Bar Vocational Studies (BVS) online chat session

This online chat session is for students interested in studying our BVS 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.

Thank you for joining us for today’s CityChat session. This session is for students interested in studying our Bar Vocational Studies (BVS) courses. This session runs from 12:00 - 13:00 (GMT). This is an open chat session for you to ask any questions you have regarding these courses and life at City, University of London. During the session, we may also share videos, polls or documents related to your course.

To ask a question, please type it in the chat box. Your question will not post straight away - it will be sent to our Moderators who will type an answer back. Once their answer is complete, it will be published with your question. You are also welcome to post just saying hi and introducing yourself!

Hi everyone, welcome to the session. My name is Julie Browne, and I am the Director of Future Bar Training. I will be very happy to answer any questions that you may have about the new bar programmes.

Hello, my name is Waqar. I am currently a Bar Vocational Studies (BVS) student. Please feel free to ask me any questions you have. I will be more than happy to answer your queries.

Hi everyone, my name is Shanice and I work here in marketing :)

Hi Everyone, hope everyone is fine.

Hi welcome!

Hi everyone, thanks for organizing this session

Hi no problem at all! I hope finds this session extremely useful

Hi everyone so what’s the minimum requirement for BVC these days.

You need a qualifying law degree or a non-law degree + GDL/CPE. You need to obtain at least a 2:2 in your undergraduate degree, but we usually only offer places to students with a 2:1. However, we may accept a student with a 2:2 if they can show that they have the ability to work at 2:1 level and/or they have other significant relevant experience.

You also need to pass BCAT and satisfy the English Language requirement.

Hello Shanice, Julie and Waqar. I really appreciate you taking time out to answer any questions we might have.
Hi all. I was wondering, is postgraduate accommodation available to those on the BVS?

Hi, I believe the accommodation is available to BVS students, as well as all of the other postgraduate courses. We have three halls of residences and the accommodation team can help you find private accommodation. Here is a link with more information: https://www.city.ac.uk/study/living-in-london/accommodation/postgraduate-halls

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Postgraduate halls

Accommodation Team

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Could you tell us the change affecting international students specifically? Thank you.

We have tried to create a number of specialist practice areas that will appeal to both home and our international students on our LLM BVS programme. We have specialist practice areas that include corporate law and practice, international dispute resolution and international commercial trade modules. We hope we have catered for many different areas of legal practice.

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The central exams of part 1 would have to be done in UK?

Yes, that is likely to be the case, although this is under consideration at the moment.

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what is the fee structure?

Here is a link to the fee information. It is detailed in the 'During your course' section: https://www.city.ac.uk/study/courses/postgraduate/bar-vocational-Studies#during-your-course

Bar Vocational Studies (Full-time)

City University Bar Vocational Studies course
Hello, my name is [redacted] and I’m a final year Law LLB student at the University of Nottingham. I was wondering what the course structure would be like for the BVS and whether postgraduate university accommodation will be available for BVS students?

Hello, my name is [redacted] and I’m a final year Law LLB student at the University of Nottingham. I was wondering what the course structure would be like for the BVS and whether postgraduate university accommodation will be available for BVS students?

The BVS has 4 key principles: Accessibility, Affordability, Flexibility and High Standards. The new BVS consists of three Vocational Component of training that you can choose:

- Bar Vocation Studies (Full-time) - this is a course similar to the current BPTC. It is a full-time over one academic year. The majority of the teaching will be face-to-face. This is suitable for those who wish to increase their legal knowledge and develop skills by studying additional modules of their choice. Within this option you can also select the LLM course to complete within the same year.

- You also have the Bar Vocational Studies (Part-time), it is delivered on a part-time basis over two years. Students will attend classes once a fortnight on Wednesday (9am to 6pm). There will be face-to-face teaching. You also have the option of gaining a full LLM, thus increasing employability.

- Lastly, there is also the Bar Vocation Studies (two-part) course. This is designed for those who want to complete only the Vocational Component as flexibly as possible. This course only consists of the BVS modules, and you will two years to complete this course. This programme is not eligible for PG loans so do bear that in mind. Part 1 will involve preparing for the centralised exams and Part 2 will be teaching of the compulsory modules.

