

FPBA WORKBOOK



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Courses & Community

- Access our online [community](#) of aspiring barristers
- Access [1-1 pupillage support](#)
- Access 1-1 coaching support



“The inspiration behind FPBA was to demystify the pupillage process and provide aspiring barristers with the knowledge and skills to unlock the pupillage gateway”

— Taz Aldeek 2024

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The Future Pupil Barrister Academy

Welcome to the Future Pupil Barrister Academy

Hello and welcome to the Future Pupil Barrister Academy. It's great to have you on board. My mission in this course is to deliver actionable value that you can use to aid you on your journey to securing pupillage.

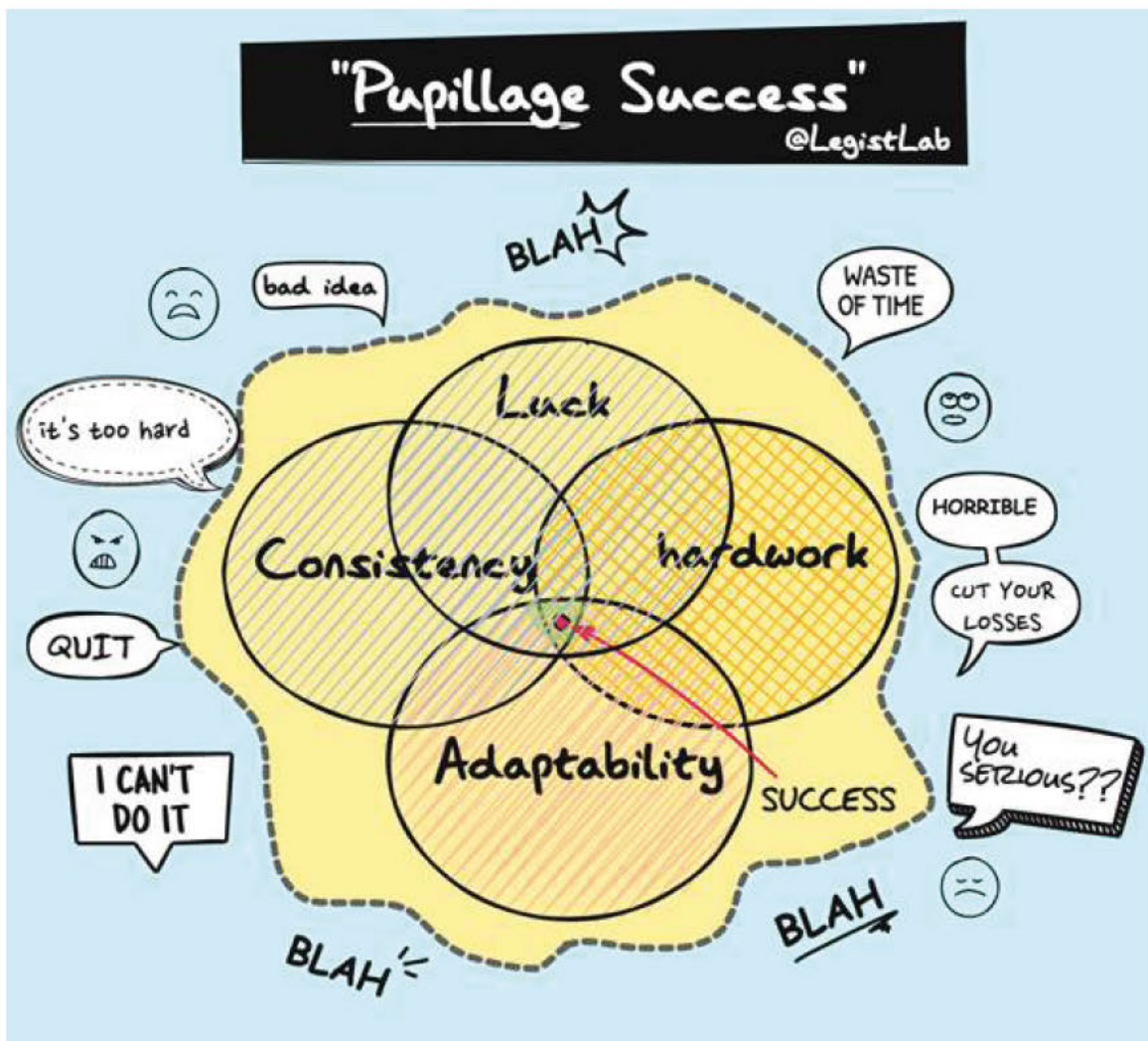


I'm Taz Aldeek and I'll be your Instructor/Guide as you work your way through the course – think of me as your aspiring barrister supervisor, here to help you on the road to securing a pupillage offer or, hopefully, several offers.

The Future Pupil Barrister Blueprint

Success in the pupillage process boils down to:

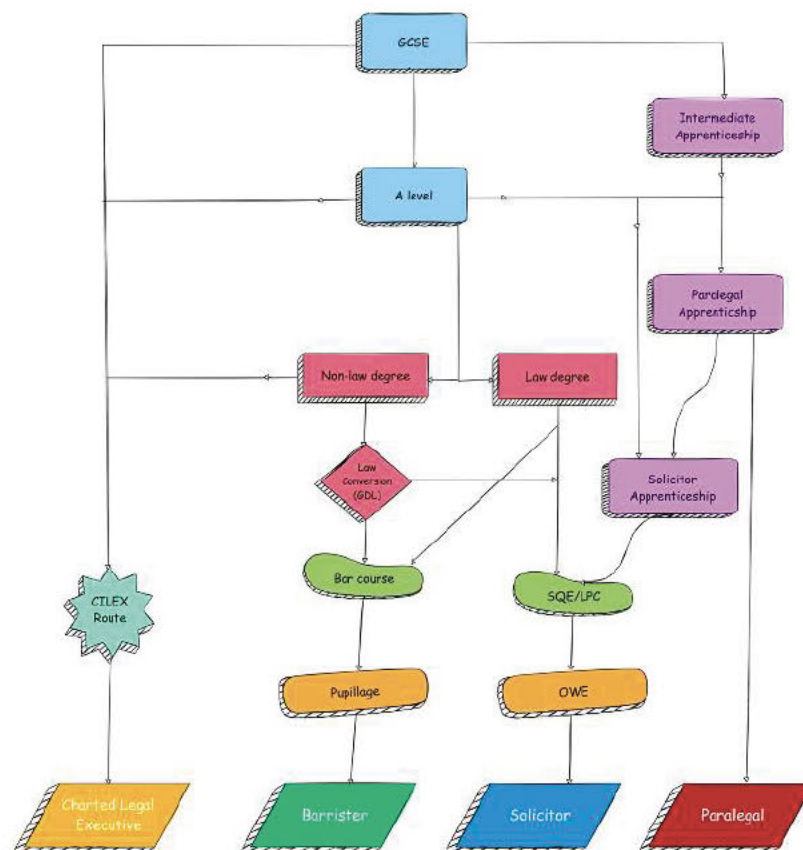
1. Hard work
2. Consistency
3. Ability to adapt
4. Luck



Module 1: Becoming a Barrister

One of the most fundamental questions you must address when considering a career in the law is whether to become a solicitor or barrister. To put it simply, barristers appear in court, while solicitors work in law firms preparing the cases that Barristers present.

Career Pathway



Module 2: Bar of England & Wales

In this module, we are going to explore what the Bar of England and Wales is, the regulator, the distinction between the self-employed and employed bar and the different types of chambers.

What is the Bar?

The Bar is the specialist profession of barristers, who have been providing expert legal advice and using advocacy skills to represent clients in court since the 13th century. Although some solicitors may now qualify for rights of audience in the Courts of England and Wales, the quality of expertise and advocacy provided by the Bar remains pre-eminent.

Why the Bar?

Your why is everything and barristers are trained to know if it is genuine or fake so deeply think about your why. Why do you want to be a barrister? We will look at this question more deeply in a later module but I'd recommend pausing the video at this point and note down some bullet points. Think about what it means to be the type of barrister you want to be and what is it about that role that interests you and why are you seeking to pursue a career in that area. Think about what it means to be an advocate. Think through the lens of a barrister and not a solicitor.

If your answer could apply to either then you need to rethink your response. You're looking for a specific reason.

Have a go at your why here...

Bar Council and Standards Board

The representative body of the profession is the General Council of the Bar (Bar Council, composed almost entirely of practising barristers and largely elected by the Bar itself. The regulatory arm of the Bar Council is the Bar Standards Board (BSB).

