

Does the Bar Training Course sufficiently prepare prospective barristers for online advocacy and an increasingly digitalised workplace?

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Abstract – This report focuses upon whether the Bar Training Course, part of the vocational component of the path to becoming a barrister, sufficiently prepares prospective barristers for online advocacy and an increasingly digitalised workplace. An important question in light of the changes taking place at the Bar and in the world around it. The first part of this report provides a contextual background to the research question, via a PESTLE analysis of the Bar and a literature review which covers the broad themes behind this question including the digitalisation of work, the digitalisation of the Bar and legal profession, and the legal profession/training in England and Wales. The second part of this report contains the qualitative data collected from the interviews conducted in order to answer the report question. It provides an overview of the interviews, the themes and general reflections from them. Ultimately concluding that the Bar Training Course does not sufficiently prepare prospective barristers for online advocacy and an increasingly digitalised workplace, as a result, recommendations for the BSB and the BTC providers are provided.

Introduction

The Bar is an old profession filled with fluttering gowns, wigs and wood-panelled courtrooms. Despite its long history, the Bar has drastically changed. Thus, it's essential the Bar Training Course (henceforth BTC) is assessed to establish it sufficiently prepares prospective barristers, which is the aim of this report. BTC is part of the vocational component of becoming a barrister, alongside the twelve qualifying sessions, which enable an individual to be called to the Bar of England and Wales.¹ Its content is set by the Bar Standards Board (henceforth BSB.)² Currently the course is made up of eight components, of which two (Civil Litigation and Criminal Litigation) are centrally assessed by the BSB. Other components must comply with guidelines contained in the BSB's Professional Standards, their assessments are set by the Authorised Education and Training Organisations (henceforth AETOs). The BTC began teaching in September 2020,³ the result of BSB's 2014 Future Bar Training Programme review.

The report begins with a PESTLE analysis of the Bar and then a literature review to set the scene for this report. The rest of the report details the qualitative research undertaken to address the research question. It also provides an overview of the interviews, themes, reflections, and recommendations. It concludes that the BTC does not sufficiently prepare prospective barristers for online advocacy and an increasingly digitalised workplace.

Digitalisation, education and the Bar

PESTLE Analysis of the Bar

As the amount of forces upon the Bar is vast, for simplicity, a PESTLE⁴ analysis enables the differing factors to be established, and crucially, a judgment made on the most influential.

¹ Bar Standards Board 'Becoming a barrister: an overview' (2021) <<https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/training-qualification/becoming-a-barrister.html>> accessed 5th July 2021.

² Bar Standards Board 'Training & Qualification' (2021) <<https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/training-qualification.html>> accessed 5th July 2021.

³ Bar Standards Board 'Authorised Education and Training Organisations' (2020) <<https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/training-qualification/becoming-a-barrister/vocational-component/aetos-from-2020.html>> accessed 5th July 2021.

⁴ CIPD 'Pestle analysis' (10th November 2020) <<https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/strategy/organisational-development/pestle-analysis-factsheet>> accessed 8th July 2021.



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Diagram 1 – PESTLE Analysis of the Bar

The PESTLE analysis demonstrates that economic, social and technological factors are currently having the largest effect on the Bar. This is why this research focuses upon whether the BTC sufficiently prepares prospective barristers for online advocacy and an increasingly digitalised workplace. These inquiries embody the challenges of these three factors, reminding the Bar of the importance of addressing them within the course.

Digitalisation of work

To define an increasingly digitalised workplace, an assessment of the general digitalisation of work was made, finding two main themes - that the digitalisation of work has occurred, and continues, the extent of the impact of digitalisation is debated.

Firstly, the literature agrees that digitalisation of work has occurred by citing that early 'technological developments' like 'mobile phones and the Internet' changed 'the ways in which professional activities' were 'carried out.'⁵ It then demonstrates that this continues because of the 'increase in performance and decrease in the cost of microprocessors.'⁶

Though, the real dispute is over the extent of its impact, the views surrounding it are a spectrum. At one end, is the belief that the digitalisation 'will reshape' work forever.⁷ In the middle, the belief that only certain groups will be affected, for example digital nomadism is seen as affecting 'executives and professionals.'⁸ Then at the other end, there is firm opposition to digitalisation being inevitable, as it is 'constrained' by various factors 'that shape its implementation.'⁹ Whilst the views are starkly different, all lack qualitative and quantitative data as these views are opinions on how the future may look.

