

BAR
STANDARDS
BOARD

REGULATING BARRISTERS

Bar Course Aptitude Test (BCAT) Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

1. What is the BCAT?

The Bar Course Aptitude Test (BCAT) tests aptitude for critical thinking and reasoning. These are key skills required for the Bar Training Course (BTC). The aim of the test is to ensure that those undertaking the Bar Training Course have the aptitude to succeed on the course.

The test consists of 60 multiple choice questions, lasts 55 minutes and is completed on a computer at an authorised Pearson VUE test centre. The test costs £150 in the EU or £170 if taken in the rest of the world.

The test is in English and does not require any legal knowledge. A full description of the [types of questions used and examples](#) are available on the Bar Standards Board (BSB) website and a [practice test](#) is available on the Pearson VUE website.

2. Who needs to take the BCAT?

A BCAT pass is one of the admissions requirements for the Bar Training Course. You cannot study the Bar Training Course without it. There are no exemptions from the BCAT.

3. I haven't been offered a Bar Training Course place yet, can I take the BCAT?

Yes, you can. Anyone can take the BCAT regardless of whether they have been offered a Bar Training Course place. Please see "[How do I schedule my BCAT?](#)"

4. I already have my IELTS or equivalent scores, do I still have to take the BCAT?

Yes, you do. English language proficiency and BCAT are two separate requirements; all Bar Training Course students must pass the BCAT regardless of their level of English language proficiency or first language.

5. Where can I take the BCAT?

The BCAT is available to be taken both in a test centre or online using Pearson VUE's online testing platform. Further information about their "OnVUE" system can be found on [Pearson VUE's website](#).

Pearson has approximately 720 test centres in 111 countries. A [list of the countries](#) where you can take the BCAT is available on the BSB website. You can also use the [search facility](#) on the Pearson VUE website to locate your nearest test centre.

Not every Pearson VUE test centre offers the BCAT, therefore you may have to travel to take the BCAT. (Only "Pearson Professional Centers" and "Pearson VUE Authorized Test Center Selects" run the BCAT. Please see the [Pearson VUE website](#) for more details.)

6. There isn't an authorised test centre in my country, how do I take the BCAT?

You need to travel to the most convenient test centre in another country. You will not be able to schedule your BCAT online in this case; please [phone Pearson VUE](#) to arrange your BCAT. Please see "[There is no price shown on the exam details page, how do I schedule my BCAT online?](#)" below.

7. How do I schedule my BCAT?

To begin with you will need an account. Go to the [Pearson VUE website](#), and click the "Create account" blue button as pictured below.



REGULATING BARRISTERS

To schedule, reschedule or cancel an exam:

[Sign in](#)

[Create account](#)

- [Forgot my username](#)
- [Forgot my password](#)

8. I am trying to create an account on the Pearson VUE website and I am asked for my BCAT ID number – what is this?

When creating your account on the Pearson VUE website you will be asked “Do you know your BCAT ID?” The BCAT ID is a number generated by the Pearson VUE website and this question is asked to ensure that those who have previously registered do not create a duplicate account.

If you have not previously used the Pearson VUE website you should select “No, I do not know my BCAT ID.”

9. I am being asked “*What is your BPTC application reference number?*” – what is this?

When creating your account on the Pearson VUE website you will be asked “*What is your BPTC application reference number?*”. Bar students no longer receive a BPTC application reference number so this field can be left blank.

Please note, if any characters are entered into this field, even just a space, you will not be able to proceed to the next page of registration. Please ensure this field is left blank.

10. How do I edit my details once I have registered?

When [signed in](#) to your BCAT ID, click on “My Profile” on the right hand side of the page underneath the “My Account” heading. On the right hand side are buttons labelled “Edit”. Click on the “Edit” button alongside the details you would like to edit.

11. How much does the BCAT cost?

The BCAT costs £150 if taken in a test centre in the EU and £170 if taken in the rest of the world.