Hello, I believe the accommodation is available to BVS students, as well as all of the other postgraduate courses. We have three halls of residences and the accommodation team can help you find private accommodation. Here is a link with more information: https://www.city.ac.uk/study/living-in-london/accommodation/postgraduate-halls

Postgraduate halls
Accommodation Team

I was wondering whether there is a clear difference between the BVS with a specialism and the LLM version of the BVS with specialism, as the website presents them as being two different courses. If so, what are the main differences between the two?
The Full-time and Part-Time BVS programmes each have a choice of three routes and you can select which route is right for you.
The PG Dip route comprises only the Vocational Component (i.e. those modules you need to pass in order to be Called to the Bar)
The PG Dip with specialism route allows to additionally select a Specialist Practice Component in a specialist practice area of your choice. You will study two electives within your chosen area of practice (we expect to offer around 10 specialist practice areas) between April and June and the specialist area you have chosen will be included in the name of your award.
The full LLM route includes the Vocational Component and the Specialist Practice electives and also a dissertation or Clinical Legal Education project (pro bono work).

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do we need to ielts?

You need to demonstrate English language ability that is at least equivalent to 7.5 in each section of the IELTS academic test or 7.3 in each part of the Pearson test of English (academic).

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Hi i would like to know that is it possible for international students to get pupillage and secondly how successful is your employment rate

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Hi

Getting a pupillage is very competitive, therefore obtaining the right grades is not enough.

However, we have a highly successful Pupillage Advisory Service with evidence that students from City have obtained a pupillage. There are number of ways we help students to prepare for pupillage applications and interviews, for example:
- We provide one to one advise sessions and CV clinics with members who have had experience of involvement in pupillage selection of their chambers;
- We provide mock pupillage interviews
- We provide mock pupillage advocacy exercises.
- You have a number of lectures and workshops to prepare you before the pupillage gateway opens.

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Hi Julie, I want to know about BVS for international students. I have had heard that the new course can be a distance learning programme for the first. Could you please make me clear about this? Thanks

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Hi, We are offering a Two-part BVS programme, with Part 1 being an online distance learning programme which prepares students for the centrally set examinations in Civil and Criminal Litigation. Part 2 is a shorter face-to-face programme lasting about 20 weeks that covers the remaining elements of training for the Bar.

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Are there any scholarships available specifically for the BVS/law school? I used the search on the website a few weeks ago but didn’t really find anything
Further scholarship information will be made live on the website shortly, but we are currently offering up to 10 full-fee scholarships and up to 100 £5,000 scholarships on the basis of academic merit annually. We also have a generous programme of bursaries awarded on the basis of financial need.

More information will be uploaded here soon: https://www.city.ac.uk/about/schools/law/support/financing-your-study

**Financing your Law Study at City - Law Student Loans, Grants & Bursaries**

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**How would a student with 2:2 show they have the ability to work at 2:1 level and what other significant relevant experience would be needed in order to be offered a place on the City BVS course?**

Hello,

Thanks for this.

So there are a number of ways of showing that a 2.2 student has the ability to work at a 2:1 level. For example, you could obtain some 2.1s in your modules which would demonstrate that you do have the ability to work at a 2:1 level even you did not attain that grade overall.

In addition, we look for passionate students who have the motivation to pursue a career at the Bar. As such, we will take into account relevant legal experience, such as mini pupillage, marshalling, working at a solicitors firm and also pro bono work. We also take into account non legal experience, such as extra curricular activities that you did at university.

Hope that helps!

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**How would a student with 2:2 show they have the ability to work at 2:1 level and what other significant relevant experience would be needed in order to be offered a place on the City BVS course?**

We would look closely at any personal information you provide in your application and we would look too at things which demonstrate your commitment to law, such as legal work placements, mini-pupillages, mooting, debating, voluntary work and matters of that kind.

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**What is the fee schedule? Admission criteria?**
Information regarding fees and admissions can be found here. Anything specific can be emailed to bvs@city.ac.uk and they will be happy to help: https://www.city.ac.uk/study/courses/postgraduate/bar-vocational-studies#during-your-course

Bar Vocational Studies (Full-time)

City University Bar Vocational Studies course

When will the application portal open? and do by any chance have an opportunity to discuss our application with any of your advisers face to face?

Our applications are now open. Please contact bvs@city.ac.uk if you wish to discuss anything in person with our admissions team.

Hi can you provide information regarding LLM BVS (with specialism)

Hi

Thanks for this.

- Bar Vocation Studies (Full-time) - this is a course similar to the current BPTC. It is a full-time over one academic year. The majority of the teaching will be face-to-face. This is suitable for those who wish to increase their legal knowledge and develop skills by studying additional modules of their choice. Within this option, you can also select the LLM course to complete within the same year. Your LLM module can either involve you to undertake a dissertation or pro bono. If you opt for the latter, you will also be writing a reflective journal as part of the pro bono you undertook.

