

**HIGHER RIGHTS OF AUDIENCE ASSESSMENT
THE PRACTICAL ASSESSMENTS
ACTORS FOR THE WITNESS ROLES**

The Higher Rights Assessment Board (“the Board”) seeks the assistance of young solicitors to act as ‘witnesses’ in assessments to be conducted in May of this year.

In May, the Board will be conducting its fourteenth assessments of solicitors seeking higher rights of audience in both civil and criminal proceedings. The assessments will include practical assessments conducted in the form of moots (mini-trials) in the High Court. Each practical assessment will require two ‘witnesses’: one for each opposing party in civil proceedings, one for the prosecution and one for the defence in criminal proceedings.

‘Witnesses’ will be provided with detailed statements of their intended evidence and will be briefed as to what is expected of them during the moots.

It is anticipated that the assessments will be conducted over two Saturdays: **9 May 2026 (Saturday) for ‘criminal’ practical assessments; 9 and 16 May 2026 (Saturdays) for ‘civil’ practical assessments.** Each moot will last about an hour. It is hoped that there will be three to four moots on each day.

Without ‘witnesses’ it will not be possible to conduct the assessments. Your participation is therefore vital.

You may volunteer to act as a ‘witness’ in as many assessments as you wish, either civil or criminal or both. If you wish, you may volunteer for just one or two assessments. Regrettably, we will not be able to offer any form of financial reward for your participation as witnesses. Hopefully, however, you may find it as a worthwhile experience.

As a related matter, your attention is drawn to that since solicitors volunteering as witness actors for the assessments are potential candidates of higher rights of audience assessment in the future, the Board has earlier agreed that there must be a cooling off or quarantine period of 12 months before volunteer solicitors who have served as witness actors can make any application for higher rights of audience assessment to avoid the

doubt of the volunteers using their roles to gain some form of advantage. Solicitors who volunteer as witness actors will be required to declare their conflict of interest with any candidates. Therefore, you may wish to take the above matters into account when deciding whether you will participate as 'witness'.

If you are interested in participating as a 'witness', a short e-mail to the Secretariat of the Board at secretary@hrab.org.hk **by 31 March 2026** will be sufficient to register your interest. The Secretariat will then contact you. If you prefer, you may contact the Secretariat by telephone on 2582 4197 / 2827 5618.