

CHAMBERS’ PUPILLAGE POLICY

**General Policy**

(a) Chambers operates an equal opportunities policy in its selection of pupils. No applicant for pupillage will be discriminated against on the basis of his or her race, colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality, citizenship, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, religion or political persuasion or age.

(b) Chambers will select pupils from the total number of applicants whose applications are received by the closing date for applications.

(c) Pupils will be accepted only if they have been through Chambers’ normal selection procedure.

(d) Chambers normally expects to recruit tenants from Pupils who have successfully completed pupillage. Tenancies are not created automatically each year, but Chambers does not take on Pupils unless it has a realistic expectation of a tenancy being available.

**The Tenancy and Pupillage Committee**

The selection and recruitment of pupils is the responsibility of the Tenancy and Pupillage Committee (the Committee). The Committee consists of no fewer than five and no more than ten members of Chambers. The composition of the Committee is intended to reflect a diverse cross section of Chambers. Chambers will comply with Bar Council guidance in the training of committee members.

**Pupillages in Chambers**

(a) Chambers usually offers two twelve month pupillages beginning in late August and early September of a given year.

(b) In respect of the non-practising period of pupillage, Chambers will pay a pupil £10,000. In respect of the practising period of pupillage the pupil is guaranteed earnings of £20,000.

(c) Only candidates achieving a 2.1, save in wholly exceptional circumstances, will be interviewed. Any such circumstances should be detailed in your application. 3 marks will be awarded for a 1st or a projected 1st. 2 marks will be awarded for a 2.1 or a projected 2.1 (suitable equivalent qualifications from institutions overseas will be considered)

(d) Applications will only be accepted through the [Pupillage Gateway](https://applications.pupillagegateway.com/vacancies/view/2083). Applications will not be accepted outside the gateway system.

(e) As required by the General Council of the Bar, Chambers will monitor pupillage applications by sex and race.

**Selection Procedure and Criteria**

Those applying to Chambers for pupillage through the pupillage gateway are strongly advised to use the information [here](https://www.9sjs.com/join-us/pupillage/) for guidance in completing their application forms. Chambers receives hundreds of applications each year for pupillage and competition is strong. We promote equal opportunity in Chambers and therefore encourage candidates to apply from backgrounds that have not traditionally been well represented at the bar.

9 St John Street Chambers is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to diversity. Our policies apply to all members of chambers, staff, pupils and those visiting chambers. Chambers is committed to the elimination and prevention of discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, sex, ethnic and national origin, class, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion or marital status. Our commitment to equal opportunities and the individual and collective obligation for staff is set out in our employee contracts. We also comply with the requirements of the equality code for the bar.

Our Selection process consists of 3 stages:-

Stage 1 - Consideration of application forms and short listing of up to 30 candidates for interview;

Stage 2 - A panel of up to 3 members of chambers will carry out the first stage interviews. Each of the interviews will last approximately 10 minutes. Each of our panel members will address each of the candidates with the same question. Panel members will score interviewed candidates individually on an agreed scale and will then compare scores with others on the panel so as to seek to reach a consensus. Up to 10 candidates will be selected for second interviews and informed via the gateway.

Stage 3 - Second interview and final selection and offers; Up to 4 members of chambers will form the second interview panel with a view to representing the diversity of 9 St John Street, an aptitude for exceptional intellectual and advocacy ability along with an ability to relate to clients is sought at the final interview stage. The second interview will last approximately 35 minutes and will include the discussion of a legal problem which will be provided to candidates to consider approximately 30 minutes prior to the interview, legal knowledge beyond that expected of the candidate given their legal training thus far is not intended to be tested. Simple demonstration of ability to analyse a legal problem and explanation of their argument to the panel is sought.

Offers will be made via the gateway.

**The Role and Duties of Pupils in Chambers**

(a) Pupillage will be offered for a continuous period of 12 months.

