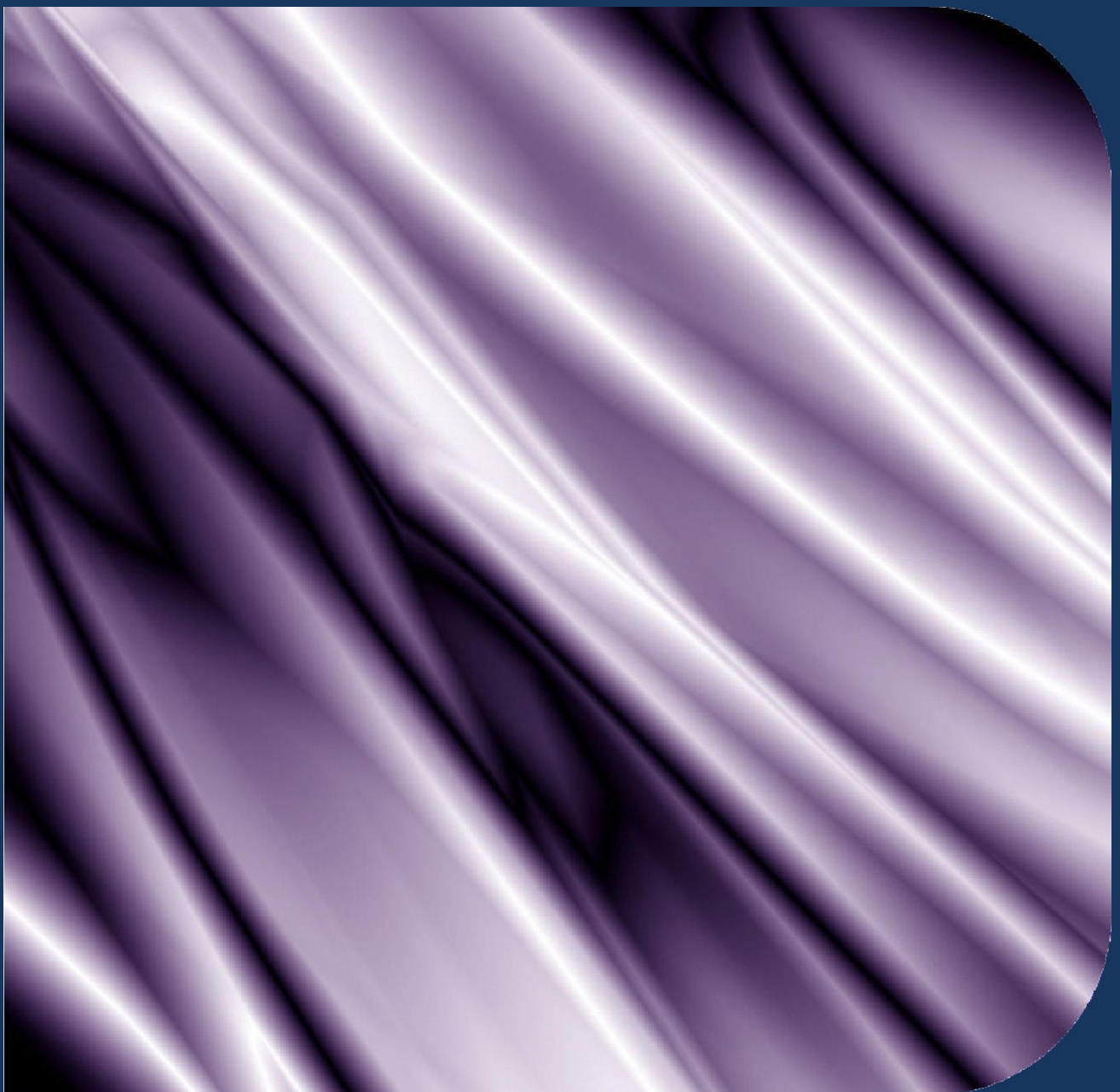


# The Bar Council

## Barristers' Working Lives Survey

### Barrister Wellbeing (BWB) analysis

January, 2024



## **Executive Summary**

### **The Bar Council Barristers' Working Lives Survey, 2023 Barrister Wellbeing (BWB) Scale Analysis**

#### **Barristers' Working Lives Survey 2023**

The General Council of the Bar, known as the Bar Council, is the Approved Regulator of the Bar of England and Wales, and the representative body for the profession. It discharges its regulatory functions through the operationally independent Bar Standards Board. The Bar Council represents all approximately 18,000 practicing barristers in England and Wales.

The Survey contained a number of questions about the work of barristers, as well as a number of demographic and attitude questions. The survey invitation was distributed to the whole population of UK practising barristers. Direct email invitations were sent to the approximately 9,000 barristers who had opted in to taking part in research. Other members of the Bar were invited to engage with the survey through communications in the Bar Council's BarTalk e-newsletter and Counsel magazines, as well as via social media. This report is based on the 3191 responses (20.6% of all eligible barristers) providing data for the 14-item version of the Barrister Wellbeing (BWB) scale contained within the survey.

#### **What is Barrister Wellbeing?**

Barrister wellbeing is that part of a barrister's overall wellbeing that is influenced by their work. It is a summary of the effect of their employment context as well as the individual and personal situation in which a barrister might evaluate the influence of work on their life. The BWB scale has an overall wellbeing score, made up of sub scales assessing a person's Psychological Wellbeing (PWB), Perfectionism (PER), Workload Management (WLM) and Supportive Work Environment (SWE). The scale has been developed in Australian and UK Barrister populations.

#### **Key Findings**

The Barrister Wellbeing scale scores, including the overall wellbeing scores were calculated and the data analysed across a number of categories linked to a series of demographic, work related and support questions asked of respondents to the survey. The key findings of these analyses are described below.

#### **Overall analysis**

1. In general terms, barristers in 2023 reported higher levels of work satisfaction and wellbeing compared to 2021, with three of the four main wellbeing measures being higher than in the previous survey.
2. Although, a third of respondents to the survey (32.2%) this year indicated they currently had a low level of overall wellbeing, this was a slight improvement over the proportion reported in 2021 (35.1%).

3. 61% of respondents felt they were overall satisfied with their job as a whole (the same percentage as in 2021).
4. Although 60% of respondents agreed they had good mood, over a third indicated they tended to feel down or in low spirits (34.9%), with 23.7%, or just over one quarter of respondents, indicating that they currently had low levels of psychological wellbeing.
5. Whilst approximately half (49%) of respondents reported they were managing their workloads well, nearly a third (31.4%) indicated they were not coping well.
6. Over 73% of respondents agreed they felt they had supportive colleagues and supportive work environments, a rise of 6% compared to 2021.

