



Which barristers offer Public Access work?

Not every barrister offers Public Access work, and those that do are not obliged to take on your case; they have the right to refuse to act on your behalf – especially if they do not feel that your case is suitable for Public Access. If your case is accepted, the Barrister will give you a client-care letter setting out the Terms & Conditions, the fee that will be charged and the timescale in which the work will be completed.

We have some barristers who act on a 'public access' basis. More information on this is provided by clicking this link: [public access details](#). They can accept work in the following areas:

- Commercial litigation
- Criminal, regulatory and professional discipline
- Family
- Employment
- Private rights
- Consumer Disputes
- Domestic Constructions

What are the benefits of Public Access?

Instructing a Barrister yourself can be much less expensive.

Instead of paying for a solicitor and a barrister, you will only be paying for your barrister, who will have fewer overheads alone than when instructed through a solicitor.

Going directly to a barrister can speed up the litigation process, since you cut out any unnecessary communication.

You benefit from having direct access to a specialist who can help you with any advisory, drafting and advocacy work.

Is my Case Suitable for Public Access?

Public access is best suited to clients who are organised and able to carry out the administrative preparation for a case themselves.

Most cases can be undertaken under Public Access, but some types of cases are especially suitable, such as:

Individuals' disputes involving breach of contract, family, inquests, wills or employment

Small and medium-sized businesses' contractual or employment disputes, or when seeking advice on non-contentious commercial issues (such as drafting standard terms & conditions, or advising on company restructuring where redundancies may need to be considered).

Cases may not be suitable for Public Access if they are likely to be very lengthy or involve very detailed legal correspondence; for example, some criminal proceedings, or cases involving foreign jurisdictions or multiple expert witnesses. If counsel considers that your matter is unsuitable for Public Access then one of the clerks will assist you in identifying an appropriate solicitor.

The Bar Council has produced some guidance which sets out the details of the sort of direct access work a barrister is permitted to conduct without a solicitor being involved. This will help to give you an idea of whether your case might be suitable for direct access, but if in doubt please get in touch.

What can my Barrister do on my behalf?

The barrister's role remains essentially the same as when they are instructed by a solicitor or another intermediary. The barrister can advise you on your legal status or rights. A public access barrister will be able to represent you directly, including drafting legal documents, court forms and letters and representing you in court.

Is there anything a Barrister cannot do for me?

A public access barrister is normally not allowed to issue proceedings or file documents at court on your behalf, contact witnesses directly, handle clients' money, investigate or collect evidence and take general management of your case. You will have to assist in some of the steps in your case, but your barrister will be there to advise you.

What will it cost?

As we have set out under pricing this is determined by a number of factors. By completing our online form we will be better placed to calculate a price.

A table to provide some guidance on a range of hourly rates at different levels of seniority is set out below.

Example of hourly rates used:

Seniority	Price
QC	£350 - £500
15 years + call	£200 - £350
6 – 15 years call	£150 – £250
0 – 5 years call	£75 - £150

These hourly rates are set out as estimates for information only. For a quote, please complete our online form. All of our fees are exclusive of VAT.

There should be no hidden additional costs. Any additional costs will be agreed and set out clearly in the client care letter provided to you if you decide to instruct a barrister who

will contact you to explain the process and how long it might take. The length of time it takes to start and conclude a case varies enormously and would be best dealt with if you decide to instruct a Barrister. If you simply instructed a Barrister for advice that might be dealt with quickly. If your case was very litigious and subject to Court proceedings these can take some time to resolve. Again, your chosen Barrister could advise you about this and what your options are.

Additional costs may be incurred in the following circumstances:

Where a case becomes more complicated due to the issues between the parties. For instance, if the Court extend the length of a hearing which would usually increase the costs for the parties.

If one party produces new documentation that needs to be reviewed.

If a case adjourns at Court as one party has not complied with an order(s) from the Court this can increase cost.

When advice is refused, and someone simply wants their day in Court which was not initially anticipated.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list but are examples that litigation is not always straightforward and the position can easily change from what was initially considered.

[How can I be sure I'll get someone with enough skill and experience to help me?](#)

We will pass your case to a barrister with the relevant qualifications and experience. All barristers have to undertake training if they wish to accept Public Access cases, and they have a duty to tell you if the work you're asking them to do falls outside their area of expertise.

Details of our barristers who accept instructions directly from the public can be found [here](#).

For further information on Public Access for Lay Clients please use the following link: [Public Access guidance for the public \(barstandardsboard.org.uk\)](#)

Our public access enquiry form can be downloaded [here](#).

There might be occasions when the public access accredited barrister will recommend your case will benefit from the assistance of a solicitor particularly if the case is likely to involve significant amounts of litigation and lodging of Court documents. Barrister's diaries are often busy and this can affect their ability to be able to respond immediately to communications with other parties involved in the legal proceedings and the assistance of a solicitor is both helpful and sensible.