The Council of the Inns of Court (COIC) is the representative body of the four Inns, through which they work collectively on strategic and policy matters relating to the Inn's support for the profession of the Bar. COIC also serves as the co-ordinating body between all the Inns.

Circuits

For the practice of law, England and Wales are split into six distinct geographical regions known as "circuits". The origins of the circuit system go back to the 12th century, when visiting judges would travel around the country each year on circuits to hear cases.



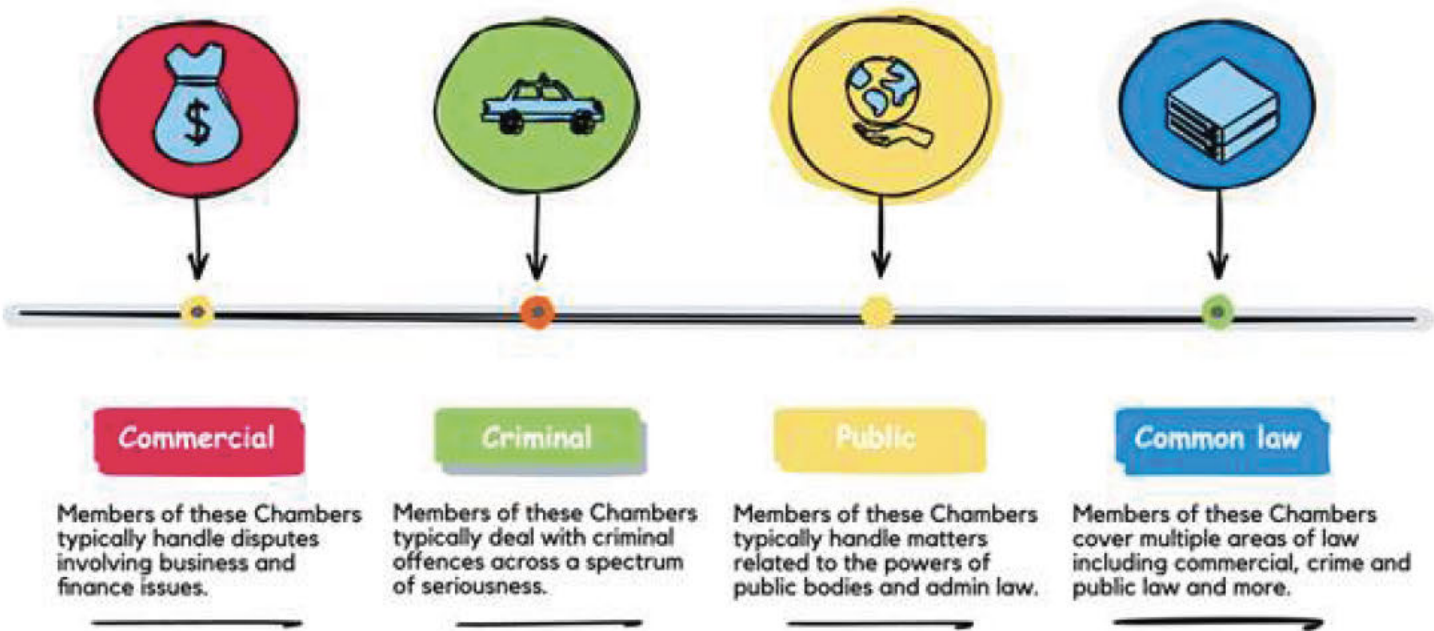
When applying for pupillage consider the circuit you want to practice on and reference it in your application. This will show a deeper understanding of the infrastructure and that you have considered where you want to practice (hopefully where that chamber is located) and identify reasons why you want to be in that region/area/circuit – what is your connection to it? Family? University? Partner?

Consider which circuit(s) you want to be a part of and why. Add these below:

Types of Chambers

There are many different kinds of chambers, and where you train has a significant influence on your career, as the style, size and clientele of each will vary. Consider the following categories to establish which type of set might best match your career goals and working style.

Types of Chambers



Have a think about what type of Chambers/AETO you want to join and include this information below...

Barrister Practice Areas



Have a think about your desired practice area(s) and why you wish to practise in them. List them below...

Module 3: Education and Finance

In this module we will learn about the Inns of Courts and the different bar course providers. In addition, we will consider the various funding opportunities available to support you on the path to becoming a barrister.

Inns of Court

Background

The Inns of Court in London are the professional associations for barristers in England and Wales. There are four Inns of Court: Gray's Inn, Lincoln's Inn, Inner Temple and Middle Temple.



All barristers must belong to one of them. They have supervisory and disciplinary functions over their members. The Inns also provide libraries, dining facilities and professional accommodation.

The four Inns of Court are:

- The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn
- The Honourable Society of the Inner Temple
- The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple
- The Honourable Society of Gray's Inn

Choosing your Inn

Inn selection should be a strategic exercise subject to your individual circumstances. Each Inn has its own traditions, facilities, services and levels of support it can provide. It is worth looking at each Inn and making an informed decision before you decide to make your decision because once you join one of the 4 Inns you become a member for life and cannot change to another Inn at a later stage.

Have a think about which Inn you want to select and include this below...

Here is a list of Bar training course providers:

Table 1. Vocational Bar training course providers

Provider	Site	Site Code	Courses Offered for 2022/23	Website
BPP	Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, London, Manchester	BPP + site name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 step-pathway full-time at all sites Part-time offered at BPP London LLM option offered at all sites 	https://www.bpp.com/
Cardiff University	-	CAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-step pathway full-time LLM option offered 	https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/
City Law School	-	CLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-step pathway full-time and part-time LLM option offered Specialist training option offered 	https://www.city.ac.uk/
University of Hertfordshire	-	HERT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-step pathway full-time LLM option offered 	https://www.herts.ac.uk/
The Inns of Court College of Advocacy	-	ICCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-step pathway full-time 4-step pathway 	https://www.icca.ac.uk/
Manchester Metropolitan University	-	MMU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-step pathway full-time and part-time LLM option offered 	https://www.mmu.ac.uk/
Nottingham Law School	-	NTU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-step pathway full-time LLM option offered 	https://www.ntu.ac.uk/
The University of Law	Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, London, Manchester, Nottingham	ULaw + site name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 step-pathway full-time at all sites, and part-time offered at several sites LLM option offered at all sites 	https://www.law.ac.uk/
University of the West of England	-	UWE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-step pathway full-time 4-step pathway LLM option offered 	https://www.uwe.ac.uk/
University of Northumbria	-	UNN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-step pathway full-time and part time 4-step pathway LLM option offered Also offered as part of undergraduate degree 	https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/

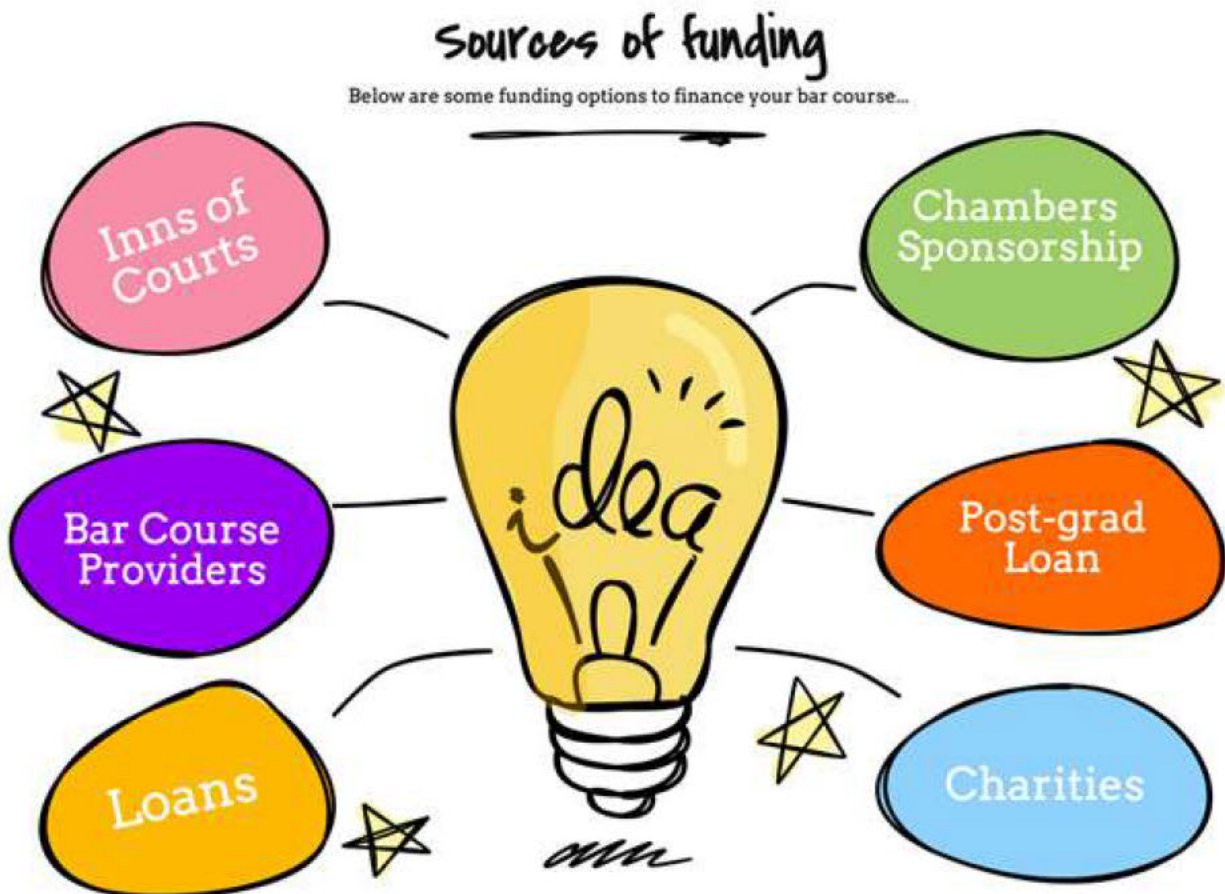
Have a think about which provider you are interested in and record this below..