### **Demographic questions and overall wellbeing**

1. Female Barristers (48% of the total responding) reported significantly lower levels of overall wellbeing compared to the men responding to the survey. This was the same finding as was observed in 2021, although the wellbeing scores were slightly higher for both groups in 2023.
2. Barristers who reported they were ethnically White (86% of all respondents) had significantly higher overall wellbeing than respondents who identified as Other ethnic / BAME (14% of respondents).
3. Generally, as barristers get older, they report higher levels of overall wellbeing, with the oldest age group (65+) reporting significantly higher wellbeing than all younger age groups.

### **Work category questions and overall wellbeing**

1. Barristers working in the Criminal Bar reported significantly lower overall wellbeing than all other practice areas. Barristers working in Family Law had significantly lower overall wellbeing compared to all other Practice Areas, except for the Criminal Bar. Those Barristers practising in Commercial Law reported the highest average overall wellbeing.
2. Those barristers who reported being in employed practice (only) were found to have significantly higher overall wellbeing than those who were self-employed in Chambers.
3. In general, those barristers called to the Bar more recently had lower levels of wellbeing than those called to the Bar before them; with those called to the Bar before 1990 reporting significantly higher rates of wellbeing compared to all other Call categories.
4. Those barristers working in the Greater London Region reported higher average wellbeing than most other regions, and significantly higher than barristers in the North East, North West, and the South East.

### **Support category questions and overall wellbeing**

1. Barristers who had experienced or observed any type of workplace bullying or harassment (44% of the total sample) reported significantly lower wellbeing than those who had no experience of this, and this was slightly higher than in 2021 (38%).
2. A much higher proportion of Barristers in 2023 (65%) reported they were acting as a mentor to others compared to 2021 (45%).
3. Only 16% of Barristers indicated they had sought help or support from the Wellbeing at the Bar website, compared to 22% in 2021, but those that had sought online help reported significantly lower wellbeing than those who had not.
4. Those barristers in higher income groups reported significantly greater overall wellbeing than those in lower income groups.

For further details of the survey, or to discuss further surveys or analyses, please contact QoWL on 00 44 2392 846306, [enquiries@qowl.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@qowl.co.uk).

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# 1. Introduction

This report provides a summary and analysis of the Barrister Wellbeing (BWB) scale items employed in the 2023 Bar Council Barristers' Working Lives Survey of barristers in England and Wales. Please note that this document provides an overview and therefore only analyses a small part of the rich data set gathered during the survey.

The full survey incorporated the 14 items of the Barrister Wellbeing scale as well as a number of other questions that assessed demographic and attitudinal items, including those about gender, age, and harassment and workplace bullying.

This combination of questions allows analysis of the important issues affecting the overall workplace experience of barristers, and enhances interpretation of the results within the broader context of work and individual related factors.

The Barrister Wellbeing scale assesses four discrete factors affecting the wellbeing of barristers. These four factors are labelled: Psychological wellbeing (PWB), Perfectionism (PER), Workload Management (WLM) and Supportive Work Environment (SWE). The combination of these four factors is used to calculate an Overall Barrister Wellbeing score.

The Barristers' Working Lives 2023 survey was distributed electronically via a web link so that respondents could enter the data in an online questionnaire. The survey was available for a total of 6 weeks between 18 April and 6 June 2023. 3,535 responses were received from a total of the 16,900 barristers on the Bar Council circulation list (overall response rate = 20.9%). Some respondents did not provide data for all of the Barrister Wellbeing questions. This report is therefore based on the 3191 responses providing data for all BWB questions (valid response rate 20.6%).

This work report has been produced by the Quality of Working Life (QoWL) research group based in the Department of Psychology, University of Portsmouth. The QoWL group has been researching employee quality of working life, stress and wellbeing since 1998. The research of the QoWL team was judged to have 'Outstanding' Impact in the UK national university Research Excellence Framework. The team has conducted research and analysis in a variety of legal settings including the Police, and with England and Wales and Australian barrister associations. More information about QoWL research group is available at: [www.qowl.co.uk](http://www.qowl.co.uk). For further details of the BWB scale survey or analysis, please contact Dr Darren Van Laar, ([darren.van.laar@port.ac.uk](mailto:darren.van.laar@port.ac.uk)).

## Privacy Policy

Please note that projects and research conducted by the employees and associates of QoWL adhere to the professional ethical values of the British Psychological Society. Our non-research survey work adheres to the policies of the Market Research Society. Storage of data adheres to the UK data protection act. The raw data resulting from surveys may be used to further our research and benchmarking data. At no point are data from individuals reported, with reports arising from data analyses being limited to groups of a minimum of 10 people. For more details, please see our website: [www.qowl.co.uk/qowl\\_privacy\\_policy.html](http://www.qowl.co.uk/qowl_privacy_policy.html)

## 2. Barrister Wellbeing scale overview

The Barrister Wellbeing (BWB) scale provides a summary of the key factors which predict perceived wellbeing in the legal profession, including psychological wellbeing, workloads and support from colleagues. The BWB scale provides information about the wider individual, social and work context in which the work-life wellbeing of barristers can be evaluated. The overall aim behind the creation of the scale was to help identify best practice and to communicate how this might be best shared.

Many of the original items in the BWB scale were based on the psychometric analysis carried out in 2017 by the University of Portsmouth on data from the 2015 Bar Council 'Wellbeing at the Bar' survey by Positive. To make these original questions suitable for a psychometric scale, where necessary they were rewritten, recoded into a consistent format and then further adapted, tested and validated using data from barrister associations in England and Wales and in Australia. The Bar Council also conducted a survey in 2021 using the BWB questions, and comparisons with this previous survey are provided where relevant.

The 13 questions of the BWB produce four psychosocial factors which contribute to the overall wellbeing of barristers. A further item was included to provide a measure of the link between barrister wellbeing and overall job satisfaction: "*Overall, taking everything into consideration, I am satisfied with my job as a whole*". All questions in the scale were responded to on a 5-point Likert scale comprising of: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree. The data was coded such that Strongly Disagree = 1 and Strongly Agree = 5. In this way higher scores indicate more agreement.

The four factors of the BWB scale are described below. Reliability is a measure of how well the questions all assess the same underlying trait or concept. Scores over .70 are good.

