



Pupillage Information Guidance Note

We are pleased to offer 4 immigration pupillages:

- 1 commencing in February 2023 (Outside of the Gateway Timetable);
- 1 commencing in October 2023;
- 1 commencing in April 2024; and
- 1 commencing in October 2024.

Pupillage commencing in February 2023

The BSB has granted us permission to advertise a pupillage outside of the Pupillage Gateway timetable. The closing date for applying for this pupillage is 23.59 on Friday, 30th December 2022. Interviews will be held on Tuesday, 17th or Wednesday, 18th January 2023. Any offer will be made by Monday, 23rd January 2023. This pupillage will commence in February 2023, with the exact start date to be agreed with the successful applicant, taking into account any applicable notice period(s).

Pupillages commencing in October 2023, April 2024 and October 2024

These pupillages are advertised in accordance with the [Pupillage Gateway timetable 2023](#).

Who We Are

Richmond Chambers is a multi-award winning partnership of specialist immigration barristers. Based in the heart of Covent Garden, we're a barrister-only immigration law practice, combining the expertise and quality of the Bar, with the service delivery and benefits package of a boutique law firm.

Authorised by the SRA as the UK's first barrister-led ABS in July 2013, we were subsequently awarded 'Best Emerging Firm' at the MPF Awards for Management Excellence, 'ABS of the Year' at the Modern Law Awards and, most recently, 'UK Immigration Law Firm of the Year' at the Gamechangers 2022 Global Awards. As we approach 10 years in practice, our continuing success has seen us grow to a team of 16 specialist immigration barristers (of whom 10 completed pupillage in Chambers) and 1 pupil, supported by 10 legal associates and 5 business administration professionals.

What We Do

Every member of our team shares a core commitment to direct access immigration work. We're passionate about making a difference to the lives of migrants and we like to get involved in our clients' cases at an early stage, to identify the relevant legal issues and help shape the outcomes.

We assist our clients through all stages of the immigration process, from preparing visa applications to enter and remain in the UK, through to providing representation at appeals and judicial reviews before the immigration tribunal and higher courts.

Our immigration barristers assist individuals with the full range of personal immigration work including: partner and family migration, short stay migration, long term and short terms work routes, business visas, the global business mobility route, global talent visas, investment migration, student visas, the EU Settlement Scheme, settlement, nationality and asylum and human rights law.

Our barristers also provide employers and corporate clients with a range of essential business immigration services. We're regularly instructed by businesses to prepare sponsor license applications, work visa applications for employees and provide advice on compliance management.

Just as in a traditional Chambers, our barristers are also instructed by solicitors and OISC representatives to provide advice, representation and advocacy in relation to all aspects of personal and business immigration law.

How We Work

Due to our unique structure, we're able to combine the distinctive tradition and unique selling points of the Bar, with a modern and dynamic business environment.

We share the same commitment to expertise, quality and ethical standards as barristers in more traditional sets. Several of our barristers practised at the self-employed Bar before deciding to move to Richmond Chambers and we recruit only the most exceptional candidates who are committed to upholding the highest standards of the profession.

And, just as at the self-employed Bar, our employed barristers are independent experts and enjoy complete freedom to advise and act autonomously, without any constraints.

Unlike in many traditional chambers though, our barristers are very much a team rather than a collection of individuals. Our working culture is inclusive and collaborative and we enjoy working together for our clients. At the same time, our managing partners provide a strategic decision-making capacity that ensures that things get done.

Without a traditional clerks room, our barristers have complete control over the work they take on, as well as the flexibility to work how and where they want. We receive a high number of enquiries from private clients every day, spanning the full range of personal and business immigration matters, as well as solicitor instructions. We operate a pool system, whereby barristers have access, via an online portal, to new enquiries that come into Chambers. The 'cab-rank rule' does not apply to us, and this complete flexibility means that our barristers are able to choose the work that best suits their experience, interests and availability.

