Pupillage at Guildhall Chambers

Your 2028 Guide

Guildhall CHAMBERS



YOUR GUIDE TO 2028
PUPILLAGE APPLICATIONS
AT GUILDHALL

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Foreword from the Head of Chambers

By Hugh Sims KC



A warm welcome to Guildhall Chambers!

Candidates often ask how we would sum Chambers up. There is, of course, a lot to be said in answer to that question; any organisation with over a hundred people in it is inevitably rich and complex in personality. I would pick three words: friendly, supportive and rewarding. Pupils, members of Chambers and staff all say that Guildhall is a friendly place to be. The consensus across a wide number of people from different disciplines and at different levels of seniority is that Guildhall's most important quality is our friendliness. A close second is support for one another; supervisors and members of Chambers are generous with their time to help you develop and deal with a busy life at the Bar. Thirdly, rewarding – first and foremost on an intellectual level, with interesting and varied case loads. And in time a sound platform for what we hope will be a long and successful professional career. These are all very good reasons for you to want to join us.

We have a pride in doing challenging and difficult work extremely well and a national reputation for the quality of our representation and for our ability across the fields in which we practise. We recognise our pupils as being our future and do all that we can to provide a supportive environment in which to begin your career. No pupil is recruited without the expectation that that pupillage will turn into a tenancy. Each pupillage is planned to ensure that the pupil gains a depth of experience across the field or fields in which they want to practise and that they have the benefit of the backing of the relevant specialist team. As members and pupils, we are lucky to be supported by an outstanding staff team each of whom is invested in the career and aspirations of everyone, whether pupil, junior or King's Counsel.

So, do come and visit us, see more of us, and do apply to join us!

About Pupillage at Guildhall

About Pupillage at Guildhall



Guildhall Chambers is one of the UK's leading barrister sets, with expertise in more than twenty areas of legal practice. We have adopted a specialist team approach and feel that this best meets the needs of our clients and leads to better service provision. Pupillage is, therefore, undertaken within the structure of specialist practice teams. The areas of law practised at Guildhall are shown later in this brochure. Pupils' progress is monitored closely by their supervisors and team leaders and feedback is given regularly. Pupils are encouraged to spend time with and do work for as wide a number of members of the team as possible in order to gain maximum experience of different styles of work and levels of seniority. Each pupil has, as well as a supervisor, a mentor who is another member of the team to whom he or she can turn in confidence if necessary. It is of great importance to Chambers that each pupil feels properly supported during what should be an exciting but challenging year and we do all that we can to ensure this.



Pupillage in 2027

We recruit through the Bar Council's Pupillage Gateway. The timetable for applications in 2027, for pupillage commencing in October 2028, is now on the Pupillage Gateway website, with the window for applications opening on 4 January 2027.

We will be offering five pupillages in total in this competition, one pupillage in each of Crime, Personal Injury & Clinical Negligence, and Employment & Discrimination, and two pupillages in our combined Property, Trusts & Estates, Insolvency & Restructuring and Commercial law teams.

The adverts for each can be seen on the Pupillage Gateway from 23 November.

About Pupillage at Guildhall

Mini-Pupillage at Guildhall

Undertaking a work experience placement or "mini-pupillage" at Guildhall provides an opportunity to experience all elements of life as a barrister including being in court, observing conferences with lay clients and instructing solicitors, and reviewing and discussing legal documents, spending up to three days with one or more of our barristers expert in the area of practice in which you are interested. We run mini-pupillages in April, July and September each year for up to 35 people, and we encourage and welcome applicants from all backgrounds.

The programme for 2027 will be advertised shortly on our website.





Pupillage Facts and Funding

At Guildhall, we have trained 20 pupils in the last 5 years, all of whom successfully completed pupillage...

...and 19 of these secured tenancy in Chambers.