How about the scholarship programme? Is it the same as previous years?

The scholarship programme is similar to previous years but as this is a new course, there will be some changes. Further scholarship information will be made live on the website shortly, but we are currently offering up to 10 full-fee scholarships and up to 100 £5,000 scholarships on the basis of academic merit annually: https://www.city.ac.uk/about/schools/law/support/financing-your-study

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When will applications close for the BVS and when will we know whether we get an offer or not?

Our applications will close approximately one month before the start date for each programme. However, we do advise you to apply early as places may fill up. You can expect to hear from us within around two weeks of making your application, and any offers we make will be conditional on meeting the entry requirements.

How are interviews for to get onto the BVS structured?

We expect to make decisions based on the detailed information we ask you to provide in our application forms for each programme. If we do ask you to attend an interview, you will be sent specific information about that in advance.

Is the application poll open now?

Yeah the applications are now open. You can apply here: 
https://www.city.ac.uk/study/courses/postgraduate/bar-vocational-studies#during-your-course

Bar Vocational Studies (Full-time)

City University Bar Vocational Studies course

Thank you Waqar and Julie. In terms of the scholarships. How does one go about applying for those? Is there a window period for applications?
Further scholarship information will be made live on the website shortly, but we are currently offering up to 10 full-fee scholarships and up to 100 £5,000 scholarships on the basis of academic merit annually. We also have a generous programme of bursaries awarded on the basis of financial need.

More information will be uploaded here soon: https://www.city.ac.uk/about/schools/law/support/financing-your-study

As per academic requirements, we consider those who have a 2.2 or 1st in their respective degrees.
- Students must also hold an offer of a place on the BVS - it can be conditional or unconditional.
- Please bear in mind you do not have to have accepted a place with us in order to apply for the scholarship.

Hope that helps!

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Hi! Can I ask how many people are there in the advocacy classes and how long are the sessions?? :)

We timetable advocacy in groups of 6. You will have about 50 hours advocacy training in total across the three different advocacy modules and each class will last for 2 hours.

Thank you Julie. And will the course be a two- part one even for those who are doing it full-time?

Hi there is a link for the differences between the bar courses. I hope it's helpful: https://www.city.ac.uk/about/schools/law/courses/professional/bar-training

**Bar Training at City**

Designed for aspiring barristers, City’s Bar Vocational Studies Course programme is for those individuals dedicated to a professional legal career as well as people seeking a career change.

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Do international students only travel to UK for part two of BVS programme
Yes as Part 1 is delivered entirely online.

Thanks Waqar. When do I take the centralised exams on each of the BVS versions? I think you website says you don’t need to pass Part 1 to go onto Part 2?

Hi

Thanks for this.

Part 1 of your centralised exams will be delivered entirely online. You will have 16 weeks to complete the two knowledge modules, that is Civil and Criminal Litigation, with an additional 4 weeks for consolidation and revision.
- You can choose to move directly from Part 1 to Part 2 or take a break between them, as long as the course is completed within 5 years.
- If you fail Part 1, you will have the option to retake, however bear in mind this will be capped and therefore you cannot get higher than 60%.

Hello - I am a final year LLB student. I want to query if you have engineering related specialism? Also, can I apply to both LPC and BPTC? Thank you.

Hi

We do not provide engineering related specialism, unfortunately. But there are other areas of specialism that we offer within your BVS and LLM programme.

Yes you are able to apply to LPC and BVS, but bear in mind you can only accept the offer for one.

I heard it is difficult to pass the Bar, how difficult is it if we decide to take the BVS and LLM route?

We have structured the LLM programme so that the BVS modules are taught and assessed first, then the specialist practice modules (which are taught and assessed between April and June), and then finally you will undertake the dissertation or clinical legal education module. Most of the writing up of the dissertation or clinical work portfolios can be done between June and September (you are required to submit the dissertation or the clinical legal education portfolio in September). However, you would be required to do some work on the dissertation between September and May and on the Clinical Legal Education Module, around half of the 300 hours allocated to that module would take place during September and May as you would work with live clients during the programme.

Hi Is the pro bono work on the LLM self-placed? and can you apply for scholarships from City if your course is being funded by an Inn?

Hi

The pro bono work is not really self-paced as you would be working with clients and there may be a regular day or evening commitment during the year if you choose the Clinical Legal Education project as part of your LLM. Please check our course pages for the latest information about scholarships.

Is there any deadline to apply for the BVS course?
We would encourage you to apply as soon as possible as places do fill up. Applications usually close about one month before the start of the relevant programme.

