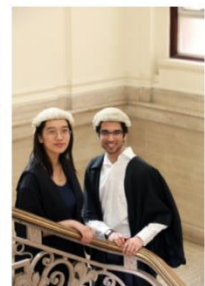




The Bar Mock Trial Competition



The Bar Mock Trial Competition 2018/19

Introduction

The BMT is a fun and unique way to engage your students in the justice system, educate them about the laws that apply to them and broaden their aspirational horizons. Every year thousands of UK students aged 14-18 take on the roles of lawyers, witnesses, court staff and jury members in crown courts across the UK and we very much hope that your school will participate in 2018.

Why take part?

It is not every day that school aged students get to act out a criminal trial in a real court, in front of a real judge. Using our tailored and age appropriate legal resources, the students have the chance to build their case themselves. We know how busy teachers are and consciously fit the competition format around your schedule.

Whether you are a head teacher interested in diversifying your school's extracurricular offering, a law teacher wishing to further your students' legal understanding or just interested in giving your students an educational experience they won't forget, the BMT is suitable for any school.

What you need to take part:

- To be a non-fee paying school in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland;
- 10-15 students aged 14-18 to take on the roles of barristers/advocates, witnesses, ushers/macers, clerks and jury members;
- Two students can also compete in the Court Artist and Court Reporter competition (this is optional);
- A lead teacher to coordinate the team, help arrange practise times and occasionally liaise with the competition organisers;
- Permission to take your students to your local crown court on a Saturday in November;
- £169.00 for the entry fee.

As a new school to the competition, you will be guaranteed a place in a heat of your choice and a dedicated barrister mentor to help your students prepare for their day in court.

Top Tip

Recruit students to your Bar Mock Trial team by:

- Making an announcement in assembly
- Putting up posters
- Engaging societies, e.g. law, debating etc.

Timeline of Events

May

Applications open for the 2018/19 cycle!

June

Schools are allocated to their Regional Heat. Schools receive the Cases, School's Guide and Role Guides for barristers, witnesses, clerks, ushers, jury members, court artist and court reporter.

July

Practice time!
Barrister Mentors recruited to each school.
School pre evaluations to be completed.

August

Barrister mentors allocated to each school to begin visits in the autumn term.

September

All schools receive check-up calls and extra assistance if needed.
Barrister mentors to make contact with schools.

October

Final month of practice!

November

Regional heats take place across the UK. Finalists determined by winning school in each regional heat.
All participating students receive certificates.

December

Final regional heats.
Deadline for Court Artist and Court Reporter Competition.

January

Finalists given National Final Case.

February

Finalists perfect their arguments!
Winner of Court Artist and Court Reporter Competitions announced.

March

National Final takes place.

Witness Statements – What are they?

A key part of any Bar Mock Trial Competition round is the questioning of the witnesses by the barristers. Whether your students are amateur dramatists or logical strategists, this is a chance for them to earn some points for their team.

The idea of both Examination in Chief and Cross Examination is to provide evidence upon which the jury can make their decision on whether the defendant is guilty or not guilty. Each school provides two barristers and two witnesses per round.

Example Witness Statement

Name: Tommy King
Occupation: Scaffolder
Age: 18

On 8th August 2016, I was out walking my dog when I came across a load of people creating chaos on Murrayfield High Street.

My curiosity got the better of me so I decided to hang around and watch what was going on. I figured no one would mind me watching and having my dog with me made me feel safe enough not to run away. I watched a group of young men and women in dark clothing break a car's windscreen and throw something inside which made the car burst into flames a minute later.

After about 5 minutes of this, a police car arrived. A section of the crowd broke off and moved towards it. They seemed to be shouting abuse at the police officers inside the car. One of them picked up a couple of bottles and started throwing them at the police car. I am sure this person was Maddison Phillips. I've seen him/her around the town and know who (s)he is, but we have never spoken to each other. (S)he was standing about 20 metres away but I could see his/her face in the light from the streetlamps. I can't remember what (s)he was wearing, but I think it was some kind of tracksuit.

After another few minutes, more police cars turned up and I decided to leave so they wouldn't think I was involved. I've had trouble with the local police before and didn't want them to think I was part of what was going on. I didn't see Maddison after this as we must have gone in different directions.

I heard from a friend that Maddison had been arrested that night and figured it was my duty to tell the police what I had seen.

Top Tip

Pay close attention to the underlined sentences – these are the main points in dispute!

Examination in Chief

A series of questions from a barrister on the **same** team as the witness. It is characterised by short, open ended questions designed to bring out the witness' story to the jury.

Questions might include:

1. What were you doing on the evening of 8th August 2016?
2. How did you react to seeing the "chaos"?
3. What did you see?
4. What happened after the police arrived?
5. Did you recognise anyone in this crowd?
6. Where were you standing when you saw this person?
7. What did they look like?
8. What happened then?
9. Why did you leave?
10. Did you see that person again?

Cross Examination

A series of questions from a barrister on the **opposing** team as the witness. It is characterised by closed, leading questions designed to elicit yes/no answers which reveal weaknesses and inconsistencies in the story. These will be highlighted and underlined to help you.

