

WESTGATE CHAMBERS

Westgate is committed to providing outstanding training for pupils so that you may reach your potential and excel at the Bar.

The pupil/chambers relationship is a collaborative one and in your regular pupil reviews you will have the opportunity to inform us of your areas of interest and we can tailor your pupillage to your needs.

Each year Chambers offers one funded 12-month pupillage.

Structure of Pupillage

You will have three seats of four months in each of Chambers' areas of practice. For the first six months your Pupil Supervisor will be your direct port of call and you will spend most days shadowing them in court and conferences. You will be actively involved in their work and will assist them with legal research, the drafting of documents, preparation of cases etc.

As well as completing work for your supervisor pupils are encouraged to travel to court with, and to do paperwork for, other members of Chambers throughout their pupillage. Pupils are encouraged to shadow junior members of Chambers towards the end of their second six to ensure they have a comprehensive understanding of the hearings they are likely to cover once on their feet in their second six.

It is the pupil's duty to ensure that his or her pupillage file is completed correctly (Chambers use the General Council of the Bar's General Common Law Pupillage Checklist) and to undertake the required further training.

Recruitment Process

Pupillage and vacancies are advertised on our website and on the Pupillage Gateway – although we are a non-gateway set.

We receive in excess of 50 applications each year, applications are graded using a point scoring system and 7-10 applications are shortlisted. The selection of the shortlist is decided at a meeting which is attended by those who graded the applications and the pupillage coordinators. This meeting is monitored for compliance with our Equality & Diversity code.

There is a single round interview conducted by a panel, consisting of a number of Members of Chambers of varying seniority. The Joint Head of Chambers will usually sit on the panel, as will one of the Pupillage Coordinators. You must complete a short pre-interview written task which you will submit when you attend for interview. On the day of your interview you will be given 20mins to prepare an

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advocacy exercise. All candidates will be assessed against the agreed selection criteria (see below) and in comparison with other applicants.

Interviews will take place in Chambers in Lewes.

Selection Criteria

Chambers selects pupils (and tenants) solely on merit. We are committed to a comprehensive Equality & Diversity policy and the age, sex, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, political views or religion of any applicant is disregarded. Disability is also disregarded, save in those limited circumstances in which it is genuinely material to a person's ability to be a tenant or pupil in Chambers.

The following selection criteria applies:

1. **Intellectual achievement** - a good record of achievement in formally assessed qualifications. A 2:1 degree level or above (A 2:2 at degree level may be considered with supporting evidence);
2. **Analytical thinking** – including the ability to absorb and process a large amount of complex and detailed information both quickly and accurately;
3. **Effective communication** – including the ability to communicate clearly both verbally and in writing;
4. **Persuasiveness/ advocacy skills** – including the ability to build strong, logical case from various points of view regardless of one's own personal perspective.
5. **Resilience** – candidates must show they are comfortable handling conflict and do not back away from tackling difficult or stressful situations and can remain calm and in control when under pressure;
6. **Interpersonal skills** - candidates must demonstrate they can effectively build productive working relationships with both colleagues and clients and treat people with courtesy and respect regardless of who they are;
7. **Motivation** – candidates must demonstrate they are committed to a career at the bar and have a good understanding of what a career in Chambers entails;

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8. **Ability to work independently** - candidates must demonstrate they are able and motivated to work on their own, seeking guidance as necessary.

Pupillage Awards

For pupils starting in 2021, Chambers offered a pupillage award of £16,601. Consisting of a grant for your first six months of £8,301 and a further £8,300 in “guaranteed earnings”. In this arrangement, any earnings received in this period (i.e. not work billed but payments actually received from clients) are offset against the award paid. In this way, pupils are guaranteed a minimum income of £8,300 during this period.

Chambers Rent is payable on those fees which are collected after completion of the pupillage period for work done during that period. There is no such levy on fees collected during the pupillage period.

Westgate wishes to support its pupils in any way it can, therefore Chambers will pay for all training courses which pupils are required to complete during their pupillage.

Credential checks

Before you commence your pupillage you must provide evidence of:

- a. Successful completion of the BPTC and/or that completion of the same is within the 5 year limit;
- b. membership of an Inn;
- c. their call to the Bar;
- d. Immigration visas have been obtained, where relevant;
- e. Waivers have been granted by the BSB, where relevant;
- f. successful completion of the BCAT (as relevant according to the most recent guidance published);
- g. any such other proof as may be required in the circumstances.

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Third-six Pupillage

All applications for third 6-month pupillage must be made directly to Chambers. Such pupillages will not normally be funded.

Any queries should be directed to The Pupillage Coordinator Mrs Ayisha Robertson: pupillagecoordinators@westgate-chambers.co.uk

Mini Pupillage

All applications must be made in writing to our senior Clerk Sean Gould SGould@westgate-chambers.co.uk and should consist of a covering letter and CV.