



Bar Standards Board

Appointment of Governance, Risk and Audit Committee members

This information pack is available in Word only, Braille, large print or other formats. It can also be made available in Welsh.

BAR
STANDARDS
BOARD

REGULATING BARRISTERS

Letter from Stephen Thornton, Chair of GRA

I warmly encourage you to consider making an application to become a member of the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee (GRA) of the Bar Standards Board. To help you as you contemplate whether this role may suit you, I would like to give you a little insight into the GRA, its work and what it is like being a part of the BSB.

With both independent members and Board members (lay and barrister) on the Committee, you would be joining a small group of highly capable and articulate people. We have a wide range of views expressed on all the issues we consider. The interaction between able people with very different backgrounds and types of expertise is one of the most satisfying aspects of what we do. We all learn from each other and by doing so, I believe we produce well-reasoned decisions. Acting with integrity and respect is a central tenet, especially as we debate what can sometimes be difficult topics. Decisions are not always easy to reach and we engage in robust deliberations in order to properly test the issues before us. Everyone has an opportunity to contribute and we are always keen to ensure that all perspectives are aired before we make decisions. I expect all Committee members to participate fully in this way.

We are supported by a talented and dedicated Executive team. We enjoy a good rapport with our individual staff members while also holding the Executive properly to account. The role of GRA in reporting on improvements made, as well as identifying issues that need attention, is a key factor in achieving that balance. The Board relies upon the ability and willingness of GRA, as a group and individually, to analyse reports put before it critically and to challenge the Executive constructively.

The BSB is funded by the profession, and we need to make sure too that we subject our operations to proper scrutiny. The GRA helps ensure that the Board sets its policies properly and has robust systems in place to monitor what the BSB is doing.

If you are successful in your application, you will join at an interesting time in the BSB's development and you will genuinely have an opportunity to help shape the future. The importance of the Bar to the rule of law and democracy in this country may not be appreciated by all but it is something we bear in mind at all times. The energy with which all Board and Committee members, and our Executive team, approach the issues before us is often inspirational. The chance to make a difference is both motivating and stimulating to me – and I think the other members of the Board and its Committees too.

If this also appeals to you, please do make an application. We look forward to our new members joining and I can assure you of a warm welcome for whoever is successful.



Stephen Thornton CBE

Board member and Chair of the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee

Overview and About The Bar Standards Board

Overview

The Bar Standards Board (BSB) is seeking to appoint two members of its Governance, Risk and Audit Committee, one to commence on 1 July 2024 and one to commence on 1 January 2025.

About The Bar Standards Board

We regulate barristers and their professional practice and specialised legal services businesses in England and Wales in the public interest.

We are responsible for:

- Setting the education and training requirements for becoming a barrister;
- Setting continuing training requirements to ensure that barristers' skills are maintained throughout their careers;
- Setting standards of conduct for barristers;
- Authorising organisations that focus on advocacy, litigation, and specialist legal advice;
- Monitoring the service provided by barristers and the organisations we authorise to ensure they meet our requirements; and
- Handling reports and allegations against barristers and the organisations we authorise and taking enforcement or other action where appropriate.

The work that we do is governed by the Legal Services Act 2007 (the Act) as well as a number of other statutes.

Our objectives are laid down in the Legal Services Act. We share them with the other legal services regulators. They are:

- Protecting and promoting the public interest;
- Supporting the constitutional principle of the rule of law;
- Improving access to justice;
- Protecting and promoting the interests of consumers;
- Promoting competition in the provision of legal services;
- Encouraging an independent, strong, diverse and effective legal profession;
- Increasing public understanding of citizens' legal rights and duties; and
- Promoting and maintaining adherence to the professional principles.

The professional principles are:

- That authorised persons should act with independence and integrity;
- That authorised persons should maintain proper standards of work;
- That authorised persons should act in the best interests of their clients;
- That persons who exercise before any court a right of audience, or conduct litigation in relation to proceedings in any court, by virtue of being authorised persons should comply with their duty to the court to act with independence in the interests of justice; and
- That the affairs of clients should be kept confidential.

