*
 - What about your peers on the BTC course?

- What, if anything, do you know about your provider's approach to addressing **bullying, discrimination and harassment**?
 - Then show stimulus if available and required to aid the discussion
 - How does this make you feel? *E.g. supported or not?*
 - Is anything missing or inadequate?
 - Are you aware of the complaints procedure?
 - Have you / anyone you know ever made a complaint? If so, was this complaint resolved and how? If not, would you feel comfortable making a complaint?
- If you feel comfortable please can you tell me about any personal experiences OR your peers experiences with **bullying, discrimination and harassment (BDH) on the BTC** in relation to the support offered (or not) by your provider (rather than the specific event(s)).
 - How would you OR did you deal with an issue around BDH if it occurred during your course? *E.g. who would you tell, what would be the process if known*
 - If so, did you feel supported or not? Why?
 - Do you feel the process set out by your provider is transparent? Why or not?
 - Do you feel the process is fair? Why or why not?

Conclusions (5 minutes)

- On reflection, is there anything that you think your BTC provider **should be doing differently** when it comes to E&D policies and practices? Why?
 - How could they improve and better support students?
- Is there anything that you think they are **doing particularly well** and what you think other providers should do / offer?
- Do you have any **advice / questions for the BSB** in relation to their role in shaping E&D policies and practices for students studying the Bar Training Course?
- Is there anything that you would like to share that we haven't covered in our discussion?

Thank you. We have now come to the end of the interview. I really appreciate you taking the time to share your views with me today. If you have any questions after we get off the call today, please don't hesitate to drop us an email and we'll get back to you.

If you would like any more information, need advice, or support, you can go to any of the following places for help: refer to Mind and Samaritans.

Limitations

With all qualitative studies, the research has some limitations. Firstly, the findings cannot be generalised to Bar Training Course students as a whole, given the small, targeted sample and the conclusions drawn from a limited number of comments. Secondly, participation in the research was voluntary, hence the accounts given may not reflect the majority of Bar Training Course students. Finally, the focus of the interviews was largely on the Equality and Diversity policies of the providers, however many of the sample had limited awareness of the policies meaning that they could not confidently answer all of the questions. For example, not all were aware that generally Equality and Diversity policies and initiatives are institution wide, rather than specific to the Bar Training Course. Additionally, many assumed that the Bar Standards Board had a larger regulatory role to play in relation to the policies.

Analysis approach

Researchers took verbatim notes during the interviews, which were added to an analysis grid that followed the structure of the discussion guide and was split out by providers. Thematic analysis was conducted, and researchers brainstormed the emerging findings internally and with the Bar Standards Board's core project team. When conducting the thematic analysis, YouGov considered the Bar Standards Board research into the coverage of provider's Equality and Diversity policies. The report structure was signed off by the Bar Standards Board.