



Information for Pupillage Applicants and Application Marking Criteria

About One Pump Court

Society is not equal. We use the law to level the field. Using fearless advocacy and professionalism, One Pump Court provides access to justice for the vulnerable and disadvantaged and fights poverty, abuse, neglect and discrimination.

We are about social solidarity. We help the disadvantaged by providing our expert services in advice, advocacy and dispute resolution. We help our clients and each other by grouping together in a democratic collective, without a Head of Chambers, sharing our decisions and our burdens. We reflect our purpose by seeking equality for all and diversity amongst ourselves. We maximise our impact by aiming for high quality, efficient services, delivered in an accessible way.

Chambers undertakes work at all levels, and members practise in the following specialist groups: family, crime and civil. Many members are also direct access qualified and Chambers actively promotes this avenue of work. We are committed to legally aided work.

Family practitioners provide a multidisciplinary and socially responsible approach to family legal services in all areas of national and international law. Members specialise in public law and private law Children Act applications, as well as ancillary relief and cohabitee disputes. The family team has a large mediation group and is committed to developing a holistic ADR service for all client groups.

The crime group consists of an experienced team of barristers practising exclusively in criminal defence work. Members of the group provide representation to defendants charged with the whole range of criminal offences at every stage of criminal proceedings.

The civil group includes practitioners specialising in housing and immigration. Housing work concentrates on problems faced by tenants and the homeless. Our large immigration team is committed to both asylum and non-asylum work with a particular

emphasis on representing vulnerable clients in the face of increasingly restrictive legislation.

Judicial review is an important area of work within Chambers, particularly in respect of housing, education and immigration work.

Chambers also has practitioners specialising in prison law, inquests and public inquiries, and Court of Protection work.

Chambers works closely with law centres and other agencies who are addressing unmet legal needs. Some members are prominent in legal pressure groups and voluntary organisations, seeking to reform and improve the provision of legal services and access to justice.

About pupillage at One Pump Court

We offer 12-month pupillages funded by way of a grant for the London living wage (as set annually by the Bar Standards Board), plus an allowance for out-of-London travel, plus the full retention of all earnings received in the second six in addition to the grant.

Pupils have the opportunity to complete periods of training across one or more specialist areas within Chambers: family, immigration, crime, and housing. There are also opportunities to gain experience in other areas including community care and prison law.

Chambers selects candidates solely on merit, seeking to ensure that we reflect the community that we serve. Applications from groups traditionally underrepresented at the Bar are strongly encouraged.

Recruitment procedure

We recruit through the Pupillage Gateway. All applications are marked by at least two members of Chambers, applying our marking criteria as set out below. The highest-scoring applicants are then shortlisted for interview. We usually hold two rounds of interviews.

The interview process usually includes an advocacy exercise, and a short presentation on a subject chosen by candidates from a list of topical questions relevant to Chambers' practice areas (both of these are prepared in advance), as well as a range of unseen questions.

Answers to all the questions and exercises are marked on the basis of the following criteria: advocacy, legal knowledge, and commitment to human rights and access to justice. These criteria are weighted differently depending on the question.

All interviews are conducted by a panel of members of Chambers and are observed by an equality, diversity and inclusion monitor.

We do not offer individual feedback to candidates regarding their applications.

Application scoring criteria

The application will include questions which provide candidates with the opportunity to score points in all of the categories set out below. Markers will award a score for each category and then add up the total to produce the candidate's overall score.

A) Written communication and presentation: up to 6 marks

Up to 6 marks are awarded for **the way in which the application form is written**. We are assessing candidates' potential to produce a high standard of written advocacy. This includes a combination of how the narrative sections of the form are written both in form and in content. This is an opportunity for candidates to showcase their drafting skill, and to demonstrate attention to detail.

We are looking for:

- Accuracy in spelling and grammar
- Clarity in layout
- Effective use of language
- Concision
- Ease of reading
- Well-written and well-explained examples/ anecdotes
- The ability to present information in an engaging fashion

Candidates' attention is drawn to the STAR approach when explaining examples:

- Situation - the situation you had to deal with
- Task - the task you were given to do
- Action - the action you took
- Result - what happened as a result of your action and what you learned from the experience

CUT OFF: If a candidate fails to score a single mark in this section, their application will be automatically rejected. A mark of zero may, for example, be awarded for a form containing careless mistakes or incomprehensible prose.