Scholarships & Awards

Here are links to the awards from:

1. [Middle Temple](#).
2. [Gray's Inn](#).
3. [Inner Temple](#).
4. [Lincoln's Inn](#).

Other Sources of Funding



You should consider each source of funding and depending on your circumstance, choose the appropriate type of funding that suits your needs.

Module 4: Work Experience

In this module we consider the competencies and standards of a Barrister. We will then look at how to draft work experience in a way that demonstrates the required skills of a Barrister.

When it comes to drafting up your work experience, there is a process that you should be following to ensure you're ticking all the boxes that a prospective employer wants to see, and that process is what I call Work Experience Mapping.

BSB Professional Statement (Competencies & Standards)

Competence & Standards

See BSB Standards and Competencies to understand the hard and soft skills expected of solicitors and barristers.

Lawyer's Profile - Competency vs Evidence

1. Hard Skills
2. Soft Skills
3. Qualities

Competencies and Standards Table

Hard Skills	Soft Skills	Qualities
Intellectual Achievement A good record of achievement in formally assessed qualifications. * At least 3 'B's at 'A' level (or equivalent). * A 2:2 degree level or above.	Sound Judgement and logical reasoning The ability to make sound decisions based on rational thinking.	Integrity The quality of being honest and showing a consistent and uncompromising adherence to strong moral and ethical principles and values

Hard Skills	Soft Skills	Qualities
Analytical Thinking (Written Advocacy/Problem Solving) The ability to absorb and process a large amount of complex and detailed information both quickly and accurately. * Can deal effectively with written, numerical and spoken information. * Can quickly distinguish between relevant facts and irrelevant information. * Relates facts to key aspects of the law. * Is able to unpick complex arguments. * Does not over-interpret information or make unwarranted assumptions. * Does not panic when faced with a deluge of information. Ability to Interpret Highly Complex Situations and Information to provide First Class Analysis/Formulating Detailed Legal Arguments/Opinions Based on Research	Resilience Is comfortable in handling conflict and does not back away from tackling difficult or stressful situations. Remains calm and in control when under pressure. * Comfortable and skilful in handling conflict. * Remains calm and in control when under pressure. * Is able to give unpalatable news. * Can cope with working in a highly competitive environment.	Ambitious Shows deep desire to achieve a specific goal or an earnest desire for achievement or distinction.

Hard Skills	Soft Skills	Qualities
Influencing/Advocacy Skills Can build strong, logical cases for various points of view regardless of own personal perspective. Can deliver with confidence and impact, using tactics and emotion to support the logic in gaining agreement. * Builds a logical, rational argument based on fact and a good understanding of the law. * Predicts objections and has arguments in place to combat them if they are raised. * Has a good understanding of influencing tactics and is willing to use them. * Can influence on an emotional level as well as on a rational one. Debating and mooting were also invaluable ways of learning how to think on my feet and present a case persuasively	Drive and Determination Has a strong focus on what needs to be achieved and puts energy and effort into ensuring that goals and outcomes are met. * Focuses on achieving outcomes. * Works to get round obstacles; does not give up. * Is proactive in shaping what gets done, whilst being cognisant of where the boundaries of their own responsibility lie. * Ensures that deadlines are met and that promises are kept.	Work Ethic & Commitment An attitude that one has towards their job. The individual take pride in their work and are willing to go the extra mile.

Hard Skills	Soft Skills	Qualities
Effective Communication (oral/written) (Interpersonal Skills and Client Management) Communicates readily and clearly both verbally and in writing. * Communicates clearly, giving sufficient background information to aid understanding without overloading the audience. • Structures communication to aid understanding. • Adapts style and language of communication to the needs of the audience. • Presents complex legal points simply and accurately. • Listens to others and builds on their points.	Motivation Is committed to a career as a Barrister. Has a good understanding of what a career in chambers entails, the negative as well as the positive aspects, and is energised by the realities of the role. * Career choice to become a Barrister is considered and well thought out. * Has a good understanding of both positive and negative realities of the role. * Is willing and able to undertake the less glamorous aspects. * Is motivated by the role.	Desire to Learn and Develop A curiosity towards learning and continuous desire to develop and improve.

Hard Skills	Soft Skills	Qualities
Ability to work independently Is able and motivated to work on their own, seeking guidance as and when is appropriate. * Demonstrates ability to work independently. * Able to rely on their own judgement when guidance cannot be found elsewhere. * Does not get distracted or demotivated when working alone.	Interpersonal skills Is skilful in building productive working relationships with both colleagues and clients. Treats people with courtesy and respect regardless of who they are. * Builds effective working relationships. * Treats others with courtesy and respect. Has a genuine interest in others and works to understand their points of view. * Connects with others and demonstrates empathy.	Sense of Humour A person's ability to perceive humour or appreciate a joke.

Hard Skills	Soft Skills	Qualities
Commercial Awareness This is a fundamental attribute for any successful lawyer no matter what area of practice or which type of lawyer. An awareness of the real world and how to offer practical solutions within the framework of the law is vital to the role of a lawyer. For this reason, students are often asked for evidence of their commercial awareness during the application process whether at interview or in an application form. This means that you need to demonstrate an aptitude, interest and understanding of business. Law firms and Chambers are business too, acting in increasingly competitive markets You may be asked at the interview and application stage to provide e.g. of topical business issues that you have been following in the press.	Relatable Ability to relate appropriately to the very widest cross-section of society, coupled with broadness of mind	Confidence The quality of being certain of your abilities or of having trust in people, plans or the future.

Hard Skills

Soft Skills

Qualities

Reading up on issues just a few days prior to an interview will not be enough to allow you to demonstrate a long-standing knowledge and interest in these issues. Instead try to follow developments in the commercial world on an on going basis alongside your studies using the sources

Three ways to demonstrate that you have commercial awareness

1. Work experience e.g. working in a law firm
2. Setting up a company or club
3. General interest and research

Hard Skills

Soft Skills

Qualities

Organisational/Time Management

Time-management skills are the skills that help you organise your time effectively to be more productive. Good organisational skills support good planning. Organisational skills include scheduling appointments, updating your calendar frequently, filing documents effectively and taking detailed notes during meetings. Being well-organised makes it easier to find documentation when you need it.

Thick Skin

A lack of sensitivity to criticism or insults.

Hard Skills	Soft Skills	Qualities
	Working Under Pressure Involves dealing with constraints which are often outside of your control - these might be resource or time constraints, the difficulty of the task or having insufficient knowledge required to complete the task, or unforeseen changes or problems.	Thick Skin A lack of sensitivity to criticism or insults.
	Attention to detail Attention to detail is the ability to focus on all areas of a project or task, no matter how small. People with excellent attention to detail are thorough in reviewing their work. As a result, the work is generally more accurate and free of errors.	