(b) Pupils will be allocated a Pupil Supervisor who will tell them when they expect the Pupil to attend Chambers although that will normally be between the hours of 9.00 am and 6 pm each weekday. Pupils should also expect and be prepared to work in the evenings and at weekends. Pupils will attend Court and Conferences with their Pupil Supervisors at locations throughout the Country, whatever hours that might entail. Frequently, Pupils can expect to travel with their Pupil Supervisors for these purposes.

(c) Pupils should familiarise themselves with the work of their Pupil Supervisor, should be ready to attend Conferences and Court, taking full notes, and to produce written work. Chambers takes its commitment to Pupils seriously and individual Pupil Supervisors devote a great deal of time and effort to ensuring a high standard of pupillage.

(d) Pupils have open access to Chambers Library. Pupils also have access to typing services relating to their own or their Pupil Supervisors’ work, although they will be expected to be able to type their own work.

(e) Pupils will be expected to follow and complete the work set out in the Threshold Standards and Competencies specified in the Professional Statement and to keep a Work Diary. Although primarily a duty of the Pupil Supervisors, Chambers expects a Pupil to observe and check that the requirements of the Professional Statement are being fulfilled. It is the responsibility of the pupil at the end of each day to ensure they have made adequate arrangements for the following day.

(f) Members of Chambers engage in a number of internal and external seminars throughout the year which are accredited for the purposes of continuing education and Pupils are invited to attend.

(g) During the second six months of pupillage, Pupils will have a variety of work which may require them to travel.

(h) When not engaged on their own work, Pupils in the second six months will still be expected to attend Court and Conferences with their then Pupil Supervisor and to do paperwork for him or her and for other Members of Chambers. Chambers will work to ensure that the amount of a Pupil’s own work in the second six months does not detract from the training given during this period of pupillage.

(i) Pupils are not expected to know everything. They should feel free to ask their supervisor questions at any time (except during conferences/negotiations/court hearings).

(j) A pupil must maintain confidentiality of every client.

(k) Pupils are expected to achieve and maintain standards of work and conduct to be expected of a Member of the Bar. This includes compliance with Paragraph 53 of the Consolidated Regulations of the Inns of Court and the General Council of the Bar (conscientious full time application to pupillage, maintenance of client confidentiality and compliance with Bar Code of Conduct and guidance and rules issued by Bar Standards Board). Further guidance on the roles and duties of pupils can be found in the BSB Pupillage Handbook.

**Pattern of Pupillage**

(a) Each Pupil will be placed with a Principal Pupil Supervisor who will supervise only one pupil at a time. The Principal Pupil Supervisor retains overall responsibility for the Pupil and remains available to offer advice and assistance throughout the pupillage. Before supervising a pupil, Chambers will ensure its pupil supervisors have received appropriate training

(b) In addition to working with the allocated supervisor, pupils will accompany junior tenants to court and conferences. Pupils may also accompany other members of Chambers to court where a case is particularly interesting or unusual, or it would otherwise be of benefit for a pupil to attend the hearing.

(c) The first period the pupil will work almost exclusively for his or her supervisor. The pupil may also work for other members of Chambers of all levels of seniority. A pupil’s working hours and holidays are arranged with his or her supervisor and will generally be consistent with the Bar Council’s recommendation that pupils should work a minimum of 35 hours per week and have a minimum of 20 days holiday. As a minimum that pupils are entitled to four weeks’ absence from training per annum i.e., 20 days in addition to Bank Holidays. For other absences, see absence policy.

(d) During pupillage Pupils are expected to carry out work for their Pupil Supervisor, any Member of Chambers with whom they are placed for any period and for other Members of Chambers, particularly during the latter stages of pupillage.

(e) Chambers makes every effort to place each individual Pupil with a Pupil Supervisor best able to provide training suited to the individual needs of that Pupil. Chambers will also take into account any expression of interest by a Pupil in particular practice areas when allocating a Principal Pupil Supervisor.

(f) The purpose of Pupils spending time with members other than their Pupil Supervisor is to enhance the training offered and to maximise the breadth of the Pupil’s experience of differing types and methods of work at the Bar. This also ensures that the Pupil’s work is seen and reported upon by a variety of Members of Chambers. Pupils may also accompany the very junior Members of Chambers to Court so that they can gain experience of the type of work they will be expected to perform during their second six months.