Our Strategy and Our Governance

Our Strategy for 2022-25

Our 2022 – 25 strategy sets out the way in which we will regulate during those three years. This document sets out our high level strategic priorities and the five key strategic aims for the BSB over this period:

- Efficiency – delivering our core regulatory operations quickly, economically and to a high standard.
- Standards – ensuring that barristers provide a high quality and responsive service throughout their careers.
- Equality – promoting equality, diversity and inclusion at the Bar and at the BSB and the profession’s ability to serve diverse consumers.
- Access – promoting consumer understanding of legal services and choice and good value in using those services (covering both the supply of, and demand for, barristers’ services).
- Independence – strengthening the BSB’s independence, capability self-confidence and credibility.

You can read more about our strategy and more detailed information about our planned activities during the 2022-23 business year, [here](#).

Our Governance

We have robust governance in place to oversee our work, led by our Board. The Bar Standards Board is currently made up of 11 members, a combination of six lay people, one of whom is the Chair, and five practising barristers, one of whom is the Vice Chair. It must have a lay majority.

For more information on the work of BSB, please go to our main website at:

www.barstandardsboard.org.uk



Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

As the regulator of the Bar of England and Wales, we have a statutory regulatory objective to “encourage an independent, strong, diverse and effective legal profession” (the Legal Services Act 2007). We also have obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

We strongly believe that, if as the regulator we are to be credible in promoting diversity, we must ourselves be exemplary. We aim, therefore, to ensure meaningful compliance with our equality duties in every aspect of our work, to demonstrate best equalities and anti-discrimination practice, and to embed equality and fairness into the day-to-day running of our organisation. The Board has, for example, just endorsed the BSB’ anti-racist strategy.

We want the Bar to be as fully diverse as the society it serves, and we want this diversity to be reflected across all areas of our organisation including on our Board and its Committees.

We welcome applications from anyone regardless of age, experience, sexuality, religion/beliefs, disability, ethnicity, heritage, gender, socioeconomic background or other differences.

The Bar Standards Board is deeply committed to inclusive working practices, so during the application process we commit to:

- Paying for care and childcare if required whilst you attend interviews.
- Paying travel costs for interviews held in person.
- Making any reasonable or (where possible) alternative adjustments – for example ensuring we have a sign language interpreter organised in advance if you’d like them and/or providing alternative adjustments which fall outside the scope of reasonable adjustments as defined by the Equality Act 2010
- Providing documents in accessible formats readily available to download.

If there is anything else you are concerned about or think we could provide, please let us know.

The Bar Standards Board [website](#) has a number of web pages dedicated to [equality and diversity](#) which set out our strategy and provide links to research and analysis published by the Bar Standards Board.

The GRA Committee

The GRA is responsible for ensuring the Board's corporate governance standards and internal controls are maintained. The Committee keeps under review and advises the Board on all matters relating to the risk management framework and the BSB's internal audit function.

The terms of reference for the Committee, can be found [here](#).

The Board has three other committees to help it discharge its responsibilities:

- Nomination - advises the Board on fair, inclusive and transparent approaches to recruitment to the Board and senior executive roles and oversees, on behalf of the Board, some aspects of the recruitment process;
- Performance and Strategic Planning - leads work in relation to development of the BSB's strategic direction and plans, and the allocation of resources to deliver the strategic and business plans. It oversees performance against relevant service levels and considers whether financial and operational resources are properly and effectively allocated and efficiently managed across the organisation; and
- Remuneration - makes recommendations to the Board on the remuneration and terms of engagement of BSB staff, its non-executive members and advisers.

All committees have practising barrister and lay members. All Board and committee members are appointed in accordance with the Seven Principles of Public Life.



About the Roles

Eligibility for Appointment

We are seeking to appoint two suitably experienced lay members.

Lay members cannot be (or ever have been) barristers or solicitors, as defined in paragraph 2(4) of Schedule 1 of the Legal Services Act 2007. Full time judges and judicial tribunal chairs are not eligible for appointment in this category either, but lay magistrates, and those who sit as lay members of tribunals, who are not legally qualified, are welcome to apply.

