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BPTC Key Statistics 2020

Executive Summary and Covering Note

Executive Summary

Demographics

- **Overall enrolment:** 1753 students enrolled on the BPTC in 2018/19. This was the highest figure for enrolment since the BPTC course began in 2011 and an increase of 134 students compared to 2017/18, the second largest year on year increase in enrolment since 2011. Of the 2018/19 enrolled students, 1591 were full-time and 162 were part-time on the course. The number of part-time students was down year on year (there were 13 fewer part-time students enrolled in 2018/19) and has shown a downward trend since 2011 when 255 part-time students enrolled on the course.
- **Domicile:** The number of UK/EU domiciled students and overseas students both showed an increase from 2017/18 to 2018/19 (from 768 to 824 for overseas students, and from 851 to 928 for UK/EU students). The number of UK/EU students who enrolled in the 2018/19 academic year is almost back up to levels last seen in 2013/14. Overall, around 52 per cent of BPTC students enrolled in 2018/19 were domiciled in the UK prior to enrolment, around one per cent were domiciled in the EU, and 47 per cent were domiciled outside the UK or EU. When the BPTC started in 2011/12, overseas students made up around a third of those on the course.
- **Gender:** The percentage of female BPTC students by year of enrolment has increased since the BPTC was introduced in 2011/12 from 52 per cent to 56.5 per cent in 2018/19 (55 per cent of overseas students, and 58 per cent of UK/EU students).
- **Ethnicity:** There was a slight increase in the percentage of UK/EU domiciled Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students on the BPTC in comparison to white UK/EU domiciled students for 2018/19. 40 per cent of UK/EU students who enrolled in 2018/19 of the 93 per cent who provided information on ethnicity were from a BAME background. This was up by around three percentage points compared to 2017/18, and around 10 percentage points higher than that seen from 2012/13 to 2014/15. The majority of 2018/19

overseas domiciled students were from an Asian background (around eighty per cent of overseas domiciled students).

- **Disability:** Around 14 per cent of UK/EU domiciled students and five per cent of overseas domiciled students who enrolled on the BPTC in 2018/19 had declared a disability.
- **First degree classification:** Around 30 per cent of UK/EU domiciled students who provided information on degree classification and enrolled on the BPTC in 2018/19 had gained a first-class degree; 54 per cent of them had gained an upper-second class degree; 11 per cent had gained a lower-second class degree, and around five per cent had another degree classification.
- The proportion of UK/EU students with a first-class degree enrolling on the BPTC has increased by around 10 percentage points since 2011/12, and the proportion with a lower second class degree has decreased year on year over the same period by around five percentage points.
- Around 11 per cent of overseas domiciled students who enrolled on the BPTC in 2018/19 had a first class degree (compared to two per cent in 2011/12). The proportion of overseas students with a lower second class degree upon enrolment has decreased from around a half in 2011/12 to around a quarter in 2018/19.

BPTC outcomes: as of January 2020

- **UK/EU students:** Around 70 per cent of full-time UK/EU domiciled students that enrolled in 2018/19 had passed the BPTC as of January 2020; with the remainder mostly yet to complete the course. Around nine per cent received an Outstanding, around 50 per cent received a Very Competent, and around 10 per cent received a Competent overall grade.
- For 2017/18 enrolled UK/EU domiciled students (including part-time), just under 80 per cent had passed the course, just under 14 per cent were yet to complete it, and around 5 per cent had failed the course; an additional 4 per cent had withdrawn from the BPTC.

- **Overseas students:** Around 60 per cent of full-time overseas domiciled students that enrolled in 2018/19 had passed the course as of January 2020; with the remainder mostly yet to complete the course. Around two per cent received an Outstanding, around 40 per cent received a Very Competent, and around 18 per cent received a Competent grade overall. For 2017/18 enrolled students (including part-time), around 80 per cent had passed the course, 10 per cent were yet to complete it, and around 9 per cent had failed it.

