



# The Bar Tribunals & Adjudication Service

The Council of the Inns of Court

## BTAS Guidance: In-Person & Online Hearings

Date of implementation: July 2022

Date of last review: July 2022

Date of next review: July 2023

### Background

1. BTAS is the body responsible for administering hearings as set out in the [Bar Standards Board's Handbook](#), and in the [Inns' Conduct Committee Rules](#).
2. Following the introduction of Coronavirus 'lockdown' measures BTAS relied heavily on the use of online hearing facilities. As the lockdown measures eased BTAS provided both in-person and online hearing facilities and a blend/hybrid of both and will continue to do so, subject to prevailing Government guidance and requirements.
3. Inns' Conduct Committee (ICC) hearings will take place online subject to the ICC considering any representations the applicant or student wishes to make as to why the matter should be heard in person.
4. For all other matters BTAS takes a neutral position as to whether a hearing should take place in-person or online. As part of the process of settling directions for a hearing, BTAS will canvas the views of the parties.
5. Where the parties cannot agree whether in-person, online or a blend of facilities are to be used, or if BTAS deems it necessary to do so, the matter will be referred to a Directions Judge, Panel, or Panel Chair to be determined.

#### The Bar Tribunals & Adjudication Service

9 Gray's Inn Square,  
London  
WC1R 5JD  
T: 020 3432 7350  
E: [info@tbtas.org.uk](mailto:info@tbtas.org.uk)

The Council of the Inns of Court. Limited by Guarantee  
Company Number: 8804708  
Charity Number: 1155640  
Registered Office:  
9 Gray's Inn Square, London WC1R 5JD

## Factors to be taken into account

6. When deciding whether a hearing should be heard wholly or partly in-person or online it is a matter for those determining the issue, having considered the views of the participants, to decide what factors to be taken into account and what weight to attach to each factor. As a matter of guidance only, and in no particular order, factors such as the following may be relevant:
  - a. The health and wellbeing of participants;
  - b. The importance/relevance of an issue to be determined;
  - c. Whether there is a need for urgency;
  - d. Whether the parties are legally represented;
  - e. The number of participants;
  - f. The availability to participants of the technology to be used and the availability of a suitable location to use the technology;
  - g. The ability of individuals to participate in and follow proceedings either in person or remotely;
  - h. Whether evidence is to be heard; whether such evidence is written or oral, presented by a lay person or professional, contested or uncontested;
  - i. The scope, scale and length of the hearing.

## Other relevant guidance and policies

7. When determining whether a hearing should be in-person or online, the following BTAS policies may also be relevant:
  - [The Reasonable Adjustment Policy](#)
  - [The Vulnerable Witness Policy](#)

## Complaints

8. Complaints about this policy or its operation will be dealt with in accordance with the [BTAS Service Complaints Policy](#).

### The Bar Tribunals & Adjudication Service

9 Gray's Inn Square,  
London  
WC1R 5JD  
T: 020 3432 7350  
E: [info@tbtas.org.uk](mailto:info@tbtas.org.uk)

The Council of the Inns of Court. Limited by Guarantee  
Company Number: 8804708  
Charity Number: 1155640  
Registered Office:  
9 Gray's Inn Square, London WC1R 5JD

# Review

9. This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.

## **The Bar Tribunals & Adjudication Service**

9 Gray's Inn Square,  
London  
WC1R 5JD  
T: 020 3432 7350  
E: [info@tbts.org.uk](mailto:info@tbts.org.uk)

The Council of the Inns of Court. Limited by Guarantee  
Company Number: 8804708  
Charity Number: 1155640  
Registered Office:  
9 Gray's Inn Square, London WC1R 5JD