

MOUNTFORD

CHAMBERS

PUPILLAGE BROCHURE

2025



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About us

Mountford Chambers is one of the UK's most established and respected criminal law sets, renowned for its excellence across serious crime, business and financial crime, regulatory, and public law. Our members are recognised for their skill, strategic judgment, and persuasive advocacy in complex and high-profile cases. We pride ourselves on being assured and compelling advocates who combine forensic precision with sound judgment. Known for our meticulous preparation and exceptional client care, we consistently achieve outstanding results in even the most demanding matters.

We are at the forefront of business and financial crime, with expertise spanning fraud, tax evasion, bribery, corruption, money laundering, asset forfeiture, and civil fraud, as well as serious and organised crime, including murder, manslaughter, terrorism, sexual offences, and appellate advocacy.

Since our successful rebrand in 2021, we have gone from strength to strength, cementing our reputation at the forefront of criminal law while expanding into new and complementary fields such as international criminal law, and inquests and public inquiries.

With our depth of expertise, collaborative culture, and unwavering commitment to justice, we continue to define excellence in modern criminal and regulatory advocacy.

Message from the Head of Pupillage

At Mountford Chambers, pupillage marks the start of a transformative journey, one that challenges, inspires, and shapes the foundations of a lasting career at the criminal bar.

Our Chambers is defined by a strong sense of community, uncompromising standards and a forward-thinking commitment to the evolving demands of modern criminal practice.

Our members invest significant time and care in pupillage, ensuring that each individual receives meaningful insight, guidance, and support. Training is structured, supportive and practical. Pupils are exposed to serious work from early on, and are mentored by leading practitioners throughout.

We welcome applications from candidates from all backgrounds who can demonstrate sharp analytical thinking, sound judgment, a commitment to advocacy, and the resilience to meet the demands of modern practice.

At Mountford, you're not just learning the job, you are learning how to thrive in it.



Head of Pupillage
Alan Kent KC

“

Excellent. Very approachable. The Chambers is an array of talented advocates.

”

Legal 500

Pupillage at Mountford Chambers



Pupillage Overview

Mountford Chambers offers an intellectually challenging, practically rigorous, and uniquely supportive pupillage experience. Pupillage here lasts up to 18 months, with tenancy decisions made no earlier than 15 months.

Once pupils are 'on your feet' they will be in court almost every day. The additional months allow ample time for feedback from members of Chambers, solicitors and the clerks to filter through, supporting steady development. An additional strength of our model is the overlap between pupils in consecutive years, which fosters a sense of community and support extending well into the junior ranks of Chambers. From a financial perspective, pupils benefit from ten months of guaranteed earnings.

During the first six months, pupils work under the supervision of two pupil supervisors. The supervisor will set the daily schedule, which typically involves shadowing them in court and at conferences. Pupils can expect to observe the full spectrum of criminal work - from fraud and serious violence to sexual offences and murder - as well as quasi-criminal and regulatory cases.

Pupils will undertake legal research and gain experience of a range of drafting, with feedback given.

There is a strong emphasis on the advocacy programme throughout, but particularly in the first six months, so that pupils are prepared for getting on their feet.

The practising period will be busy, varied, and immensely rewarding. Pupils are in court every weekday, and are part of a rota to cover hearings on Saturdays and bank holidays. Typical Magistrates' Court work includes first appearances, mentions, trials, and sentencing hearings, as well as forfeiture and enforcement proceedings. Crown Court work will initially include PTPHs, mentions, and sentences, but may include trials in due course.

Mountford pupils enjoy a range of resources and professional memberships to support their development. This includes access to Westlaw, CrimeLine subscriptions, and optional membership of professional associations such as Women in Criminal Law, the Young Fraud Lawyers Association, the Association for Regulatory and Disciplinary Lawyers.

Chambers will also pay for optional specialist or additional training; examples in recent years include the Youth Justice Legal Centre Course and the Criminal Bar Association Young Bar Day.

Pupils are encouraged to raise their profiles through articles and participation in podcasts, as well as attendance at lectures and networking events.

Calendar Overview

October November December	First Supervisor	First Six	Award of £3,000 pcm
January February March April	Second Supervisor		
May June July August September	Third Supervisor	Second Six	Guaranteed Earnings of £3,000 pcm
October November December January February March	Fourth Supervisor	Probationary Tenancy/ Transition to Tenancy	
			Tenancy Decision

“

Mountford Chambers has established itself as a top quality Chambers. From top to tail there is strength and depth across the board

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Legal 500

Pupil Supervisors

Mountford Chambers is fortunate to have a large number of talented and dedicated pupil supervisors, of varied call and expertise. Great care is given to the allocation of pupil supervisors, to ensure that our pupils are given exposure to a range of styles and practices.



William England



Bozzie Sheffi



Richard Furlong



Jim Tilbury



Abigail Penny



Houzla Rawat



Daniel Frier



Joe Hingston



Tom Edwards



Sophie Evans



Alexandra Scott



Mark Watson



Sebastian Winnett



Fiona Clegg



Ben Brown

Advocacy

The Advocacy Team runs weekly advocacy sessions for pupils. A cornerstone of the pupillage process at Mountford, the programme provides invaluable support to and development of our pupils and tenants of the future. Interactive and evolving year on year, the programme has been tailored to prepare pupils for life on their feet in the Magistrates' Court and into the Crown Court.

