Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC) online chat session

This online chat session is for students interested in studying our BPTC at The City Law School. The session will be run by academic staff, giving you the opportunity to ask questions about your chosen course at City, University of London. As this is a typed chat group session, you will be able to see the answers to questions asked by other applicants.

Welcome the online chat for the BPTC at The City Law School. It’s your opportunity to ask any questions you have about the course and studying with us. We look forward to chatting with you!

Hello! I’m Emma, and I work in the marketing team at The City Law School. Professor Stuart Sime will be joining us shortly. I look forward to answering your questions!

Hi Emma, is this a group chat or is it an individual chat session?

Hi 🚀 it’s a group chat. Messages will appear when they’re answered.

Hope you are feeling well. I have some queries regarding BPTC Programme.

Hi 🚀 that’s great - what would you like to ask?

I wanted to firstly know if you offer the BPTC part-time?

Hi 🚀 We don’t currently offer the BPTC part-time, as the programme will be changing from 2020 entry. For 2019 it is only available full-time.

Hi Emma, to what extent can you use work experience to gain "credits" on the course please?

There are 3 Pro Bono options on the CLS BPTC, each of which is 15 credits. Students take 2 options in term 3, and students can choose 1 of these.

Hi Emma, I would like to enquire on how classes are conducted at City Law School e.g. what is the class size and teaching method for the module?

It varies depending on what you’re studying - advocacy classes are taught in groups of 6, whereas for other subjects you’ll have lectures.
How long does it take to complete LLM in bar professional training?

There are some things to do in Terms 1 and 2 on the LLM, including a lecture and choosing your dissertation title. Most of the work is done between the beginning of June and September.

Hi Emma, how many students are allocated to a class? And how many students were given offers to study in city this coming sept 2019?

It varies depending on what you’re studying - advocacy classes are taught in groups of 6, whereas for other subjects you’ll have lectures. In terms of number of offers, I don’t have those to hand, but we generally have around 400.

Is there a live video?

No

Thanks for letting me know Emma. I next would like to please how many times a week would one have to attend classes on a weekly basis, and around what times during the day are the classes?

About 12 hours a week. We timetable over 3 days mainly, although sometimes re-arranged classes go into the 4th day of a week. That is unusual. Most classes are 10.30 to 6.00. We occasionally have a 9am class, and there are a few classes (about 3 during the year) at 6 to 7pm.

How many BPTC students studying in CLS pass within the first round usually? And also can u advise about retakes

We have about 400 students each year. Students are allowed 2 retakes in each subject (3 attempts in total). Summer retakes are in August.

When are the semester breaks and exam periods? Just need a rough gauge of the timeline don’t neee specific dates, thank you
You can find a breakdown of all of our term dates here https://www.city.ac.uk/about/city-information/academic-year Assessments are scheduled throughout the year, January-May.

**Academic year (term dates)**
City, University of London for the 2016-17 and 2017-18 academic years.

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Thanks Stuart, how much of the full course requirement does 15 credits constitute?

Students have to take 12 assessments. Options are two of these.

when will the ROUND 2 offers for BPTC 2019-20 be released?

It is best to apply straight away, and to put us first, on the second round. They are live from April.

If we fail 2 modules for instance then do we just retake those 2 modules or do we retake everything?

You’d only retake any individual modules that you fail, not everything.

Are there any textbooks we have to buy, apart from the ones already included in the price?

All the textbooks you need are issued by the School. You will be issued with a range of Skills Manuals published by OUP, plus 3 textbooks, plus 2 practitioner books.

Aside from being eligible for postgraduate funding, what do consider to be the benefits of studying the BPTC/LLM over the BPTC alone?

The BPTC leads to a university Post graduate Diploma in law, plus (with dining etc at the inns) to eligibility for Call to the Bar. The professional qualification is very well regarded by employers, but not all (especially overseas employers) are familiar with the PgDip. The LLM is recognised by everyone.

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Hello Emma, I am currently considering my options for the 2020/21 intake. One of my questions is regarding the combined BPTC/LLM. I understand this course does not end until September. How does that timing affect the beginning of a potential pupillage?
HI, as our programme currently stands, if you choose to study the LLM route, you’ll still have passed all of the BPTC components at the same time as BPTC students and will be called to the Bar in July with them.

How are advocacy classes conducted?

Students prepare from realistic Briefs for each class. These are every week. Classes are conducted as though in court, with students acting as Counsel. Each student receives individual feedback on each performance.

What is the assessment method? Is it separated into two terms or one single final assessment?

Assessments vary by module. For example, this could be exam based or coursework. For skills-based modules, your assessments will assess that skill, eg. report writing and advocacy, etc.

Are there any key features of City Law School that makes it standout compared to other BPTC providers?

We have been running Bar training since 1852, and designed the course that has developed into the BPTC. We are located in Gray’s Inn. Our staff include the authors not only of the Bar manuals, but a range of student and practitioner books used around the country. We tend to be known as running a friendly, but hard-working course.

Thank you Stuart, are lectures recorded for all modules?

Yes (but with one or 2 exceptions).

What are the modes of assessment for our subjects? The ratio of assignment to written examination for instance?

There are 4 short answer / multiple choice assessments
3 Advocacy assessments
4 drafting/opinion writing assessments
1 conference assessment

What would be the situation should a student be offered BPTC fee scholarships by an Inn and a provider?

CLS scholarships are independent of those offered by the Inns.

What are the credentials for CLS BPTC and if a person holds Second Class Honours: Lower division below 55% aggregate but do have good professional experience. Will he considered for BPTC?
We mainly give offers to applicants with Firsts and 2.1s. We do give offers to some students with near miss 2.2s.