Our barristers are supported by a team of legal associates and professional administrators who ensure that our barristers are able to provide a consistently high level of service delivery directly to our clients. Legal associates are available to assist with legal tasks ranging from taking notes at conferences and court hearings, to taking and drafting witness statements, preparing bundles, legal research and drafting. Meanwhile, our team of professional administrators, all of whom are experienced in working directly with the public, deliver a seamless non-traditional 'clerking' service.

Our focus on direct access work means that there's no such thing as a last minute brief and, because all our work is conducted on an agreed fee basis, with fees paid in advance, our barristers have no aged debt.

We embrace new technology wherever this enables us to work more effectively and flexibly. Every barrister is provided with an Apple IMac and Apple MacBook Pro notebook, to use and work where and when their schedule dictates. We also maintain a modern, comfortable and well equipped hub in Chambers, in the centre of Covent Garden. This is a place where our barristers can work in a collaborative team environment and share knowledge and ideas, when they wish to do so. Our cloud based case management and document sharing systems, combined with video conferencing technology, facilitate working directly with clients around the world and ensure that remote working is possible.

"Having practised at the traditional bar for 15 years I was excited at the opportunity to join a forward thinking and modern set. I was welcomed by a friendly, dynamic, caring and hardworking team. Clients are always well served and excellent and consistent results are achieved through hard work and dedication. I knew immediately on joining that I had made the right decision and am excited to be part of an innovative set who are leading the way forward."

Alexandra Pease, Immigration Barrister

Pupillage at Richmond Chambers

Each pupillage is an employed pupillage, full time and for twelve months. During the twelve months each pupil will be allocated to one or more pupil supervisors, but our pupils also have regular opportunities to work for other members of Chambers.

Pupils see a wide range of private client immigration law work including applications, appeals and judicial reviews involving partner and family migration, short stay migration, long term and short term work routes, business visas, the global business mobility route, global talent visas, investment migration, student visas, the EU Settlement Scheme, settlement, nationality and asylum and human rights law. Our focus on direct access work means that pupils can expect daily client contact.

The pupillage year is structured into two six month periods. The first six months is spent collaborating on a wide range of applications and appeals across all areas of personal and business immigration law, often involving complex and novel points of law. In the second six months, learning through experience continues, but the reputation of Richmond Chambers is such that our pupils can also expect to be briefed by both solicitors and members of the public in their own right.

We are committed to providing our pupils with high quality, relevant training. Our barristers provide regular feedback to our pupils in relation to all work undertaken under their supervision and we hold monthly in-house advocacy training. We also go beyond the Bar Council's training requirements and provide the additional training that we deem necessary for a successful direct access practice.

We believe that pupillage should be about learning and gaining experience. Richmond Chambers' pupils are not required to undertake any competitive advocacy exercises or complete any formal assessments. Nor do we require our pupils to compete against each other. We evaluate each person individually based on merit.

We are committed to recruiting new members from our pupils, after evaluation against our standards of excellence. Our recruitment and training processes are such that in the last 3 years all pupils have been offered and accepted membership of chambers at the end of their pupillage. We continue to support our new members in the early years of practice.

We offer each pupil a salary package starting from £25,000 p.a., plus up to a further £1,000 performance bonus, plus additional benefits, including hybrid working, 20 days paid holiday (plus 8 bank holidays), interest free travel loan, expenses (including practising certificate fee), funding of compulsory pupillage courses required by the Bar Standards Board, a contribution towards CPD courses, access to our Chambers pension scheme and private health insurance scheme, and other benefits in kind. Both salary and benefits can be expected to increase substantially upon successful completion of pupillage.

“Richmond Chambers stands out from other immigration firms I have worked at due to the collegiate atmosphere and its unwavering commitment to achieving the best results for clients. Having started as a legal associate, I have had the opportunity to work closely with all of the barristers and have been pleasantly surprised at how generous each of them are with their time, guidance and advice. This has continued throughout pupillage, during which I have been encouraged to develop my own knowledge, skills and confidence. While hard work is expected, it is also valued. I have often been shoed out of Chambers in the evening, and professional and personal successes are recognised and celebrated both inside and outside of working hours.”