Job Description

Expectations of a GRA Committee Member

GRA Committee members must be able to provide high-level strategic thinking, advice and leadership to ensure the BSB Board's corporate governance standards and internal controls are maintained.

Committee members are expected to uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life, being:

- Selflessness - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
- Integrity - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- Objectivity - Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- Accountability - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- Openness - Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- Honesty - Holders of public office should be truthful.
- Leadership - Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

About the Roles (continued)

The role of GRA Committee members

- Play an appropriate part in ensuring that the necessary business of the Committee is carried out efficiently, effectively, and in a manner appropriate for the proper conduct of public business;
- Make constructive contributions to debate and make knowledge and expertise available to the Committee and the BSB as required;
- Ensure that the BSB acts in accordance with its instruments of governance and with the BSB's internal rules and regulations;
- Accept collective responsibility for the decisions reached by the Committee;
- Establish constructive and supportive but challenging working relationships with the BSB's people, and recognise and respect the proper separation between governance and executive management and delivery; and
- Ensure that proper mechanisms exist for financial control and for the prevention of fraud.

Personal Attributes of GRA Committee members

- Members will have a commitment to the justice system, to equality and inclusion, and the values, aims and objectives of the BSB;
- Members will act fairly and impartially in the interests of the BSB, using independent judgement and maintaining confidentiality as appropriate;
- Members are expected to attend all meetings of the Committee, or to give timely apologies if absence is unavoidable;
- Members must participate in training specified by the Board; and
- Members must participate in procedures established by the Board for the regular appraisal and/or review of the performance of individual members.



Person Specification

Competencies Required of GRA Committee Members

All Bar Standards Board GRA Committee members must demonstrate a set of core competences and qualities, as set out below. In addition, an interest in and commitment to the aims and objectives of the BSB is essential. Full induction training will be provided to new Committee members.

1. Experience, knowledge and skills

Candidates will demonstrate evidence of the following:

- Experience of non-executive oversight of the governance, risk and/or audit processes and controls in an appropriately complex organisation;
- Experience of critical analysis of policies and reports, and identification of areas of best practice as well as areas requiring improvement;
- Experience of operating with high levels of public scrutiny and accountability;
- Evidence of a strong intellect and understanding of the issues that are relevant to regulating the Bar and where the Board relies on GRA for advice or assurance, and the ability to exercise sound judgement on these issues; and
- An appreciation of the regulatory environment within which the BSB operates, including the distinction between governance and management.

2. Integrity and Respect

- Highest possible standards of ethics and personal integrity;
- Behaving at all times in a fair, balanced and non-discriminatory manner;
- Supportive yet challenging – sets and demands high standards; and
- Demonstrating an understanding of the importance of promoting equal opportunities for all, treating people fairly whilst responding sensitively to differences.

Person Specification (continued)

3. Strategic Appreciation

- Ability to think strategically, synthesise complex information, weigh up options, measure risks and work constructively with other Committee members;
- Experience of developing and implementing policy in a challenging environment; and
- Ability to cope effectively with complexity; take an independent view; deal with ambiguity and retain a balanced view despite conflicting demands.

4. Team work and credibility

- Excellent interpersonal, communication and presentation skills with a collaborative style;
- Ability to challenge senior staff and to engage constructively with staff and contractors at all levels; and
- Ability to contribute to a high performing committee with a diverse membership.

5. Analysis and Judgement

- Intellect to assimilate complex information, arriving at objective decisions;
- Record of addressing difficult issues with consistency, diplomacy and tenacity;
- Demonstrable ability to think independently, stating and supporting personal decisions in front of colleagues, whilst also being open to challenge; and
- Capacity to reach an overall assessment and to raise perceptive and valuable questions and influence outcomes.

6. Equality and Diversity

- Strong understanding of and demonstrable commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Ability to engage with a range of diverse stakeholders and board members.

Important Information

Terms of appointment

An appointment to the role of GRA Committee member is for a fixed period of up to three years and may be renewed for a further term of three years, subject to satisfactory performance and that it is in the interests of the BSB to do so.

