



## **JASON ELLIOTT BARRISTERS PUPILLAGE POLICY DOCUMENT**

### **1. Description of Chambers**

Established in 2015, Jason Elliott Barristers is a Barristers' Chambers based in the north-east of England. Chambers is attached to Jason Elliott Associates, a Barrister-led entity, created following the recent changes implemented by the Bar Standards Board. With five Barristers at the current time, we are rapidly developing a wide portfolio of varied and high-quality work. Our five tenants are highly regarded nationally, boasting combined experience of over eighty years, and have a vision of developing into a leading provider of legal services in the region and across England and Wales.

We serve a wide range of clientele, and value every client relationship greatly. Each engagement benefits from the depth and breadth of our expertise. We approach every client with a focus on integrity, advocacy, and understanding. We aim to develop our areas of practice and pursue effective expansion, to which end we take very seriously the commitment to providing the highest quality training to pupils. We do not shy away from the fact that our pupils will have to work extremely hard to develop their and our practice, however we offer a friendly, familial and down to earth environment in which to complete pupillage, and believe that we have the facilities to perfectly equip pupils with all the skills to succeed at the Bar.

We take pupils on with a view to offering tenancy at the end of successful completion and view continued recruitment of junior tenants as imperative to our continual progression. Tenancy will be awarded on merit and to those who have demonstrated the necessary skill and commitment to succeed.

We offer one pupillage, in order that we are free to dedicate ourselves to training a single individual. Pupils to us are an investment in our future, and we only recruit those who we foresee as being valued members of our team for years to come.

### **2. Areas of Work**

Chambers already has a presence in a variety of areas of practice. These include Prison Law, Criminal Defence, Appeals, General Common Law, Mental Health, Immigration, Family, Compensation Claims including Personal Injury, Judicial Review, Employment, Chancery and Commercial and Civil litigation.

We are experienced in handling cases that are sensitive and high profile, and our members have acted in a number of reported cases. We aim to provide pupils and juniors with exposure to as many of our areas of practice as possible, and also encourage active self-marketing using their existing experience and skills, in order to develop and vary new fields. Our client base is vast and wide ranging, reflecting the breadth of our areas of practice. We place equal importance on both written and advocacy work, allowing our members to pursue the direction of their choice, as they build more experience.

In terms of location, members of Chambers appear in Courts across the north of England and regularly appear in London and other locations across the nation. We are also more than happy to visit prisons in any location, so pupils and tenants alike are expected to travel.

### **3. Pupillage Committee**

Responsibility for the management of pupillage falls to the Pupillage Committee, the current members being the Head of Chambers, Jason Elliott, John Craggs and Paul Fleming.

### **4. Pupillage Recruitment**

We are not a member of Pupillage Gateway, the recruitment process is usually by way of covering letter and CV, with the details of the same being published upon both our website and the standard pupillage recruitment websites.

Chambers intends to recruit two pupils each year.

### **5. Selection Processes**

Jason Elliott Barristers is committed to a policy of equal opportunities and candidates are welcome regardless of race, ethnic, or national origin, nationality, citizenship, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, religion or political persuasion. We aim to recruit candidates, regardless of their background, who can demonstrate the necessary commitment to a career at the Bar, the north-east of England and Jason Elliott Barristers, particularly in its capacity as a set of Chambers which is attached to a Barrister-led entity. The recruitment of pupils is taken very seriously because every pupil is selected on the basis that it is hoped they will go on to become a tenant in Chambers.

We look for applicants who not only demonstrate the above commitments, but also sound legal knowledge and maturity. We seek pupils who can build effective client relationships and exercise a sensible and pragmatic approach. In particular, we look for those who can take the initiative and be responsible for their own professional growth, client care, and the development of our business. We look for the ability to manage a varied and intensive workload, and the ability to relate to a wide range of client, both professional and lay, commercial and individual. We are under no

illusions as to the challenges facing our pupils and tenants, however the above qualities will allow those selected the greatest chance of real success.

As a general rule, we would expect applicants to have attained at least a 2:1 classification at undergraduate level, and a Very Competent on the BPTC. We would of course give consideration to candidates falling outside these parameters, should extenuating circumstances exist.

The number of candidates considered for interview is dependent upon the number of applications achieved. Candidates will generally undergo two interviews and may be invited to spend some time in chambers as part of the recruitment process. All members of the Pupillage Committee will have involvement, and interviews will be based upon the candidates' experience and attitude, as well as focusing on our work and an honest appraisal of the challenges that it and pupillage provides.

During interviews we attempt to ascertain whether a candidate would enjoy being part of our team, as well as assessing in a general sense their ability as potential advocates, and any experience that may help us to develop as a business. We naturally seek to ensure that their legal knowledge and experience is also of a sufficiently high standard to ensure that this may be properly be developed during pupillage.

