

Mental Health & Wellbeing at the Bar

Excessive Workload



Wellbeing
at the Bar

Excessive workload

"I can't cope with how much work I have to do now."

Ways to deal with an excessive workload

Keep calm: As with all situations that cause you anxiety or stress, the key thing is to try to keep calm.

1. Try immediately to relax: you may even find some [deep breathing exercises](#) useful
2. Review what is causing you to feel overwhelmed.
3. Are you being asked to do more than your set hours on a regular basis?
4. Do you feel that you have more work than you can cope with?
5. Are you being asked to do jobs that you perceive to be beyond your capabilities?
6. Do you feel you are working harder than your colleagues?

These could all be signs of excessive workload. It could be a short term or a long terms problem.

If short term:

- Write a list of what you have to do
- Work out which have to be prioritised
- Work out which you can delegate
- Can you ask a friendly colleague for some help?
- Work out whether you can have an extension on any tasks
- Speak to your senior clerk or principal if you need a senior colleague's assistance
- Recognise that it is a short term pressure and that things will get better
- Once the short term pressure has passed review what you can do to see whether you can avoid such clashes in the future

If long term:

- Write out a list of what you have to do
- Work out which have to be prioritised
- Work out which tasks you have to do and which can be delegated
- Can a colleague help you with them?
- For those that do not specifically require your input, think about who else can work on them
- Speak to your senior clerk or relevant manager and calmly explain that you have identified that you have too much to do
- Ask them for their support and help in assisting you to reduce the workload accordingly