Hard Skills

Soft Skills

Qualities

Leadership

The art of motivating a group of people to act toward achieving a common goal

Work Experience Mapping

The idea of Work Experience Mapping is understanding what the competencies and standards of the profession or the job description are, and mapping our existing work experiences onto these skills so that a prospective employer knows we have the skills needed to do the job. This is a baseline requirement for getting shortlisted and invited to the first interview. Make a note of all the hard and soft skills and qualities expected of a barrister and use them to construct a two column table. On the left the skills and qualities and on the right cross reference your best piece of work experience that demonstrates each skill.

Each work experience or voluntary activity that you have undertaken has (hopefully!) resulted in you learning the core skills necessary to become a barrister or solicitor. If you are not able to demonstrate all the skills then I would advise going out and getting more work experience as the market is extremely competitive and grades and work experience are expected as a given.

Work Experience Mapping Table

I have created a [template](#) for how to map your work experience.

Walkthrough

- 1. Competencies and Standards on the Left
 - 1. Hard Skills
 - 2. Soft Skills
 - 3. Qualities

Hard Skill	Experience (evidence)
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Intellectual Achievement

A good record of achievement in formally assessed qualifications.
At least 3 'B's at 'A' level (or equivalent).
A 2:2 degree level or above.

Hard Skill	Experience (evidence)
Influencing/Advocacy Skills	
Can build strong, logical cases for various points of view regardless of own personal perspective. Can deliver with confidence and impact, using tactics and emotion to support the logic in gaining agreement.	
Builds a logical, rational argument based on fact and a good understanding of the law. Predicts objections and has arguments in place to combat them if they are raised.	
Has a good understanding of influencing tactics and is willing to use them.	
Can influence on an emotional level as well as on a rational one.	
Debating and mooted were also invaluable ways of learning how to think on my feet and present a case persuasively	

Hard Skill

Experience (evidence)

Analytical Thinking (Written

Advocacy/Problem Solving) The ability to absorb and process a large amount of complex and detailed information both quickly and accurately. Can deal effectively with written, numerical and spoken information. Can quickly distinguish between relevant facts and irrelevant information. Relates facts to key aspects of the law. Is able to unpick complex arguments. Does not over-interpret information or make unwarranted assumptions. Does not panic when faced with a deluge of information. Ability to Interpret Highly Complex Situations and Information to provide First Class Analysis/Formulating Detailed Legal Arguments/Opinions Based on Research

Soft Skill	Experience
------------	------------

Sound Judgement and logical reasoning

Drive and Determination Has a strong focus on what needs to be achieved and puts energy and effort into ensuring that goals and outcomes are met.

Focuses on achieving outcomes.

Works to get round obstacles; does not give up.

Is proactive in shaping what gets done, whilst being cognisant of where the boundaries of their own responsibility lie.

Ensures that deadlines are met and that promises are kept.

Soft Skill	Experience
<p>Is committed to a career as a Barrister. Has a good understanding of what a career in chambers entails, the negative as well as the positive aspects, and is energised by the realities of the role. Career choice to become a Barrister is considered and well thought out. Has a good understanding of both positive and negative realities of the role. Is willing and able to undertake the less glamorous aspects. Is motivated by the role.</p>	

Leadership Skills

Soft Skill	Experience
Ability to work independently Is able and motivated to work on their own, seeking guidance as and when is appropriate. Demonstrates ability to work independently. Able to rely on their own judgement when guidance cannot be found elsewhere. Does not get distracted or demotivated when working alone.	
Organisational/Time Management/Working Under Pressure	

Soft Skill	Experience
Organisational/Time Management/Working Under Pressure	LL.M Student: Whilst writing an LL.M dissertation I was required to meet strict deadlines set by my academic supervisor in addition to preparing for several other exams, playing rugby for the university, and working at a local café to fund my education. My capacity to multitask effectively was key to meeting these deadlines, without compromising on the standard of work, as I understood the importance of setting realistic targets and adapting to any challenges faced along the way. To manage each of these commitments I have meticulously organised my time and structured each calendar week around, allocating a sufficient and proportionate amount of time to excel in each of these endeavours.
Soft Skill	Experience
Attention to detail	

Soft Skill

Experience

Commercial Awareness This is a fundamental attribute for any successful lawyer no matter what area of practice or which type of lawyer. An awareness of the real world and how to offer practical solutions within the framework of the law is vital to the role of a lawyer. For this reason, students are often asked for evidence of their commercial awareness during the application process whether at interview or in an application form. This means that you need to demonstrate an aptitude, interest and understanding of business. Law firms and Chambers are business too, acting in increasingly competitive markets You may be asked at the interview and application stage to provide e.g. of topical business issues that you have been following in the press. Reading up on issues just a few days prior to an interview will not be enough to allow you to demonstrate a long-standing knowledge and interest in these issues. Instead try to follow developments in the commercial world on an on-going basis alongside your studies using the sources

Three ways to demonstrate that you have commercial awareness

1. Work experience e.g. working in a law firm
2. Setting up a company or club
- 3.

Qualities

Evidence

Integrity

Sets the bar apart from other professions – how you conduct your cases. How you are with other colleagues and clients. Off the pitch outside court bar colleagues look after each other. Be helpful, corporate and act with integrity (most important suit a barrister has) – if we lose that suit then it is the end of the independent bar. Barristers have no loyalty to a firm and it's a small profession, so it is integrity that distinguishes barristers from other professions without it nothing else matters. There is a right sort of competitiveness and the wrong sort. Make sure it is at the forefront of your mind.

Resilience

Is comfortable in handling conflict and does not back away from tackling difficult or stressful situations. Remains calm and in control when under pressure. Comfortable and skillful in handling conflict. Remains calm and in control when under pressure. Is able to give unpalatable news. Can cope with working in a highly competitive environment.

Qualities	Evidence
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Work Ethic & Commitment

Relatable - Ability to relate appropriately to the very widest cross-section of society, coupled with broadness of mind

Qualities	Evidence
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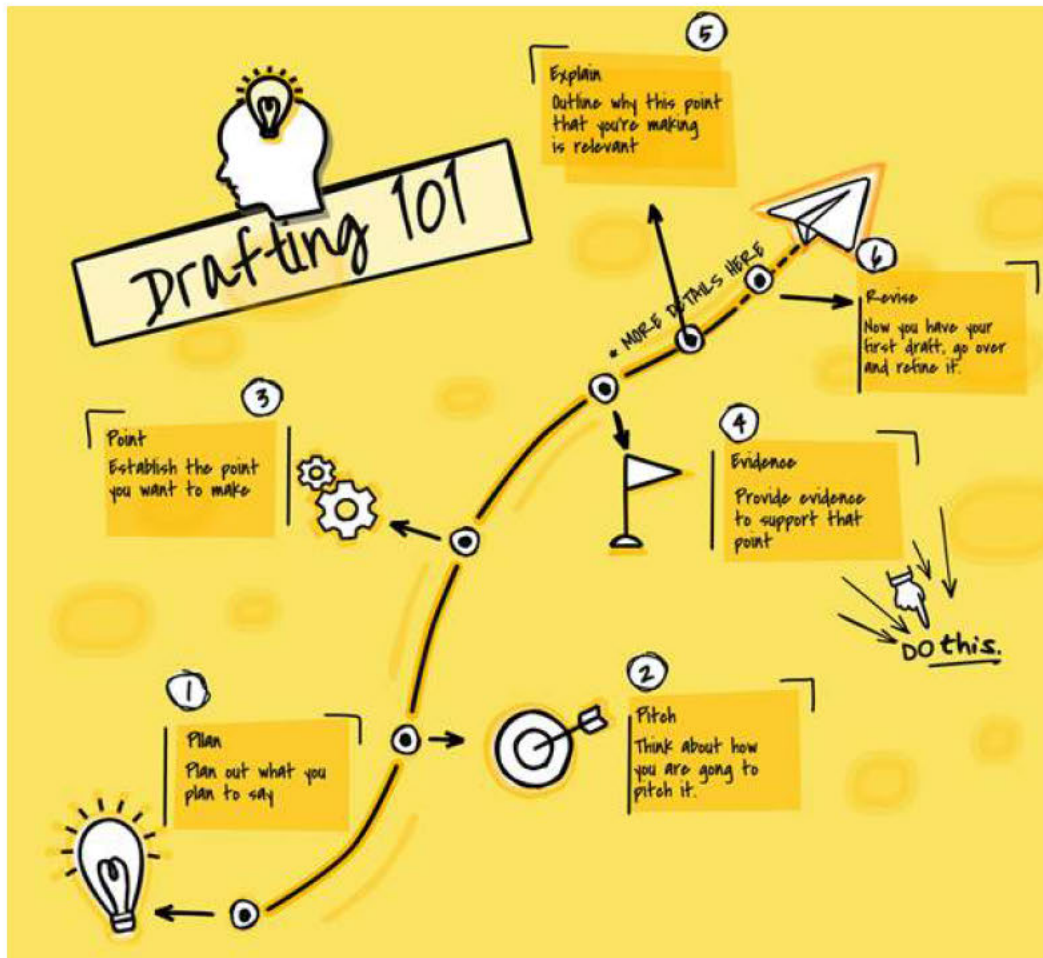
Desire to Learn and Develop