Remuneration

Members are remunerated at the rate of £330 per meeting (our usual day rate), with an additional 12.07% for holiday pay. That is net of VAT and we will pay VAT to those members who are VAT registered. A day is deemed to be equivalent to seven hours, and that includes all reading and preparation time and attendance at the meeting. Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed within the conditions of the BSB's travel and expenses policy.

Time Commitment

GRA meets six times a year - a day would usually include preparation and meeting attendance.

Location

Based in London. Meetings are held at our offices on High Holborn although facilities for remote attendance are available.

Conflicts of interest

Any actual or perceived conflicts of interest will be explored by the selection panel at the interview, as will any matters which could diminish public trust and confidence in the regulator. If you are offered and accept appointment, you should note particularly the requirement to declare any conflict of interest that arises in the course of BSB business and to declare any relevant business interests, positions of authority or other connections with organisations relevant to the business of the BSB. Similarly, any matters affecting or concerning you which could diminish public trust and confidence in the regulator must also be disclosed. This is an ongoing requirement throughout the term of the appointment.

How to Apply

The recruitment process is being undertaken by Inclusive Boards on behalf of The Bar Standards Board. If you wish to apply for this position, please supply the following by 23:59 14/04/2024

- A detailed CV setting out your career history, with responsibilities and achievements.
- A cover letter of no more than two sides demonstrating by examples the six competencies required of GRA Committee members as well as your motivations for applying.

To submit your application please visit www.inclusiveboards.co.uk/opportunities or email BSB@inclusiveboards.co.uk

As part of the process you will also be asked to complete a:

- Voluntary diversity monitoring form - This information is not used in the selection process. It is not seen by the panel assessing your application. Inclusive Boards and the BSB will use this information only to monitor the diversity of candidates we attract and appoint.
- Vetting and references form.

Key dates:

- Deadline for applications: 23.59 14 April 2024.
- Preliminary interviews ongoing virtually with Inclusive Boards up to and including the end of w/c 22 April 2024.
- Final Panel interviews with the Bar Standards Board: Wednesday 15 May 2024.

The selection panel will consist of three members:

- Stephen Thornton CBE (lay Board member, Chair of GRA and Chair of the panel);
- Jeff Chapman KC (barrister member of the Board and GRA);
- Paula McDonald CBE (lay independent member of the panel).

If you have any questions or would like to arrange a call to discuss the role please email BSB@inclusiveboards.co.uk or call 0207 267 8369

Handling your application

We will process your application as quickly as possible and will keep you informed at key stages. We will acknowledge receipt of your application electronically and check it for completeness and eligibility. If you do not receive an acknowledgment, please check your spam and then contact BSB@inclusiveboards.co.uk.

Dealing with your concerns

If you have a complaint about the way that your application has been handled, please email BSB@inclusiveboards.co.uk in the first instance. If you are dissatisfied with the response given, then your query will be escalated to a Senior Consultant.

If you wish to raise your concerns with the BSB, you must do so in writing within 28 days of receiving notification of the outcome of the relevant stage of the process. You should address your concerns to the BSB's Head of Governance and Corporate Services, Rebecca Forbes RForbes@barstandardsboard.org.uk, who will deal with them in accordance with the BSB's service complaints policy. This can be found [here](#).

INCLUSIVE BOARDS

About Us

Inclusive Boards is the UK's leading board diversity practice. We have worked alongside over 300 organisations to provide support with Board recruitment, development and governance reviews. We strive to be at the forefront of equity and diversity, and believe that everyone should be represented at Board level. Additionally, we also provide bespoke training sessions on a variety of subjects including personal branding, inclusive recruitment practices and board structures and governance as well as delivering leadership development programmes for underrepresented leaders across a range of sectors.

Contact us today

Improve diversity on your Board, please don't hesitate to contact us via hello@inclusiveboards.co.uk.

To join a Board, sign up to become a candidate via our website and be notified of the latest opportunities as and when they become available.



www.inclusiveboards.co.uk



[@InclusiveBoards](https://twitter.com/InclusiveBoards)



<https://linkedin.com/company/inclusive-boards>

