

Trinity Chambers Pupillage Applications and Selection Criteria

Introduction

Trinity Chambers takes its responsibilities, both in recruiting pupils and in maximising their development in Pupillage, very seriously.

Chambers' Director of Pupil Training is Nick Stonor QC.

The Deputy Director is James McHugh to whom all enquiries should be addressed in the first instance: J.McHugh@trinitychambers.co.uk.

The details of all Pupillages offered will be advertised on www.pupillagegateway.com. That information is not repeated here. Chambers will not consider any formal or informal application for pupillage that is not made on the application form at www.trinitychambers.co.uk and in accordance with the instructions on our website.

Selection Criteria for the sifting process

The application process results in an average of 150 applications each year or thereabouts. All applications are read in full. The following is looked for in particular:

- A 2:1 degree or better though exceptional candidates with a 2:2 degree for exceptional reasons have been selected for interview in the past.
- Excellent writing ability and advocacy skills.
- Quality of answers to the Written Form Questions.

- Chambers pays particular attention to the questions that invite written advocacy and the cogency of the arguments put forward.
- Breadth of experience, though we are equally keen to recruit those of ability who have come “straight through” university to the BPTC.
- A local connection to the area is regarded as a positive attribute, though is not essential.

First Round Interviews

Approximately a dozen people will be selected to attend for interview on a weekday, usually a Friday. Because of the difficulty in re-assembling an identical panel, we are sorry that it is not possible to offer alternative dates in any circumstances.

The first half of the first interview comprises standardised questions that will be asked of all candidates. They are not particularly searching questions and are used to allow the panel (usually three members of Chambers with either the Director or Deputy Director of Pupil Training present) to get to know the applicants. The second half of the 25-30 minute interview will consist of questions that relate to the particular experience and academics of each applicant. The weighting of the questions is equal.

The scoring categories for the first round interview questions are:

- Academic Achievement
- Relevant Experience
- Presentation

- Persuasive ability
- Reasons for coming to the bar
- Reasons for coming to Trinity

The weighting is equal for each category.

Second Interviews

Second interviews will take place on a Friday or a Saturday morning. Again, it is simply not possible to make alternative arrangements because we cannot re-constitute the same panel.

Second round interviews are generally 40-45 minutes in duration and either four or five candidates will be invited to attend. The panel will be larger, generally of 5 or 6 members and the members are likely to be more senior, often with judicial appointments, and generally with a silk in attendance.

The interview will usually begin with candidates asked to argue an “almost unarguable proposition” from two propositions given to candidates 30 minutes before the interview starts.

After that, the early, standardised, questions may be very similar to first round questions or application form questions because the majority of panel members will not have met the candidates before. There will always be one member of Chambers from the first interview panel on the second panel.

Later questions will be candidate-specific and address the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate’s application.

The same categories as for the first round interviews are considered with assessment of oral advocacy, based on the “almost unarguable propositions” test, in addition. Equal marks are awarded for each category.

After the Interviews

Successful applicant(s) will be contacted by Chambers and an offer made. Offers will be made open for acceptance for two weeks.

Unsuccessful candidates requesting feedback by email will receive it by email, though there may be a considerable delay caused by the number of requests and the fact that it is likely to be holiday season.

Underlying Principles

Trinity Chambers takes its equality and diversity commitments very seriously and a member of the E&D team will be present at every interview. We encourage diversity within Chambers and therefore encourage applications from all sections of society regardless of age, gender, belief, background, religion, sexuality, race, nationality, ethnicity or disability. We do not operate a policy of positive discrimination in favour of any group.

We aim to recruit only the very best candidates, pupils whom we would expect to secure a tenancy within Chambers at the conclusion of pupillage. We are committed to excellence in oral and written advocacy, practical advice to clients and the promotion of the best traditions of the bar.