Ambitious

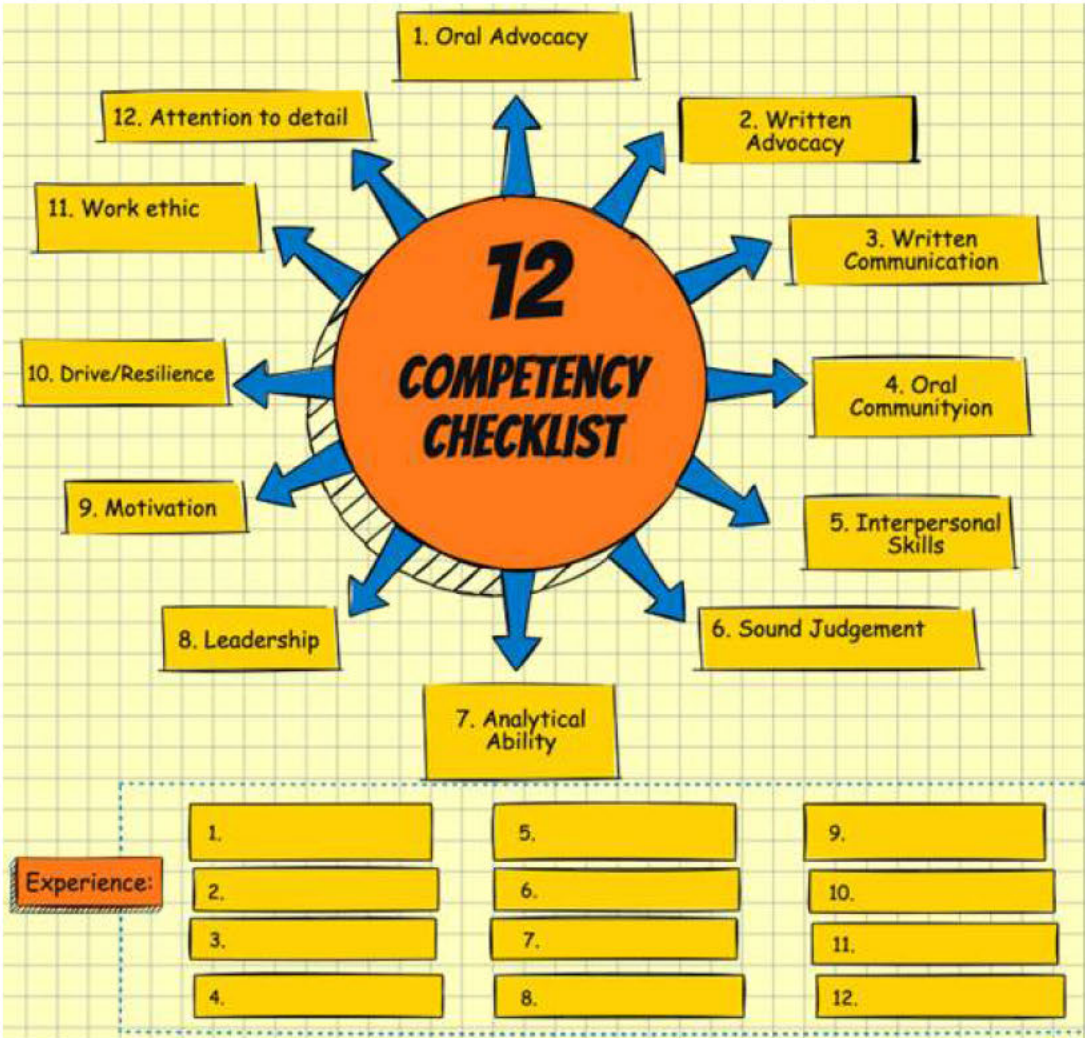
Sense of Humour

Filling in the Table

When filling out the evidence column in the above table you should consider following the 6 steps set out below when drafting each work experience.



Quick Fire Competency Checklist




For each competency set out above, match up the best work experience you have above to demonstrate it.

Mini-pupillages

Mini-Pupillage Report

Where have I been?	What have I seen?
Who did I see?	What did I learn? <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Particular case?- Particular skill observed?- Particular lesson?- Practice area landscape?



OBSERVED ← → **INFORMED**

For each mini-pupillage you attend, you should complete a mini pupillage report for each day which answer the above questions.

Module 5: Pupillage Preparation

“Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.”

In this module we set out the fundamentals to effective pupillage preparation. We then address a comprehensive candidate and AETO analysis.

Pupil Barrister Selection Criteria

Now that you have the key dates in your head it makes sense to start off reviewing the two key documents which are relevant to the selection criteria of pupil barristers. You need to appreciate how your application is marked and against what criteria so that this can guide the way you draft your pupillage applications. The two main documents we are going to look at are:

1 - The Bar Council's Fair Recruitment Guide 2015 - A Best Practice Guide for the Bar

2 - The Bar Standards Board Review of Pupillage Advertising and Selection Criteria by BSB

Candidate Analysis: Work Experience, CV & Cover Letters and Self-Enquiry

Now that we appreciate the key dates and documents before we can jump into our candidate analysis, we need to get our house in order and create our template CV and Cover Letter that we are going to tailor each time we apply to an AETO.

Work Experience Mapping

Before we attempt to create our CV let's pull in our Work Experience Mapping table that we created in Module 4 which should have all your relevant and key experience which you have mapped out to cover the key competencies and standards outlined in the Barrister' Professional Statement.

CV & Cover Letter Workshop

You should now draft your CV and Cover Letter.

Self-Enquiry

With the house in order, it's time to sit down and begin the process of self-enquiry. In its simplest form, you are trying to figure out your story. To do that you need to start asking yourself the big questions and be open and honest with yourself about your strengths and weaknesses.

To help guide you we are going to go through some of these questions:

1. Where do you want to live and spend the next 5-10 years of your career?

Answer:

2. Why do you ACTUALLY want to be a barrister?

Answer:

3. What are your desired practice areas(s)?

Answer:

4. What is your Unique Selling Point?

Answer:

5. SWOT Analysis

Answer:

A SWOT analysis is an assessment of your strengths, weaknesses the opportunities available to an AETO and what you can bring by way of value and an acknowledgement of potential threats to their business and how you can mitigate against them.

This exercise is AETO specific and should be completed every time you apply to an AETO and updated accordingly as opportunities and threats are time dependent.



Strengths

Weaknesses

Opportunities

Threats

1

2

3

AETO Analysis: Chambers, Clients & Cases

Once you have completed a thorough candidate analysis it's time to move onto the AETO analysis.

We will teach you our 3-tier approach to conducting meticulous AETO research which will reveal the AETOs best suited to your application and most likely to consider your application and invite you to interview.

Pupillage Directory/Law careers

Have a look at the Pupillage Directory in the Law Careers handbook (page 433). You can find the handbook inside the 'Candidate Analysis' lesson, under the 'Files' section.

AETO Selection: 3-Tier Research Matrix

Finding your dream firm or chambers doesn't just happen by accident. Well, for some people it does... but for others they can end up settling for an employer, practising an area of law they hate or even walking away from the profession all together, so today I'm going to share with you our 3-tiered approach to finding the right direction for your legal career and to identify the best suited chambers for you, which will serve to significantly increase your chances of securing pupillage.

Essentially, the Matrix consists of 3 databases which helps you construct:

1. Longlist which you use to identify targeted AETO to put in your...
2. Shortlist which you then put into your...
3. Pupillage tracker

I'm going to take each database in turn starting off with the longlist.

The Longlist: Candidate vs AETO Fit

[Click here](#) to see the Longlist template I have prepared for you to use.

The Shortlist: Priority List

[Click here](#) to see the Shortlist template I have prepared for you to use.