Overall, what the digitalisation of work shows is that the Bar is influenced by this swirling climate of digitalisation, but the extent of its impact remains debated.

Digitalisation of the Bar and Legal Profession

As there is no literature on the digitalisation of the Bar, general developments of digitalisation are used to contextualise innovations of the Bar and the legal profession. Firstly, general developments of 2000s which impacted the Bar and legal profession included the introduction

⁵ Jeremy Aroles, Nathalie Mitev and François-Xavier de Vaujany 'Mapping themes in the study of new work practices' (2019) 34 *New Technology, Work and Employment* 285, 285.

⁶ Eurofund Automation, digitisation and platforms: Implications for work and employment (2018) *Publications Office of the European Union*, Luxembourg, 1.

⁷ Chris Warhurst and Will Hunt 'The digitalisation of future work and employment: Possible impact and policy responses' 2019/05 *JRC Working Papers Series on Labour, Education and Technology*, 3.

⁸ Gérard Valenduc & Patricia Vendramin 'Digitalisation, between disruption and evolution' (2017) 23 *Etui* 121, 130.

⁹ Peter Fleming 'Robots and Organization Studies: Why robots might not want to steal your job' (2019) 40 *Organization Studies* 23, 31.

of LinkedIn,¹⁰ Facebook,¹¹ Instagram¹² and Twitter¹³ which encouraged people's lives to move online. This was supported by the increasing use of the internet (by 2019, 91% of adults in the UK were internet users¹⁴) which further forced the Bar to develop to keep up. One such development, Clerksroom Direct, launched in 2015, enables 'anyone to search for and instruct a barrister directly.'¹⁵ BillyBot, launched in 2017, is a junior clerk robot who chats online to people.¹⁶ Whilst neither have drastically taken off, they show that digitalisation of the Bar reflects the legal profession's utilisation of digital technology to meet with the needs of clients looking for 'whole of business advice.'¹⁷ Though, has been pushed by the Big Four moving the 'legal world's.....terrain,'¹⁸ which has trickled down¹⁹ to the Bar, resulting in developments like BillyBot and Clerksroom.

Though, the digitalisation of the Bar has been pushed by the pandemic. s.53-57 *Coronavirus Act 2020*, enabled courts and tribunals to use video and audio technology to conduct hearings, meaning nearly all hearings in England and Wales during 2020/21 were conducted like this.²⁰ Despite being emergency measures, the Select Committee on the Constitution noted that the changes from the pandemic need to be 'sustained in the longer term.'²¹ However, this will only be driven by a desire for change from the stakeholders. There is yet to be conclusive research about this desire for future digitalisation of the courts.

Currently, the theme within the literature focuses on the reluctance to accelerate legal technology. Recent research conducted found that there is only 'modest' take up of 'many

¹⁰ Launched in 2003 - Erik Gregerson 'LinkedIn' (8th July 2021 Britannica) <<https://www.britannica.com/topic/LinkedIn>> accessed 27th July 2021.

¹¹ Launched in 2004 - History 'Facebook launches' (2nd February 2021) < <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/facebook-launches-mark-zuckerberg>> accessed 27th July 2021.

¹² Launched in 2006 - History 'Twitter launches' (12th July 2021) < <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/twitter-launches>> accessed 27th July 2021.

¹³ Launched in 2010 - George D. Harrison 'The History of Instagram' (17th May 2020 izood) < <https://instazood.com/blog/the-history-of-instagram/>> accessed 27th July 2021.

¹⁴ Office for National Statistics 'Internet users, UK:2019' (24th May 2019) < <https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/itandinternetindustry/bulletins/internetusers/2019>> accessed 27th July 2021.

¹⁵ Clerksroom 'General Information' (2021) < <https://www.clerksroom.com/profile?type=services&fl=M&pid=2016>> accessed 27th July 2021.

¹⁶ Julian Webb 'Legal Technology: The Great Disruption?' (2020) 897 *University of Melbourne Legal Studies Research Paper* 1, 17.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 17.

¹⁸ David B Wilkins and Maria J Esteban Ferrer 'The Integration of Law into global business solutions: the rise, transformation and potential future of the Big Four Accountancy networks in the global legal services market' (2018) 43 *Law & Social Inquiry* 981, 1009.