BPTC graduates who have commenced pupillage: as of March 2020

- Overall, around 43 per cent of UK/EU domiciled BPTC graduates who enrolled on the course from 2014/15-2018/19 (2014-2018) had commenced pupillage. The relevant figure increases to around 47 per cent when looking at those enrolled from 2014-2017 only, as it can take some time for more recent graduates to gain pupillage. The likelihood of gaining pupillage varies widely by degree class and BPTC overall grade in particular, with ethnicity and first degree institution also appearing to be influencing factors.
- Those with an Outstanding overall BPTC grade were the most likely to have commenced pupillage. Around 85 per cent of such UK/EU domiciled graduates with a first-class degree and 79 per cent with an upper-second class degree had commenced pupillage. For UK/EU BPTC graduates with a Very Competent overall BPTC grade; around half of them with a first-class degree, 40 per cent of them with an upper-second class degree, and around 22 per cent of them with a lower-second class degree had commenced pupillage. The proportion of UK/EU domiciled graduates with a Competent overall grade who had commenced pupillage were far lower (12 per cent or less for all degree classifications).
- **Domicile:** 1375 out of the 1420 BPTC graduates (around 97%) from 2014-2018 cohorts that had commenced pupillage as of 31 March 2020 were domiciled in the UK/EU prior to BPTC enrolment.
- **Gender:** Around 55 per cent of all UK/EU BPTC graduates enrolled from 2014-2018 were female, and 45 per cent were male. Of those

from this cohort that went on to commence pupillage, around 53 per cent were female, and around 47 per cent were male. Males with a first-class degree appeared to be slightly more likely than females to gain pupillage when controlling for BPTC grade. The opposite was seen for those with an upper-second class degree.

- **Ethnicity:** When controlling for degree class and BPTC grade, UK/EU BPTC graduates from BAME backgrounds who enrolled from 2014-2018 were less likely to have commenced pupillage than those from white backgrounds. For example, of UK/EU domiciled BPTC graduates with an upper-second class degree and Very Competent overall BPTC grade, 45 per cent of them from white backgrounds had commenced pupillage, compared to around 25 per cent of the BAME cohort with the same degree class/BPTC grade.
- **Disability:** Overall it seems that similar proportions of those with a declared disability and those without a declared disability gain pupillage once degree class/BPTC grade are taken into account.
- **First degree institution:** When controlling for BPTC overall grade and first-degree classification, those who attended universities classified in the Top 10 in the UK according to The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide, were more likely to have commenced pupillage compared to attendees of universities classified in the next forty; who were in turn more likely to have commenced pupillage than those attending other universities.
- For example, 55 per cent of those with an *upper second class degree* and *Very Competent* BPTC grade who went to a UK university ranked in the *top 10* had commenced pupillage. In comparison around 48 per cent of those with a *first class degree* and a *Very Competent* overall grade on the BPTC who went to a university ranked *11-50* in the UK had commenced pupillage.

Introduction to the BPTC Key Statistics report

This report provides key statistics relating to students enrolled on the Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC), which is the vocational stage of training for the Bar, at the time of writing in April 2020. The BPTC is delivered at a number of universities across England and Wales, and the data in this report reflect data submitted to the Bar Standards Board by these BPTC providers as at February 2020.

The BPTC is delivered in a range of ways:

- full-time over one academic year, or part-time over two academic years;
- as a stand-alone qualification or integrated with a qualifying law degree (as offered by the University of Northumbria at Newcastle).

From September 2020, the BPTC will no longer exist in its current format as it will be replaced by a number of different courses authorised by the Bar Standards Board which all lead to Call to the Bar. Details about the BPTC and training to become a barrister in England and Wales, including details on the future of training for the Bar can be found on our [website](#). Details on which providers have been authorised to provide training to become a barrister in England and Wales from September 2020 can be found [here](#).

This report is divided into four parts:

- Part 1** Key statistics aggregated for all providers (full-time and part-time BPTC students);
- Part 2** Key statistics by provider (full-time BPTC students);
- Part 3** Key statistics by provider (part-time BPTC students);
- Part 4** BPTC graduate progression statistics - both aggregated and by provider (full-time and part-time BPTC students).

The BPTC cohorts included in Parts 1-3 are as follows:

- 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19 full-time students;
- 2016/18, 2017/19, 2018/20 part-time students, with data on student demographics only for those in the 2018/20 cohort, as results are not yet available for this cohort.

In Part 4 the 2014/15 and 2015/16 full-time and 2014/16 and 2015/17 part-time cohorts are also included in order to give a more detailed picture of statistics on pupillage for those who have graduated from the BPTC.

Important notes regarding data use and interpretation

In some instances, we have not been provided with information on some students regarding their characteristics and/or BPTC outcomes. Such cases are not represented in charts throughout the report if applicable. Including instances where there is no information on a characteristic/outcome can make it difficult to compare between years and cohorts for the categories being presented.

From 2016/17 the rules on the number of re-sits allowed per student for each module on the BPTC changed. Previously students were only allowed one re-sit per module, but from 2016/17 students have been allowed two. This means as of the time the data for this report were collected, there had not been enough sittings for it to be possible for any 2018/19 students to fail the entire course via failing exam sittings. This affects the comparison between years for the charts on BPTC outcomes.