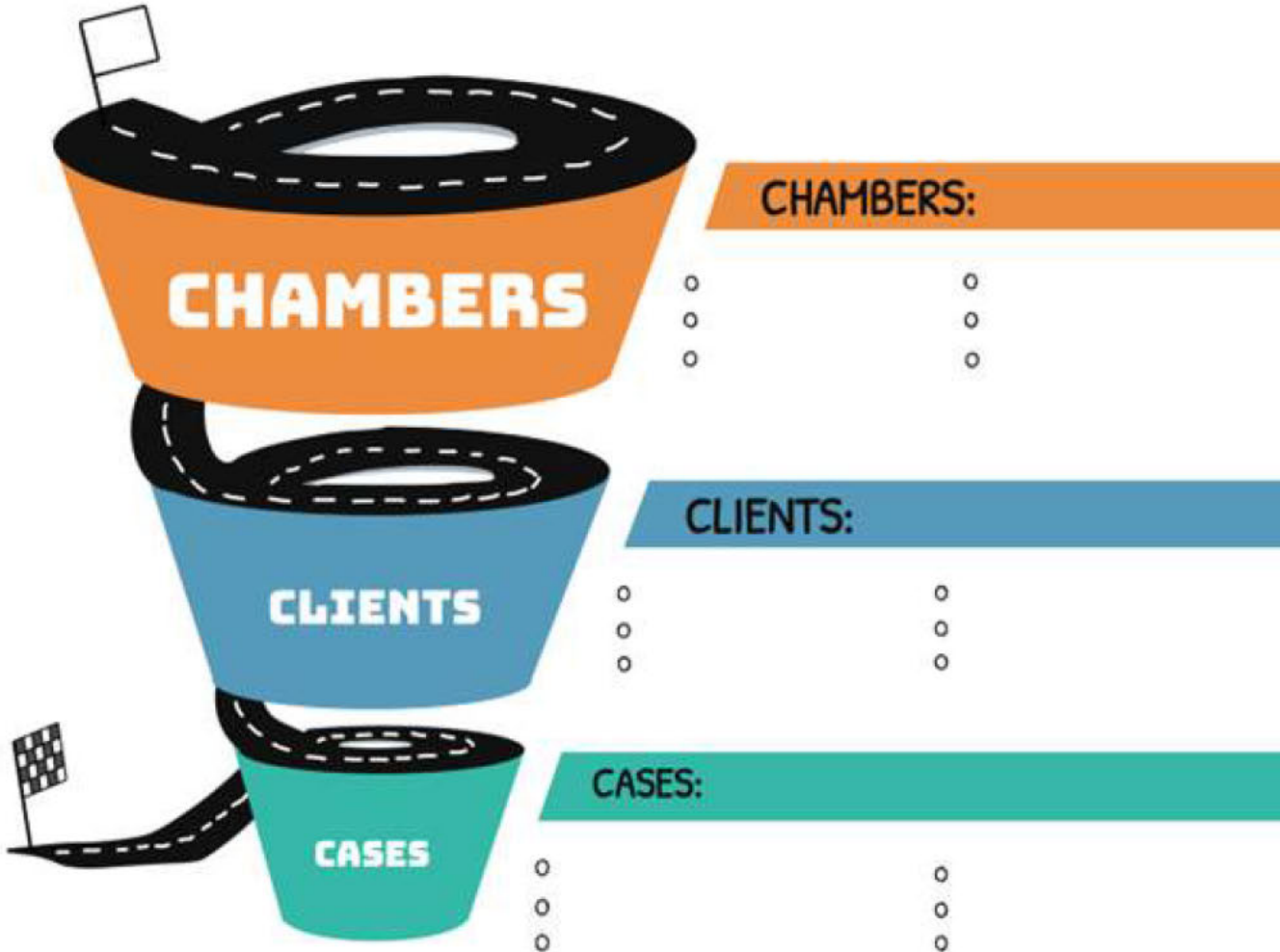
Pupillage Tracker

[Click here](#) to see the Pupillage Tracker template I have prepared for you to use.

AETO Research

As a general rule of thumb the first thing to look for on any AETO website is whether they have any pupillage guidance which sets out what specific criteria they mark applications against.

AETO Research: 3C'S



When conducting research into any chambers/set/AETO you want to remember the 3Cs:

1. **Chambers**
2. **Clients**
3. **Cases**

Module 6: Pupillage Applications

Treat a pupillage application like a written piece of advocacy (be persuasive)

In this module we learn about the do's and don't of pupillage applications before moving on to the ten laws of drafting. We then take you through a pupillage gateway tutorial before reviewing a successful pupillage gateway application. We end on considering the AETO questionnaire and the key questions that arise during the pupillage application process.

Laws of Drafting

Writing persuasive and compelling pupillage applications is an art form and notoriously difficult to get right. At the heart of a successful application lies two key ingredients:

1. It's unique to the applicant and tells their story in a way that captures the curiosity and interest of the reader
2. It establishes all the hard and soft skills required of a prospective barrister in addition to the qualities expected of members of the profession.

Laws of Drafting

- 1 Brevity**
Use clear and succinct language.
- 2 Simplicity**
Use simple language to write persuasively and be understood clearly.
- 3 Pitch**
Pitch your submissions correctly.
- 4 Word counts**
Don't confuse word counts with word limits. Less is more.
- 5 Repetition & fillers**
Make every sentence count, and don't repeat yourself.
- 6 Target audience**
Know your target audience and understand who you are speaking to.
- 7 Spelling & Grammar**
S&G are considered baseline expectations.
- 8 Prose/Bullets**
Write in prose to evidence your written advocacy. Deploy bullet points when appropriate.
- 9 Tailor**
Tailor your responses to the particular AETO
- 10 P.E.E**
Remember... Point. Evidence. Explain. Adopt this mantra when drafting.

Pupillage Gateway Tutorial

For the uninitiated let me explain. The Pupillage Gateway is similar to UCAS, which is a portal used by A-level students to apply to university in the UK. The Pupillage Gateway is a portal used by aspiring barristers to apply for pupillage, which is the last bit of training you need to qualify as a fully practising barrister in England and Wales.

"YOU CAN ONLY APPLY TO 20 CHAMBERS ON THE GATEWAY SO PICK WISELY"

[STEP 1: Register/Login](#)

[STEP 2: Profile Builder](#)

[STEP 3: Questionnaire](#)

[STEP 4: Questionnaire](#)

[STEP 5: Equal Opportunities Monitoring](#)

[STEP 6: Questionnaire](#)

Filing in the Pupillage Gateway Questionnaire (Part 2)

The emphasis when answering the AETO questions in the Pupillage Gateway Questionnaire is to do the big questions justice.

Why do you wish to become a barrister?

Write your answer here...

What areas of practice are you interested in and why?

Write your answer here...

Give reasons for your choice of chambers

Write your answer here...

Why do you believe you will make a good barrister?

Write your answer here...

Please identify any other experiences/skills that you believe may help you in your career

Write your answer here...

Answering Competency-based Questions (Star Method 2.0)

I have prepared a Star Method template for you to [use](#).

Module 7: Pupillage Interviews

In this module we can consider the do's and don'ts of pupillage interviews. We start off by considering a range of interview checklists before establishing key preparation strategies for pupillage interviews, after which we analyse chambers selection reports. We then explore preparation for first and second round interviews.

Pre-Interview Checklist

Review your application

You need to review your paper application

Substantive Law Refresher

Create a list of key statutes and legal principles and cases related to your area of law. Add them below...

Advocacy Refresher

Revisit the fundamental lessons you have learned as an advocate to date as an aspiring barrister or bar school student which I will divide into 3 areas:

Written Advocacy	Oral Advocacy	Responding
Study the facts - Persuasion requires certainty and you can't be certain if you don't know the facts on which you're speaking.	Rehearse - Knowing the key points you want to make will mean that you're less likely to need a script which makes you more flexible and sound a lot more natural which will improve your ability to persuade.	Make notes/keep a diary.
Identify the issues. -This will help create your roadmap for where you're trying to get to.	Experiment - with different styles	Listen carefully to what your opponent is saying so that you can sift out irrelevant information and identify the key issues to respond to.
Written Advocacy	Oral Advocacy	Responding
Know your ask - Be clear on your goals from the outset and make your requests clear - Identify the issues and your present your points of persuasion in response to each clearly.	Film yourself - Iron out any bad habits and critique yourself honestly	Recognise when to concede - shows strength not weakness.