- Our pupillage award for October 2028 will be £60,000. £30,000 of this is a fixed award for your first six months, and we then guarantee you will earn £30,000 in your practising pupillage in the second six months – you may well earn more.
- Up to £7,500 of this can be advanced in the year before pupillage.
- Work travel expenses are funded by Chambers during your non-practising pupillage.
- Compulsory courses during pupillage – and any travel and accommodation expenses to attend them - are funded by Chambers.
- We provide regular internal training in business-related matters.
- All pupils have free access to Lexis+ and Westlaw UK online research facilities.
- Unlike many chambers, Guildhall pupils are invited to attend business development and social events with our solicitor clients.
- A new laptop and portable monitor are provided by Chambers at the start of pupillage, along with a monitor, keyboard and mouse for home-working – all yours to keep, free of charge, when you gain tenancy.
- Our pupils receive all the support you would expect from a leading national set of chambers.

Why Guildhall Chambers?



Selecting the right chambers in which to begin your journey as a barrister is a crucial career decision and one which obviously demands the closest consideration. For those seeking a dynamic, enriching and friendly environment in which to learn their profession, guided by talented and supportive mentors,

Guildhall Chambers stands out. Guildhall Chambers has a fine, longstanding reputation across a wide range of legal practice, both nationally and regionally. Aspiring barristers are drawn to us for several compelling reasons.

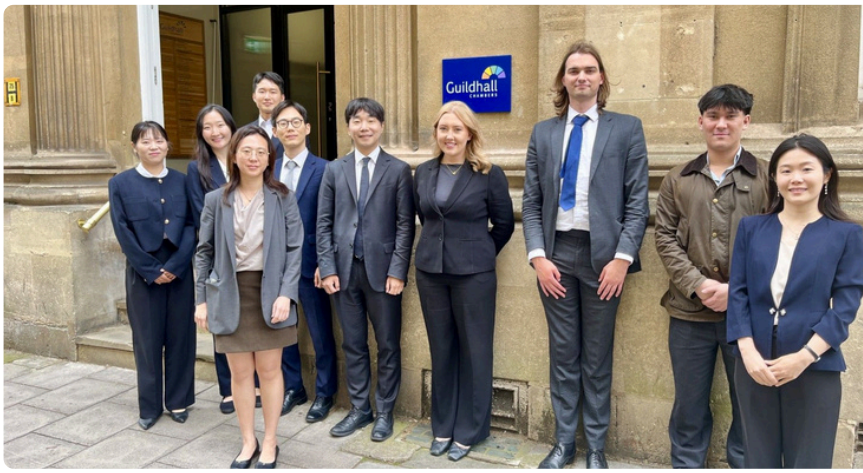
Primarily, Guildhall Chambers consists of dozens of experienced and accomplished barristers who excel in their fields of practice. Our members offer a wealth of expertise from which our pupils can benefit, learning from leading practitioners in the profession.

Secondly, Guildhall is committed to nurturing and guiding pupils on their journey towards becoming skilled and confident barristers. Pupillage at Guildhall Chambers is structured to provide comprehensive, first-hand learning. Pupils are not only given opportunities to observe in court but are actively encouraged to take on their own cases, promoting a vital sense of independence and self-assurance. All our pupils are consistently "on their feet" in their own cases during their Second Six, whilst still being able to learn from and assist in others' cases, sometimes in the highest courts of the land.



Guildhall's emphasis on diversity and inclusion marks it out as a progressive and forward-thinking institution. Chambers actively fosters an environment that enriches both our place of work and the work that we do, celebrates differences and promotes equality, recognising that diverse perspectives enrich both.

Why Guildhall Chambers?



As well as excellence in professional development, at Guildhall we place importance on contributing to the wider legal community and society. Pro bono initiatives, community outreach programs and charitable endeavours are integral to Chambers' ethos, allowing pupils to engage with the broader social aspects of their work and to recognise the value of using their legal skills for the benefit of others.

The choice of Guildhall Chambers for pupillage will be an inspired one, leading you to encounter a tremendous blend of tradition, innovation and opportunity in a nurturing and intellectually stimulating environment. The knowledge and experiences gained, the camaraderie developed, and the professional network you will establish will help you to shape the beginning of a successful and fulfilling career at the Bar, at one of the country's leading sets of chambers.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion



At Guildhall Chambers, we are committed to promoting and upholding the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in every aspect of our practice. We believe that a diverse and inclusive legal profession fosters innovation, enhances the quality of legal representation, and contributes to a fair and just society. Our principles cover: equality of opportunity; diverse representation; an inclusive culture; the elimination of discrimination; accessibility; appropriate training and development; and accountability and review.

