

# Courtroom Testimony for Expert Witnesses

## Course Description

An expert witness is a person with expertise in a particular field that exceeds the knowledge level of the trier of fact and who applies that expertise in a legal setting. Becoming an expert witness in any field is a significant accomplishment. It means that through your education, training and experience you have gained knowledge in a particular field of endeavor that is superior to that of the trier of fact.

From both a criminal and civil trial perspective, it is essential that a forensic expert be able to communicate that vital information in an effective and compelling manner so as to maximize its value. The ability to do that is rarely innate and is something that can be learned and practiced. This course is designed to teach experts how to become effective expert witnesses.

This highly rated course is dynamic and combines lectures, demonstration and moot court practice.



## Who should attend?

This course is specifically designed for experts (and experts in training) in ANY area of expertise. Specific examples and moot court practice focuses on the areas of expertise represented by course participants.

# Learning Outcomes

This course will provide participants with a substantial amount of useful and practical information. Topics covered include the following:

- » Preparation for courtroom testimony
- » Drafting expert reports
  - » Format
  - » Content areas
  - » Wording of opinions
- » The role of the prosecutor, defence attorney, judge and jury
- » Trial procedure
- » Becoming qualified as an expert witness for the first time
- » Expert witness bias
- » Drafting curriculum vitae
- » The role of the expert witness
- » Strategies for effective direct examination
  - » Essential communication skills needed when presenting evidence to juries and judges (many areas are covered under this topic)
  - » Visual, multi-modal presentation of evidence
- » Strategies for successfully handling cross examination
- » Changing opinions
- » Daubert hearings
- » The role of the expert witness when there is an opposing expert

# Contact Information

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# Jonathan W. Hak, Q.C.

Jonathan W. Hak KC PhD is a barrister and solicitor who served as a Crown Prosecutor in Canada for over thirty years. He has extensive experience prosecuting serious and violent crime and utilizing image-based evidence in complex cases. His full-time work is as a Lecturer at the University of Leicester Law School in the UK, where he teaches Advanced Criminal Law and other courses.

He is also an international imagery law lecturer who teaches extensively in the UK, US, Canada, Singapore, and other countries on the legal and practical considerations involved in the effective use of image-based evidence in criminal prosecutions. He is also an Adjunct Associate Law Professor at the University of Lethbridge in Canada.

Jonathan developed a dynamic and highly effective course on Courtroom Testimony for Expert Witnesses, which is designed for expert witnesses (and experts in training) in any field of expertise. Since 2006, this course has been presented at various locations in Canada and the United States for federal investigative agencies; forensic laboratories; provincial and state regulatory agencies; provincial, state, and municipal police services; and other professional groups. He also developed and presents a course on Courtroom Testimony for Investigators.

Jonathan holds a Diploma in Criminal Justice from Mount Royal University, Canada; a BSc (with distinction) in Criminal Justice from California State University, USA; an LLB from the University of British Columbia, Canada; an LLM from the University of Cambridge, UK; and a PhD from Leiden University, Netherlands. The focus of his recent PhD work is on the use of non-textual evidence in international criminal prosecutions. He is the author of the book *Image-Based Evidence in International Criminal Prosecutions: Charting a Path Forward* (Oxford University Press, 2024). Jonathan was appointed Queen's Counsel in 2006.