(g) Although any Member of Chambers with whom a Pupil is placed will be expected to perform the duties of the Pupil Supervisor, the Principal Pupil Supervisor retains overall responsibility for the Pupil and remains available to offer advice and assistance throughout the pupillage.

(h) Upon commencement of Pupillage, a Pupil is also provided with a ‘Mentor’. A Mentor is a junior member of chambers, who is not from the same practice group as the Pupil or Pupil Supervisor. They are provided as an additional source of help, support and guidance. Pupils can consult with their Mentor in relation to any subject and be assured that all conversations will be strictly confidential unless in exceptional circumstances such as a serious regulatory breach.

The Mentor assigned will abstain from the final vote regarding an offer of tenancy.

**Assessment and Feedback**

(a) The general performance of Pupils is monitored primarily by the Principal Pupil Supervisor and regular, informal discussions will be held with Pupils in relation to progress. Pupils are expected to maintain a work record document with comments to be added by the supervisor which serves as evidence of monitoring of all work done in pupillage.

(b) At the 3, 6 and 9 month stages of pupillage Chambers will conduct a formal pupillage review. This is a meeting in the form of an appraisal attended by the Pupil, the Principal Pupil Supervisor and a member of the PC. At this review, consideration will be given to the extent to which the pupil has demonstrated the required standards and competencies identified by the BSB in Appendix H of the Pupillage Handbook. The meeting is an open discussion and gives an opportunity to offer further guidance. The meeting also gives the Pupil an opportunity to raise any concerns or queries relating to pupillage with the Pupil Supervisor or a Member of the PC.

(c) In addition to the completion of compulsory training courses, (usually provided free of charge by the Norther Circuit), Pupils will be provided with the opportunity to attend further training courses that are deemed relevant and appropriate by their Supervisor. The cost of such training will be met by chambers.

**Complaints and grievances**

(a) Any complaints Pupil may have should first take them to their Pupil Supervisor. If the grievance or complaint directly involves the Pupil Supervisor then the Pupil should raise the matter with a member of the PC, or their Mentor. Grievances or complaints may informally be raised with any member of Chambers. Any Pupil who wishes to raise a formal grievance may do so in accordance with Chambers’ Complaints and Grievance Procedures which comply with the Equality and Diversity Code for the Bar.

Harassment will not be tolerated or condoned and Pupils have a right to complain if it occurs.

(b) Upon any alleged breach of the role and duties of pupils set out in this policy, breaches of Chambers’ other policies, breaches of the written agreement for pupillage and/or BSB disciplinary findings the following procedure will apply:

In the first instance, the Pupillage Committee investigate the nature and extent of the complaint, and ensure that the pupil is given prompt notice of the nature of the charge, and is given a full opportunity to have his or her answer heard;

After investigation, if it finds the complaint made out, the Pupillage Committee has delegated authority to either:

     i. Issue a verbal warning to the pupil; and/or

     ii. Refer the matter to the Executive Board.

If dissatisfied with the decision of the Pupillage Committee, the pupil has a right of re-hearing to be conducted by the Head of Chambers, in the presence of at least 2 members of the Executive Board, all of whom shall not be members or recent members of the Pupillage Committee.

After investigation, if the complaint is found to be made out, the Head of Chambers together with the other members of Chambers who have attended the rehearing may either:

    i. Issue a verbal warning to the pupil; and/or

    ii. Refer the matter to the Executive Board

If the matter is referred to the Management Committee, a full explanation of the nature and extent of the complaint is made by a representative of the Pupillage Committee, or, in the case of a referral for a re-hearing, the Head of Chambers, to the meeting. The pupil shall also have a full opportunity to be heard upon the issue and shall be entitled to a representative of his or her choice. The meeting may then decide either:

    i. to take no further action; or

    ii. to issue a verbal warning; or

    iii. to issue a formal written warning; or

    iv. to terminate the pupillage.