Our pupillage selection process reflects these principles and is both rigorous and fair. We select pupils on ability and potential alone, ensuring candidates are not treated more or less favourably on the grounds of any protected characteristic. We welcome and encourage applications from those typically underrepresented in the Bar and will readily make reasonable adjustments for candidates who require them.

Practice Areas at Guildhall



Crime

'AN ELITE CRIMINAL SET WITH AN ABUNDANCE OF TOP-CLASS BARRISTERS'

Practising in all aspects of criminal defence and prosecution work, barristers at Guildhall Chambers are experts in areas from murder, serious sexual allegations, slavery, terrorism and serious fraud, to road traffic cases. Members attract instructions from prosecution authorities and leading firms of solicitors nationwide. We provide both advocacy and advisory services across the full spectrum of fraud and financial crime cases, with members of our criminal and civil teams often working together to provide a complete service many other sets are unable to offer; this can include barristers across our Crime, Commercial, Insolvency, Employment, Personal Injury and Clinical Negligence teams.



Regulatory & Discipline

'GUILDHALL CHAMBERS' REGULATORY TEAM HAS 'STRENGTH IN DEPTH', WITH NOTABLE EXPERTISE IN HEALTH AND SAFETY MATTERS AND SPORTS REGULATORY CASES'

Described as 'the best set' for Business and Regulatory Crime, our Regulatory & Disciplinary practice also intersects with our expertise in Commercial and Employment matters and covers animal welfare, banking & finance, financial services, environment & planning, health & safety, inquests, professional discipline and sports.

Commercial Dispute Resolution

'A STANDOUT SET ON THE WESTERN CIRCUIT WHOSE BARRISTERS POSSESS AN EXTENSIVE BODY OF COMMERCIAL EXPERTISE'

Our clients range from individuals and SMEs to household brands and international corporations in a wide range of commercial disputes. We represent clients across the UK and appear in courts often. The members of the team specialise in certain types of commercial dispute resolution work, such as professional negligence, financial services, banking and finance, company law, shareholder disputes, fraud/conspiracy, and more general breach of contract and breach of warranty claims. As well as appearing in the County Court, High Court, Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court, our barristers also act in adjudications, arbitrations (including ICC Arbitrations) and other types of alternative dispute resolution.

Practice Areas at Guildhall



Professional Negligence

'EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN HANDLING PROFESSIONAL NEGLIGENCE FOR BOTH CLAIMANTS AND DEFENDANTS ACROSS THE FINANCIAL AND LEGAL SECTORS'

We act both for or against professionals in respect of negligence, breach of contract, breach of fiduciary duty and breach of trust. We are particularly well respected for our specialist knowledge and skill in areas such as Banking & Finance and Insolvency.
Our clients include individual claimants and defendants, legal expenses insurers, group claimants, major insurance companies and Lloyd's underwriters.



Insolvency & Restrucuring

'A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR INSOLVENCY COUNSEL'

One of the largest insolvency teams with a national reputation outside of London, we act in all areas of contentious corporate and personal insolvency, including directors' disqualification proceedings, cross-border insolvencies and regulatory proceedings against insolvency practitioners. We also advise on non-contentious insolvency issues, corporate recovery and turnaround. Our barristers are instructed by leading firms of insolvency lawyers, insolvency office holders and regulatory bodies. Several members of the team are members of the Attorney General's Panel of Junior Counsel, receiving instructions from Government departments.

Property, Trusts & Estates

'A GO-TO SET FOR PROBATE AND TRUSTS WORK, ALONG WITH COMMERCIAL AND INSOLVENCY LITIGATION' ... 'THE GO-TO SET FOR PROPERTY MATTERS'

Guildhall Chambers has a longstanding reputation for expertise and experience across all areas of Property, Trusts & Estates work. Members advise on all aspects of Chancery & Commercial Chancery work, covering both contentious and non contentious matters. Our clients range from individual beneficiaries, trustees, executors and interested parties through to landlords, tenants, developers and property owners as well as commercial organisations and large development companies.