¹⁹ Jamie Susskind on The Pupillage Podcast 'The Future of the Bar' (October 2019) <<https://open.spotify.com/episode/0XvVkuYyEgSndiXVmdsSUp>> accessed 2nd August 2021, 4.00 – 4.10.

²⁰ Select Committee on the Constitution, *COVID-19, and the Courts* (HL 2019-21 Paper 257)

²¹*Ibid*, para.298.

forms' of AI amongst solicitors.²² This is reflective of digitalisation of the legal profession being 'unevenly distributed,' and dependent on sector and geography.²³ So, the Bar could do more, as solicitors are digitalising faster, but ultimately their traditional workplace, the courts, has not been digitalised until recently. Therefore, the digitalisation of the legal profession is very dependent on the aspect of the profession you are talking about and which part of England and Wales.

Legal education/training in England and Wales

As the BTC is part of legal education/training at the Bar, the general literature of legal education/training must be considered. One of the themes is the lack of innovation. A major innovation of the BPTC (predecessor of BTC) was City Law School's integration of Poll Everywhere into teaching civil litigation,²⁴ which merely made sessions more engaging. The BTC has gone a little further, as the first component of ICCA's Bar Course is delivered online.²⁵ Yet, this innovates how the course is taught so law schools remain 'conventional in structure and content.'²⁶ Though, recently content has been innovated as the *Unlocking the potential of AI* project at the University of Oxford saw a trial module 'Law and Computer Science' bring together postgraduates in Law and Computer Science.²⁷ However, this is not a widespread change, conducive of innovation, so a lack of innovation remains.

Another theme is the lack of reviews into legal education/training. The most recent was conducted in 2013 - *LETR Setting Standards The Future of Legal Services Education and Training Regulation in England and Wales*²⁸, which investigated the impact of the *Legal Services Act 2007* upon legal education/training. However, it was reliant on the goodwill of the regulatory to take it further. The report broke a twenty-five-year gap since the last review.²⁹ Whilst there have been important reviews into legal education/training, they are seismic and all-encompassing either implementing drastic change or investigating the impact of changes.

²² Marik Sako, John Armour, Richard Parnham 'LawTech Adoption and Training Findings from a survey of solicitors in England and Wales' (*University of Oxford: Oxford* 2020), 17.

²³ Julian Webb (n 16), 17.

²⁴ Dominic Pates 'On AI Labs, mobiles for barristers, and co-created infographics' (18th November 2020 City University of London) <<https://blogs.city.ac.uk/learningatcity/2020/11/18/on-ai-labs-mobiles-for-barristers-and-co-created-infographics/>> accessed 13th August 2021.

²⁵ The Inns of Court College of Advocacy 'ICCA Proposes New Bar Course' (10th May 2019) <<https://www.icca.ac.uk/icca-launches-bar-course/>> accessed 27th July 2021.

²⁶ Alison Bone and Paul Maharg 'Introduction: Legal education assessment in England' in Alison Bone and Paul Maharg *Critical Perspectives on the Scholarship of Assessment and Learning in Law* (1st edn ANU Press 2019) 15.

²⁷ See University of Oxford Department of Computer Science 'Law and computer science: 2020-2021' (2021) <<https://www.cs.ox.ac.uk/teaching/courses/2020-2021/LawandCS/>> accessed 10th August 2021.

²⁸ (2013)

²⁹ See The Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Legal Education and Conduct First Report on Legal Education and Training (*Millbank* 1996).

There is no precedent for continually reviewing legal education/training on a smaller scale, which is significant to this research as it's based on this approach.

Equally, there is a tug of war between education/training providers and the profession over balancing academic and practical skills. The profession is concerned that 'new lawyers are unprepared for economic and technological reality'³⁰ whereas providers are worried that theoretical/social justice subjects are being pushed out in favour of practical subjects,³¹ The latest research reflects this because it is divided over where practical skills should be taught, particularly technological skills. The research cites CPD courses as the best as they meet 'the continuously changing' environment but further research is needed.

Finally, the literature is critical of the cost of education. A three-year LLB in England and Wales costs over £27,000³², with the postgraduate professional courses costing between £10,000 - £18,000.³³ These high costs draw criticism over how well the courses prepare students, something which this research is doing as well. Though, such criticism is not limited to legal education/training as broadly there is criticism over the cost of higher education.

