

8 NEW SQUARE

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Policies in Relation to Pupils

Number of Pupils

Chambers generally expects to award one or two funded pupillages each year, to applicants who are perceived as being strong contenders for tenancy in due course. Such pupillages are for twelve months, with a review at six months.

Finance

For funded pupillages, Chambers makes an award of £75,000 - £37,500 award and £37,500 by way of guaranteed income. Pupils may draw down a portion of this award in the year preceding pupillage.

Owing to the complex nature of the law practised by members of Chambers and the time it takes to learn, there is not a great deal of suitable independent work for pupils to undertake in their second six months, and recent experience has been that they will generate some fees, but usually not up to the level guaranteed.

Selection Procedures

It is Chambers' policy to select pupils in the following way:

- (a) Application is initially through Pupillage Gateway
- (b) On the basis of their Pupillage Gateway applications, a number of applicants are asked to attend a first interview. The first interview is with three or four members of Chambers and the Chambers Director and is intended to assess applicants' motivation and suitability for practice at the intellectual property bar;
- (c) On the basis of their first interviews, a number of applicants are asked back for a second interview, which is also with three or four members of Chambers and the Chambers Director. The panel for second interviews sometimes includes some of those involved in first interviews and some different members. The second interview is intended to assess applicants' aptitude for legal reasoning and argument and takes the form of a question(s) on a legal problem. It is not intended to assess knowledge of the law of intellectual property, which is not expected of candidates. No preparation is required, but applicants will have an opportunity to consider the problem for a short time before the interview begins.

- (d) To ensure that applicants are treated uniformly throughout the selection process, Chambers tries to make sure that all applicants are asked similar questions at both interviews, that the questions asked are appropriate and fair, and that the same panels of members of Chambers attend all of the interviews in each round (professional commitments permitting).

Those who are invited for interview will be offered reasonable travel expenses for travelling to and from the interview.

Our tenants come from a wide range of backgrounds and chambers continues to encourage applications from a diverse base.

Applicants should be able to show:

- Academic qualifications of at least a 2:1 (or equivalent) from any recognised university (unless there are extenuating circumstances).
- Law degree or GDL (or equivalent) and accepted an application to a BPTC or completed the BPTC.
- Proof or other explanation of technical/scientific aptitude to deal with the type of work in chambers.
- An interest in Intellectual Property as a career.

Policy and Procedure for the Recruitment of Tenants

Chambers' policy is to recruit as tenants those who Chambers consider have the ability and aptitude to become successful practitioners in the areas of law in which Chambers primarily specialises. The decision to offer tenancy to pupils is made by Chambers as a whole and depends upon the assessment by Chambers of the performance of pupils during their pupillage.

Members of chambers undertake Fair Recruitment Training.

Role and Duties of Pupils

Pupils spend almost all of their time, particularly in the first six months, observing their pupil supervisors (and other members of Chambers) and learning by drafting pleadings and opinions, undertaking legal research, summarising or analysing documents and so on. Also, pupils are encouraged to write headnotes for cases to be reported in the specialist intellectual property reports and, occasionally, articles for specialist journals.

In their second six months of pupillage, pupils may also undertake a certain amount of their own work, usually devilling, simple opinions or pleadings, or straightforward Court hearings. For the reasons mentioned above, it is unlikely that pupils will do much work on their own account, although such work usually increases significantly in the last couple of months of pupillage for pupils who have been taken on.

Pupils may be asked to do either or both of the following during their pupillage:

- (1) give a lunchtime CPD Seminar to members of Chambers on a topic of law or practice of their choosing.
- (2) conduct a formal advocacy exercise in the form of a simple application which they will be asked to prepare and argue in front of at least one senior barrister (e.g. the Head of Chambers or other senior KC) as well as their pupil supervisor.

It is Chambers' objective that by the end of pupillage each pupil should have developed the competencies in the BSB's Professional Statement.

General Pattern of Pupillage

Pupils usually spend three months with one or two pupil supervisors. Pupil supervisors will be chosen based on their availability and the type of work that they anticipate doing during the relevant period. Chambers is however flexible in this respect, and pupils may spend slightly more or less time with a particular pupil supervisor, for example, in order to see a case to its conclusion, and may spend time with other members of Chambers if deemed particularly interesting or useful to do so. Pupils may also on occasion do pieces of work for other members of Chambers, however any such work will be arranged through your supervisor and time will be allocated for such work as appropriate.

The Pupillage Committee will endeavour to ensure that the pupil is exposed to as broad a range of types of work as possible during their pupillage.

Policies and Procedures for Pupils not taken on

Chambers makes every effort to assist such pupils, by suggesting other chambers, firms of solicitors, patent attorneys, or companies, to which they might apply. Chambers further assists by contacting such persons on the pupil's behalf (if desired) and by giving advice and support generally. Chambers has in recent years been very successful in ensuring that such pupils are able to find a tenancy or further pupillage in other chambers, or offers of employment.

In addition to this, Chambers makes decisions about whether or not pupils will be taken on well in advance of the end of their pupillages; decisions about tenancy are nearly always made in July. Pupils who are not going to be offered a tenancy are told as soon as possible.

Chambers considers that it is in the best interest of pupils who are not offered a tenancy to make other arrangements as soon as possible, while at the same time recognising that this can take some time in the present, extremely competitive, atmosphere. Such pupils are always allowed a reasonable time to remain in Chambers while they look for alternatives and are treated in a friendly and supportive manner while they do so.