Written Advocacy	Oral Advocacy	Responding
Use clear, simple and concise messaging - simplicity underpins your ability to persuade if your argument is complex it will be difficult to understand and therefore for someone to agree. This means making sure that your messages or requests are stated as clearly and briefly as possible. If your message or request sounds confused, other people may not know what it is that you want for your child. What is the most important information that you need to convey? At times, other information may be useful to support your request. Too much information, however, may get you sidetracked on other issues that may not be as important.	Body language - Be still, and focus on your stance. Don't tap your legs, wave your hands etc.	Study your opponent's style and think about what points they made and how they were able to persuade and add those skills to your arsenal
Tailor the message for the target audience	Eye contact - confidence maintain eye contact with the judge when delivering your submissions.	

Written Advocacy	Oral Advocacy	Responding
All propositions/Arguments should be supported by either evidence, authority or common sense	Tone - your ability to persuade lies in the tone you use.	
Structure - Everything should be done within a structure whether it is drafting your skeleton argument or delivering your submissions. Headlining - This applies to skeletons everything should fall under headings whether it is your introduction, your legal test or your submissions	Speed - Removes fillers	
Order your arguments - putting your most persuasive point at the top.	Volume - need to hear you.	

Written Advocacy	Oral Advocacy	Responding
Mini conclusions and final conclusion.	Be yourself - Much easier said then done but I always compare advocacy with driving in the beginning of driving you're trying to remember a million things and then one day the penny drops and everything becomes automated so you can focus on road without worrying about the mechanics advocacy is no different	

Written Advocacy	Oral Advocacy	Responding
	Keep calm and move along	
	Clear your throat - Before performing do breathwork & clear your throat out and take a sip of water.	
	Use your active voice.	
	Signpost - When delivering your submissions you should always SIGNPOST - this will bank you big marks by making your submissions easier to follow and understand - the judge will appreciate it.	
	Incorporate pauses.	

Preparing for Pupillage Interviews

As I did previously with drafting pupillage applications, I will be sharing the key lessons I learned as alumni of Lincoln's Inn PFS with respect to first and second-round pupillage interviews.

The interview process is designed to test:

1. Whether you are able to clearly express your thoughts;
2. Your powers to persuade the panel;
3. Your ability to defend a position; and
4. Your ability to engage in a discussion on a contentious topic

Be your own Advocate

*'A bird doesn't fear that a branch won't break because trust is placed in her ability to fly' - **Charlie Wardle**,*

I preach this message - be your own advocate and believe in yourself. If you have received a pupillage interview, that is a sign that on paper you've made the mark which you should remember walking.

Know thy self

Be honest about your strengths and weaknesses before interview. Demonstrating awareness is important, but even more important is evidence of willingness and enthusiasm to work on yourself, as this will carry you through your personal and professional life.

Don't over-prepare

Preparation is incredibly important. However, it is also possible to overprepare the price of which is that you may become stiff and rigid when the interview deviates (and it will) from your rehearsal. Rather than memorising lines verbatim to anticipated questions I suggest you learn the elements of your answer which gives you flexibility in arranging a new and fresh response on the spot which sounds natural rather than rehearsed.

Too polished isn't good but while it may sound great it often lacks authenticity and fails to show them how you fair when answering a question you have not prepared for.

Research the panel

While most Chambers do not explicitly disclose the members who will be part of the pupillage or interview panel, if you inquire via phone or email, many will gladly inform you about who will be conducting your interview.

Knowing who your audience will be in advance will let you highlight aspects to your application that may resonate. Also it allows you to visualise the interview in advance and walk through it in your mind first before you appear on the day which will help reduce anxiety and nerves.

Practise your advocacy

Before you get to the interview which may or may not contain an advocacy exercise because advocacy is a skill it is something that you need to practise to get good at, which means when you haven't performed advocacy for a while, it is sensible to dust off your proverbial wig and get back into the advocacy arena before the big day.

Attire

'Dress how you want to be addressed' - Bianca Frazier

First impressions count, make them so. For your wardrobe, the word is 'conservative'. The interview is an opportunity for AETOs to see how you will appear in court. If you want to be unique, add subtle touches such as pins/ broochs. Avoid loud and attention-seeking – be conscious that this raises your potential risk profile. When you're a practising barrister, wear what you like (within reason).

Men	Women
Suit jacket	Suit jacket/coat
3 piece/2piece suit	Skirt suit
White/pale blue/pale pink shirt (top buttons up)	Trouser suit
Tie (matching pocket square optional)	Plain dress with a jacket (ideally match/avoid clashes)
Belt	White/pale blue/pale pink shirt
Shoes (polished)	Nails (conservative)
Socks (dark)	Tights (optional – dark & no ladders)
Aftershave (2/3 sprays)	Heels/platform shoes (closed tip)
	Perfume (2/3 sprays)

Test run

Conduct a test run to ensure there are no nasty surprises on the day. However, this is not possible when for example you live in Manchester and the Chambers in London. In these circumstances remember to leave sufficient time to arrive at least 1 hour early. If your interview is in the morning and you have to travel 3 hours consider whether it is possible to get a hotel the night before. If not arrive early and park up at a local coffee house while you wait. Travel disruptions do happen which you need to be live to. The last thing you want is to be late for your pupillage interview. That is an uphill battle to come back from...

Get your mind right

In the days leading up to the interview prepare yourself mentally. Indulge in your self-care routine to get you primed and ready for action. Don't worry and stress up to the very last minute. Take time to get your mind right. Believe me it will show and pay dividends.

Interview reminders checklist

1. SELL YOURSELF – Focus on delivery – enthusiasm and passion
2. Remember TAILOR your answers to the questions
3. PAUSE before giving answers – Avoid fillers “like” “um” “ah”
4. Be CALM & speak slowly – If a left field question comes up take a moment and do your best
5. SIT-UP straight & hold your hands still
6. Don't be MEEK – No head tilting
7. Confidence, confidence, CONFIDENCE
8. They want a BARRISTER in the making
9. You are your own client – be FEARLESS
10. You are the most PREPARED in the room – Prepare hard and then go with the flow
11. Relax & HAVE FUN
12. You DON'T have to be PERFECT – mistakes will happen, accept it and move on/fight back
13. DON'T be DESPERATE for the job. Know that the opinions of others don't define you and that life is much bigger than this job; you have a lot to look forward to

First-round Interviews

The following lessons have been gleaned from attending first and second-round pupillage interviews at some of the best sets in the country. It's important to remember that pupillage recruitment varies considerably across sets. The advice that follows is based on some of the key themes that arise when preparing for pupillage interviews. For each set that you're applying to try to see if you can establish contact with a member of the chambers or clerk to get some specific insights. Chambers are likely to be consistent in their approach to conducting interviews therefore further information of what you can expect for a particular set will be great value to your preparation.

No two pupillage interviews will look the same. Each interview is a unique experience. This is one of the first principles to understand as an interviewee. From this understanding, it is important to remember that you will never be able to be fully prepared. You have to price in space to deal with things spontaneously and in the moment rather than have a scripted line prepared for every eventuality.

The following are likely to arise during first-round pupillage interviews:

1. **Questions you don't know the answer to.** Expect the unexpected and you will never be surprised. If you get asked a question that you are unsure of there is nothing wrong with being strategic and taking a sip of your water to buy time or even asking for a moment to consider. If you don't know the answer you can ask to come back to it later in the interview or be honest and explain that you don't know the answer but you're enthusiastic to find out and can follow up with an email.
2. **Advocacy exercises.** Be aware that some may ask you to conduct an advocacy exercise as part of a first-round interview. This is less likely but still possible. Advocacy assessments tend to arise during second-round pupillage interviews, which we will cover later in this chapter.

3. **Confrontation and challenge.** This is to be expected in any pupillage interview. The skill of a barrister is to identify and scrutinise points of law. With that said the skills and qualities they are seeking to establish are whether you can defend a point in the face of challenge. It is important to be firm and stand your ground when you have good reason to. However, equally it is important to recognise when to concede ground in the absence of any legitimate standing. This feedback into how you exercise judgement is a key attribute of any barrister.
4. **Post-interview questions.** Don't shoehorn a question in. If you don't have any genuine questions then politely decline. There is no expectation for you to ask anything. If you decide to ask a question, appreciate there is a risk attached to doing so. Ask yourself am I only asking this question in an attempt to impress the panel? Contrary to popular belief there is such thing as a stupid question – like those where the answer is clearly plastered across their website.

Second-round Interviews

The second-round interviews by nature are more intensive than first-round interviews. Normally they will be longer, more complex and involve more senior members of chambers. You may find yourself on the other side of a very long table. Don't be intimidated. Remember you possess the accolades and qualities that put you in that seat. Don't forget that you have already demonstrated in your first interview you have what it takes to be offered pupillage.

