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## INSTRUCTING A BARRISTER

Public Access

Public Access - Information for Lay Clients

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### PUBLIC ACCESS - INFORMATION FOR LAY CLIENTS

#### Public Access – Introduction

The services offered by barristers are different from those offered by solicitors. Barristers are trained as specialist advisers and advocates and this means that they become involved where expert legal advice is needed, where documents need to be drafted for their clients to use in court or for representation before a court, tribunal or other organisation.

Members of the public can now instruct barristers directly although there are exceptions in certain areas of work. In essence these areas are:

*(i)* Immigration or asylum work;

*(ii)* Family or criminal proceedings other than for advice. Criminal proceedings have not been commenced (but not to include interviews conducted by prosecuting or investigating authorities) or some appeals;

*(iii)* Where the instructions come from intermediaries and are in connection with any family or criminal proceedings.

Barristers are not obliged to accept public access instructions and may refuse instructions if they consider it is in your interests or the interests of justice for you to instruct a solicitor or other professional.

The Bar Council has produced a guide to help you understand the nature of the barrister's role and how best you may use public access. For Guidance for Lay Clients [click here](#).

Before barristers can accept public access instructions, they must first have complied with certain training requirements. For a directory of barristers who have complied with the training requirements and to accept public access work, [click here](#).

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