



The Inns of
Court College
of Advocacy

Student Protection Plan

March 2026

Provider's name: Inns of Court College of Advocacy (ICCA) via a scheme of delegation from the Council of the Inns of Court (COIC).

Provider's UKPRN: 10081618

Legal address: The ICCA, 9 Gray's Inn Square, London, WC1R 5JD

Contact point for enquiries about this student protection plan: Sally Hunt, Operations Director (shunt@icca.ac.uk)

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Student protection plan for the period 2026–2027

An assessment of the range of risks to the continuation of study for your students, how those risks may differ based on your students' needs, characteristics and circumstances, and the likelihood that those risks will crystallise.

The Inns of Court College of Advocacy commenced the delivery of its Bar Course in the Academic Year 2020/21. The ICCA only delivers one academic programme (The Bar Course), which is split into two parts, an online phase of approximately 12–16 weeks followed by a campus-based phase of approximately 20 weeks. The LSB approved new rules from the regulator, the BSB to enable this model as a permitted pathway – <https://www.legalfutures.co.uk/latest-news/barrister-apprentices-on-way-as-training-reforms-are-approved>.

The ICCA has been re-authorised by its Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB), the Bar Standards Board, to deliver the ICCA Bar Course until 2029.

There are two course intakes each academic year as follows:

- **Cohort 1** – Online Phase (commencing in September); Examinations (December) (unless a different pathway is chosen); Campus Phase (commencing in March)
- **Cohort 2** – Online Phase (commencing in January); Examinations (April) (unless a different pathway is chosen); Campus Phase (commencing in September)

The campus-based phase is taught by ICCA staff across the four Inns of Court at:

The Honourable Society of Gray's Inn

The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn

The Honourable Society of the Inner Temple

The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple

The ICCA operates as a subsidiary of a charity called The Council of the Inns of Court (COIC) on a not-for-profit basis. In line with the Bar Standards Board's Authorisation Framework, the ICCA has the following objectives for the delivery of the Bar Course:

Flexibility – A flexible qualification route that has appeal to suitably qualified students and reduces the financial risk to students;

Accessibility – Admission to the course that is based on merit and is open to all suitably qualified students regardless of background;

Affordability – To provide real value to students by delivering a not-for-profit course, which is delivered for the lowest sustainable fee with opportunities for bursaries and access to a Hardship Fund (subject to meeting criteria)

High Standards – To provide the best possible educational experience and vocational training to students by experienced and committed academic tutors, supported by professional and invested operational staff.

Risk Analysis

Risk that the Institution will cease to operate

Likelihood **low** (impact on student **high**)

The ICCA operates under a grant from the four Inns of Court. At full recruitment, the course comfortably covers all costs incurred by the ICCA in its delivery. There are two unlikely scenarios where the operation of the course ceases to become viable for the ICCA:

- A dramatic and unsustainable rise in delivery costs
- Significant under-recruitment of students

At full recruitment each year, the ICCA achieves an operating surplus, which mitigates student under-recruitment by approximately 10%. Based on the market research conducted with potential students, and observed recruitment trends over the last five admissions cycles, such a shortfall is assessed as unlikely based on the current Bar Course market and our competitor analysis.

The ICCA uses the facilities of the Inns of Court to deliver the Bar Course, and the ICCA has a cost base (excluding salaries) of approximately £1.25M per year. This means that all reasonable costs can be controlled, and significant increases in cost which could make the course unviable are extremely unlikely. Academic staff costs are linked to student recruitment (targeted at 1 academic staff member for every 11 students) and suitable action would be taken in the event of persistent under-recruitment to reduce staff overheads.

The Council of the Inns of Court has a risk management methodology which monitors and reports on risk and allows for early mitigating measures to be implemented. All risks and the ICCA responses are overseen by the ICCA Board of Governors.

In the highly unlikely event of course closure, the ICCA closure policy would be implemented, which is also overseen by the profession's Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB), the Bar Standards Board (BSB). The closure policy ensures that all students are protected and there is a commitment that all students enrolled on the course, including those with deferred places, can complete the course. Course delivery will only cease when all students have graduated.

Risk that the institution will close a location building or campus and cannot find a suitable location

Likelihood is **low** (impact on student **low**):

The ICCA teaches across the four Inns of Court and has approximately twice the teaching room capacity required to teach the Bar Course. As such, the ICCA's business continuity plan will always re-book suitable accommodation on-campus in the first instance. The ICCA books all teaching accommodation 12 months ahead and the providers of teaching accommodation (the four Inns of Court) will operate to a service level agreed with the ICCA and ensure that the ICCA has priority for facilities during the term-time working day.

In the event that a building or zone becomes unavailable, the ICCA's Registry Services team will re-book accommodation and inform students. Additional teaching space within the Inns and other local facilities can be quickly customised to meet the needs of the Bar Course, with minimal impact on the learning of students.