## **6. Pupillage Awards**

Pupils taken on for twelve months currently receive a £12,000 grant payable in regular monthly instalments. This will increase to £15,728 from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019, in accordance with the Bar Standards Board's recent reforms. This is in line with the rates recommended by the Living Wage Foundation.

Local travel expenses in the north-east are deemed covered by the overall pupillage award, while travel to locations further afield may be reimbursed as appropriate.

## **7. Pupillage programme**

Pupils are assigned to one pupil supervisor for each six-month period. During the first six non-practising months pupils are assigned to Mr Elliott or Paul Fleming, who are both registered pupil supervisors, and will also spend time with John Craggs. They will attend court and client conferences with both on a daily basis, and will be assigned written work and legal research as directed. They will also take responsibility for the management of case files. We will ensure that pupils have contact with all members and gain exposure to the full spectrum of work we undertake. Given that we are a small set, communication is easily facilitated by personal contact, so it is always the case that pupils' workload is known to each member, and its manageability easily monitored.

During the second six months pupils will remain with either Mr Elliott or Mr Fleming. Pupils will conduct cases in court and conferences independently and can expect to commence development

of their own practice. We also welcome a willingness to develop a professional network from a very early stage. In the event pupils are not in Court for a day they will be expected to attend Court with another member of Chambers or accompany members to conferences and aid in any ongoing paperwork as the need arises. We will regularly review pupils' progress and observe their performance both in and out of court during the second six. We will also seek feedback from instructing solicitors and members of the clerking team.

## **8. Secondment opportunities**

Mr Elliott previously practised at 2 Dr Johnson's Buildings Chambers, Temple, London. He remains a Door Tenant at this set, therefore Chambers has the ability to arrange a secondment to 2 Dr Johnson's Buildings, should this be of interest to, and practical for, pupils. This is a highly thought of Common Law Set, where pupils may spend up to a month in both their first and second sixes, gaining an insight into the workings of the London Bar and a traditional Barristers' Chambers, as well as valuable exposure to a variety of areas of legal practice.

Chambers is committed to ensuring the best education possible is provided to our pupils. Time spent working in this environment as a pupil would be of undoubted benefit, and Chambers would recommend taking this opportunity if at all possible.

## **9. Training**

Chambers will aid pupils in preparing to attend the two compulsory courses necessary for Continuing Education (Advocacy and Practice Management) and time off is provided to allow for completion of the same.

## **10. Performance review and feedback**

Chambers is an early adopter of the Bar Standards Board's Future Pupillage Training statement. This is based on a number of desired outcomes, but promotes a more reflective approach by both pupil and supervisor. Our most recent pupillage was conducted under this scheme and entailed the keeping of a pupillage diary, in which cases attended were summarised and the learning points identified. We place great importance on continued communication with pupils, so monthly monitoring meetings and performance reviews will be scheduled, where these will be discussed. This will also allow any areas where further exposure is required to be identified, such that they may be acted upon expeditiously.

## **11. Recruitment to Tenancy**

Pupils are expected to submit an application for tenancy towards the end of their pupillage. We would only request a pupil to complete a third six in the rarest of circumstances. Decisions

regarding tenancy will naturally be made towards the end of pupillage. It is fully appreciated that pupillage is an intense experience, involving the steepest of learning curves, however we make every possible effort to ensure that pupils are reassured and that any difficulties they experience are addressed at the earliest possible juncture.

Pupils who have shown dedication to their work, professional skills and the development and promotion of our business are generally recruited. We value initiative above all else, and those pupils who demonstrate a willingness to show diligence and an independent attitude will inevitably succeed. We judge on merit and the effort expended will dictate the ultimate reward.

Tenancy decisions are taken by all members. In our case, we currently have four members, therefore a unanimous agreement to offer tenancy will be required.

Prior to this decision, all members of Chambers will be invited to impart their views on the pupil and their performance during pupillage. Pupils may be asked to provide examples of their written work, and we may seek the opinions of clients.

Should a decision be taken not to offer tenancy, pupils will be allowed to remain in Chambers for a period of three months from the date of the decision on a squatting basis.

## **12. Third six pupils**

Third six pupils may occasionally be recruited, depending on the need. This is conducted on an ad hoc basis, using the same criteria as applied to pupils generally, outlined herein.

## **13. What to expect**

On their first day, pupils will be formally introduced to their new colleagues. There will be an introduction to members, the clerking team and the expectations of a pupil. Access to our premises will be outlined and keys provided.

June 2019

Mr Jason Elliott

Head of Chambers

**Jason Elliott Barristers**