To conclude, the literature review has provided a background to the research, presenting a PESTLE analysis of the Bar, alongside an exploration of the literature of the digitalisation of work, the Bar and the legal profession as well as an overview of legal education/training in England and Wales. Though, within each of these themes, it is clear there is a dearth of research which this research hopes to fill in some way.

³⁰ Ronald W Staudt and Marc Lauritsen 'Justice, Lawyering and Legal Education in the Digital Age' (2013) 88 *Chicago Kent Law Review* 687, 687.

³¹ Margaret Thornton 'The Law School, the Market and the New Knowledge Economy' (2007) 17 *Legal Education Review* 1, 25.

³² Billy Sexton 'How am I going to afford the LLB?' (11th May 2020 *AllaboutLaw*) < [https://www.allaboutlaw.co.uk/law-courses/llb/how-am-i-going-to-afford-the-llb->](https://www.allaboutlaw.co.uk/law-courses/llb/how-am-i-going-to-afford-the-llb-) accessed 16th August 2021.

³³ Jemma Smith 'Legal Practice Course (LPC)' (May 2021 *Prospects*) < <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors/law-sector/legal-practice-course-lpc>> accessed 16th August 2021 and Jemma Smith 'Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC)' (May 2021 *Prospects*) < <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors/law-sector/bar-professional-training-course-bptc>> accessed 16th August 2021.

Overview of the research

What is online advocacy?

For this research, online advocacy is the skill of a barrister putting his/her client's case to court³⁴ via a digital medium, including but not limited to, Zoom, Microsoft Teams and the Cloud Video Platform currently used by courts in England and Wales.³⁵

Traditionally, advocacy is either written or oral. For this research, online advocacy is focused on oral online advocacy. Written online advocacy has already changed due to word processing applications and cloud storage. Therefore, its digital changes are not as drastic.

What is an increasingly digitalised workplace?

For this research, an increasingly digitalised workplace is based on a workplace already containing 'employees with computers and Internet access'³⁶, which will develop over time into a workplace where employees are complemented by automation.³⁷ Additionally, this definition includes the movement of the workplace from the physical to the digital, i.e., work could take place through online platforms/virtually.³⁸

This definition is focused on short to medium term developments rather than long-term as these raise more complex questions. Therefore, this definition is based on the idea that current workplaces will digitalise further, rather than focusing on the potential disruptors which will fundamentally change the workplace.

Empirical research

Due to the specific nature of the research question and the scant information available from the BTC providers, interviews were carried out to glean qualitative data.

Initially, it was hoped that four providers would be interviewed. However, due to difficulties with contacting interviewees, August being peak holiday season and professional limitations for

³⁴ The Inns of Court College of Advocacy 'Advocacy' (2021) < <https://www.icca.ac.uk/what-is-advocacy/> > accessed 6th July 2021.

³⁵ HM Courts & Tribunals Service 'How to join Cloud Video Platform (CVP) for a video hearing' (3rd March 2021) < <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-join-a-cloud-video-platform-cvp-hearing/how-to-join-cloud-video-platform-cvp-for-a-video-hearing> > accessed 13th July 2021.

³⁶ Angela D Benson, Scott D Johnson, and K Peter Kuchinke 'The use of technology in the digital workplace: a framework for human resource development' (2002) 4 *Advances in Developing Human Resources* 392, 393.

³⁷ Definition of automation used here is that from Eurofund Automation, digitisation, and platforms: Implications for work and employment (2018) *Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg*, iv – which states that it is 'the replacement of (human) labour input by machine input from some types of tasks within production and distribution processes.'

³⁸ Gérard Valenduc & Patricia Vendramin (n 8), 129.

interviewees, all nine providers were approached. In total, twenty-two representatives were contacted, four interviews were secured.

The interviews were semi-structured, which included a list of pre-set questions and the flexibility for an open conversation enabling the interviewee to share their own accounts and express their opinions on the topics.³⁹

The interviews were conducted via Zoom, utilising the Cloud Record Function. A transcript has been analysed to answer the research question, reveal themes and act as the inspiration for recommendations. Due to the ongoing pandemic, interviews were conducted virtually. They were conducted in line with Durham University guidelines regarding data collection and GDPR. All information regarding the identity of the interviewees, either explicitly or implicitly has been removed, so the interviewees will be known as I1, I2, I3 & I4.