Please take into consideration the difficulty in comparing data between years; the data refer to cohorts enrolled at different points in time and this affects the proportion of students yet to complete the BPTC and the relative proportions of those achieving each overall grade, withdrawing from, or failing the BPTC, as well as the amount of time those that have passed the course have had in which to gain pupillage.

It should also be noted that it is worthwhile to refer to the x-axis of the charts representing student numbers in order to get a better context of the size of the cohort being represented.

Please also take into consideration the difficulty in drawing inferences from these data, as there are many factors involved in determining student success on the BPTC as well as progression onto pupillage following completion of the course.

Owing to a discrepancy in the data, throughout the report the domicile data used for 2017 enrolled students at BPP institutions are that which was provided to us by students when taking the BCAT.

Data presentation

The data in the main body of the report (Parts 1-4) are presented in charts with most measures indicating both numbers and percentages of BPTC students. Providing both helps to illustrate population size and give greater context to the percentages displayed.

The raw data can be found in the appendices in an anonymised form, in compliance with the anonymisation code of practice outlined below. In the appendices, where we do not have data (either because the provider did not collect the data, or the student did not provide the data) we have used the words "Not provided". However, in the charts, we have not included individuals where data on one or more characteristics have not been provided, as including it would lead to greater difficulty in making direct comparisons between groups.

In this report "Not yet complete" means the student has either not taken all the assessments, not passed all the assessments, deferred one or more assessments to a future year, or been permitted to suspend their studies and resume at a specified point. Students who have withdrawn from the course have not completed all the assessments and therefore have no overall grade; in some cases, these students may re-enrol. A student who has failed the BPTC may re-enrol to take the entire course again. In cases where charts relate to students domiciled in the UK/EU or overseas only, this refers to the

region in which the student was domiciled prior to enrolment on the BPTC. The domicile codes used in the aggregation of the data are taken from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). The terminology used in chart titles regarding domicile is as follows:

- UK/EU domiciled students;
- Overseas domiciled students;
- Students from all domiciles.

Regarding changes to this report, Chart 2.A.6.2 has been taken out this year, owing to small numbers of UK/EU students with a lower second class degree at the majority of BPTC providers. In addition, a new chart in Part 4 has been included (4. A. 7. 2), showing proportions of UK/EU domiciled BPTC graduates gaining pupillage by degree class, university attended, BPTC grade and ethnicity.

Data sources

The data in the report were collected from:

- Individual BPTC providers;
- the BPTC online applications system, BarSAS, and
- pupillage registration data from our database.

Validation has been carried out on returned data based on comparisons against data already held by the Bar Standards Board and by asking BPTC providers to verify the information that was provided.

We have taken considerable care and attention in the compilation of the data provided to us and we have sought to provide a purely objective presentation of the data. Missing data and/or new information received may affect the representation of the data presented in this report and efforts will be made to incorporate any such data in future reports. Despite our best efforts and quality control procedures, mistakes can happen. When they do, corrections will be made in a timely manner, announced and clearly explained to users.

Data protection and confidentiality

We take our responsibilities for data protection very seriously and have made every attempt to make sure that individual students cannot be identified from the data included in this publication. We have adhered to the *Anonymisation: managing data protection risk code of practice* report from the Information Commissioner's Office, (November 2012) and applied anonymisation techniques where appropriate.

An outline of the anonymisation process is given in Appendix II.

The data in this report were compiled by staff of the Bar Standards Board. Providers were given the opportunity to validate the data they submitted.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to BPTC providers for their cooperation in providing the majority of data used in this report.

Key to providers of the BPTC

Code	Name of provider	Law school webpage	Notes
BPP	BPP Law School	https://www.bpp.com/courses/law	In 2018/19, BPP offered the BPTC at five sites: Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, London and Manchester. The course at BPP Birmingham started in September 2015, and the delivery of the BPTC at BPP's Bristol site commenced in September 2017.
CAR	Cardiff Law School	www.cardiff.ac.uk/law-politics	
CLS	City Law School, The	https://www.city.ac.uk/about/schools/law	
MMU	Manchester Metropolitan University	www2.mmu.ac.uk/law/	
NTU	Nottingham Law School	https://www.ntu.ac.uk/study-and-courses/academic-schools/nottingham-law-school	
UNN	University of Northumbria at Newcastle	https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/about-us/academic-departments/northumbria-law-school	
UOL	University of Law, The	https://www.law.ac.uk/	The University of Law offered the BPTC at three sites, London, Birmingham and Leeds. The course offered at Leeds started in September 2016.
UWE	University of the West of England	www1.uwe.ac.uk/bl/bls	

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