



Applications

St. Mary's Chambers is recognised as one of the leading specialist family law sets. We invest a great deal in supporting our pupils through the training process and all pupillages are offered on the basis that a tenancy will be available if they are successfully completed.

Pupils are mentored throughout their time with us by three different supervisors, making sure they have access to a wide range of work and styles of advocacy. Supervisors also encourage their pupils to attend court and complete paperwork for other members of chambers. This ensures that future barristers fully immerse themselves in the St. Mary's culture and understand our approach to providing legal services and client care. In the last five years we have offered eight tenancies following pupillage.

Chambers is tremendously busy at all level and, having recruited 4 pupils in the last Gateway cycle for 2017, we are looking for up to three pupils for 2018 (likely February, June and October start dates).

We are committed to equal opportunities recruitment and promoting a diverse profession. Where two or more candidates are equally qualified, we will break that tie using the provisions of Part 11 of the Equality Act 2010. We will never select a less qualified candidate for pupillage over a more qualified candidate.

Funding and fees

Chambers will honour any commitment by the Bar Council to the level of funding in the light of the Minimum Wage Act. The current level of funding is £6,000 in the first six months; £3,000 to be paid on arrival in Chambers and £3,000 to be paid after three months. In the second six months, Chambers guarantees an income of £1,000 per calendar month.

Additionally, Chambers will pay all fees in relation to continuing education courses and other related expenses and any further courses which Chambers recommends that a pupil should attend. Pupils are also entitled to reimbursement of their travelling expenses to and from Court during the first six months of pupillage and in the second six months if attending Court with a Pupil Supervisor. Second six month pupils can expect to have a busy Court practice, but this is balanced with the need for continued training with the Pupil Supervisor.



Selection Procedure

All applications should be made using the Pupillage Gateway and applications will be processed in accordance with its timetable. All applications are assessed by at least two members of the Pupillage Committee in accordance with criteria set in advance of the opening of the Pupillage Gateway. We apply a rigorous coherence and moderation process.

Applicants who have been successful at the paper application stage will be notified by email. First round interviews will be conducted by panels of three members of the Pupillage Committee. Interviews will last for approximately 15 minutes and candidates will be asked the same questions. We will update this page in the near future to advise you of the date for First Round interviews.

Final round interviews will be conducted by three members of the Pupillage Committee. These interviews will last for approximately 40-50 minutes. The first part of the interview will consist of an exercise involving a case study, which will not require any advance knowledge of family law. The second part of the interview will consist of a discussion on various topics and may include a discussion of topics raised in the paper application. We will update this page in the near future to advise you of the date for Second Round interviews.

All applicants will be notified through by e-mail of the outcome of the interview and unsuccessful applicants may request feedback about their interview, by email, from the Head of the Pupillage Committee, Matthew O'Grady.

Pupillage Gateway Marking Criteria

Academic Achievement (maximum 4 marks)

We will not consider applications from candidates who have obtained a degree, which is not at least a 2.1. We welcome applications from candidates who have studied subjects other than law equally with candidates who have studied law.

2 marks to be awarded to applicants with a First Class degree in Law

1 mark to be awarded to applicants with a First Class degree in a non-Law academic subject

1 mark will be awarded to non-Law candidates who achieved a Distinction in the GDL

1 mark will be awarded to candidates who achieved a Distinction in any Masters degree

1 additional mark will be awarded to candidates who hold a Doctorate

Ability to Self-Motivate and Work Ethic (maximum 5 marks)

Up to 5 marks to be awarded to applicants who can evidence exceptional self-motivation and work ethic. This will, necessarily, be far beyond what is typically encountered of the studious pupillage applicants.

Communication & Reasoning (maximum 2 marks)

Up to 2 marks to be awarded for the appropriateness, effectiveness and content of the application.



Commitment to the Law and the Bar (maximum 3 marks)

Up to 2 marks to be awarded to applicants who evidence commitment to practice law and to a career at the Bar. Candidates who have achieved Outstanding on the BPTC will be awarded an additional 1 mark.

Commitment to Family Law

Up to 2 marks to be awarded to applicants who evidence a commitment to or relevant experience of family law.

We will update this page with general information on the marking criteria for both interviews in the near future.

What to expect in pupillage

- Pupils will be expected to be in Chambers between 9.30am and 5.30pm from Monday to Friday and may take one hour for lunch.
- Each pupil will be allocated three Pupil Supervisors over the course of 12 months, changing Supervisor every 4 months.
- Pupils will carry out work, attend Court and conferences as directed by their Pupil Supervisor in consultation with the Clerks.
- Pupils are expected to keep a work diary and to keep the Clerks informed as to their whereabouts if not in Chambers.
- Pupils may offer to undertake work for other members of Chambers after they have completed 3 months of pupillage but their Pupil Supervisor will assist in how best to manage this work.
- Pupils can expect regular progress reviews by their Pupil Supervisors on an informal basis and every 3 months the pupil will be invited to attend a short meeting with the Pupil Supervisor and a member of the Pupillage Committee to discuss the progress of the pupillage, to identify any problem areas and to air any grievances that the pupil may have.
- In the event of any grievance, injustice or personal difficulty experienced, pupils are asked, if possible, to first inform their Pupil Supervisor or, in default, a member of the Pupillage Committee. If the matter cannot be resolved in this way, the pupil or member of the Pupillage Committee may approach the Head of Chambers for formal consideration of the grievance.
- Pupils and Pupil Supervisors will use the Family Law checklist and aspects of the Common Law checklist.
- Pupil Supervisors are selected to ensure a wide experience of practice and advocacy styles covering the full range of Divorce and Child Care Law.