- Psychological Wellbeing (PWB) contains three items and has a sub-scale reliability of .84. Items are associated with aspects of psychological wellbeing and mental health, for example, "I tend to feel down or low in spirits".
- Perfectionism (PER) also contains three questions, and exhibits a reliability value of .80. The items pick up on the tendency for individuals to attempt to be perfect in their working behaviours and the negative psychological consequences when this is unachievable, for example, "I tend to dwell on my mistakes".
- Workload Management (WLM) has three items with a combined scale reliability of .74. The items in this subscale are related to perceived ability of an individual to control their workloads and the impact of this on their wider life. An example WLM question is: "I have significant control over the content and pace of my work".
- Supportive working Environment (SWE) is represented by four items, with a subscale reliability of .76. The items are related to evaluations of workplace relationships and the extent to which an individual can influence their role: for example, "Within the environment in which I work, I feel comfortable to express my opinions, thoughts and ideas".



This combination of subscales allows an analysis of the most important issues affecting the overall wellbeing experience of barristers in a way that can be interpreted in a wide context of work and individual related factors.

### 3. Barrister Wellbeing scale summary

#### Barrister Wellbeing (BWB) Scale overview

The BWB scale was designed to assess the wellbeing of barristers and has 13 questions which contribute to four discrete wellbeing factors. The four factors are: Psychological Wellbeing (PWB), Perfectionism (PER), Workload Management (WLM) and Supportive Work Environment (SWE). The table below illustrates the BWB scale scores as a percentage of people (%Agree) agreeing or strongly agreeing with the items on that subscale. All questions for the Bar Council survey were answered on the same 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree). The table below compares summary scores on the current, 2023, survey (3191 respondents) with the 2021 survey (3479 respondents).

<b>Percentage Agreement rates for ‘BWB’ Subscales and Overall question</b>	<b>2023 Survey %Agree</b>	<b>2021 Survey %Agree</b>
<b>Psychological Wellbeing (PWB):</b> The questions associated with this factor are related to the extent to which an individual agrees they are currently experiencing a positive mood.	<b>56</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Perfectionism<sup>†</sup> (PER):</b> The Perfectionism factor assesses the extent which an individual is critical of themselves or their work. Generally, a high score in Perfectionism is associated with lower overall wellbeing.	<b>68</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Workload Management (WLM):</b> The six items in the workload management factor are associated with an individual’s sense of being able to manage the pressures or demand arising from work.	<b>49</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Supportive Work Environment (SWE):</b> The supportive work environment factor is associated with a sense of being valued, and being supported in a social as well as a developmental sense.	<b>73</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Overall Barrister Wellbeing:</b> The four BWB subscale scores can be used to generate an overall barrister wellbeing composite score to summarise the overall work-based wellbeing for barristers.	<b>50</b>	<b>47</b>

Notes: %Agree = percentage of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing to this factor;

†: Negatively phrased factor, where higher values indicate higher levels of self-criticism and therefore lower levels of wellbeing. **XX**: More than 5% above the previous survey. **XX**: More than 5% below the previous survey.

#### BWB scale summary

More than half (56%) of respondents reported they agreed or strongly agreed they had a positive mood, compared to just over half in 2021 (52%). More than two thirds of respondents in both 2023 and 2021 said they were perfectionist and could be critical of themselves. Slightly fewer than half of respondents (49%) agreed they managed their workload well. 73% of respondents said they had supportive work colleagues (up by 6% since 2021), and 50% of barristers responding agreed they had overall good wellbeing as a barrister.

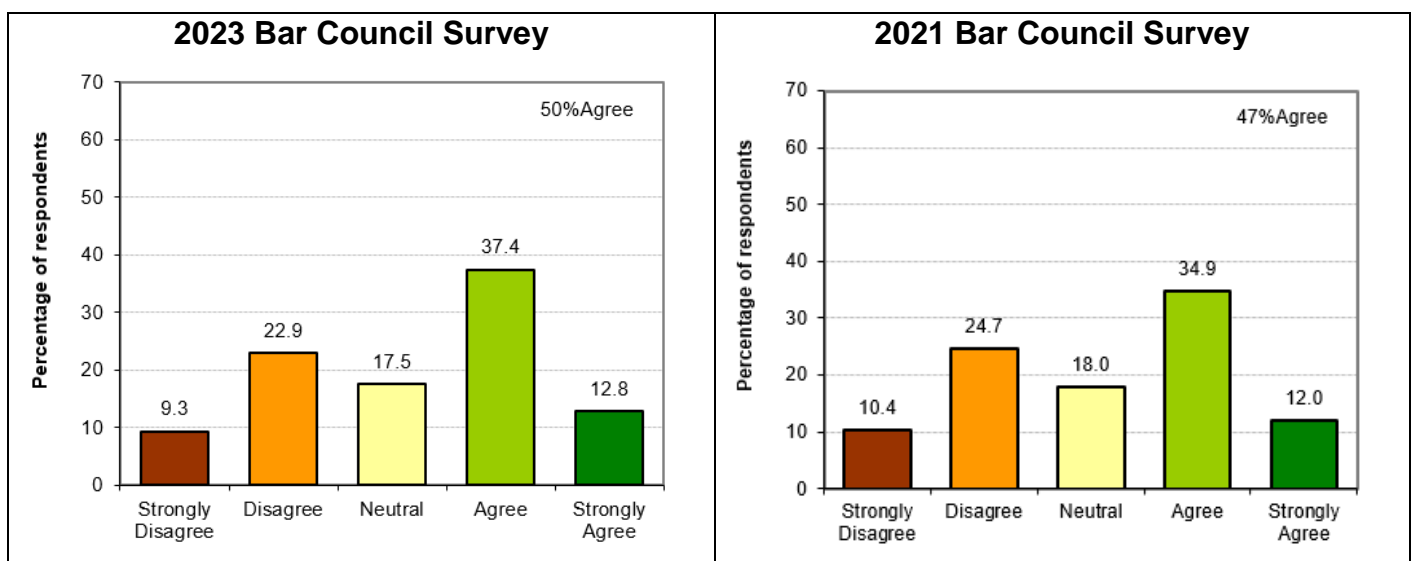
## 4. Barrister Wellbeing details

### **BWB: Overall Wellbeing**

*Overall, how much do you agree you feel generally content with your working life as a Barrister.*

Taken together, the 13 questions contributing to the sub-factors of the BWB scale provide an overview of the key factors which predict the perceived wellbeing of Barristers and the wider individual, social and work contexts in which these issues are evaluated such as psychological wellbeing, workloads, the effect of striving to be perfect, as well as colleagues and the working environment.

The overall Barrister Wellbeing of the Bar Council respondents is shown below. The figures show the percentage of those responding who selected each of the ratings as answers in both the 2023 and the 2021 Bar Council surveys.



