

## **Policy on Mini-Pupillages**

- Applications
- Selection
- Conduct

### **1. Overarching Considerations**

- 1.1 Cobden House Chambers is committed to the provision of Mini-Pupillages to provide those considering a career at the Bar with insight into the profession and into Cobden House Chambers in particular.
- 1.2 Cobden House Chambers particularly encourages and welcomes applications from candidates who have no previous experience of or contact with, the Bar.
- 1.3 Cobden House Chambers reaffirms its commitment to equality in the context of Mini-Pupillage provision and Mini-Pupillages will be offered to candidates without regard to any protected characteristic as defined in the Equality Act 2010 and more fully particularised in Cobden House Chambers' Equality Policy and Pupillage Policy.
- 1.4 The availability of Mini-Pupillages will be promulgated as widely as possible through both formal and informal channels including the Bar Council Mini-Pupillage Hub, school visits, mock trials and other events.
- 1.5 Mini-Pupillages are not assessed, do not form a part of the Pupillage Application process and a Mini-Pupillage should not be viewed as a prerequisite to a Pupillage Application in any way whatsoever.
- 1.6 All applications will be considered in accordance with the selection process set out hereunder.

### **2. Number of Mini-Pupillages**

- 2.1 Cobden House Chambers aims to offer at least 24 Mini-Pupillages each year although that number may vary in accordance with demand and available resources.
- 2.2 Mini-Pupillages are provided throughout the year subject to available resources.

### **3. Application**

- 3.1 Application for Mini-Pupillage must be made on Chambers' Application Form which is available to download for Chambers' Website or in hard copy on request.
- 3.2 The Application Form will have a detachable front sheet containing all identifying information and equality monitoring information. The front sheet will be

separated from the balance of the Application Form prior to assessment in order to eliminate conscious or unconscious bias.

- 3.3 When assessing applications preference will be given to candidates in the following categories:
- (i) Sixth Form (KS5) students deciding whether to pursue a career in law;
  - (ii) First Year Law undergraduates deciding on which branch of the profession they wish to join;
  - (iii) Second Year non-law undergraduates deciding whether to pursue a career in law;
  - (iv) Third Year Law, PGDL and BPTC students deciding which practice areas they wish to pursue and/or which chambers they wish to apply to.
- 3.4 Not all applicants will fit comfortably into one of the above categories and the personal circumstances of each applicant will be considered when deciding whether to offer a Mini-Pupillage.
- 3.5 Cobden House Chambers does not offer Mini-Pupillages to candidates who have not reached KS5 or the equivalent, save in exceptional circumstances.
- 3.6 All applicants will be asked whether they have been invited to apply by a member of Chambers or a member of staff and will also be asked to state their relationship with that person.
- 3.7 Applicants will be asked to state their preferred area of practice, if they have one.
- 3.8 Applicants will be asked to state their preferred dates for a Mini-Pupillage and Chambers will be as flexible as possible so as to accommodate the academic or work commitments of the candidate.

#### **4. Assessment and Offer**

- 4.1 All applications will be checked and registered by a nominated administrator (not the Pupillage Administrator), who will also remove and file the front sheet before forwarding the Application for assessment.
- 4.2 Applications will be assessed by the Pupillage Director and the Pupillage Administrator who will decide whether to offer a Mini-Pupillage to the applicant bringing into account the following criteria (where applicable):
- (i) Whether the applicant shows the potential drive, ability and enthusiasm to practice in a demanding and competitive environment;
  - (ii) Whether the applicant is at one of the identified academic stages set out in (3.3) above;

- (iii) Any evidence that the Applicant faces particular challenges or disadvantages in accessing a career at the Bar;
  - (iv) Whether Chambers has the available resources to accommodate the candidate's preferred dates.
- 4.3 The decision of the assessors will be notified to the Applicant by email (if appropriate) or by post.

**5. Content of Mini-Pupillages**

- 5.1 Mini-Pupils will have the opportunity (where appropriate) to see a mixture of Court, conference and/or written work.
- 5.2 No written work undertaken by a Mini-Pupil will be formally assessed but feedback will be given, appropriate to the academic stage which the Mini-Pupil has reached.
- 5.3 Mini-Pupillages will normally be for a period of 3 days unless varied in consultation with the Applicant.

**6. Conduct of Mini-Pupils**

- 6.1 Mini-Pupils should be smartly dressed at all times in a manner appropriate to a formal, professional environment.
- 6.2 At the start of the Mini-Pupillage, Mini-Pupils will be asked to sign a confidentiality undertaking and the importance of confidentiality and legal professional privilege will be explained.
- 6.3 At the start of the Mini-Pupillage, Mini-Pupils will also be given guidance on appropriate conduct in the presence of lay and professional clients, members of the judiciary and other legal professionals.