



BAR HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMITTEE OF
ENGLAND AND WALES

Malawi Public Interest Casework Support (Malawi-PICS)

Frequently asked questions

Malawi PICS is for barristers in the UK to support Malawian lawyers and human rights defenders working on public interest cases.

- *What is a public interest case?*
 - A public interest case is something for you to define as you are in the best position to know what issues affect people in Malawi. A public interest case may be a case raising human rights / constitutional issues, or it could be a class of case that comes up frequently in the Malawian courts and is on an issue that is relevant to many people in Malawi.
- *What if you are not sure if the case you are thinking of referring is a public interest case?*
 - If you are unsure whether your case falls into the public interest category then we recommend referring it to us and we can help you decide.
- *How do you get a barrister to help you on your case?*
 - Fill out our case request form and email it to the Bar Human Rights Committee project coordinator at: coordination@barhumanrights.org.uk.
- *Who are the lawyers that will help on your case?*
 - We will aim to identify lawyers who have significant experience in the specific area of your case, for example women's rights or criminal law etc.
- *Why might it be useful to have a barrister help on your case?*
 - Barristers in the UK tend to be highly specialised and it is for this reason that we are in a good position to assist your cases. The barristers are likely to be familiar with the legal arguments, UK and international case law, statutory provisions, and international treaties and guidance that will be relevant to your case.
- *When should you make the request?*
 - Make the referral as soon as possible, even if you still have preliminary work to do on the case before sending all of the documents. This will give us time to identify the right barristers to work with you and will ensure that we can meet your deadline.
- *What happens if the deadline is very tight? Is it still worth referring a case?*
 - Yes! We will do our best to help. If we are unable to find someone with time to work on your case quickly then we will let you know.
- *Do you have to use the work done by the barrister?*
 - Your case remains your case, even if you refer it for input from a barrister. The decision of course remains yours how to run your case and what arguments to include. We are happy to share ideas and make suggestions based on our experience, but we in no way intend to tell you how to run your case.