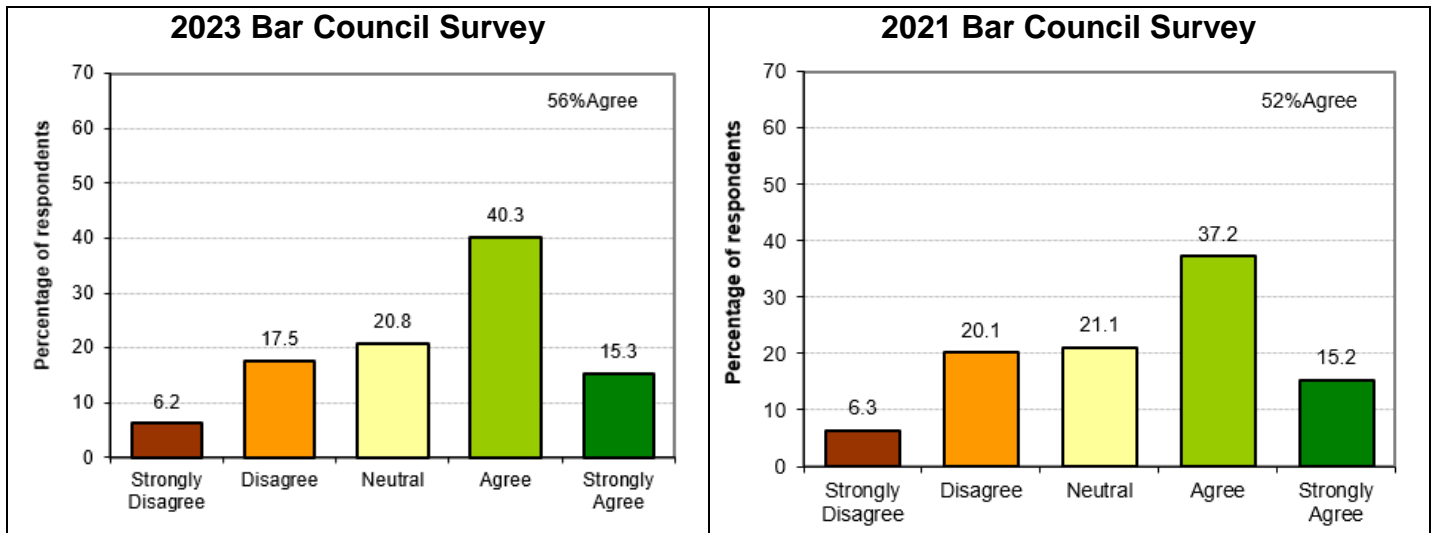
Approximately 50% of those responding to the BWB questions in this survey agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied overall with their wellbeing as barristers, a rise of 3% compared to the survey in 2021. The figure also shows that nearly one third (32.2%) of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed they had good levels of overall wellbeing.



## BWB: Psychological Wellbeing (PWB)

*How much you agree you feel generally content with life.*

Psychological Wellbeing (PWB) assesses the extent to which an individual feels good or content within themselves. Psychological wellbeing both influences, and is influenced by work and non-work factors. Ratings of Psychological Wellbeing are likely to incorporate both broader psychological wellbeing as well as general aspects of physical health.



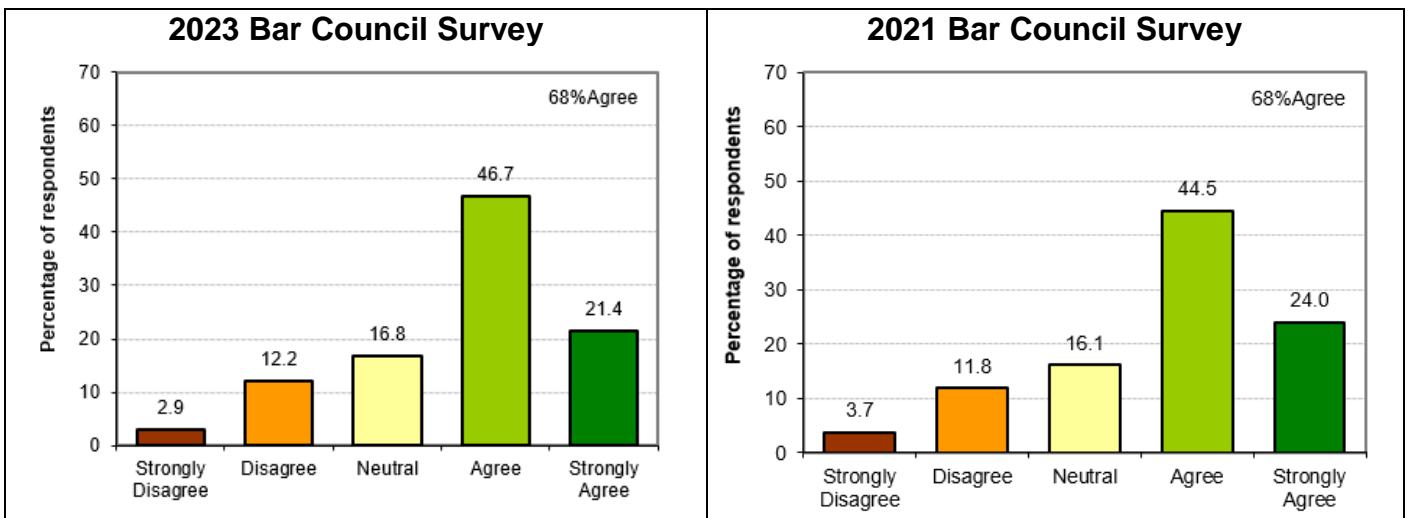
Approximately 56% of Bar Council respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt generally content with life, and this is up 4% since 2021. However, 24% of Barristers responding in 2023 still disagreed or strongly disagreed with this sentiment.

Psychological wellbeing can affect an individual's performance at work for better or for worse. When people feel good, they work well and enjoy being at work more. On the other hand, when people feel low, or anxious, or ill at ease, regardless of whether the distress springs from their work or from difficulties at home, their work is likely to be adversely affected. In this way, improving the general wellbeing of people at work is best tackled through a positive approach, with attention being paid to prevention and health promotion rather than simply responding with provision of help when problems arise.

## BWB: Perfectionism (PER)

*The extent to which an individual is critical of themselves and their ability to be effective at their job.*

Perfectionism (PER) is an individual psychological trait that drives an individual to achieve their best work, and the tendency to be self-critical when this cannot be achieved. Perfectionism is a characteristic of many high demand jobs with high responsibility and high consequences when things do not go well. Although acceptable levels of job-related perfectionism are important in professional roles, too high a sense of perfectionism can lead to self-criticism and poorer overall wellbeing. In this way, higher values of perfectionism are usually associated with lower wellbeing.

