



BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – MONDAY 13 MAY 2019

Online courts

[The Times \(online\)](#) - Litigants will increasingly be directed to online courts as part of government policy, justice ministry officials conceded for the first time on Friday. David Gauke, the lord chancellor, acknowledged that plans to “allow people to start to settle disputes away from the courtroom” form part of the Ministry of Justice’s court modernisation programme.

Legal profession leaders sounded alarm bells over the proposals.

Richard Atkins, QC, the chair of the Bar Council, which represents barristers, added that “many court users do not have access to computers, nor do they feel comfortable using IT to solve their problems.”

“They must not be prevented from participating in the court process,” he said.

“Whatever modernisation programme is followed, it must not lead to people being unable to enforce their rights. Litigants, defendants and witnesses should not be forced to travel many miles or for many hours because a local court has been closed.”

Education & training

[The Times \(online\)](#), [Law Gazette](#) – Further reports that a charity plans to radically shake up the Bar school market with the launch of a not-for-profit and significantly cheaper version of the vocational course required for qualification.

In a move that would cut fees by almost 30 per cent for those aiming to qualify at the Bar in England and Wales, the Inns of Court has applied to run a revamped version of the Bar professional training course.

In addition to cutting fees, the Inns said they would radically restructure the course along the lines proposed for some time by the Bar Council, the body that represents barristers.

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The dates for our legal professional & professional court user drop-in sessions being held at Crown Courts in May are:

- 13 May - #Isleworth
- 15 May - #BlackFriars & #Snaresbrook
- 21 May - #WoodGreen
- 23 May - #Croydon, #InnerLondon, #Southwark
- 30 May - #Woolwich

