

# MAITLAND

# PUPILLAGE

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“This top commercial Chancery set offers pupils  
"astonishing feedback" and a colourful social scene”

*Chambers Student Guide*

# WHY MAITLAND?

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Maitland has been regarded for many years as one of the pre-eminent sets of Chambers in the field of commercial and chancery litigation. We are instructed in a huge range of cases and are consistently ranked as a leading set in all our core areas of expertise – commercial dispute resolution, civil fraud, company and partnership, insolvency and asset recovery, offshore and trusts – and several related specialisms, such as banking and financial services, property litigation, media and entertainment and crypto assets.

Our continued success as a leading set of Chambers depends on our recruitment of the most talented people, the comprehensive training we give them during pupillage and the opportunities we offer them as junior tenants. We see every pupil as a prospective tenant; and ultimately, we hope, a future KC.

There is no such thing as a “Maitland type”. We look for the qualities which we think are required to excel in our field of practice: a first-class mind; an aptitude for written and oral advocacy; good judgment; sound interpersonal skills; and a level temperament. We believe that those qualities are to be found in candidates from every background; and can be evidenced in many different ways.

We are committed to increasing the diversity of Maitland and adopt a variety of techniques to achieve that objective, while maintaining the fair treatment of all candidates.

# WHAT DO WE OFFER?

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We offer a 12-month pupillage in accordance with the requirements of the Bar Standards Board; and with an emphasis throughout on training in all of the skills required of an excellent commercial and commercial chancery practitioner.

We only offer pupillage to candidates who demonstrate that they have the ability and skills to become tenants at Maitland. We have no limit on the number of tenancies offered in any given year and pupils are never in competition with each other. We have for many years recruited as tenants most, or all, of our pupils. Provided a candidate meets the requisite standard based on their own performance, a tenancy is offered.

From September 2025 a pupillage award of £75,000 is offered to all pupils at Maitland. Up to £30,000 of the award may be drawn down in advance during the course taken to satisfy the vocational component of Bar training or to pay the associated fees. The balance of the award is paid in instalments monthly in advance over the course of the 12 months of pupillage. We also fund the compulsory courses required of pupils by the Bar Standards Board.

Prospective pupils may also be able to obtain awards from the Inns of Court to assist in funding their GDL and/or vocational component of Bar training. Applications for these awards should be made to the Inns.

In light of the emphasis we place on advocacy training (see below), our pupils are not expected to practise during their second six prior to the tenancy decision. After the tenancy decision, pupils who have been offered tenancy may be offered certain work provided their pupil supervisor gives permission.

# YOUR PUPILLAGE APPLICATION

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Maitland is a member of the Pupillage Gateway and applications for pupillage are made in accordance with the Gateway timetable.

## ELIGIBILITY TO APPLY

We welcome applications both from law and non-law graduates and recognise that training in other disciplines can be good preparation for a career at the Bar. We have in recent years offered pupillages and tenancies to those with law degrees and those who converted to law after their undergraduate degrees in roughly equal numbers.

All candidates must have obtained (or be predicted) a minimum upper second class undergraduate degree or equivalent; and be “on track” to being qualified to start pupillage in September 2025 by completing the vocational component of Bar training before then (by any of the relevant pathways permitted by the [Bar Standards Board](#)).

We also accept applications from candidates who are already qualified as legal practitioners in England and Wales or in other jurisdictions. On occasion, it may be possible for such a candidate to be recruited outside the pupillage process; and we are happy to consider any individual case. But for most candidates who have not previously practised as advocates in England and Wales, we regard a Gateway application and a full pupillage thereafter as appropriate, even if from a regulatory point of view the Bar Standards Board would be prepared to waive some or all of the candidate’s pupillage requirements upon transfer to the English Bar.

Unsuccessful applicants for pupillage may apply for a second time in a subsequent year. However, we do not accept further applications from candidates who have applied twice previously.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

We receive around 100-200 application forms each year through the Gateway from which we select approximately 40 first round interviewees and then approximately 10 second round interviewees. We generally offer up to three places for pupillage per year.

At every stage, candidates are assessed by reference to the four qualities which we think are necessary to excel in our area of practice, namely: (1) reasoning and analytical ability, (2) aptitude for advocacy, (3) judgment and (4) interpersonal skills and temperament. Our process is intended to draw out from each candidate the best available evidence of those qualities.