Since I am currently a LLB student doing my final year, is it better to apply for BVS now or after I complete my LLB undergrad?

You can apply now and any offer we would make would be conditional on meeting the entry requirements.

This is a question for Waqar. How many hours of preparation do you do in a week? In what aspects is the BVS different from the LLB?

Hi.

Thanks for this.

I put around 40 hours in total of independent study, however this can greatly vary depending on the type of module I am focusing on.

The LLB focuses on substantive law, whereas the BVS focuses on procedural law. The BVS is more of a practical course to prepare you for the type of work you will be doing as a barrister.

The BVS involves both knowledge and skills exams. It does not require you to write the sort of essays that you would have done as an LLB or GDL student.

Hi, is the pro bono work self placed?

Hi. We have a number of partners we work with. Students are asked to place their preferred companies in order, they are then allocated to one which suits them and their ranking. Of course, this is subject to availability amongst other factors.

What are the areas of specialism do you offer? @Waqar

Hi. We expect to offer specialisms such as Advanced Advocacy, Advanced Criminal Practice, Advanced Civil Practice, Corporate Law, Commercial Chancery Practice, Employment Law and Practice, Family, Dispute Resolution, International trade, Public Law and Social Justice. There are at least two modules within each area to enable you to gain depth and breadth of knowledge in your chosen area of practice.
What are the areas of specialism do you offer? @Waqar

Hi,

Thanks for this.

We offer a number of specialism modules as part of the BVS:
- Advanced Criminal Litigation
- Advanced Civil Advocacy
- Free Representation Unit: Employment (pro bono)
- Free Representation Unit: Social Security (pro bono)
- Domestic Violence (pro bono)
- Crown Court Practice
- Fraud & Economic Crime
- Advanced Criminal Advocacy
- Commercial Property
- Company & Insolvency
- Employment law & Practice

The list goes on. Please use the link below I sent to look at all the specialist modules we offer.
https://www.city.ac.uk/study/courses/postgraduate/bar-vocational-studies

Bar Vocational Studies (Full-time)

City University Bar Vocational Studies course

Thanks for all the precious info. @Julie may you please confirm the dates for two part bvs? Start end dates for each parts? Also when we are applying now by when would we receive confirmation from city?

Hi, part 1 will commence in late July 2020, to enable students to do the first sit of the new centrally set examinations in December 2020. The results for Part 1 are expected to be released by the BSB in late January, and you could obtain those results before progressing to Part 2, which will commence in February 2021. We also will be offering a second set of dates on the Two-part programme, those being in March 2021 (part 1) and September 2021 (part 2)

How likely is it to get admission for BVS without any prior work experience?

It is very important for you to show us how passionate you are about pursuing a career at the Bar. As such, I highly advise you to seek relevant legal work experience. We will consider all sorts of legal experience, such as mini pupillage, marshalling, mooting or even working at a law firm.

LLM with BVS is a one year course?

Yes, there is an option for this.
I have one module pending. Can I apply for BVS now?

Please do contact our admissions team on bvs@city.ac.uk and they will be able to advise you.

Thank you for attending the session and asking so many questions! We hope you got a lot out of it. A transcript of this session will be uploaded to this page within the next two weeks: https://www.city.ac.uk/study/visit-us/online-events

**Online events**

Interested in finding out more about City, University of London’s courses but unable to attend our open days? Register now for one of our online events.

We will be answering the remaining questions now but if you have any further questions, please send an email to bvs@city.ac.uk or law@city.ac.uk and they will be happy to help :)

Should we have any questions in the future may we contact you directly or we should use the other address shared by @Shanice earlier?

You can send an email to bvs@city.ac.uk or law@city.ac.uk

On your website it mentions a class size of 24, which classes is that for?

Hi, each module will have a couple of workshops to introduce some key concepts, but the vast majority of teaching is in groups of 12 (for written skills) and 6 (for oral skills). You will also have a comprehensive series of mini-lectures and other materials and guidance online to support each module and to help you prepare effectively and efficiently for classes.

Do we have to apply through CAB if we want to apply LPC or directly to you? Thank you.
To apply for the LPC, you must apply online through CAB. Applications have opened and can be made up until the end of August before the start of the course.

Please bear in mind you will have to pay a registration fee when you apply.

I am also sending you the link to this to assist you further. Hope it helps!

https://www.city.ac.uk/study/courses/postgraduate/legal-practice-course

Legal Practice Course (LPC) Course

Legal Practice Course (LPC) Postgraduate Diploma - The ideal course for anyone looking to become a solicitor, whatever area of law you are interested in.