**Bringing [Dis]Ability to the Bar – Mini Pupillage Policy**

**Introduction**

1. The aim of this policy is to ensure BDABar has a consistent process for offering mini-pupillages to disabled aspiring barristers.

**BDABar Mini Pupillage Scheme: Objectives**

1. The aim of the mini-pupillage programme is to provide disabled aspiring barristers with an insight into life at the Bar and provide guidance in the pursuit of a career at the Bar.
2. Disabled aspiring barristers will have the opportunity to see what work barristers undertake, observe court hearings, and start building their own network with Bar professionals.
3. By shadowing barristers and observing their day-to-day life in Chambers and courts, aspiring barristers will have the opportunity to judge for themselves whether this is a job they can see themselves doing in the future.
4. BDABar hopes that by enabling disabled aspiring barristers to get mini-pupillages, this will improve their CV for their pupillage applications.
5. BDABar believes mini-pupillages are important for many reasons including: helping aspiring barristers gain insight; helping them decide whether they wish to become a barrister; breaking down the prejudice and misinformation about life at the Bar and respecting the tradition of the bar helping the next generation.
6. Mini pupils, who consent, may share their experiences of living with disabilities with the barrister who they are shadowing.
7. The BDABar Mini Pupillage Scheme will enable chambers to reconsider their accessibility, and in collaboration with BDABar, take positive steps to become more accessible and inclusive for their mini pupils, pupils, barristers, members of staff and clients.
8. It is hoped that in building relationships with Chambers through the Mini Pupillage Scheme, BDABar will help improve accessibility of existing and future external mini pupillage schemes.
9. Any funding of mini pupillages is subject to Chambers’ individual policy and cannot be subsidised by BDABar.

**What is the purpose of the BDABar Mini Pupillage scheme?**

1. **Overview / Instructions**
2. Applicants must be over 18 years of age and have either enrolled on, or completed, an LLB or GDL course.
3. Applicants must self-identify as disabled. The definition of disability found in the Equality Act 2010 may serve as guidance but is not defining for the purposes of this scheme.
4. Applicants will be required to complete an application form as part of a formal selection process.
5. Applications should be completed and sent to the email mini-pupillage@bdabar.org by the specified deadline, which is subject to change by the organisation.
6. Mini pupillages will be at a length in line with Chambers’ policy, usually between 3-5 days. Where Chambers’ policy is shorter, BDABar will encourage Chambers to review their policy to ensure it fulfils BDABar’s specified mini pupillage purpose.
7. Accessibility is primarily the responsibility of Chambers and they must do all that is reasonable to ensure that their mini pupillage experience fulfils BDABar’s specified mini pupillage purpose.
8. BDABar will provide specific advice on accessibility and EDI matters on the request of either Chambers or mini pupil.

**Application**

1. Applications must be made using the BDABar’s application form, downloadable from the website. Applications must be sent to mini-pupillage@bdabar.org by the requested date and time set out on the application form and on the website.
2. Any changes to deadline will be published on our website and our social media accounts. Applicants will be encouraged to monitor the website for changes.
3. An extension to the deadline may be granted as a reasonable adjustment to the application process where unforeseen circumstances relating to a disability have caused an applicant to miss the deadline. Applicants wishing to request an extension must make their request as soon as possible, and approval of an extension is at the discretion of BDABar.
4. There will be two rounds to the recruitment process:
	1. All applicants will be involved in a paper-sift, the criteria of which is included under heading ‘Selection Criteria’; and
	2. Approximately two-thirds of applicants will be selected to take part in a short oral advocacy assessment.
5. Candidates will be invited to inform BDABar their preferred area of interest (for example, if they wish to see family cases or property cases), but it must be noted it will not always be possible to accommodate candidates’ first preferences.
6. Applications will only be accepted if they are made using BDABar’s application form. BDABar will not accept applications via cover letter and CV.

**Selection criteria**

1. Applications will be assessed on the following criteria:
	1. Intellectual Ability: Evidenced by, amongst other things, academic performance at university or academic potential shown through improvements at each academic stage or other successes such as published articles and essay competitions. Qualifications from A-Level through to postgraduate will be considered; and
	2. Advocacy and Communication Skills: The candidate deploys precise and well-reasoned arguments, with clarity and fluency. The candidate can demonstrate persuasiveness and conviction, and can tailor style to the audience; evidenced by experience in, amongst other examples: mooting, mock trials, debating, public speaking, customer service experience, social causes, advocacy, and drama; and
	3. Teamwork Skills: The candidate needs to be able to build productive working relationships, treat people with courtesy and respect regardless of their background. Furthermore, the candidate needs to respond appropriately to those from diverse backgrounds and to the needs and sensitivities created by individual circumstances; evidenced in, amongst other things, a professional background and volunteer work; and
	4. Strong Motivation to Practise at the Bar: The candidate will exhibit a high level of commitment to a career at the Bar, together with a sound understanding of the profession and where relevant, any current intended area(s) of practice. Importantly, the candidate must understand what it is to be a barrister, and have a genuine interest in practising law at the Bar; and
	5. Understanding of the Value in a Mini Pupillage: Evidenced in the candidate’s answer to the specific question regarding motivations in the written application; and
	6. Care and Attention in Preparing the Application: Evidenced in careful planning of the questions and structured answers.