“Excellent barristers of unrivalled quality”

## THE APPLICATION FORM

Candidates are required to complete the standard Gateway application form, together with certain questions added by us. The whole content of your application form will be assessed for evidence of the four qualities for which we recruit. But you may find it helpful to bear in mind the following general pointers:

- When assessing reasoning and analytical ability, we look closely at your academic history which you will be required to explain in detail in the relevant parts of the form. But we also recognise that academic achievement must be seen in context: to that end, we give all candidates the opportunity to provide contextual personal data through the Rare Contextual Recruitment System (see below) and we also take into account other personal circumstances set out in the relevant parts of the application form. In addition, we recognise that strong reasoning and analytical ability can in some cases be evidenced by a candidate's employment history or other non-academic activities: if you think this may be the case for you, we would encourage you to lay out explicitly the relevant evidence in your form.
- In relation to the other three qualities for which we recruit (aptitude for advocacy; judgment; and interpersonal skills and temperament), we recognise that every candidate will have different personal circumstances; and that relevant evidence may come from a wide variety of life experience. For this reason, our application form does not ask for specific types of evidence (eg. "What mooting have you undertaken?"). Instead, it asks candidates to set out the evidence which they consider most relevant. This will be different for each candidate. But when completing these questions, please bear in mind that concrete examples of things which you did (together with any necessary explanation of why those things were difficult or impressive) will always be more helpful than general assertions as to your abilities.
- Although the standard Gateway form asks for your history of legal work experience and we will consider any evidence which you provide, we have no requirement that candidates should have completed mini-pupillages or similar activities. Again, we recognise that every candidate's circumstances will be different.
- Finally, practice at the Bar (and membership of Maitland) requires the highest standards of personal integrity. We expect candidates to complete application forms with complete honesty and also to give disclosure of any circumstances which should be drawn to our attention. Naturally, we reserve the right to take robust action in the event that any candidate is discovered (either during the application process or later) to have breached those requirements.

In addition to the application form, all candidates are also offered the opportunity to provide us with information as to personal and economic background through the Rare Contextual Recruitment System, which is used to contextualise the candidate's application and in particular their academic results. Provision of this information is entirely voluntary.

We use the Rare System as a "screen in" tool, not a "screen out" tool; and under no circumstances are candidates ever marked down either for supplying or for not supplying this information.

Once all forms and Rare submissions have been received, they are each anonymised and provided to at least two Members of Chambers to be independently scored for evidence of the four qualities for which we recruit. Scores are then moderated between the readers to enable a shortlist of approximately 30 candidates to be selected for interview. Regrettably, we often find that there are more suitable candidates than there are available first round interview places, and allocate those places to the candidates with the highest scores after moderation.

## THE INTERVIEWS

The first round interview lasts for approximately 25 minutes and is held in front of a panel of two or three Members of Chambers. It involves some general questions and a longer discussion of a hypothetical case. That hypothetical case will have been designed to test your general reasoning and analysis, rather than your legal knowledge, and you will be given a short period of time to consider and prepare thoughts on it before your interview.

The second round interview lasts for approximately 30 minutes and focuses on the more detailed study of a hypothetical case (which will, again, be designed to engage your general reasoning abilities rather than any specialist legal knowledge). This case is then discussed with a panel of up to five barristers, including one or more of our KCs. Interviewees are asked to come to Chambers in time to allow themselves 60 minutes of preparation.

The interviews are intended to draw out evidence of the same four fundamental qualities on which we recruit. In relation to the hypothetical cases, a perfect candidate would be able to pick out the issues from the case materials; think through their implications; reach judgments as to the best solution which are both well-reasoned and commercially realistic; explain the issues and their reasoning to the interview panel in clear terms; take on board challenges to that reasoning by the panel; follow through the logic of new points “on their feet”; work out and explain available counter-arguments; have the good judgment to change their views where appropriate (or not, as the case may be) and interact with the panel in an appropriate and engaging manner throughout. But of course we are well aware that the perfect candidate does not exist. Our interviews are intended to be enjoyable but also to involve an intellectual “work out”: most candidates will get into difficulties at some point during their interviews, and how they recover is itself part of the assessment. We enjoy getting to know candidates in this way, as thinkers and future advocates; and we hope that candidates will leave feeling energised and enthused by the experience.

At the end of each interview, candidates will be scored independently by each interviewer on the four qualities for which we recruit, before scores are moderated so that candidates may be ranked.



