



Pupillage at Pallant

The word 'pupillage' is a word that fills most aspiring barristers with dread. The thoughts of a year-long interview, late nights doing drafting in your first six and prepping cases in your second six, and long weekends (or no weekends, depending on which way you look at it). The fear of burnout, and the fear of failure, were some of my main worries before I started my pupillage with Pallant. Prior to commencing pupillage, I prepared by clearing my diary for the next 365 days and telling all friends and family that I would be unavailable for the foreseeable future. Fortunately, my experience at Pallant was nothing like what they warn you of.

From my very first day, I felt the support of my supervisors, the clerks, and my peers. There was no expectation to work ridiculously long hours, just to work hard in the hours I had. I felt support in terms of my work, my work-life balance, and my own mental health, with regular check-ins from my colleagues. One major thing I learnt during my pupillage with Pallant is that all members of Chambers want you to succeed, and are there to support and uplift one another - this really shines through. Court days can be long, stressful and draining, but with the support of the team, those days are made that little bit better.

The range of work I was exposed to in my first six was vast, and I was in Court most days, shadowing different members of chambers, drafting documents, carrying out legal research, and gaining experience by way of advocacy exercises. This allowed me to be provided with extremely useful feedback, which I was then able to implement throughout pupillage. It also allowed me to see different styles of Court preparation, drafting and advocacy. I found that one of the benefits of this was that I could develop my own style, taking elements of different members styles, and making them into my own. During my first six, I managed to gain exposure to many types of hearings including: fact-finding hearings of non-accidental injury, final hearings, applications for

relocation, and financial remedy hearings. I also managed to gain exposure to the types of hearings that I would be doing myself in my second six, including non-molestation order hearings, occupation order hearings and emergency protection order hearings.

In my second six, the clerks and my supervisors helped me to obtain a huge range of work, and I had really fantastic opportunities throughout which I remain tremendously grateful for. I found that Pallant really does strike the perfect balance, whereby I did not feel overwhelmed with the amount or type of work I was being given, but I also felt that I was being challenged to progress and develop as an advocate. During my second six, I of course took on lots of my own work (including public law proceedings, private law proceedings, and domestic violence proceedings), which was daunting, but made better by the support of the team. I also had the opportunity to continue to shadow other members of Chambers, when I was not in Court, and even had the opportunity of assisting a senior member of Chambers with a two week non-accidental head injury fact finding hearing, which was an invaluable experience for me.

If I had to describe my pupillage in one word, I would have to say it was fantastic. I learnt so much, and I found that the team at Pallant really made my experience what it was. I am so excited to continue my journey at Pallant and hope that others are able to have the same positive experiences that I did.

Grace Navas

October 2025