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Academic excellence for
business and the professions



**The
Royal
Courts
of
Justice**

Witness Familiarisation

Our **Witness Familiarisation sessions** provide witnesses with an invaluable opportunity to find out how the trial process really works.

We prepare witnesses to give evidence by taking them through a practical enactment of being cross-examined and teach them how to remain calm under pressure.

Our sessions give witnesses the confidence to give evidence effectively.

Purpose of the sessions

These sessions prepare witnesses to give their best evidence free from nerves and help them to avoid typical pitfalls.

The witness will gain a better understanding of whichever setting they will be giving evidence in. Our sessions can help prepare for any type of legal hearing and can include various court procedures, regulatory hearings and interviews. They will learn how to deal with tough questioning and remain calm under pressure in the witness box.

All our sessions comply with the latest case law and guidance and have been written in conjunction with experienced members of the judiciary.

Professionalism and flexibility

- Last minute requests and flexible delivery options.
- Sessions provided and supported by a dedicated CPD training department.
- No cancellation fees should a case settle near to trial or tribunal date.

Witness of fact or expert witness?

We regularly deliver witness familiarisation sessions to both witnesses of fact and expert witnesses preparing to give evidence in a whole range of courts, tribunals, committees and hearings.

One-to-one and small groups

Witnesses may be prepared in small groups or individually. Where possible we recommend a one-to-one session to ensure that each witness receives specific individual

attention enabling them to build up their confidence and deliver their best evidence in court.

Duration of session

For individuals, a one-to-one session usually lasts three to four hours.

For a group of up to six witnesses, a full day session is usually appropriate.

Bespoke sessions can be arranged if your needs differ to those outlined above.

A judge can be in attendance

We can arrange for a retired judge to be present at the session to provide additional authenticity and give further feedback.

Post-session feedback

The trainer provides each witness with detailed oral feedback and advice on how to communicate their evidence in the best way. We can also film sessions at your request for further review.

We will provide you with a written report for each witness. Additionally, the trainer can meet with you and your colleagues after the session to provide an expert opinion on the presentation of the witness.

Follow-up sessions

If the witness is likely to face prolonged cross-examination we suggest that an intensive additional session focusing purely on cross-examination would be highly beneficial.

“I found the session very informative and the cross-examination incredibly helpful.”

Expert Witness

“The practical advice and information was invaluable. I found the session very useful.”

Senior Associate

“Really useful to see how the process works in ‘real life’. Excellent examples with superb case studies.”

Ministry of Justice Intermediary

This follow-up session is also recommended when a witness has undergone an initial session and it is felt, after considering the report, that they would benefit from additional witness familiarisation.

Fictional case studies provided

As you may know, the trainer cannot know the facts of your case or discuss this with your witnesses. Therefore the session will be based on a fictional and unrelated case study or an old expert witness report. The transferable skills your witness learns from this case study can then be used at trial.

Location: UK & International

We are able to deliver these sessions at your offices or at our state-of-the-art training rooms at The City Law School based at Gray’s Inn in central London.

We can also deliver these sessions anywhere in the world, so they are available to all international clients in all locations to suit their individual needs.

Our trainers

Our Witness Familiarisation Group is led by Robin Sellers and Marcus Soanes.

Robin Sellers

Robin joined City Law School in September 2014 as a CPD Consultant combining this with a career at the bar stretching over 20 years. In that time he has prosecuted and defended at all levels including murder, fraud, money laundering and fatal road traffic offences as leading and junior counsel. He specialises in multi-handed cases such as conspiracy to supply class A drugs. Robin is also a grade 4 prosecutor for the CPS.

Marcus Soanes

Marcus has experience in practice of the Magistrates’ and Crown Courts and is approved as a BPTC advocacy tutor by the Advocacy Training Council. He has delivered witness familiarisation to a wide range of expert witnesses including psychiatrists, accountants, surgeons and occupational therapists as well as witnesses of fact, and offered courtroom skills training to the Serious Fraud Office and several police forces.

Book a free introductory seminar

We will come to your offices and deliver a one hour introductory session for your lawyers.

This seminar is completely free and will explain the many benefits of professional witness familiarisation sessions. It will also include a practical demonstration of current cross-examination techniques and can count towards attendees ongoing professional development requirements.

Find out more

The City Law School runs legal skills courses for solicitors, accountants, healthcare practitioners and other professionals, drawing on the collective knowledge and skills of the staff across the School and within the university.

For further information on how we can support your needs, or to request a brochure please contact our CPD department.

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