**Duties of mini pupils**

1. Mini pupils’ performance will not be assessed.
2. If it is standard policy for Chambers’ to assess mini-pupillages, a mini pupil may be invited to undertake an assessed mini-pupillage with the set, but this will be at the discretion of the Chambers, *in addition to* the BDABar mini-pupillage and, therefore, separate to BDABar mini-pupillage policy.
3. It is the duty of the successful candidate to contact the chambers / barrister assigned to them to fix a mutually convenient date for the mini pupillage.
4. Chambers will open dialogue on accessibility and reasonable adjustments with the mini pupil. BDABar will endeavour to facilitate any communication on accessibility and reasonable accommodation, if required.
5. All successful applicants must be dressed in smart, court appropriate attire and attend on time – at a time that has been pre-agreed with their barrister. There will be a lunch break.
6. It is the mini pupil’s responsibility to find their way to each location.
7. Mini Pupils must follow the instructions given by members of staff who are connected with the mini pupillage.
8. Chambers will ensure that members of staff connected to the mini pupillage are briefed on relevant accessibility agreements and will not give any instructions which pressure a mini pupil to breach the accessibility agreements.
9. Mini pupils may be required to sign a confidentiality agreement to observe strict client confidentiality both during and after the mini pupillage, the details of which will be included within the document.
10. Mini pupils must not offer any advice to any person and must not express any opinion either in court or in conference, unless expressly asked by counsel.
11. Mini pupils must not take any papers, copies of papers or notes belonging to members of chambers home with them.

**Data Protection**

1. BDABar will collect and maintain personal information about applicants when applying for a mini pupillage through this scheme.
2. BDABar will delete applicant’s personal data one year after the conclusion of the application round.
3. Applicants must be aware that chambers and court buildings are equipped with CCTV for protection of clients, barristers and employees and to protect against theft, vandalism and damage. Generally, recorded images are routinely destroyed and not shared with third parties. It is not suggested that mini pupils will be monitored or their actions subject to surveillance, rather this is to bring to the attention that monitoring may occur.
4. Barristers will be aware that they will be disclosing personal and sensitive information to a mini pupil which will be regarded as processing data under the Data Protection Act 2018.

**Duties and obligations of barristers towards mini pupils**

1. Barristers are under no obligation to take a mini pupil with them to court or conferences. For example, if they feel they are under time restraints which will mean they cannot speak with the mini pupil, or there are confidentiality or data processing risks. Each barrister is entitled to turn down a request.
2. Barristers should take appropriate action in relation to confidentiality and data protection when accompanied by a mini pupil.
3. Barristers should take all reasonable steps to ensure mini pupils do not feel uncomfortable or harassed at any time.
4. If further unforeseen accessibility issues arise during the course of the mini-pupillage, the mini pupil must feel comfortable raising them with their mini pupil supervisor.

**Expenses**

1. BDABar is unable to cover the expenses of successful applicants.
2. BDABar will make mini pupils aware of Lincoln’s Inn’s Mini Pupillage Grant Scheme which exists to assist students in funding their mini-pupillages. This scheme helps students who have secured a mini pupillage but need assistance with additional funds to complete it. The scheme is intended to help with the cost of long-distance travel, accommodation and purchasing professional clothing. The value of each grant is calculated based on the applicant’s anticipated expenses up to a maximum of £500. Applicants do **not** need to be members of Lincoln’s Inn to apply for the grant.
3. Details of Lincoln’s Inn’s Mini Pupillage Grant Scheme will further be available on BDABar’s website.

**Other matters**

1. If there are any problems during the mini-pupillage, the mini-pupil can speak directly to the Mini Pupillage Officers, the Head of Schemes and/or contact the BDABar Chair (Konstantina Nouka). Contact details are available on BDABar’s website.
2. The Bar Council’s Ethics Committee has a paper addressing ethical and legal issues associated with mini-pupillage and barristers who interact with mini pupils are advised to read it: [www.barcouncilethics.co.uk/documents/mini-pupils-implications-practice/](http://www.barcouncilethics.co.uk/documents/mini-pupils-implications-practice/)

**Review of this policy**

1. This policy will be reviewed annually. This policy was last reviewed on: 11 October 2023.