

This is what barristers who attended the ABA's first residential advocacy course had to say about it...

Lindsey Alford, Qld

“The ABA Residential Advocacy Course was the most intensive and rewarding advocacy instruction I have received. As a latecomer to the Bar it bridged in one week that which litigation solicitors and more senior barristers accumulate from years of practice. The quality of the coaching and the experience of seeing such excellent skills demonstrated by the learned panel of coaches is unique. The one-on-one reviewing of your current technique captured on video enables a progressive improvement during the week. But, don't attend unless you are prepared “to sweat it”. And yes, the collegiate social activity had its own rewards, great wine, and good company.”

Brendan Ashdown, WA

“An invaluable experience focused on the practical skills of advocacy. An outstanding opportunity to learn from coaches experienced in advocacy at the bar, and to draw on their wealth of knowledge.”

Michael Daly, Tas

“The inaugural residential course was excellent. It revealed the reality of my own skill level but also the promise of great improvement. I think it's safe to say that in the six months following, I have used what I learned and observed almost on a daily basis. I cannot say that about any other course I have attended. The stellar ‘coaching’ faculty was generous and supportive. The skills imparted were designed to greatly improve the quality of the participants' advocacy and while I hope that has happened, advocacy has since been so much more interesting, rewarding and enjoyable. I recommend it very highly.”

Michael De Marillac, ACT

“I found it to be an excellent course. I was impressed by the depth of experience and qualifications held by the coaches. The course trainees were made very welcome by the staff and coaches and we really got to know one another during the dining in nights. The quality of the coaches who attended was simply outstanding and the large number of coaches ensured that we received individual attention when it was needed. I gained a tremendous amount of insight into the practice of Courtroom advocacy and the advice given to me by experienced professionals was invaluable. Another benefit of the course was meeting my fellow Junior Barristers from other States and Territories and developing lasting ties with them. Above all I left the course feeling confident of being able to handle myself effectively in any Courtroom situation and unlike other courses I have been on, the memory of what I learned does not fade because we all got to take away videotapes of our own individual performances as we progressed throughout the course. I would highly recommend this course to anyone who wants to increase their effectiveness at the Bar.”

Elsbeth Hensler, WA

“In January 2007, I tore myself away from the cricket (and cricket’s environmental, gastronomic and alcoholic accessories) to attend the Australian Bar Association’s Inaugural Residential Advocacy Course. Attending the course definitely improved my advocacy. The close attention that the coaches paid to the participants and the coaches’ practical suggestions for improvement were a great help in becoming a better advocate. Even more helpful was the opportunity to repeat exercises and immediately put the coaches’ suggestions into practice. It was a great course to participate in: even if I have to miss more cricket, I will be signing up to do the course again.”

Melanie Hindman, QLD

“Experienced and effective advocates providing one on one, honest and constructive feedback on your numerous performances and providing suggestions on how to improve. What more could a barrister looking to sharpen their advocacy skills hope for?”

Jacob Horowitz, NSW

“I got more advocacy experience in 5 days than I got during the whole of my first year in practice at the Bar. This is the best advocacy course around.”

Noelle Hurley, SA

“The Perth residential advocacy course provided a unique forum to experiment with different techniques and be critiqued in a constructive way without adverse impact on "the client": an incredible opportunity to refine advocacy skills and build professional confidence and self esteem.”

Jonathan Miller, SA

“I enjoyed the last course because of what I learnt (largely in retrospect) but at the time for the friendship and camaraderie that developed amongst the whole group. Whilst the instructor/student line was well defined during working time the residential element of the course made for some great whole group socialising – sometimes it was so much fun we had to set our alarms to 4am to catch up on preparation! The workload was extremely heavy and simulated real life - we were all absolutely exhausted by the end of the week. A junket it was not, but a very valuable contribution to all aspects of professional development it has proved to be from my perspective.”

Richard Price, WA

“The course exceeded my expectations by a big margin. I was staggered by a number of things: the high number of judges relative to the number of participants; that so many senior barristers volunteered to be judges, each devoting a week or more of their valuable time for the betterment of their peers; the intensive and one-on-one attention given to each participant; and the thoroughness of the course. Without doubt, it was the best professional education investment I have made. The course offers a unique opportunity to explore, analyse and converse about advocacy issues with leaders of the profession. Very highly recommended. This course deserves a five-star rating.”

Dan Shillington, ACT

“The high ratio of coaches (mostly silks) to barristers meant you were on your feet for much of the course or receiving feedback. It was also a great opportunity to try new techniques in a non-competitive environment. The live in aspect enabled the feedback and exchanging of ideas to continue in a social setting which was terrific.”

Marcus Solomon, WA

"I undertook the week long ABA Advocacy Course in January 2007. I cannot imagine a more valuable course in advocacy. The experience and quality of the tutors and the individual attention they invested in participants was nothing short of extraordinary. One often hears of a unique opportunity ‘too good to miss’. Such hyperbole is normally reserved for puffery and gimmicks – in this case it is entirely accurate!"