Are all assessments within the spring period, or are they broken down by some being after Christmas, and the other half in Spring?

We spread the assessments across the period from early January to the end of May. We tend to have no more than 2 assessments in a week. They are scheduled to enable students to prepare for each one.

Approximately what time do classes start and finish on teaching days please?

Almost all classes are in 1.5 hour slots between 10:30 and 6pm. This is to enable students to use off-peak travel. Occasionally a class is at 9am, usually on a re-arrangement. About 3 lectures in the year are 6-7pm. We also have guest lectures, which are usually at 6pm.

Is the bptc in city law school conducted according to term basis meaning the first half of the term we only learn 5-6 of the modules and the other half the remaining? Or do we learn everything one short from the beginning till the end?

The first two terms (September to Dec, then Jan to April, cover most of the compulsory subjects. We continue with Advocacy classes to the end of term 3, as we are mainly an Advocacy school. We also have conference skills in term 3. However, the main focus in Term 3 is on the options.

Hi Stuart, I have Upper 2:1 but was last valid until 2012/13 can I get an extension or do I have to sit the GDL?

Thanks Stuart. Do CLS have any tools to assist with preparing for exams/assessments such as past papers or a marking rubric?

There are lots of support materials available to students on the intra-net (Moodle), plus support lectures. Each assessment has its own assessment criteria, which are provided to the students at the start of the course in our assessment handbook.

Hi Stuart, I have Upper 2:1 but was last valid until 2012/13 can I get an extension or do I have to sit the GDL?

We recommend you get in touch with the Bar Standards Board to discuss this, as it isn’t something that we can make a decision on.

How are the subjects spread out across the academic year? Do we do all the subjects at the same time?

The first two terms (September to Dec, then Jan to April) cover most of the compulsory subjects. We continue with Advocacy classes to the end of term 3, as we are mainly an Advocacy school. We also have conference skills in term 3. However, the main focus in Term 3 is on the options. The compulsory subjects are Advocacy, Drafting Opinion Writing and conference (skills), and ADR, Ethics, Civil and Criminal litigation and Evidence (knowledge). These (apart from conference) are spread across terms 1 and 2.
With the full time BPTC, how many days of classes are there per week?

Hi, classes on the full-time programme are currently scheduled over 3 days. This gives you two days during the week to prepare for classes, and to undertake extracurricular/pro bono activities.

How is the BPTC changing?

The Future of Bar training project is due to come into operation in September 2020. It aims to promote flexibility of learning, so there will be a range of different modes of study leading towards the assessments. The underlying assessments, however, are likely to be similar to those on the existing course.

Is there any support available for the pupillage application process and in preparation for interviews?

Yes, absolutely. Our Pupillage Advisory Service provide support for both, through events, mock interviews and one-to-one sessions. You can access this support as soon as you receive and accept an offer of a place to study on the BPTC with us.

How are advocacy classes taught to students? Are we taught about the skills and how to conduct ourselves and attempt the questions? Or we work out way around it through the feedbacks we receive on a weekly basis?

At CLS we believe in lectures. So, students have a series of Advocacy lectures on the elements of the skill at the start of term 1. We also provide students with a practical, and detailed, Advocacy manual. This has "how to do it" guides for a range of types of advocacy. Slightly different approaches are taken in each skills area, but each is designed to equip you in advance for what you need to do.

What are the ratio of international students to local students taking the bptc in CLS?

Usually, around 50% of our cohort are international students, so we have a diverse student body.

What is the attendance system like in city? Is attendance taken digitally or we write our names down on a paper? And how strict is CLS in terms of absenteees?

There is a basic full attendance rule. Students need to attend at least 80% of classes to pass the course. Attendance is taken by signing in etc at every class. This is a professional requirement, so of course it is taken seriously.

Thanks Emma, and how many students on average are matured age (30+)?
The majority of students are under 30, but there are significant numbers of students each year in each 5 year group through to 60. I would estimate about 25% plus are over 30.

Are there separate clubs and societies for postgraduates to join or we basically just join the existing clubs and societies of city in general?

City Students’ Union is for all students, however there is a specific Postgraduate Community that you can get involved in, in addition to many Law-focused societies.

The course work for BPTC 2019-20 be changed or will it be same as of previous year 2018-19?

The 2019-20 BPTC is the same as the existing BPTC. the change occurs in September 2020.

Do you know when precise details of the 2020 change will become available please?

New programmes are under development as we speak. There should be details on the CLS website in around June 2019, subject to confirmation from the Bar Standards Board.

Are or lectures and classes conducted in the law school campus alone or are we spread out across the whole campus?

For 2019-20 CLS lectures and classes on the BPTC all take place in our Atkin Building and Princeton Street buildings in / very close to Gray’s Inn.

We have five minutes left of the chat, so if you have any questions remaining, please let us know.

Is it recommended to stay within zone 1 or outside of it is okay as well?

Students come in from all distances. Accommodation further out tends to be more reasonably priced.

What are the popular options of accommodations among postgraduate students?
There are a few different options. Many of our postgraduate students choose to live in private rented accommodation, however there are also student halls available with City. In this case, we’d recommend applying as soon as possible. Our accommodation office will also make an effort to house you with people studying on a similar course. If you’re interested in student halls, you might like to take a look at our accommodation pages [https://www.city.ac.uk/accommodation](https://www.city.ac.uk/accommodation)

**Accommodation**

All you need to know about student accommodation at City, University of London.

Thanks for attending the chat! We hope you got your questions answered.