

Response form

What is your name? Alex Cisneros

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What is your job title? Policy Analyst: Equality & Diversity and CSR

When responding please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation:

I am responding as an individual

I am responding on behalf of an organisation (name of organisation)
The General Council of the Bar

If your organisation has undertaken published research in this area or trialled measuring socio-economic background, please detail this below.

We currently collect the following data about applicants applying to join the Bar at the post-graduate level through the Pupillage Gateway (our online recruitment portal):

Did you mainly attend a state school between the ages of 11 - 18?

If you attended a fee paying school, did you receive any kind of financial award to cover 50% or more of the school fees?

At any point in your school years (aged 11 - 18) were you eligible for Free School Meals?

At any stage in your school years (aged 11 - 18); did your household receive income support?

Did you take part in an outreach or widening access programme (for example with Pathways to Law or the Social Mobility Foundation) during your school or university years?

When you studied your undergraduate degree, what was the occupation of the higher earner of your parents/guardians:

Did either of or both of your parents obtain a degree from a higher education establishment?

Please indicate your approximate anticipated level of debt, if any, on completion of pupillage:

Do you look after a family member(s) because of ill health or disabilities?

Do you look after a family member(s) because of problems related to old age?

Please check the box that best describes you as a respondent:

- Respondent type
- Business representative organisation / trade body
 - Central government
 - Charity or social enterprise
 - Individual
 - Large business (over 250 staff)
 - Legal representative
 - Local government
 - Medium business (50 to 250 staff)
 - Micro business (up to 9 staff)
 - Small business (10 to 49 staff)
 - Trade union or staff association
 - Other (please describe)

If you are responding as an employer, which sector is your organisation most typically associated with?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not relevant (e.g. not responding as an employer) | <input type="checkbox"/> Fast Moving Consumer Goods |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Sector | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy, Water, Utilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting or Professional Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering, Industrial |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Law | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Banking and Financial Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Charity sector |
| <input type="checkbox"/> IT / Telecoms | <input type="checkbox"/> Creative industries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retail | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state) |

Question 1

Figure 1 (page 5) sets out our thoughts on the important characteristics for the socio-economic background measures. Which of these are most important to you?

	1 Not important at all	2	3	4	5 Highly important	Don't know
Accurate measure of disadvantage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accessibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comparability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Verifiability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Likely to elicit a response	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clarity of the measure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Longevity of measure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any other characteristics that you think should be considered?

Question 2

For each measure at Appendix 1, summarised below, please indicate with an X how suitable you consider each measure to be. To support your responses, further information about the measures is set out in Appendix 1. For some measures, the age at which a measure may be relevant is still to be determined, as there is no current consensus. If you have a view on a particular measure, please provide this information in the comments section.

Where you do not feel that you are in a position to judge the appropriateness of a particular measure, we invite you to indicate this using the 'don't know' option. 1 indicates not at all suitable, 5 indicates highly suitable.

**Engagement Document: Developing a Common set of Measures for Employers on the
Socio-Economic Backgrounds of their Workforce and Applicants**

	1 Not at all suitable	2	3	4	5 Highly suitable	Don't know	Include as a key measure? (Yes / No / Don't know)	Comments
Parental income or wealth								
Parental income or wealth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	An individual may not know their parent's salary.
Parents / guardian / carer eligible for income support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	An individual may not know if their parent is eligible nor if the support is not being received.
Parents / guardian / carer received income support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	See above
Respondent was eligible for free school meals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	Eligibility is a more accurate measure but a respondent may not know if they were eligible but did not receive FSM.
Respondent received free school meals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	See above re eligibility and receipt. Receipt of FSM is something the respondent is likely to know and is therefore a relatively useful measure.
Housing tenure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	
Amenities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	This measure will change significantly over time, meaning comparisons between cohorts are impossible.

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	1 Not at all suitable	2	3	4	5 Highly suitable	Don't know	Include as a key measure? (Yes / No / Don't know)	Comments
Access to Internet at home whilst at secondary school.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	The Office of National Statistics produced a bulletin in 2015 showed that "almost all adults aged 16 to 24 (96%) accessed the internet 'on the go'". Access to the internet at home is not therefore particularly helpful. Also see above regarding the change in access and comparison between cohorts.
Working during term time at University to support own living costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	More research needed before it can be known that this is a good proxy for parental income.
Level of University maintenance loan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	More research needed before it can be known that this is a good proxy for parental income
Parental job								
Parent / guardian / carer's occupation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	Parental occupation is useful as a proxy for parental salary which respondents are likely to know. It may make sense to provide a list of categories of occupation to enable easier comparison and so that "occupation" means more than just "job title".
Parent / guardian / carer's job title	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	[Select]	Often meaningless and impossible to compare between cohorts.
Parent / guardian / carer unemployed for more than 6 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	Professionals may be unemployed for 6 months, so this may not be a useful proxy for family income.
Parental qualifications								