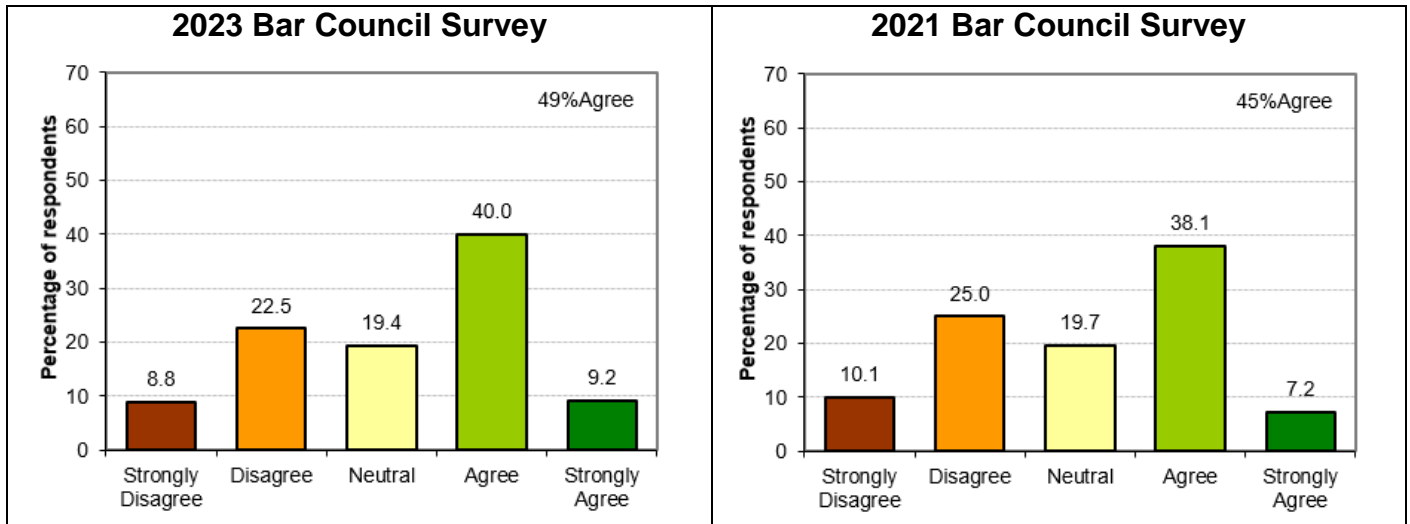


Approximately 68% of the Bar Council survey respondents agreed they exhibited perfectionist traits. This was very similar to the response observed in the 2021 survey. The reputation and therefore success of a barrister can depend on their command of the law and the details and contents of the brief they are working on. Cases can be won or lost on whether the full details are understood. However, individuals high on perfectionism tend to dwell on mistakes and will often experience a reduction in confidence and consequently wellbeing.

## BWB: Workload Management (WLM)

*The extent you agree that you can cope with the competing demands of your job.*

Workload Management (WLM) assesses the extent to which an individual is satisfied with various aspects affecting their ability to juggle the demands of their job, including the pace of the work and their work-life balance. Individuals who are not able to successfully manage their workloads may find the quality of their work can start to suffer, with the consequence that other aspects of work and family life are negatively affected. This, when taken together with a perceived lack of control over workloads can lead to low levels of job-related wellbeing.



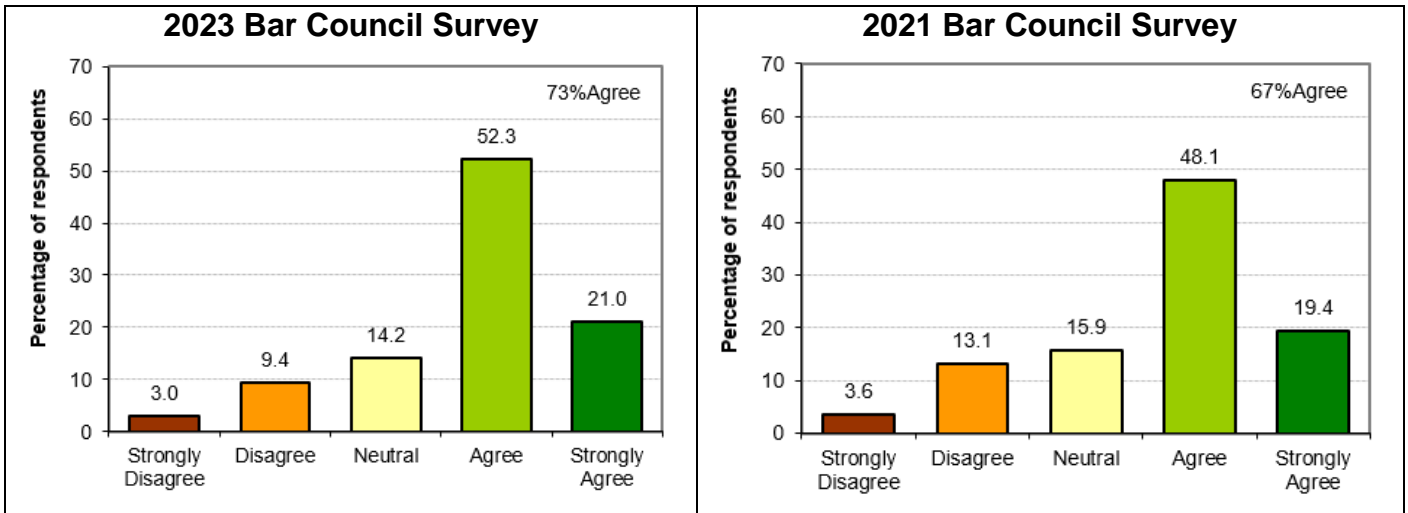
49% of respondents in this survey reported that they were able to successfully manage their workloads, up 4% since 2021. It was noted that although 40% of respondents agreed with this, only very few (9%) strongly agreed they could manage their workload well.

The WLM factor is conceptually related to work-life balance and control of pace and demands at work. Traditionally in the profession, more senior barristers are often able to choose the type and number of cases they work on, whereas more junior colleagues are expected to take on as many cases as they can. The pressures and demands of an unmanageable workload can have serious implications for wellbeing.

## BWB: Supportive Work Environment (SWE)

*How far you agree you feel you are supported by colleagues and decisions that affect you at work.*

Supportive Work Environment (SWE) reflects the level to which an employee, or a self-employed respondent working within chambers, feels they are supported by colleagues and can exercise what they consider to be an appropriate level of control within their work environment. This perception might be linked to various aspects of work, such as a sense of cooperation between colleagues, including the opportunity to contribute to the process of decision making that affect individuals.