# LIFE IN PUPILLAGE

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## PUPIL SUPERVISORS

Pupils are assessed over a 40-week period. Pupils usually sit with four pupil supervisors for four rotations of 10 weeks each. Pupil supervisors are mid to senior-level juniors and only ever have one pupil at a time. You will generally sit in a room with your supervisor and may sometimes be supervised remotely if a supervisor is working from home. You will accompany them to court and arbitration hearings and mediations/other settlement meetings and (other than for exceptional reasons) attend their conferences, telephone conferences and video conferences. This gives you broad exposure to the major tools of the commercial and commercial chancery barrister's trade – advocacy (written and oral), drafting pleadings, opinion writing, legal research, preparation of notes on evidence, trial preparation (including witness handling) and negotiation skills.

## ADVOCACY TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT

Further, at regular intervals throughout the pupillage assessment period, you will participate in Maitland's in-house advocacy training and assessment programme. Each individual exercise takes the form of mock hearings, for which you prepare from a set of papers given to you in advance, just as you would in practice. Senior Members of Chambers act as the tribunal, dealing with your application as it would be dealt with if genuinely made in court.

These exercises have a two-fold purpose: they are both part of your assessment process, and are also designed to help you develop the oral advocacy skills you will need as a practitioner in a supportive environment. We believe that success in our profession ultimately depends upon a barrister's level of accomplishment as a court advocate and, accordingly, we consider the advocacy training and assessment programme a key part of the pupillage process.

## PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

A further key aspect of your training is in professional ethics. We run a workshop devoted to the barrister's professional obligations, during which you are asked how you would react to particularly testing scenarios. Again, detailed feedback is provided at this workshop, which is run by senior Members of Chambers who draw upon many years of experience.



“The focus is on feedback at this top commercial chancery set”

*Chambers Student Guide*

## LIFE AS A PUPIL AT MAITLAND

We recognise that pupillage is demanding, and we do our best to make it as interesting, enjoyable and rewarding an experience as possible.

Pupils are not expected to work late in the evenings or at weekends, although, due to the nature of practice, there may be times when some longer hours are necessary.

Pupils are welcomed into and encouraged to participate in the social life of Maitland's. During pupillage, pupils will often have lunch with their pupil supervisors and other Members of Chambers (juniors' fish and chips on a Friday is a regular event), and are welcome at Maitland's social events.

Each year, there are two pupil mentors who are Members of Chambers with experience of pupillage (as pupils and/or pupil supervisors). They play no part in the assessment process; and are available to speak to pupils, in confidence in appropriate circumstances, about personal and professional issues which any pupil cannot or does not want to raise with their supervisor.

For an overview of life as a pupil, please click [here](#) to read the latest Chambers Student Guide's report on Maitland.


## THE TENANCY DECISION

We take our decision as to whether or not to offer tenancy after around 40 weeks of assessment.

We believe in providing continuous constructive feedback to our pupils on their work, which is done through detailed discussion and an objective grading system (set against the standard we expect of a junior tenant), so you have a clear idea of how well you are progressing, what you do well, what needs improving and (crucially) how to do that.

Pupil supervisors provide detailed feedback on individual pieces of work and on the pupil's progress at the end of each 10-week rotation. The advocacy assessors also provide detailed feedback as soon after each individual advocacy exercise as possible to help you identify existing strengths and areas which require improvement. The objective grading system used by the pupil supervisors is also used by the advocacy assessors.

We invest heavily in our pupils and hope that every pupil will meet the required standard by the time the tenancy decision is made. But inevitably there are times when this does not happen. Maitland is committed to making every effort to find good homes for any of our pupils who are not offered tenancies. The overwhelming majority find tenancies at other good Chambers.



“An impressively deep stable of elite silks and juniors”

