

Terms of reference of the independent review of the Bar Standards Board's management of the August sittings of the Centralised Examinations

This review will be undertaken by an independent education specialist with experience of exams administration, assessment methodology, reasonable adjustments in an academic setting and academic audit. It will be open to the appointed reviewer to engage other experts to supplement their own expertise where necessary.

The reviewer will report their findings to the Governance Risk and Audit Committee of the BSB.

The review will cover:

1. Governance of the decision to postpone the April examinations and the decision that the BSB should take on responsibility for the management of the August centralised examinations. This should also cover the overall accountabilities between BSB and the providers for the delivery of examinations. Were these clear in the run-up to April and August and do they need re-visiting in the light of recent developments?
2. The quality of the Board's oversight of the decision to stage the examinations in August and the arrangements to deliver them
3. The decision to hold computer-based assessments, the process for the selection of Pearson VUE as the BSB's supplier and the adoption of OnVUE as the preferred mode of delivery
4. Equality impact assessment prior to contracting with Pearson VUE and during the delivery of the August exams, including anticipating the impact on protected characteristics beyond those with a disability.
5. Contracting with Pearson VUE including the management of the administration of the contracts
6. Management of data protection implications arising from the August exams and the preparation of a Data Protection Impact Assessment
7. Development of the assessment methodology for the August exams, including:
 - i. The decision not to allow breaks for remotely proctored exams
8. Engagement with BPTC Providers, including:
 - i. Support and guidance from Providers to the BSB on arrangements for scheduling the centralised assessments
9. The handling of reasonable adjustment needs of candidates by the BSB, including;
 - i. Reasonableness of the general BSB approach
 - ii. The provision of information by BPTC Providers to the BSB about the reasonable adjustment needs of their students
 - iii. The booking of candidates with reasonable adjustments by Pearson VUE

- iv. Management by Providers of the finding of alternative venues for candidates who could not be accommodated through the Pearson VUE system, either remotely or at a test centre
 - v. Decisions relating to those candidates who could not be reasonably accommodated
10. The BSB's communication strategy and its effectiveness. How successfully did the BSB provide information about the assessments to the key parties? In particular, how well did the BSB communicate with students during the examination period?
11. The booking process for candidates with no reasonable adjustments
12. The delivery of the assessments by Pearson VUE including:
- i. Technical and other difficulties in accessing and using the Pearson VUE OnVUE platform
 - ii. Pearson VUE customer services
 - iii. Accessibility of statistical information about the assessments
13. The management by the BSB of the relationship with Pearson VUE
14. The effectiveness of risk management throughout the exam period. How were risks identified and mitigated?