Themes and reflections

From the qualitative data collected, four themes emerged:

1. Is it necessary to include online advocacy and awareness of an increasingly digitalised workplace?
2. There are other important factors
3. COVID-19 and its impact
4. Where should any changes come from?

Each of these themes will be reflected upon to establish any similarities or differences between the interviewees views, alongside comparing their opinions to the broader literature.

Necessary?

The issue of whether it is necessary to teach online advocacy and an awareness of an increasingly digitalised workplace came up. However, the interviewees opinion's varied in intensity on necessity. For example, I2's questioning of the necessity of online advocacy came from their belief that there is no difference between online and face-to-face advocacy, stating:

'The principles of good advocacy are universal'

However, whilst this opinion centres on the skillset of advocacy, I2 was still open to teaching online advocacy, because it is 'a very good idea,' enriching the contextual education of prospective barristers. Though, I2 still questioned the necessity of teaching it.

³⁹ R. Opendakker 'Advantages and Disadvantages of Four Interview Techniques in Qualitative Research' (2006) 7 *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 1, 3.

Similarly, I3's opinions lacked any enthusiasm for online advocacy being necessary. However, this came from their view that the civil system is reluctant about online hearings, stating:

'I don't really think online hearings are ideal for all sorts of reasons'

Therefore, I3's muted enthusiasm comes from a professional reluctance, than not seeing it as a skill. However, I3's professional reluctance sits uncomfortably with the Select Committee on the Constitution view that courts will move towards more online hearings.⁴⁰ So, there is an incompatibility of views but ultimately, these are personal opinions.

Yet, I3's reluctance over the necessity of teaching online advocacy, also came from the fact that:

'we've had telephone hearings for a long time, and the very interesting thing is that at no part of the various courses, are we required to teach anything about telephones hearings'

So, arguably why should online advocacy be taught, when telephone hearings which are established are not. However, despite the precedent of telephone hearings, this is not convincing to dismiss the growth of online hearings, and the importance of teaching them.

Despite the reluctance of some of the interviewees, I1 stated:

'there are certain skills that are different when you're dealing with advocacy in real life situations to how you're dealing with it online.'

This completely contrasts I2's view that online advocacy is no different. However, I1 was not fully convinced it was necessary. I4 thought similarly, believing it should be taught as prospective barristers 'will inevitably' have to do it but that 'prescribing a certain amount of online advocacy' would not be 'a good idea.' So, overall, whilst they do think teaching it is a good idea, it may not be necessary.

Regarding an increasingly digitalised workplace, there a similar feeling about how necessary it is. For example, I1 stated that:

'it's just probably about having technology as part of everyday usage in everyday life and knowing how to adapt to that really'

This is not an isolated opinion, as others have commented simple 'day-to-day'⁴¹ technology skills are all that is needed, rather than any detailed knowledge. So, potentially it is not

⁴⁰ Select Committee for the Constitution (n 20), para. 258.

⁴¹ The Careers Team 'Chambers will need to ensure pupils are prepared for the digital age' (*Legal Cheek* 18th April 2018) < <https://www.legalcheek.com/lc-careers-posts/chambers-will-need-to-ensure-pupils-are-prepared-for-the-digital-age/>> accessed 3rd August 2021.

necessary for prospective barristers to be taught about this as they will pick up these simple skills throughout life, as noted by I3 by stating that prospective barristers are ‘using online technology much more than we are.’

However, this view was not shared by all: I4 commented that they ‘get asked a lot of questions by students about how to use online learning platforms.’ This is completely different, highlighting the mixed feelings about whether both online advocacy and an increasingly digitalised workplace are necessary.

Other important factors?

A prominent theme within the interviews was that other factors cropped up as being important to include within the course and what it should aim to do. For example, I2 emphasised the BTC’s main focus on preparing them for practice, ensuring they don’t walk ‘into court thinking “You know what I did that on the course but I haven’t got a clue where I am or what I am meant to be doing or how it works.”’ This overall aim, rather than having smaller focuses like online advocacy and an increasingly digitalised workplace, mirrors the BSB’s ‘day one of practice’⁴² standard. Though arguably this is the broad aim of the course, it does not dismiss that the course can have smaller aims.