Chambers UK



# LIFE AS A JUNIOR TENANT AT MAITLAND

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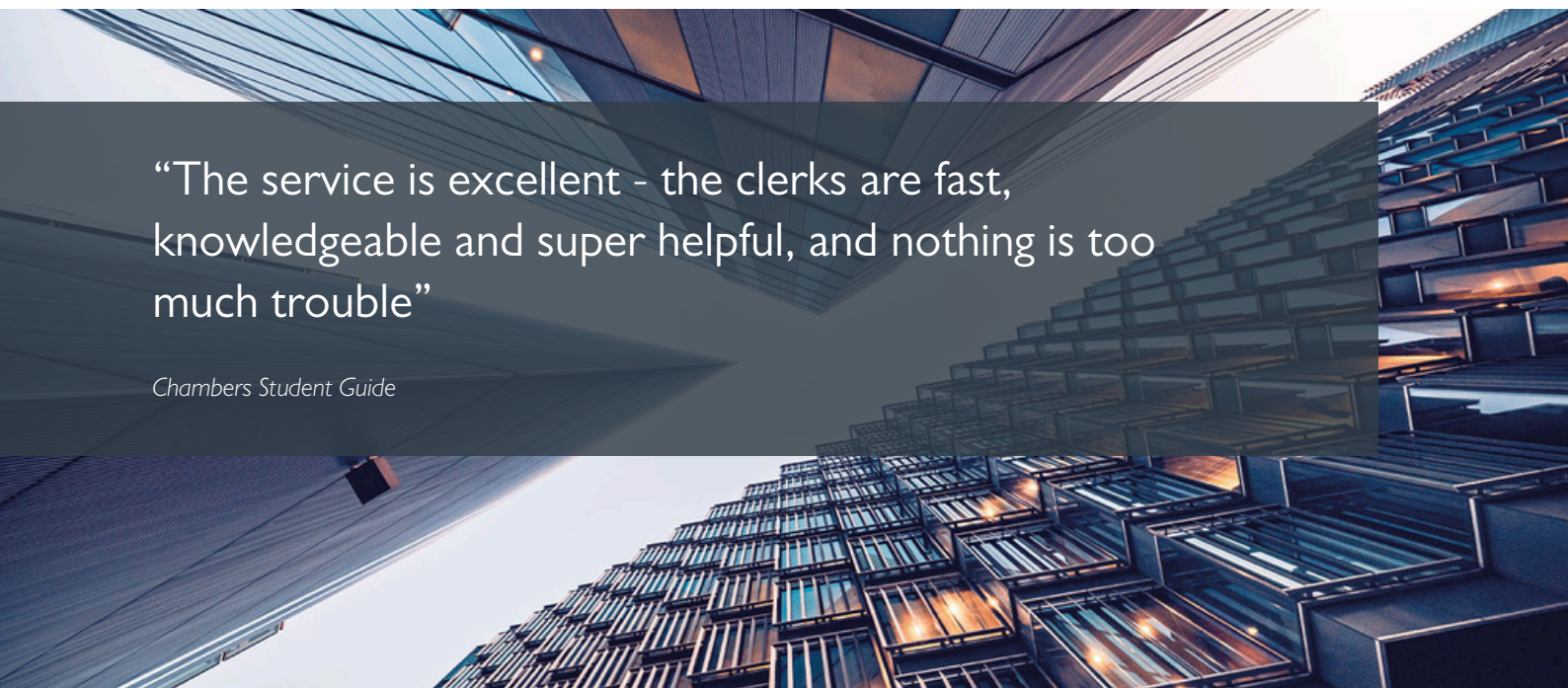
As soon as you become a Member of Chambers, you are likely to have two main types of work: (1) taking responsibility for running your own smaller scale cases, typically in the fields of small contractual disputes, insolvency, company and property litigation; and (2) being led by KCs or senior juniors in heavy disputes, typically in the fields of large scale commercial litigation or arbitration, civil fraud, complex insolvency and asset recovery situations and offshore and trusts work. This combination of independent practice and collaboration with experienced practitioners will develop your skills as both an advocate and a tactician from the outset of your practice.

Our junior tenants are encouraged to develop their expertise across all of Maitland's main areas of work; but equally are free to specialise if they wish.

As one of the largest of the leading sets in our field, we have the highest levels of administrative support. You will have access to excellent resources and a dedicated team of staff to help you manage and grow your practice.

We also offer exceptional professional support in the early years of practice. You will be welcomed into an open and friendly environment, where members look out for each other and offer a strong network of mutual support. Your colleagues' doors will always be open, whether you want to discuss a difficult point of law or just drop in for a quick chat.

Whilst barristers are self-employed and earnings therefore vary, our experience is that the earnings of first year tenants at Maitland generally far exceed the pupillage award and compare favourably to first year earnings at other commercial Chambers and City solicitor firms. In any event, Maitland also offers a Cash Flow Assistance Scheme for the benefit of junior tenants who have successfully completed their pupillage. This scheme operates within the first two years of practice and further details can be provided on request. Further, junior tenants do not pay Chambers expenses for their first year in practice.