Practice Areas at Guildhall

Employment & Discrimination

'A FANTASTIC SET COMPRISING EXCELLENT BARRISTERS'

Our employment and discrimination barristers undertake all types of statutory matters in the Employment Tribunal's jurisdiction, including appeals to the EAT and above, as well as discrimination matters outside the employment context. We handle high-value and urgent matters in the Business and Property Courts and County Court, as well as appearing in front of professional disciplinary bodies and tribunals. Our clients include some of the UK's largest law firms as well as Government departments, local authorities, police forces, unions and solicitors' firms. We act for blue-chip companies, financial institutions, schools and universities, NHS Trusts, charities and SMEs, as well as claimants from all walks of life and a broad spectrum of professions.



Clinical Negligence

'A GREAT CLINICAL NEGLIGENCE SET'



Our barristers provide expert advice and advocacy at all stages of Clinical Negligence litigation from the first enquiry to final Costs & Litigation Funding. As well as extensive legal and medical knowledge, our members have a thorough understanding of the governance of NHS and other care providers, enhanced through their involvement in Regulatory & Discipline litigation. Several of the team bring experience from related healthcare fields and hold dual qualifications including a doctor, assistant coroner and mental health judge. We act for both claimants and defendants, and our clients include injured and vulnerable patients as well as government bodies, defence organisations and commercial care-providers.

Costs & Litigation Funding

'A GREAT SET IN BRISTOL, GUILDHALL HAS A LONG-ESTABLISHED PRESENCE IN THE MARKET'

We act for clients in all inter partes costs disputes and costs issues arising in litigation generally. The work includes assessments of costs involving issues of principle and of high value, costs appeals and costs management. It also covers advising on enforceability of funding arrangements, issues of coverage and indemnity relating to Before the Event and After the Event insurance, solicitor own client disputes and professional negligence cases relating to costs and funding.

Practice Areas at Guildhall



Personal Injury

'A TOP-TIER SET ON THE WESTERN CIRCUIT, WITH EXPERTISE SPANNING THE FULL GAMUT OF PERSONAL INJURY CLAIMS'

We undertake all Personal Injury matters, including serious and catastrophic injury and industrial disease through to other employer and employee liability matters, including claims involving psychological injury through harassment, bullying and stress at work. We also advise on public liability, the armed forces, occupiers' liability, road traffic accident and travel-related claims. Several members offer specialist expertise in areas such as child abuse (advising local authorities and institutions as well as individuals), deliberate injury, fraudulent insurance claims, injury caused by animals, Costs & Litigation Funding and Court of Protection matters. Acting for both claimants and defendants, our clients include top-tier solicitor firms, insurance companies and corporate bodies.



Court of Protection

Our work in this complicated and specialist field is closely linked to our Personal Injury, Clinical Negligence and Trusts & Estates practices. We have extensive experience advising and representing various parties in Court of Protection cases concerning personal welfare, property and affairs, serious medical treatment, deprivation of liberty and human rights claims. We also advise and appear in mental health cases, such as nearest relative displacement applications in the County Court, judicial review, habeas corpus applications by detained patients in the Administrative Court, and in hearings before the First Tier Tribunal (Health, Education and Social Care Chamber). Our Court of Protection barristers are frequently instructed on behalf of the Official Solicitor, local authorities, health bodies, the Office of the Public Guardian and family members.

Practice Areas at Guildhall

Sports Law

'NO OTHER SET IN THE COUNTRY HAS SUCH EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE IN THIS AREA'



We provide specialist advocacy and advisory services to the sports sector both throughout the United Kingdom and abroad. We have expertise in leading high profile reviews and investigations and regulatory & disciplinary hearings, as well as comprehensive experience in Sports Law-related contract, Professional Negligence, Insolvency, Commercial, Competition, Crime and Employment & Discrimination matters. We act for clients from international and national governing bodies to individuals with a wide range of different sporting backgrounds, from internationally renowned sportsmen, professional clubs and national sporting bodies to individual amateur athletes.



Guildhall Chambers

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