You should go through all the same steps you covered in preparing for your first interview. Revisit your first-interview and bring yourself back up to speed on what was asked and how you responded.

This second-round interview is more focused on competencies and uncovering your true personality and character. AETOs want to stress test their potential future colleague through questions aimed at uncovering technical knowledge and advocacy exercises designed to establish the advocate's ability.

Let go of any anxieties around perfectionism - they are not looking for the finished article as they appreciate where you are in your advocacy journey. Instead they are trying to make a guesstimate about whether you can grow into the role.

At this stage, Chambers are looking to establish if you can succeed in the profession, represent them to a high standard and have a career at the Bar. Normally, tenancy can be a lifelong union which is why this investment is taken considerably seriously by all members of Chambers. You may have all the right tools but if they think you're going to be difficult to get along with then they won't go any further with your application.

Don't try to be liked - be yourself (a professional version and you will find the Chambers that is best suited to you rather than projecting a false impression that later falls apart as you discover that you don't fit in, are unhappy and decide to leave.

Before we consider the different types of advocacy exercises that can arise it is important to make a note of the pace and tone of the second-round interview. Expect to hit the ground running the moment the interview begins. Believe me you will blink and the interview will be over. The tone is likely to be much more formal rather than a casual informal conversation so be aware of that going in. Try to highlight your best qualities during the interview and showcase the best version of yourself.

Pupillage Interviews: Advocacy Exercises

Leading up to your first or second-round pupillage interview you should have practised your advocacy and hopefully be in a position to meaningfully engage in an advocacy exercise however it presents itself.

Naturally, we cannot cover every format but we can cover those which have a tendency to arise and provide you with the tools you need to respond to them effectively at the interview.

It is paramount that you carve out time in your preparation to practise advocacy exercise otherwise this might be your undoing at the interview.

The following are the type of advocacy exercises that may arise during a first or second round pupillage interview:

1. Oral Advocacy
2. Written Advocacy
3. The Debate
4. The Presentation
5. The Legal Problem
6. The Ethical Scenario

Module 8: Pupillage Cycle Review

In this module we highlight the importance of insuring each application is reviewed before submission. We then identify the key documents which should be developed throughout each pupillage cycle before addressing the key questions a candidate should ask themselves following an interview. We end by outlining the significance of requesting feedback and building confidence in the pupillage process.

Pre-submission (Peer & Barrister Review)

Before you send your pupillage applications make sure you sit down and review your application. Before you do, ideally in the first instance, reach out to a member of the Bar to review your application.

Live Documents (Experiences, Questions & Interviews)

I recommend that you create the following live documents that you will develop throughout each pupillage cycle:

1. Competencies vs Experiences table
2. A Pupillage Gateway Master Document
3. Application & Interview Bank
4. Feedback log

Pupillage Tracker Template

You can duplicate the Pupillage Tracker we created in Module 5 each year should you need to.

Self-reflection After Interview

After every interview before you forget the details of what happened you should write everything down immediately. Answer the following questions:

1. How many interviewed you?
2. Across what period of time?
3. What questions did they ask you?
4. How did you respond?
5. What did you do well at interview?
6. What could you have done better?
7. Where there any ethic questions? What were they?
8. Was there an advocacy exercise?
9. Was there a legal problem?
10. Did anything surprise you?
11. Did the interview over run?
12. Could you have been more concise?
13. Where could your research have been better?
14. Did you explain points using the STAR 2.0 method?
15. Did you argue your position effectively? Were you prepared for counter-arguments?

16. Out of 10, what grade would you give your performance?

Dealing with Rejection

Sometimes interviews don't go your way. That is NORMAL and part of the process. Unless you're one of the lucky ones you will have time where you question yourself and whether the goal is achievable. I did on more than one occasion, but you have to keep going because those that get pupillage in the end kept going. Everyone else got tired and gave up. If you receive an unfavourable email don't be dejected by it.

The quicker you accept it and take the lessons, the sooner you will arrive at your destination. Complain and resist the process and you will only make it last longer than it needs to and put your future success at risk. Every barrister has a story to tell about an interview that went horribly wrong. The worst experiences make for the best stories. As long as you're improving and you did your best on the day despite all the challenges, that is all you can ask of yourself. The next interview is around the corner. Don't lose hope. Be patient. Your time will come.

Pupillage Feedback Log

I have created a template for you to log your feedback [here](#).

Building Confidence

Confidence is built on evidence. Regardless of the outcome, you were invited to interview - don't forget that. There will be lessons you must learn along the way but as long as you keep showing up you will get better. Your interview performance will get stronger. You will start receiving more positive feedback upon which your confidence will grow. Even if you don't feel confident in the beginning, practise working on your confidence.

Focus on projecting it as much as you can through the way you walk, the way you carry yourself, the tone and manner in which you speak. These little details go a long way in conveying confidence to those around you. In the beginning it might feel disingenuous but there is magic in faking it until you make it. Over time your belief will align with your new identity.

Module 9: Pupillage and Beyond

In this module we take students through the timeline of receiving a pupillage offer, selecting the right pupillage, to progressing on to first and second six, before qualifying as a practising barrister at the Bar of England and Wales. We end by learning about tenancy and the various career paths open to practising barristers.

Pupillage: First Six

The “first six” of pupillage refers to the initial six months of a barrister’s practical training in chambers, under the supervision of a qualified barrister (the pupil supervisor). This stage is non-practising, meaning the pupil does not conduct cases or represent clients in court. Instead, they observe and assist their supervisor and other members of chambers to develop advocacy and legal skills.

Pupillage: Second Six

The “second six” of pupillage is the second stage of a barrister’s training and typically lasts six months. During this period, the pupil becomes a **practising barrister** and is authorized to take on their own cases, appear in court, and earn fees. It follows the “first six,” which is a non-practising phase focused on observation and learning.

Pupillage: Third Six

The “third six” of pupillage refers to an optional, additional period of practical training after the standard 12-month pupillage. It is often pursued by pupils who have completed their initial pupillage but have not yet secured tenancy (a permanent position in chambers). The third six is a further opportunity to gain advocacy experience, develop skills, and demonstrate suitability for tenancy, typically lasting three to six months.

Why a Third Six?

A third six is most commonly pursued by:

- Pupils who completed their initial pupillage in a very competitive chambers and were not offered tenancy but still gained valuable experience.
- Pupils seeking additional advocacy opportunities or exposure to different types of work.
- Individuals who are geographically relocating and need a new chambers base.

While a third six can be a stepping stone to tenancy, it is not a guaranteed pathway. Success requires hard work, adaptability, and building a reputation that makes chambers or clients confident in your abilities.

Tenancy

Tenancy is the term used to describe a permanent position as a member of a barristers' chambers. After completing pupillage, a barrister may be offered tenancy, allowing them to practise independently and build their own legal practice within the chambers.

Pivoting Between the Self-Employed & the Employed Bar

Whether you are at the self-employed Bar or employed Bar there are always opportunities to cross over to each side regardless of your practice area. For example, if you practice commercial law HMCR and SFO will have relevant positions. If you do civil then you may consider the GLD. If you're a criminal barrister you have the CPS. There are law firms who provide in-house advocacy services, local councils and the list goes on and on.

Alternatively if you're at the employed Bar you can send out as many applications to Chambers for tenancy or third six.

Opportunities Outside the Bar – In-house & Academia

There are always opportunities outside of the world of the Bar if for any reason you want to pause your practice or take a break or walk away completely. Consider secondment opportunities or roles in academia such as starting a career as a law lecturer or school teacher (this requires further training).

Alternatively if you wish to manage you can also apply for legal manager roles, reviewing lawyer roles or even pivot into the judiciary with enough experience. The list is endless and I won't propose to try to make a dent in it.

Once you're fully qualified the world is your oyster.

International Opportunities

If you no longer wanted to practice in the UK you might be able to transfer to fellow common law jurisdictions (with some minor retraining, one would imagine or sit the Bar exam in another jurisdiction to begin your new practice. You could also consider applying to EU regulatory bodies or any other jurisdiction who may be seeking the knowledge and skills of a member of the Bar of England and Wales.

Thank you

Whatever you decide to do with your career I wish you all the success in the world. Thank you for being apart of this pioneering cohort. I hope you have found the course useful and I would greatly appreciate any feedback you could offer.

Good luck on your journey to the Bar.

I look forward to meeting you at one of the Inns or in court.