Risk of discontinuing a specific subject or programme

Likelihood **low** (impact on student **high**)

To deliver the Bar Course, the ICCA must be:

- Authorised to deliver the course by the PSRB (the BSB); and
- Validated by an Academic Partner (King's College London) as the Degree Awarding Power for the provision of the PGDip award.

The loss of either of these accreditations (accreditation from King's spans a period of 5 years, re-authorisation from the BSB is approved for the next 4 years) would result in the ICCA not being able to deliver the course. Although this would have a significant impact on students, the likelihood is assessed as low for the following reasons:

- All ICCA processes and policies are linked to the UK Quality Code;
- All relevant processes, including quality assurance and Academic Regulations have been developed in collaboration with our Academic Partner, and are subject to regular oversight and review via the Periodic Programme Review and Annual Monitoring Review processes led by King's College London;
- External examiners from the PSRB and the Academic Partner are appointed and attend all relevant committees;
- All mandatory reporting requirements are adhered to;
- All processes relating to marketing and student services are fully CMA compliant; and
- The ICCA has implemented the necessary governance committees to ensure appropriate academic and operational oversight.

The Bar Standards Board have re-authorised the ICCA as an AETO (Authorised Education and Training Organisation), approved to deliver the Vocational Component of Bar Training. Re-authorisation is valid to the period **September 2029**.

Risk for Higher and Degree Apprenticeship Provision

N/A

Risk we cannot provide this programme mode.

Likelihood **low** (impact on student **high**)

The ICCA's Bar Course comprises Part One, involving online self-guided study and access to teaching and learning materials via the ICCA's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), and Part Two which is a full-time course delivered in-person in Central London.

This course structure is integral to ensure the ICCA's Bar Course complies with the BSB's Authorisation Framework for Bar Vocational Training providers.

Delivery of Part One of the course is assured while the VLE and other online resources are available – given their online nature these can scale to meet demand of an increased cohort size as required.

For Part Two teaching, the ICCA uses the facilities of the Inns of Court to deliver teaching sessions, and are able to negotiate increased (or reduced) teaching space as the requirements of Part Two cohorts demand.

As such, this risk is judged to be low likelihood.

The measures that you have put in place to mitigate those risks that you consider to be reasonably likely to crystallise

The Student Protection Plan applies if the ICCA:

Discontinues the Bar Course;

- Closes a location (building or campus) in which the course is taught and cannot find suitable premises at a nearby location

Or

The ICCA can no longer provide the Bar Course because:

- we cease operating through no choice of our own
- we lose authorisation from the PSRB
- we lose academic validation

The management of these risks is in accordance with the following ICCA policies, available on request:

Policy	Staff member responsible	ICCA Governance Committee responsible
Fair Admissions Policy	Vice-Dean	Board of Governors
Closure Policy	Dean	Finance & Operations Committee

Awards policies (various)	King's College London	ICCA Education committee
Policies relating to collaborative (validated) provision	Head of Collaborative Provision, King's College London	ICCA Education Committee
Fee, refund, and compensation policy	Operations Director	Finance and Operations Committee

These policies are in place to protect students, maintain the academic and operational aspects of the ICCA and allow it to mitigate risks. All policies have been developed in line with the Quality Code for Higher Education and CMA guidance.

Information about the policy you have in place to refund tuition fees and other relevant costs to your students and to provide compensation where necessary in the event that you are no longer able to preserve continuation of study

Our Fee, refund and compensation policy provides the necessary re-assurance to students and validators/authorisers of our course that students have the necessary protections and that the ICCA is compliant with all necessary legislation, including CMA policy and guidance.

The policy is written by the ICCA's Operations Director and overseen by the ICCA's Finance and Operations Committee. In the unlikely event of closure or if the ICCA's Bar Course cannot be run for operational or academic reasons, students will receive a full refund, or alternative arrangements will be sought for the delivery of the course. There will be no enrolled student on the ICCA's Bar Course who will not have the opportunity to attend a Bar Training Course at the price advertised and within the Academic Year in which they are enrolled.

A student who withdraws, for example, in the event of long-term illness or disability or who is required to withdraw from the course, may incur financial loss for a portion of the fees, however the student will have the opportunity to be re-admitted to the course in a subsequent year as long as the student remains academically qualified to attend (and is within applicable time-limits for pre-requisite qualifications).

Information about how you will communicate with students about your student protection plan

This Student Protection Plan is communicated in the following ways:

- Via the Bar Course Policies & Procedures page on the ICCA website at www.icca.ac.uk; Within terms and conditions, shared with applicants prior to accepting an offer with the ICCA;
- As part of the enrolment process; Linked from the ICCA's Academic Regulations and Student Handbook.