In 2023, 73% of respondents agreed they had a Supportive Work Environment, up 6% since 2021. Very few of the Barristers responding (12%) thought their work environment was not supportive.

Most Barristers are self-employed, but often depend on others for much of their work and workplace support. In addition, the combative nature of the job, can mean that colleagues can be in direct competition in terms of winning clients or cases. This can mean a less supportive work environment than is present in other jobs.

## 5. Analysis of Wellbeing scores by demographic category

The overall average BWB score can be used to understand how different categories of barrister differ in their wellbeing. This in turn can be used to explore how best to support colleagues with lower wellbeing and perhaps form the basis of wellbeing interventions.

Table 5.1 shows the mean values for overall Barrister Wellbeing, broken down by 10 key demographic category questions. Where relevant, the statistical significance (an index of the reliability of the difference) between the sub-categories for each measure is also shown.

### Overall Barrister Wellbeing demographic question summary

- In all of the demographic categories considered, the mean overall wellbeing score of respondents was slightly higher in 2023 compared to 2021.
- Female respondents (48.3% of the total) reported they experienced significantly lower overall wellbeing on the measures used in this survey compared with males, although both male and female overall wellbeing scores were slightly higher than in 2021.
- Generally, as respondents get older, they report higher levels of overall wellbeing, with the oldest age group (65+) having significantly higher wellbeing than all younger age groups. A similar profile was found in 2021.
- White respondents reported significantly higher overall wellbeing than BAME respondents (the same trend as was observed in 2021). However, a more detailed breakdown showed that only the Asian or Asian British sub-category of respondents reported significantly lower wellbeing than White respondents. Please note, it might be best to treat this finding with a little caution as the samples sizes are very unequal between the samples (86% of all Barristers responding were White). There was no difference observed in wellbeing between reported religions.
- Respondents who considered themselves disabled, reported significantly lower levels of overall wellbeing compared to those who did not.
- Heterosexual / straight respondents reported significantly higher overall wellbeing than LGBTQ respondents. Similar trends were observed in both 2021 and 2023 surveys.
- Respondents who were primary carers for children under 18 or who had responsibility for caring for an adult reported significantly lower overall wellbeing than those who did not, the same trend as in 2021.
- In terms of type of School attended, those respondents who had attended an independent school reported significantly higher wellbeing than those who attended state schools, once again the same trend as was observed in 2021.

5.1 Barrister overall wellbeing scores by demographic category showing mean values and significant differences between sub-groups		Barrister Wellbeing Overall Mean 2021	Barrister Wellbeing Overall Mean 2023	2023 Category Sig. different from?	Count	%
Sex	a. Female	3.04	<b>3.11</b>	b	1412	48.3%
	b. Male	3.23	<b>3.34</b>	a	1510	51.7%
	Sig.	**	**			
Age	a. 16 - 24 years	-	-	-	< 10	0.3%
	b. 25 - 34	3.00	<b>3.13</b>	e, f	494	16.8%
	c. 35 - 44	3.08	<b>3.14</b>	e, f	769	26.2%
	d. 45 - 54	3.14	<b>3.21</b>	f	863	29.4%
	e. 55 - 64	3.26	<b>3.30</b>	b, c, f	587	20.0%
	f. 65 plus	3.54	<b>3.67</b>	b, c, d, e	212	7.2%
	Sig.	**	**			
Broad ethnic group	a. White	3.15	<b>3.25</b>	c	2495	86.0%
	b. Mixed or Multiple	3.06	<b>3.63</b>	-	132	4.5%
	c. Asian or Asian British	3.01	<b>3.05</b>	a	135	4.7%
	d. Black and Black other	3.08	<b>3.12</b>	-	80	2.8%
	e. Other ethnic group	3.08	<b>3.21</b>	-	60	2.1%
	Sig.	*	**			
BAME Split	a. White	3.15	<b>3.25</b>	b	2495	86.0%
	b. BAME	3.05	<b>3.11</b>	a	407	14.0%
	Sig.	**	**			
Disability	a. Yes	2.94	<b>3.01</b>	b	304	10.60%
	b. No	3.17	<b>3.26</b>	a	2577	89.40%
	Sig.	**	**			
Religion grouped	a. No religion	3.15	<b>3.24</b>	-	1342	47.8%
	b. Christian	3.15	<b>3.24</b>	-	1221	43.5%
	c. Other religion	3.16	<b>3.20</b>	-	247	8.8%
	Sig.	ns	ns			
Sexuality (grouped)	a. LGBTQ	3.03	<b>3.08</b>	b	249	9.5%
	b. Straight	3.16	<b>3.27</b>	a	2361	90.5%
	Sig.	**	**			
Primary carer for child under 18	a. Yes	3.08	<b>3.16</b>	b	1079	37.0%
	b. No	3.17	<b>3.27</b>	a	1839	63.0%
	Sig.	**	**			
Adult caring responsibility	a. No	3.17	<b>3.26</b>	b	2381	82.0%
	b. Yes	3.00	<b>3.11</b>	a	523	18.0%
	Sig.	**	**			
Broad type of school	a. State	3.10	<b>3.17</b>	b	2020	63.4%
	b. Independent	3.22	<b>3.30</b>	a	993	31.2%
	c. Other/Intl	3.11	<b>3.22</b>	-	172	5.4%
	Sig.	**	**			
	All Data	3.13	<b>3.21</b>		3191†	100%

Notes: \* = a significant difference between categories of  $p < .05$ ; \*\* = a highly significant difference  $p < .01$ ; - or ns = a non-significant difference between categories. NB. Some respondents may not have answered all questions. † = the maximum number of respondents. Categories with 10 or fewer respondents are not reported.

## 6. Analysis of Wellbeing scores by work category

In addition to basic demographic information about themselves, most respondents also provided information about their working arrangements and conditions.

The tables in this section show the mean values for Barrister Wellbeing, broken down by the six key work category questions. The statistical significance between the sub-categories for each measure is also shown.

