



BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – WEDNESDAY 7 AUGUST 2019

Pupillage

[The Times](#), [Law Society Gazette](#), [Legal Cheek](#), [The Australasian Lawyer](#) – The legal media reports that requiring chambers to enter into written agreements with pupils may help to counter “shocking” instances of abusive treatment, the Bar Council has said in response to an informal Bar Standards Board (BSB) consultation.

The Bar Council said written agreements would make pupils, pupil supervisors and chambers aware of their obligations and ‘prevent or reduce disputes, should difficulties arise’.

Social mobility – ‘I am the Bar’

[The Times](#) – A letter in The Times from barrister James Keeley in response to an article about the advantages of going to Oxbridge says: “The Bar Council, through its inspirational campaign, I am the Bar, is encouraging those from so-called non-traditional backgrounds to pursue a career at the Bar. The UK needs to look beyond the educational institution and concentrate more on the prejudice someone has faced, the difficulties they have overcome and above all their potential.”

Criminal justice

The Times – The Times reports that top lawyers have warned that the Prime Minister’s pledge to recruit 20,000 extra police officers will be a waste because there are insufficient lawyers to bring suspects to trial.

Criminal lawyers argue that trying to push significantly more defendants through the courts would result in many being freed as they [could not be prosecuted within a reasonable time](#).

The Times reports that figures show that the number of prosecutions brought in England and Wales has fallen by 45 per cent over the past eight years, despite recorded crime rising for the past five years to reach 5.9 million offences. The

proportion of crime resulting in a charge or summons in the same year they were recorded by police has halved to 7.8 per cent, prompting academics and victims' campaigners to suggest that people will give up on the justice system.

Mark Fenhalls, QC, a former chair of the Criminal Bar Association and current South Eastern Circuit leader, said that "represents as many as 400,000 crimes where victims have been let down by the justice system without their cases even coming to court".

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