**Reasonable adjustments**

In keeping with Chambers’ Equality and Diversity Policy, any applicant for pupillage, Pupil likely to require reasonable adjustments should inform Chambers in advance and reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure applicants, with disabilities, or physical or mental health conditions, are not substantially disadvantaged during their time with Chambers.

**General Data Protection Regulations & Information Management**

Pupils are required to abide by Chambers’ Data Protection and Information Management policies which aim to protect and promote the data protections rights of individuals and of Chambers and to prevent mismanagement of Chambers’ information systems, assets and ICT.

**Award and Expenses**

Pupils will receive funding from Chambers during the12 month pupillage as follows:

(a) In the first six months, a payment of £10,000. Pupils will receive all of this amount by the end of the first six months. However, Pupils, are offered a choice in respect of how it is drawn down.

Option A: £2,000 is drawn down at the time pupillage is confirmed. Pupils will receive a further £3,000 upon commencement of pupillage, followed by £1,000 per month up to and including the sixth month.

Option B: No monies are drawn down prior to pupillage commencing. Upon commencement Pupils receive £2,500, followed by £1,500 per month up to and including the sixth month.

(b) Guaranteed earnings during second six. During the second six months Chambers will, on a monthly basis, ensure Pupils receive receipts of £1,000 per month plus sufficient to cover reasonable travel expenses by “topping up” receipts in accordance with Bar Standards Board requirements. At the end of the second six months, Chambers will ensure that Pupils have received receipts of £20,000 over the course of the whole six month period by “topping up” receipts in accordance with Chambers’ guarantee.

(c) If you do not commence your pupillage, fail to complete it satisfactorily, or do not take up the offer of a tenancy at the conclusion of your pupillage, Chambers retains the right to recover any sums that you have received in funding subject to any restrictions upon such recovery imposed by the Bar Standards Board.

(d) Pupils are expected to cover their own expenses in travelling to and from Chambers. Pupils are otherwise not expected to meet travel and accommodation expenses when accompanying a pupil supervisor.

A pupil’s reasonably incurred travel expenses for the purposes of pupillage (other than those incurred in respect of fee paying work) will be reimbursed on production of receipts.

(e) expenses for travel to and the cost of compulsory courses and examinations required by the BSB during the pupillage year will be met by chambers if not provided free of charge.

(f) No chambers fees are payable during the 12 month Pupillage period.

**Holidays and Sickness**

Pupils are entitled to 20 working days leave, not including Bank Holidays, per annum. Pupils should take no more than two weeks leave in each part of pupillage and dates are to be agreed with the Principal Pupil Supervisor. In the event that a pupil is not able to attend Chambers due to illness, in the first instance, the clerks will need to be informed by telephone. If sickness absence continues for more than a week then consideration will be given to extending the pupillage period.

If a decision is taken to extend the pupillage period, then the pupillage award will continue for the extended period.

We recognise that there may, exceptionally, be a need for additional time off for example to attend medical appointments or where there is a bereavement. In those circumstances, the pupil supervisor, in his or her discretion, may allow the pupil to take additional time off.

**Tenancies**

Tenancy applications by existing pupils are determined by the whole of Chambers. In the first instance, the Pupil Supervisor and the PT Committee will consider if an offer of tenancy should be made. Consideration of the merits of a candidate will be by reference to their performance during pupillage taking into account the competencies prescribed at the outset of pupillage, information from quarterly reviews, and Supervisors comments. The Management Committee make the final decision.

As a general principle, the strength of chambers is maintained and improved by taking on new tenants who have successfully completed twelve months pupillage in chambers. We are committed to selecting pupils of outstanding ability and potential who will make a positive contribution to the future development of chambers. Accordingly, whilst no guarantee whatsoever can be given that a tenancy will follow pupillage, our policy is to select carefully, from the many applications we receive each year, those who we believe can become successful practitioners in chambers in due course. The history of chambers shows that most pupils have been offered tenancies on completion of their pupillage.