### Overall Barrister Wellbeing work question summary

- Table 6.1 shows that those respondents who reported being in employed practice (only) were found to have significantly higher overall wellbeing than other those self-employed in Chambers. A similar difference was found in 2021, although average overall wellbeing scores for all groups are slightly higher in 2023.
- Respondents who worked full-time in a regular pattern of work without extended hours were found to report significantly higher wellbeing than those who worked other types of hours. Those who worked full-time extended hours including weekends reported significantly lower wellbeing compared to respondents with other working patterns. A similar pattern of responses was found in the 2021 survey.
- In general, those respondents called to the Bar more recently had lower levels of wellbeing than those called to the Bar before them; with those called to the Bar before 1990 having significantly higher wellbeing than all other categories. The same trend was observed in practice years, with the Young Bar having a significantly lower wellbeing than both the Middle and the Later practice groups. A similar pattern of responses was also reported in the 2021 survey, although yet again all wellbeing scores are slightly higher in 2023.
- In terms of Area of Practice, respondents working in the Criminal Bar reported significantly lower overall wellbeing than all other practice areas. Those working in Family law reported significantly lower wellbeing scores compare to all other areas except the Criminal Bar, where they reported significantly higher wellbeing. The Wellbeing scores of most Areas was slightly higher than in 2021. Please note, scores for all 14 individual questions, broken down by Area of Practice are shown in the Appendix.
- Those respondents working in the Greater London Region reported higher average wellbeing than other regions, and significantly higher than respondents in the North East, the North West, South East (who all had similar wellbeing scores). A generally similar pattern of responses had been observed in the 2021 survey.



<b>6.1 Barrister overall wellbeing scores by work category showing mean values and significant differences between sub-groups</b>		Barrister Wellbeing Overall Mean 2021	<b>Barrister Wellbeing Overall Mean 2023</b>	2023 Category Sig. difference from?	Count	%
Current work type	a. Employed Practice only	3.24	<b>3.42</b>	b	307	9.6%
	b. Self Employed practice (in Chambers)	3.12	<b>3.19</b>	a	2783	87.2%
	c. Self Employed Practice (Sole Practitioner)	3.24	<b>3.35</b>	-	60	1.9%
	d. Both (Self Emp. and Empl'd)	3.05	<b>3.19</b>	-	41	1.3%
	Sig.	**	**			
Typical working hours	a. Full-time (work in office hours each working day)	3.34	<b>3.52</b>	All	466	14.8%
	b. Full-time extended hours (not weekends)	3.23	<b>3.33</b>	a, c	720	22.8%
	c. Full-time extended (incl. we's))	2.98	<b>3.05</b>	All	1628	51.6%
	d. Part-time	3.27	<b>3.33</b>	a, c	342	10.8%
	Sig.	**	**			
Year called to the Bar (banded)	a. Pre 1990	3.4	<b>3.52</b>	All	431	13.5%
	b. 1990-1999	3.14	<b>3.24</b>	All	897	28.1%
	c. 2000-2009	3.07	<b>3.13</b>	a, b	898	28.1%
	d. 2010 to 2023	3.03	<b>3.14</b>	a, b	965	30.2%
	Sig.	**	**			
Practice Years	a. Young Bar	2.98	<b>3.10</b>	c	432	13.5%
	b. Middle Practice	3.08	<b>3.15</b>	c	1325	41.5%
	c. Later Practice	3.25	<b>3.31</b>	a, b	1434	44.9%
	Sig.	**	**			
Area of Practice (grouped)	a. Criminal	2.92	<b>2.96</b>	All	865	27.1%
	b. Civil	3.20	<b>3.32</b>	a, e	711	22.3%
	c. PI/PN	3.20	<b>3.32</b>	a, e	375	11.8%
	d. Commercial	3.25	<b>3.42</b>	a, e	523	16.4%
	e. Family	3.17	<b>3.20</b>	a, b, c, d	653	20.5%
	f. Other/International	3.45	<b>3.35</b>	a	64	2.0%
	Sig.	**	**			
Region	a. Wales	3.02	<b>3.11</b>	-	48	1.7%
	b. North East	2.92	<b>3.10</b>	j	171	6.2%
	c. North West	3.05	<b>3.10</b>	j	274	9.9%
	d. Yorkshire and the Humber	3.11	<b>3.15</b>	-	89	3.2%
	e. West Midlands	3.24	<b>3.12</b>	-	118	4.3%
	f. East Midlands	3.02	<b>3.11</b>	-	86	3.1%
	g. South West	3.15	<b>3.23</b>	-	178	6.4%
	h. South East	3.07	<b>3.10</b>	j	557	20.1%
	i. East of England	3.08	<b>3.27</b>	-	33	1.2%
	j. Greater London	3.23	<b>3.28</b>	b, c, h	1166	42.1%
	k. Europe / Overseas	-	<b>3.44</b>	-	48	1.7%
	Sig.	**	**			
	All data	3.13	<b>3.21</b>		3191†	100%

See Table 5.1 for notes about the table format.

## 7. Analysis of Wellbeing scores by harassment, mentoring and Pro Bono questions

The Barristers' Working Lives survey asked a number of questions about the support and harassment barristers experience, as well as about the Pro Bono work they do to help others. Table 7.1 shows the mean values for overall Barrister Wellbeing, broken down by these questions.

- Respondents who had seen or experienced workplace bullying, harassment or discrimination (44% of those answering this question; 38% in 2021) reported significantly lower wellbeing than those who had no experience of this. In addition, those who had *personally* experienced bullying and harassment or discrimination (35% of those responding in 2023, 30% in 2021) also reported significantly lower overall wellbeing than those who did not. Note however, the overall wellbeing score for both types of these questions was slightly higher than in 2021.
- The 64.5% of respondents who said they mentored others (up from 46% in 2021) reported significantly higher wellbeing than those who did not. Respondents who reported they had a mentor had slightly lower wellbeing than those who did not (this difference was significantly lower in the 2021 survey).
- Although 49% of respondents reported some level of Pro Bono work, there was no significant difference in overall wellbeing score between the sub-groups, except between those who did 5 days or less Pro Bono work a year, and those who did 11-20 days.
- Perhaps unsurprisingly, those 17% of responding barristers who indicated they had sought support from the Wellbeing at the Bar website and resources (down from 22% in 2021) reported significantly lower wellbeing than those who did not.
- In 2023 the highest income group was split into 2 categories (those earning £150-£240K and those more than £240k) compared to 2021, to provide a finer level of analysis. In 2023 the respondents in the highest two income groups reported significantly greater overall wellbeing than those in the lower income groups, and the very highest income group had significantly higher wellbeing than those in the second highest income group.