12. I want to take the test in Bangladesh but the website won’t let me book. How do I schedule a test in Bangladesh?

Due to credit card irregularities, online bookings for tests in Bangladesh are currently blocked. Please email BCAT@BarStandardsBoard.org.uk stating you would like to sit in Bangladesh and we will assist you with booking your test. Please see “[How do I pay for my BCAT?](#)”

13. There is no price shown on the exam details page, how do I schedule my BCAT online?

If your home address is in a country that does not have an authorised test centre, no price will be shown on the exam details page. You have two choices:

- (1) edit your home address to a country that has an authorised test centre, schedule your test online and then edit your home address again, or;
- (2) book your test by phoning your nearest [Pearson VUE customer service centre](#).

14. How do I pay for my BCAT?

Immediately after scheduling your BCAT you pay via the secure online payment facility on the Pearson VUE website.

Candidates in Bangladesh will be unable to pay for their test via the Pearson VUE website. Please email BCAT@barstandardsboard.org.uk and we will assist you with paying for your test.

The online payment facility is not available in Cameroon, Ghana, Lebanon, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda. For these countries please contact your [preferred test centre](#) to arrange payment and schedule your BCAT.

If you have any queries regarding payment please [contact](#) your nearest Pearson VUE customer services team.

15. When can I take the BCAT?

The opening and closing dates of the BCAT are confirmed on the [BSB](#) and [Pearson VUE](#) websites.

We strongly recommend taking the BCAT earlier rather than later in case a re-take is necessary. Please see "[If I fail the BCAT, can I re-take it?](#)" below.

In previous years the BCAT has been fully booked in the run up to the closing date. If no slots are available, you will not be able to take the test and will not be admitted to the Bar Training Course even if you meet all the other requirements.

16. I have a disability, how do I apply for accommodations / reasonable adjustments?

If you would like to request reasonable adjustments (accommodations), please read the reasonable adjustment policy before completing the reasonable adjustment form.

For reasonable adjustments such as a Reader, a Recorder or a Braille test, the Bar Standards Board and Pearson VUE require **six weeks' notice** to put these in place for your test. For reasonable adjustments such as extra time or a separate room, the Bar Standards Board and Pearson VUE require **two weeks' notice** to put these in place for your test. The Bar Standards Board and Pearson VUE will try and accommodate all reasonable adjustment requests, but reserve the right to decline requests that do not provide the notice periods indicated above.

Do **NOT** book the BCAT online, this will result in you arriving at the test centre to find you are booked for a standard test with no reasonable adjustments.

Once completed, please email the reasonable adjustment form to BCAT@barstandardsboard.org.uk together with supporting documentation.

17. How can I prepare for the BCAT?

A full description of the [types of questions used and examples](#) are available on the BSB website and a [practice test](#) is available on the Pearson VUE website.

18. What happens if I apply for the Bar Training Course but do not pass the BCAT before the start of the course?

You will not be able to enrol on the Bar Training Course if you have not passed the BCAT by the test closing date.

If you have extenuating circumstances you can apply for a late take of the BCAT. Please see "[I was prevented from taking the BCAT before the closing date, what do I do?](#)" below and also the BCAT extenuating circumstances policy on the website.

19. What do I need to bring to the BCAT?

You do not need any equipment to take the BCAT but you will need two valid forms of ID, a primary government issued ID with name, photo, signature and date of birth and a secondary ID with two out of the following three components in any combination: name, photo and signature.

Please note these must be original and valid documents (e.g. valid photo driving licence, valid passport, or valid biometric permit). You will receive confirmation of the ID requirements once you schedule your test. A non-exhaustive list of acceptable primary and secondary IDs is available in the [BCAT Handbook](#) on the BSB website.

20. How long is the BCAT?

There is a time limit of **55** minutes for the BCAT, this includes reading the instructions and examples. If you finish all the test sections before the time is up, you can review all your answers for the whole test before finally submitting them for scoring. After the test you will be asked to complete an optional 5 minute survey to evaluate your BCAT experience. This survey is not part of your test time.