I3 spoke at length about wellbeing, to ensure that students understand the realities of the Bar and learn how to maintain their wellbeing. This fits with the Bar’s discussions about wellbeing, as even pre-pandemic, the profession was in the ‘grip of a mental health crisis.’⁴³ However, whilst stressing its importance, I3 did not feel it was necessary to specifically teach about wellbeing.

Generally, whilst there are other factors which interviewees proposed as important, similar to the discussions around online advocacy and an increasingly digitalised workplace, they were not proposing that these should be included. However, it does also show that the Bar is clearly not an isolated profession, and so the PESTLE analysis rings true. In turn showing, that the course should balance various aims, to ensure prospective barristers are prepared.

COVID-19 and its impact

Unsurprisingly, COVID-19 and its impact was a theme throughout. It encouraged the providers to think about digital technology more than they previously did. I4 stated that if they approached the BSB in 2019 to teach online, ‘they would have probably laughed at us’, mirrors

⁴² Bar Standards Board *BSB Bar Qualification Manual*, 37.

⁴³ Hannah Summers ‘Barristers in England and Wales ‘in grip of mental health crisis’ (*The Guardian*, 6th May 2018) < <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2018/may/06/british-barristers-mental-health-crisis-survey-criminal-bar-association>> accessed 26th August 2021.

legal education/training's reluctant to innovate. The pandemic 'thrust upon' (I3) the providers an 'experiment' (I4) which otherwise they probably wouldn't have conducted. This experimental attitude is probably why the interviewees were open to considering online advocacy and an increasingly digitalised workplace. I1 embodied this as their provider was considering 'whether or not' to 'incorporate' online advocacy 'into the course' going forward. So, the reluctance to innovate may have dissipated as the pandemic has forced providers to reconsider and ponder their offerings.

Yet, the reluctance persisted - I4 was more concerned with recent graduates coping 'in the real world' than a 'lack of familiarity with digital technology.' Similarly, I2 was concerned of prospective barristers in the 'face to face world.' Whilst these are short-term concerns/consequences of the pandemic, the knock-on effect is that the primary focus will be on face-to-face education to 'catch-up' students. This mentality coupled with the general reluctance of legal education/training means that the pandemic 'experiment' could be wasted, and components like online advocacy and an increasingly digitalised workplace put on the backburner.

Where should any changes come from?

The interviewees were divided over the source of any changes to the course. I1 and I2 noted the use of student feedback, which suggests that any changes should be made by individual providers. Though, it is unclear how quickly they would make any changes.

There was a conflict of views between I3 and I4. I3 believed the course does 'too much', without 'adding any extra content,' which suggests they believe the BSB should change the course. Comparatively, I4 did not feel the BSB should be involved because there are many providers who did not like that under the old BPTC how much the BSB 'prescribed' the course. Overall, what emerges is that any changes to the course would need to be a collaboration between students, the course providers and the BSB. Therefore, if online advocacy and an increasingly digitalised workplace were to be included, these stakeholders need to be included to ensure any changes were made appropriately.

Conclusion and recommendations

The course, from the data collected by this research, does not sufficiently prepare prospective barristers for online advocacy and an increasingly digitalised workplace. Primarily because whilst the course encourages awareness, students are unable to practice the skills due to either technological limitations or because it is deemed unnecessary. However, due to the pandemic, online advocacy was taught but out of necessity than a conscious choice. This report includes recommendations for prospective barristers to be sufficiently prepared for these components. The recommendations are directed to the BSB and the course providers.

Recommendations for the BSB:

- Enable all AETOs to access the digital case management system so prospective barristers can understand the basics of the system
- Consider introducing online advocacy and telephone hearing sessions into the course by discussing with AETOs, practitioners and students
- Encourage AETOs to encourage prospective barristers to be aware of technological developments and how the Bar could change

Recommendations for the AETOs

- Have external speakers engaged with prospective barristers about technological developments and how the Bar could change
- Maintain the feedback loop with prospective barristers to ensure the course stays relevant to their needs as the digital world grows
- Put pressure on the BSB to enable access to the digital case management system for prospective barristers
- Put pressure on the BSB to hold a consultation into how online advocacy and telephone hearing sessions could be integrated into the course

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