Questions might include:

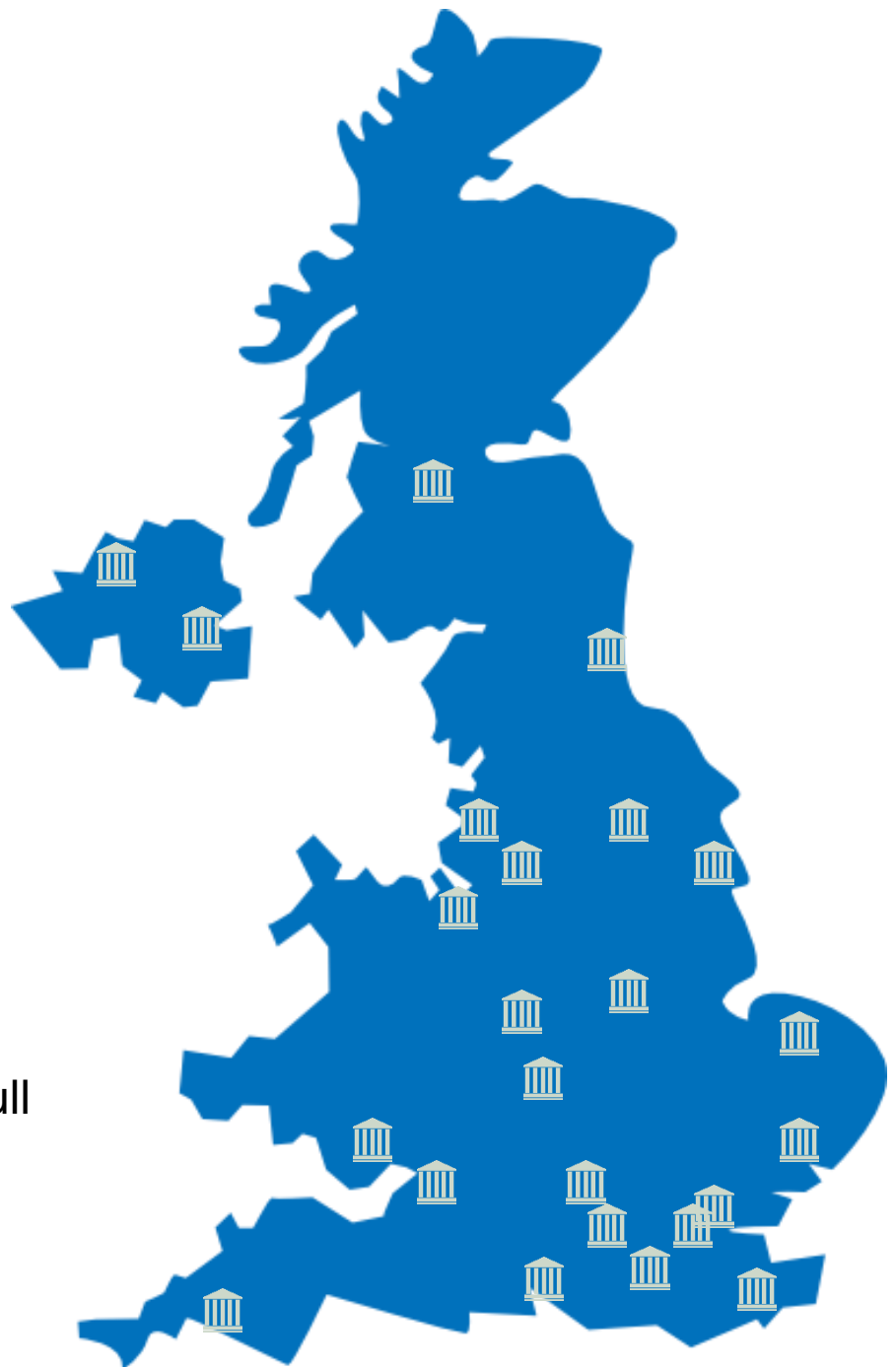
1. You say you were around 20 metres away from the group when you identified the defendant, could you see them clearly enough to identify them?
2. You also say that it was dark at the time, would this have affected your view of the event?
3. You also say that you can't remember what the person you saw was wearing, so could it be possible that you don't really remember what they looked like?
4. You've described the event as "chaos", so do you think, given the distance, lack of clear daylight, and the chaotic and distracting surroundings, it is possible to make a mistake in seeing someone's face clearly?
5. You have said that you only came forward after hearing about the defendant's arrest and not straight after you had supposedly identified them committing a serious crime. I put it to you that you didn't identify the defendant at all, but have used this as an opportunity to put away a rival – is this correct?

Top Tip

If your prosecution and defence teams work together, they can spot weaknesses and strengths in each other's arguments and prepare to counter them in court!

List of Regional Heats for 2018/19

Plymouth
Maidstone
Guildford
Inner London
Reading
Snaresbrook
Ipswich
Norwich
Oxford
Bristol
Cardiff
Birmingham
Stafford
Nottingham
Chester
Manchester
Preston
Leeds
Kingston upon Hull
Newcastle
Glasgow
Southampton



We are currently taking applications for all of the Regional heats listed above. Applications close on 1st June, but spaces may still be available in selected heats beyond that.

To apply, visit www.smartlaw.org.uk/mock-trials/

Questions? Contact BMT@youngcitizens.org or call 020 7566 4154