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	1 Not at all suitable	2	3	4	5 Highly suitable	Don't know	Include as a key measure? (Yes / No / Don't know)	Comments
Parental / guardian / carer completion of degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	
Highest parental / guardian / carer qualification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	
Individual's education								
Proficiency in English (or language educated in).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	This would be difficult to measure.
Type of primary school attended (state, state selective, independent) If independent, whether over 75% of fees were a government assisted or funded via a bursary / scholarship)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	The nature of provision differs across the country and is not a good indicator of socio-economic background.
Type of secondary school attended (state, state selective, independent. If independent, whether over 75% of fees were a government assisted or funded via a bursary / scholarship)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	More research done into the appropriate %
Type of institution completed further education (age 16-18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	See above in relation to primary schools
Name of school attended (primary, secondary and further education institution)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	Employers are unlikely to have the information available to them to judge the quality of particular schools, which may in any event change over time
Living in area of deprivation								
Home postcode at age X	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	This would be difficult for many employers to accurately interpret. In some areas, particularly urban areas, a single postcode may cover a variety of socio-economic circumstances.
Personal disadvantage								
Whether time has been spent in care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	
Whether ever had refugee or asylum status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	

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	1 Not at all suitable	2	3	4	5 Highly suitable	Don't know	Include as a key measure? (Yes / No / Don't know)	Comments
Whether was a carer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	
Overall subjective measure of SEB								
Closed self-assessment of SEB	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	
Open self-assessment of SEB	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	

Please list any additional measures that you think should be considered.

Question 3

Should the same measures be used for both new entry level hires (e.g. graduate / apprenticeship) as experienced hires and the existing workforce?

Yes No Don't know

Please explain your answer:

We believe that it is acceptable to use the same measures for different age cohorts (which is the essence of this question), but it is important for analytical purposes to recognise changing societal conditions which will affect different age groups: eg the recent expansion in university attendance will mean that the next generation are much more likely than previous generations to have a graduate parent; older workers who benefitted from free university education may have been less likely to have needed to work during their courses than those currently at university.

For analytical purposes it may therefore be important to correlate the socio-economic questions with age: for some purposes it may be necessary to know whether the "experienced hire" is 60 or 25.

We also note that social mobility criteria may differ in appropriateness depending on the purpose for requesting the information. In the context of the Bar, for example, applicants for access schemes such as the Bar Placement Week are selected on the basis of criteria concerned with a lack of opportunity, whereas scholarships may be means-tested, focussing upon income. Therefore different criteria may carry different weight depending on the purpose for which the information is collected.

Question 4

Please indicate with an X how important you think it is for these measures (or alternative measures to be identified) to be applicable to those who grew up overseas. 1 indicates that you consider this to not be important at all, and 5 indicates you consider this to be essential.

1 Not important at all	2	3	4	5 Essential	Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please explain your answer:

In an increasingly globalised world it seems odd not to have measures which are applicable to those who grew up abroad. However, we think that it is difficult for employers to make a meaningful assessment of the socio-economic background of those growing up abroad. Moreover, overall results may be skewed if the questions are not well-suited to ascertaining the socio-economic backgrounds of those who grew up abroad

Question 5

If you consider a composite measure (i.e. collating numerous measures into a single output measure) to be important, do you have any views on the most suitable methodology (e.g. scoring /

flagging) for developing a composite measure? Are there any important interactions between measures that you believe should be noted?

We are strongly opposed to a composite score. None of the measures are perfect measures of a candidate's background, they are simply proxies. Moreover some (eg parental income) measure only economic capital, whereas others (eg time spent in care) also measure social or cultural capital. Turning the responses into scores and combining them loses the nuances which are important for proper analysis.

Question 6

What are the main barriers to your organisation collecting socio-economic background data?

	1 Not a barrier	2	3	4	5 Major barrier	Don't know
Lack of expertise to analyse findings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Inflexible ICT or HR systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Lack of board / senior sign-up	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Concerns about staff response	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Size of organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Lack of business case for change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Lack of resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other – please state below	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question 7

What would make it more likely for your organisation to adopt a socio-economic background measure?

As with most diversity criteria, we struggle to collect data because some applicants have a perception that the Bar is not a diverse place. At the stage when we collect data about social mobility (in the Pupillage Gateway), candidates are aware of being in very strong competition with others and so may have concerns about highlighting their application 'for the wrong reasons', even if assured that those making selection decisions do not see the diversity data.

In 2015 for example, 14% of candidates chose not to answer a question about free school meals.

Question 8

Would you be willing to publish anonymised data on the socio-economic background of your workforce, or to deposit your data in a secure database that academics and researchers could access?

Yes No

Question 9

Do you believe that the collection of socio-economic background information would be beneficial to your organisation and the wider social mobility agenda?

Yes

No

Please detail your comments below.

Emphatically, yes. It would enable a clearer understanding of how the Bar, and recruits to it, compare in socio-economic terms with other professions and society generally and enable us better to undertake focussed measures to ensure that the Bar is a diverse profession.

It would also go some way to tackle negative perceptions at the Bar which in itself would encourage more non-traditional candidates to join the Bar.

To promote greater transparency we may want to attribute some comments to the person providing them when we report the outcomes of this engagement. If you do not wish your name or organisation to be identified in this way, please tick this box.