A full description of the [types of questions used and examples](#) are available on the BSB website. You are also advised to try the [practice test](#) available on the Pearson VUE website to familiarise yourself with the BCAT and its timings.

21. Is the BCAT available in different languages?

The test is only available in English.

22. Will I be allowed to use a dictionary when I take the BCAT?

No.

23. What is the pass mark for BCAT?

BCAT scores are measured on a scale which ranges from 20 to 80. The lowest passing score is 45. Candidates need to answer more than half the questions correctly to pass.

24. When will I know if I have passed?

You will be told at the test centre and given a printed score report. Your score report will confirm your test score and score category. The four score categories are Fail, Pass (Marginal), Pass and Pass (Strong). The likely correlation between the BCAT score and a student's performance on the Bar Training Course for each score category is given. The BSB recommends that you consider these implications carefully before proceeding with your Bar Training Course.

The BSB only requires that you pass the BCAT in order to enrol on the Bar Training Course. Your AETO will only be told if you passed or failed the BCAT; you are under no obligation to declare your score to anyone.

Ensure you collect your score report before you leave the test centre as it is your proof that you have passed the BCAT. Pearson VUE will charge £25 to provide you with a replacement score report.

25. How long are BCAT passes valid for?

If you passed the BCAT before 2016 or from 19 December 2016, your pass is valid for five years.

For candidates who took the BCAT between April and August 2016:

- I. BCAT passes scoring 45 or more are valid for five years.
- II. BCAT passes scoring 44 or less were only valid to enrol on the Bar Training Course in September 2016.

26. If I fail the BCAT, can I re-take it?

Yes. Candidates are allowed three attempts in one calendar year, starting from the date they first take the test. For example, if a candidate takes the test on 2 February 2021, they are allowed two further attempts until 1 February 2022. Candidates must wait 48hrs before re-taking the BCAT.

You must wait 48hrs before retaking the test.

There is no reduction in fee for retaking the BCAT.

27. Do I need to notify the BSB when I have taken the BCAT?

No.

28. Do I need to notify my Bar Training Course AETO I have taken the BCAT?

Yes. Your Bar Training Course AETO will need to know the registration number and validation number printed at the top and bottom of your score report. (Ensure you collect your score report before you leave the Pearson VUE test centre, as Pearson VUE will charge you £25 to provide a replacement.) Your AETO will use these numbers to authenticate your result on the Pearson VUE website.

29. I've lost my score report, how do I obtain a replacement?

You will need to contact the Pearson VUE customer service centre in your regional area, the numbers for each region can be found on the [Pearson VUE website](#). Pearson VUE charges £25 to provide you with a replacement score report.

30. I missed my scheduled BCAT, what do I do?

If you were prevented from attending the test due to unexpected circumstances, outside of your control, you can apply for a free re-take under the extenuating circumstances policy. Please read the policy before completing the extenuating circumstances form.

Notice period: Forms must be submitted no later than **five working days** after any scheduled test taking that was affected by extenuating circumstances.

Once completed, please email your extenuating circumstances form and supporting evidence to BCAT@barstandardsboard.org.uk.

Each application will be considered on an individual basis according to the criteria in the [extenuating circumstances policy](#).

31. I was prevented from taking the BCAT before the closing date, what do I do?

If you were prevented from scheduling your BCAT before the closing date due to unexpected circumstances, outside of your control, you can apply for a late take under the extenuating circumstances policy. Please read the policy before completing the extenuating circumstances form.

Notice period: Forms must be submitted no later than **five working days** after the closing date.

Once completed, please email your extenuating circumstances form and supporting evidence to BCAT@barstandardsboard.org.uk.

Each application will be considered on an individual basis according to the criteria in the [extenuating](#) circumstances policy.

32. How do I get more information if my question is not answered on this website?

For questions about test centres, registering for the test and payment queries please contact [Pearson VUE customer service](#) for your relevant region.

For questions about the test itself, extenuating circumstances or reasonable adjustments please email BCAT@barstandardsboard.org.uk.