The sessions and advocacy exercises have been tailored to be as true to life and practice as possible, from last minute instructions to challenging interventions from the tribunal. Individual feedback is provided after every exercise, including practical tips, in order to develop and refine skills learnt during the Bar Course. As the course progresses, the exercises enable pupils to deal with issues pragmatically and with ever increasing confidence.

Alongside the core Advocacy Team, senior members of Chambers deliver presentations on more complex and specialist areas. Additionally, on occasion outside speakers attend sessions, including accountants and instructing solicitors.

During first six, sessions run weekly and include both online and in-person exercises, to mirror a mixed practice of CVP and in-person hearings. Pupils will be expected to attend advocacy every week and to carry out any preparation or research required. This continues into second six. During the Transition to Tenancy period,

pupils will still attend advocacy, but less frequently, and the emphasis shifts to refining specific skills and complementing their busy practices.

In recent years, we have been delighted to collaborate with 5KBW, Furnival and 2 Bedford Row for a pupillage advocacy session at Inner London Crown Court. This takes place towards the end of our pupils' first six. We are fortunate enough to have the use of two courtrooms for a range of exercises including sentencing – hearings, bail applications, mentions and Probation breaches. The evening provides a fantastic opportunity to engage in as real to life court practice as possible. Members of Mountford play court ushers, defendants, dock officers and a senior member will take on the role of Crown Court Judge. An invaluable experience, other members of Chambers attend the event to support our pupils.

An important part of Mountford's ethos, training and mentoring our pupil barristers is at the forefront of the in-house advocacy programme. The weekly programme provides our pupils with the necessary skills to excel in their early days at court.



Ben Brown



Fiona Clegg

The Application Process

Applications for pupillage follow the Gateway timetable but we have our own application form. The next application round will take place in early 2026, with offers of pupillage to commence in the Autumn of 2027.

Mountford Chambers recruits pupils who demonstrate a genuine interest in criminal and regulatory work.

We are looking for highly motivated individuals, able advocates, and candidates who demonstrate sound judgement. We are interested in those with the potential and passion to succeed and build a practice in an ever-changing branch of the profession.

Written applications will be assessed on six areas:

- Intellectual ability
- Advocacy skills
- Interest in criminal and regulatory law
- Relevant experience
- Commitment to the Criminal Bar
- A short written advocacy exercise

Once all forms have been received, they are each anonymised and provided to two Members of Chambers to be marked applying our criteria.

First Interview

The first-round interview lasts for approximately 15 minutes. Each candidate is asked to argue for or against a proposition

drawn from a topical legal or professional issue, and to undertake a second more informal advocacy exercise.

The interview process is not designed to be intimidating, but to give the applicant an opportunity to demonstrate their ability and potential.

Second Interview

The second-round interview lasts for approximately 20 minutes and focuses on formal advocacy. Candidates will be asked to undertake an advocacy exercise, provided in advance so that written submissions can be prepared. This may be a plea in mitigation, a bail application, or similar situation. There may also be questions arising out of the candidate's application form.

All interview panels are constituted by members of Chambers who have undertaken Fair Recruitment Training.

Feedback

We are not able to provide written feedback to those whose applications do not progress to interview.

We can offer short written feedback to those who reach the interview stage if the request for this feedback is received within seven days of any notification of rejection.

Equality & Diversity

Mountford Chambers is acutely aware of the systemic obstacles and structural inequalities facing underrepresented groups at the Bar. We are constantly working to improve and reflect on our own fair recruitment, retention, and progression policies in order to make Chambers an inclusive environment where people from all backgrounds can feel welcome and build a successful practice.

Mountford is committed to contextual recruitment and believes that candidates who have overcome external barriers to success often make the most driven and dedicated barristers. Mountford has made a number of recent changes to its recruitment policy in order to encourage applications from candidates of all backgrounds and to reduce barriers to entry.

We have removed A-levels from the pupillage application form altogether and have significantly reduced the weight given to degree classification in our marking process. We provide applicants with opportunities to highlight adversity they have faced and obstacles they have overcome, both in an academic context and more generally at any point in their lives. Our marking scheme expressly includes discretionary 'bonus' marks for candidates who have overcome various forms of adversity. Overall, our goal is to give candidates from every background a full and fair opportunity to demonstrate that they will make tenacious and brilliant barristers ready to face the challenges of a career at the Criminal Bar.

Mountford's updated recruitment policy was highlighted in the Bar Council's recent [Race at the Bar: A Progress Report](#) as an example of a chambers that has taken a creative and/or collaborative route to increasing access to the profession.

Mountford also participates in a number of initiatives designed to promote diversity and equality at the Bar as a whole. These include taking c. 10 pupils through Bridging the Bar, participation in the 10,000 Black Interns programme, and sponsorship of Women in Criminal Law (WICL). A number of our members hold significant leadership and founder member roles within WICL.

The Bar as a whole still has a long way to go before it fully reflects the diversity of the society it serves, but we are proud of the initiatives we have taken to promote diversity, equality, and inclusion both in Chambers and across the Bar. We will continue to monitor and review our Chambers policies and practices to ensure that they reflect our strong commitment to these values.

Disabled Candidates

Chambers makes reasonable adjustments in respect of disabled candidates for pupillage. Relevant details are sought in the course of the application process. Potential applicants who would like to discuss reasonable adjustments in advance of applying are also welcome to contact our Chambers Administrator at orlaosullivan@mountfordchambers.com.



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Social



MOUNTFORD

C H A M B E R S

Mountford Chambers
13 Ely Place
London
EC1N 6RY



clerks@mountfordchambers.com 
020 7936 6300 
www.mountfordchambers.com 