<b>7.1 Barrister overall wellbeing scores for Harassment, Mentoring and Pro Bono questions showing mean values and significant differences between sub-groups</b>		Barrister Wellbeing Overall Mean 2021	<b>Barrister Wellbeing Overall Mean 2023</b>	2023 Category Sig. different from?	Count	%
I have seen or experienced workplace bullying, harassment or discrimination (any experience)	a. None	3.30	<b>3.43</b>	b	1619	55.8%
	b. Yes	2.87	<b>2.96</b>	a	1283	44.2%
	Sig.	**	**			
I personally experienced B&H or discrimination in person or online	a. No	3.27	<b>3.41</b>	b	1881	64.8%
	b. Yes	2.82	<b>2.88</b>	a	1021	35.2%
	Sig.	**	**			
I act as mentor for other lawyers	a. Yes	3.18	<b>3.26</b>	b	1964	64.5%
	b. No	3.1	<b>3.15</b>	a	1081	35.5%
	Sig.	**	**			
I have a lawyer mentor	a. Yes	3.04	<b>3.16</b>	-	328	10.8%
	b. No	3.15	<b>3.23</b>	-	2723	89.2%
	Sig.	**	ns			
Days of Pro Bono work provided in last 12 months	a. None	3.14	<b>3.20</b>	-	1557	50.3%
	b. 5 or less days	3.15	<b>3.27</b>	d	1108	35.8%
	c. 6-10 days	3.16	<b>3.21</b>	-	213	6.9%
	d. 11-20 days	3.15	<b>3.02</b>	b	114	3.7%
	e. More than 20 days	2.94	<b>3.24</b>	-	104	3.4%
	Sig.	ns	**			
Used the Wellbeing at the Bar Website and Resources?	a. Yes	2.95	<b>3.04</b>	b	311	16.7%
	b. No	3.19	<b>3.25</b>	a	1553	83.3%
	Sig.	**	**			
Income group	a. Up to £90k	3.03	<b>3.12</b>	c, d	924	29.3%
	b. £90-150k	3.13	<b>3.11</b>	c, d	853	27.1%
	c. £150-£240K	3.34	<b>3.25</b>	All	617	19.6%
	d. More than £240k	-	<b>3.41</b>	All	756	24.0%
	Sig.	**	**			
<b>All data</b>		3.13	<b>3.21</b>		3191†	100%

See Table 5.1 for notes about the table format.

## 8. Advanced Analysis: predicting overall job satisfaction

The Bar Council's 2023 Barristers' Working Lives survey generated a very rich data set. To provide a more in-depth analysis of how wellbeing influences the experience of the job of a barrister, a hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted on the data. This type of analysis investigates how well sets of variables statistically predict scores on the overall job satisfaction question 'Overall, taking everything into consideration, I am satisfied with my job as a whole'.

Three sets of variables were analysed, the first set controlled for sex and age, the second set controlled for ethnicity and area of practice. Taken together gender, age, ethnicity and area of practice predicted about 4% of the variance in the overall work satisfaction question. When the four BWB factors were then added to the regression model, they were found to make a highly significant improvement and were able to predict 59% of the variance in the overall work satisfaction question (after controlling for gender, age, ethnicity and area of practice). The table below shows the significant predictors of overall job satisfaction.

	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Err	Beta		
(Constant)	-0.396	0.125		-3.158	0.002
Sex	-0.086	0.027	-0.039	-3.194	0.001
Age band	-0.04	0.011	-0.043	-3.562	<.001
Broad ethnic group	0.022	0.015	0.016	1.42	0.156
Area of Practice (grouped)	0.018	0.008	0.025	2.156	0.031
Psychological Wellbeing (PWB)	0.457	0.017	0.41	26.382	<.001
Perfectionism (PER)	0.014	0.017	0.011	0.809	0.419
Workload Management (WLM)	0.35	0.016	0.316	21.75	<.001
Supportive Work Environment (SWE)	0.363	0.02	0.244	18.516	<.001

Dependent Variable: d1n: Overall, taking everything into consideration, I am satisfied with my job as a whole

In the table above, those BWB areas with the largest 't' values (ignoring the negative sign) are the best predictors of overall job satisfaction. The table therefore shows that the PWB was the best predictor of ratings of overall job satisfaction followed by WLM and then SWE. These are therefore the factors might be prioritised when considering interventions to improve the job satisfaction of respondents. Note that Perfectionism was not a significant predictor of overall job satisfaction using this model.

## 9. Appendix

This section contains a detailed breakdown of the score for all Barrister wellbeing sub scales by the 14 BWB questions.

### 9.1 Descriptive Statistics for individual Barrister Wellbeing questions and comparison across Area of Practice and Survey year

9.1 Descriptive Statistics for individual barrister wellbeing questions and comparison across Area of Practice and Survey year	All % Agree	%Agree by members within each Area of Practice											
		Criminal		Civil		PI/PN		Commercial		Family		Other/Int	
		2023	2021	2023	2021	2023	2021	2023	2021	2023	2021	2023	2021
Question	2023	2023	2021	2023	2021	2023	2021	2023	2021	2023	2021	2023	2021
d1a: Within the environment in which I work, there is generally a sense of cooperation and collaboration	79	70	70	82	79	84	81	84	78	79	83	84	77
d1b: I have significant control over the content and pace of my work	52	29	26	61	49	58	46	66	54	55	44	70	61
d1c: I am able to integrate the things that are most important to life and work	47	26	28	57	48	58	48	63	54	43	40	74	59
d1d: I tend to feel down or low in spirits (-ve)	35	48	49	30	32	29	35	23	32	36	34	23	25
d1e: I experience little interest or pleasure in doing things (-ve)	20	30	32	15	19	13	21	14	19	20	20	14	16
d1f: A case going badly has an impact on my confidence (-ve)	73	77	75	75	77	72	81	71	74	70	76	68	61
d1g: Overall, I find my workload manageable	49	32	40	56	55	58	57	63	59	46	48	49	70
d1h: I tend to dwell on my mistakes (-ve)	62	64	64	61	60	61	64	58	60	65	64	62	45
d1i: My current mood is good	60	52	46	64	58	63	61	69	61	59	62	61	70
d1j: I tend to be very critical of myself	72	75	77	73	71	70	71	67	69	74	74	68	69
d1k: My relationships with other colleagues are as good as I would want them	67	63	51	68	52	69	51	67	49	72	55	63	67
d1l: Within the environment in which I work, I feel comfortable to express my opinions, thoughts and ideas	69	62	60	72	65	71	71	75	70	67	67	67	75
d1m: I am able to confide in work colleagues regarding challenges experienced with my cases	78	78	76	79	75	79	76	75	73	79	78	80	65
d1n: Overall, taking everything into consideration, I am satisfied with my job as a whole	61	41	43	69	68	70	67	76	73	60	63	72	70
N =	3191	865	921	711	776	375	420	523	571	653	699	64	77

Notes:

- %Agree scores are the average % respondents who agree or definitely agree with questions.
- Colour coding indicates differences compared to the overall %Agree average for this question: **XX** = 5% worse; **XX** = 10% worse; **XX** = 5% better; **XX** = 10% better. Note colour coding for 2021 is related to the average question scores for that year.
- (-ve) = This question is negatively phrased, so that a higher %Agree indicates lower wellbeing stress. NB this means scores higher than average are colour coded red, etc..
- N = Number of respondents answering this question.

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