The plan forms part of our external quality assurance 'pack' and will be subject to regular review by the Director of Operations and Dean of the ICCA. It will be aligned to other relevant policies and will be monitored by the Finance and Operations Committee, which report to the Board of Governors.

Should any element of the plan be activated, students will be notified within one week of the decision being formally approved and made aware of their rights as stipulated in the plan and CMA guidance.

The ICCA undertakes to students (see the ICCA Bar Course Student Handbook 'Student Voice' section) that their views will be properly considered in accordance with the following principles:

Every student at the ICCA deserves the right to raise any issues they are facing with the quality of their education or student experience directly with the ICCA.

Every student on Part Two of the Bar Course at the ICCA deserves access to a representative at study level.

The ICCA will engage with all the student representatives to ensure that all concerns are heard and responded to in a timely and relevant manner.

As such, the ICCA gathers feedback through Student Representatives, through Student Staff Liaison Committees, through Student Feedback Surveys and through student representation on the ICCA Education Committee, all of which are clearly referenced in the Student Voice section of the ICCA Bar Course Student Handbook. There is also a comprehensive student complaints procedure outlined in the Academic Regulations and Student Handbook.

Although the course is delivered in an academic environment, the ICCA implements processes and evaluation techniques which also draw on best practice in vocational training, namely the four levels of training evaluation (Kirkpatrick, D.L. (1994)). These four levels are:

Level 1 Reaction measures how students react to education and training

Level 2 Learning analyses if the understands the training and education (e.g. is there and increase in knowledge, skills, or experience)

Level 3 Behaviour - whether students are utilising what they learned at work.

Level 4 Results determines if the training and education had a positive impact on the profession

When adhering to this model it is only Level 1 and 2 that apply to educational institutions when eliciting student feedback. However, to ensure a best practice approach is taken, all student feedback mechanisms should meet the criteria of Level 2, i.e. do not focus purely on immediate reactions, but to promote reflection on the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

Level 3 evaluation remains important for institutions to conduct, and therefore maintaining contact with alumni is important to measure the level to which training and education transferred to the demands of the work-based component.

Students are invited to submit a questionnaire at the end of each module to provide detailed feedback on all aspects of the teaching, assessment, learning environment, administration, and resources. This forms part of modular review which utilise the Student Record System and Moodle

VLE data to provide a holistic overview for the ICCA's course and college level leadership. Students are able to raise a question through the ICCA Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) at any point during the course to provide feedback relating to any issue relating to teaching, assessment, learning environment, administration, and resources. This is treated as a feedback mechanism and is separate from the ICCA's Complaints Procedures. Students have the option to remain anonymous or provide their details to facilitate a follow-up discussion.

The ICCA has developed all the necessary Registry functions to administer student feedback. Course questionnaires include questions on reaction to teaching but also student confidence in their ability to meet the requirements of the Professional Statement. These questionnaires are implemented after each module and tutors are responsible for ensuring all students participate. This information is made available to academic staff in the form of a report which also includes analysis of module results to measure student reactions and confidence against overall performance.

Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings (see Student Voice section of the Student Handbook) are designed to provide student representatives with a forum to raise feedback on behalf of the students they represent to staff on the Bar Course. SSLCs will be chaired by the Bar Course Leader and student feedback will be shared with lead tutors for individual Bar Course modules. SSLC representatives will have a remit to proactively gather feedback from their fellow students.

Student Representatives are recruited and are members of the ICCA's Education Committee. SSLC representatives (or any other student with feedback for the academic or support staff) are invited to make contact with the Student Representatives prior to meetings of the Education Committee.

The Student Representative then provides feedback to the ICCA Governors via the ICCA Education Committee. There will also be regular opportunities for the Student Representatives to engage with the ICCA's leadership, specifically the Bar Course Leader and Registry Manager. Certain issues may then be raised to the Operations Director for resolution.

The ICCA may ask students to attend focus groups where course review is planned to discuss new ideas and gain feedback on planned changes and enhancements. This must be balanced against the academic demands of a 20-week course and may be addressed with volunteer alumni where necessary.

All feedback results are available to the ICCA Education Committee, the Terms of Reference of which are contained in the Academic Regulations. The Committee's remit includes monitoring progress against educational strategic objectives, as well as monitoring the nature and level of any complaints received and ensure that appropriate action is taken in respect of them. Membership includes student representation from both an ICCA Student Representative as well as a recent alumnus of the ICCA Bar Course. This student representation allows additional student feedback to this important forum and fosters direct engagement with the ICCA's leadership and Governors.

An annual course review authored by the Bar Course Leader draws on available data including student feedback to update the Bar Course Leader's Course Improvement Plan. The ICCA

periodically engages with course alumni on either a questionnaire or interview basis to review and develop the transfer of knowledge and skills to the Pupillage and Work-Based Training component.

The Dean of the ICCA reports annually to Governors on all matters pertaining to delivery of the ICCA Bar Course.