B: Academic Achievement: up to 6 marks

We award a set number of marks for candidates' final (not predicted) **undergraduate degree results**, as follows:

- Third: zero marks
- Lower second (2.2): 2 marks
- Upper second (2.1): 4 marks
- First: 6 marks

We do not automatically award additional marks for postgraduate degrees as we recognise that not all candidates will have the means available to them to undertake further study. However, marks may be awarded, where appropriate, in the "experience"

and “commitment to human rights and access to justice” sections, where a candidate’s postgraduate education is relevant to those sections.

Discretionary marks are also available for **exceptional circumstances** where the candidate has a poorer than anticipated **final degree grade** for reasons such as bereavement or illness. Please see the separate section below on “extenuating circumstances” for further information on the types of circumstances which may be considered. There is a specific section in the application form for such reasons to be set out, and they need to be clearly detailed so they can potentially be verified through references if necessary. Depending on the circumstances and explanation provided by the candidate, discretionary marks may be awarded up to the maximum points available for this section.

CUT OFF: If a candidate fails to score a single mark in this section, their application will be automatically rejected.

C) Experience: up to 6 marks

Up to 6 marks are available for **legal and relevant non-legal experience** where skills developed or used would have application to practice at the Bar. Such skills may include, for example:

- Written or oral advocacy
- Legal knowledge
- Academic study
- Working with others
- Working with members of the public
- Decision-making
- Ethics
- Organisational skills
- Assisting others with problems

The categories of potentially relevant experience (whether professional, academic or personal) are not closed and may include any type of experience if the candidate is able to persuasively explain how this relates to their planned career as a barrister. We are conscious that not everyone has had the same opportunities: for example, in relation to obtaining unpaid legal work experience. We do not require candidates to have undertaken mini-pupillages. If any relevant mini-pupillages have been undertaken, they will not attract more than one mark in total, regardless of the number.

We do not award additional points in this section for relevant experience just because it is related to human rights or access to justice. The “experience” section is about relevant skills and understanding gained in any area of life (including while studying, for those candidates who apply directly after completing full-time education).

CUT OFF: If a candidate fails to score a single mark in this section, their application will be automatically rejected.

D) Commitment to human rights and access to justice: up to 6 marks

Up to 6 marks are available for candidates' **demonstrable commitment to human rights and access to justice**. Evidence in support is required, and vague statements which are not supported by examples will not be accepted.

The following are examples:

- Working with or assisting vulnerable people/ Chambers' client groups in a professional, voluntary or personal capacity
- Paid or voluntary work or study relating to human rights and/or access to justice
- Relevant academic study
- Writing articles relating to human rights and/or access to justice
- Campaigning to bring about change to an unjust position or help individuals, whether locally or further afield
- Protesting/lobbying

Candidates must explain how their particular experiences demonstrate their commitment to human rights and access to justice.

CUT OFF: If a candidate fails to score a single mark in this section, their application will be automatically rejected.

E: Extenuating circumstances: up to 2 marks

Candidates can score up to 2 additional marks (not exceeding the maximum total score) where they have experienced difficulty or hardship at some stage in their lives which may have a bearing on their scores in any category. Candidates are encouraged to state how their background or circumstances may impact their scores, rather than leaving this to the marker to infer. Further evidence or references may be sought from candidates if necessary. The list of extenuating circumstances is non-exhaustive, but some examples include:

- Having a disability or being neurodivergent
- Having significant caring responsibilities
- Having spent time in care
- Living in poverty
- Coming to the UK as an asylum seeker or seeking humanitarian protection
- Suffering from a significant bereavement
- The context of their education, such as the school attended

Total marks available

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|--|------------------|
| A) Written communication and presentation | 6 |
| B) Academic achievement | 6 |
| C) Experience | 6 |
| D) Commitment to human rights and access to justice | 6 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>24</u> |

E) Extenuating circumstances (overall score not to exceed 24) 2