Zarina Rahman, Immigration Barrister

Life After Pupillage

We do expect high standards from our pupils and barristers. However, all pupils who reach the high standards that we set for ourselves will benefit from the security of an employed position upon successful completion of pupillage. Compensation packages can be tailored to individual needs and circumstances, but newly qualified barristers typically enjoy the following:

- Guaranteed basic salary paid monthly
- Additional salary payment based on receipts
- Additional performance related bonus
- No aged debt
- 30 days paid holiday per year, in addition to bank holidays
- Unlimited unpaid leave
- Hybrid working
- Generous maternity / paternity / parental leave policy

- Practising certificate fee paid
- Professional insurance fee paid
- CPD training costs paid
- Membership of ILPA, EIN and Free Movement paid
- Practitioner texts purchased
- Pension scheme
- Private medical insurance scheme
- Interest free season ticket and travel card loans
- Cycle to work scheme
- Access to employee discounts

Who Should Apply?

We look for pupils with excellent academic ability and a high level of motivation.

Applicants must have at least a 2:1 degree, and in addition demonstrate a commitment to the Bar, an impressive academic or employment history, and an interest in our specialist area of work.

Our successful candidates tend to be confident, articulate and interesting individuals with the right aptitude for working directly with members of the public.

Neither undertaking a [mini-pupillage](#) with us or employment as a legal associate are prerequisites for a successful pupillage application.

“For an aspiring immigration barrister such as myself, there could have been no better choice for pupillage than Richmond Chambers. The opportunity to delve deeply into all aspects of immigration law alongside expert practitioners in the field is unparalleled and ensures an excellent training ground for budding immigration barristers. Upon joining, it became apparent to me that chambers’ unique collegial atmosphere is not simply welcoming and motivational – the thorough exchange of thoughts and ideas amongst the set’s barristers is key to the high standard of legal services it offers.”

Alex Papatotiriou, Immigration Barrister

How to Apply

Richmond Chambers does not use the Pupillage Gateway System to process applications.

To apply for a pupillage, please complete and submit our [Pupillage Application Form](#).

Pupillage commencing in February 2023

The Pupillage Application Form must be completed electronically and emailed to our HR Manager, Nancy Holland at nancy.holland@richmondchambers.com by 23.59 on Friday, 30th December 2022, along with any correspondence from the BSB confirming any dispensations from pupillage. We will not accept hard copy applications or consider any other material provided. Applicants are advised to read the guidance note and our selection criteria carefully.

Pupillages commencing in October 2023, April 2024 and October 2024

The Pupillage Application Form must be completed electronically and emailed to our HR Manager, Nancy Holland at nancy.holland@richmondchambers.com by Wednesday 8th February 2023 at 12pm, along with any correspondence from the BSB confirming any dispensations from pupillage. We will not accept hard copy applications or consider any other material provided. Applicants are advised to read the guidance note and our selection criteria carefully.

We also encourage applicants to complete our Equality & Diversity Monitoring Form.

Applicants are advised to read this Pupillage Information Guidance Note and our [Pupil Selection Criteria](#) carefully.

We will acknowledge all applications and write to each applicant after the closing date to inform them of whether their application has progressed through to the next stage, or whether their application was unsuccessful. Due to the high number of applications likely to be received, we will be unable to provide feedback on unsuccessful applications. Any applicant that reaches the interview and assessment stages will have the opportunity to attend a feedback session with one of our recruitment panel members.

Equality and Diversity

We encourage applications from candidates from all backgrounds, regardless of age, gender, race, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or belief, or disability.

Further information

[Download our Guide to Pupillage at Richmond Chambers](#)

If you have any questions, please contact our HR Manager, Nancy Holland, at nancy.holland@richmondchambers.com