“The service is excellent - the clerks are fast, knowledgeable and super helpful, and nothing is too much trouble”

*Chambers Student Guide*

## INSIDER VIEWS

Georgia Terry

The emphasis on training at Maitland creates an environment where the focus really is on continual and incremental development, so that on day one of tenancy I could hit the ground running. Pupils sit with four supervisors for ten weeks each. Because Maitland's core practice areas are broad, each of my supervisors had really quite different specialisms. I was engrossed in their practice and would attend court and client conferences whenever they did. The entire forty weeks are assessed, and it felt as though the process was designed with transparency and feedback in mind, over and above anything else. At all times, my supervisors were proactively guiding me towards the skills and competencies that make up the threshold against which the tenancy decision would ultimately be assessed. Every piece of written work (live or non-live) is assessed from the outset against a standardised grading system, which allowed me to track my own progression and reduced, insofar as is possible, the incidental stresses that can be associated with pupillage. Maitland's in-house advocacy training gave me the opportunity to evolve as an advocate while also receiving detailed and comprehensive feedback in a supportive environment. Pupils are also included in Chambers' social events. I would often attend in-house seminars and networking events, and there are internal social events (including weekly juniors' lunches) which provided another layer of support during a busy year. As well as being brilliant preparation for commercial chancery practice, pupillage at Maitland felt thoroughly and carefully designed with transparency and progress at the front and centre of the process.

Tim Foot

Starting off as a tenant at Maitland is busy but rewarding. Throughout pupillage, you are trained in all the essential skills of being a commercial chancery barrister, including advocacy. As a new tenant, you get to put those skills into practice from day one. Maitland ensures that all its new tenants take on a balance of work, both led and unled, and I have loved honing the skills developed in pupillage to become a better advocate for my clients. The support from other members of Chambers is palpable, and members of all seniorities have always provided open ears and sound advice whenever I have needed them.

Fiona Dewar

The goal of each pupil-supervisor relationship at Maitland is the same: to deliver high quality training in a supportive and productive learning environment which enables each pupil to reach – and demonstrate – their full potential across certain core areas of competence by the time of their tenancy decision. However, no two relationships are the same: because no two pupils are the same. We train and support our supervisors in providing flexible, dynamic teaching, feedback, support and opportunities to evidence progress in the way that best meets the specific needs, aptitudes, knowledge, experience and learning style of each pupil. It is a vital, challenging and hugely rewarding role to which our members dedicate significant time, commitment and care; and one which affords a unique opportunity to reflect on our own practice and draw on our knowledge and experience to train the next generation.

# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION


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Maitland has a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion, both within our own set of Chambers and across the Bar as a whole. We are proud of that commitment. Further information about various initiatives we have implemented and supported can be found [here](#).

We are also proud of our internal processes for fair recruitment, which reflect (we believe) the very best practice currently in use at the Commercial and Chancery Bar and are kept under regular review. We welcome applications from people from all sections of society regardless of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, belief or age and encourage applications from groups presently under-represented at the Commercial and Chancery Bar.

## 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 Pupillage Administrator.



“Maitland Chambers is "very much in the premier league" of commercial chancery sets”

*Chambers UK*



# MINI-PUPILLAGE

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We see mini-pupillage as useful both for potential applicants and for chambers. Mini-pupillage provides the opportunity to obtain experience of the work we do and of the atmosphere in chambers. The visit is not assessed.

Those accepted for mini-pupillage will spend one day in chambers (usually with junior members but sometimes also with KCs) attending court and conferences, and studying sets of papers. There are a limited number of places available for mini-pupillage each year and these are confined to the court terms. They are always heavily over-subscribed, particularly during June, July and December. We find that mini-pupils obtain the most from the experience if they have completed at least a year of an undergraduate law degree or, for those converting to law, have started the GDL course at the point when they visit chambers.


In the event that there are more candidates than available places in any mini-pupillage round, each candidate is assessed by reference to their application form. Candidates will need to satisfy chambers that they can demonstrate the key qualities we are looking for or that they have the potential to demonstrate them in the future. Our four key qualities, in order of importance, are: (1) reasoning and analytical ability, (2) aptitude for advocacy, (3) judgment and (4) interpersonal skills and temperament. There are many different ways in which candidates can provide evidence of these key qualities and we keep an open mind when reading applications. General pointers are given on our main pupillage application page, which can be found [here](#).

Applications for mini-pupillage are considered three times a year, as follows:

- for a mini-pupillage in October or November, applications should be received between 1 April and 31 August;
- for a mini-pupillage in December or January, applications should be received between 1 September and 15 November; and
- for a mini-pupillage between May and July, applications should be received between 16 November and 31 March.

Applications must be submitted via our online form which can be found on our website [here](#).

Our mini-pupillages are unfunded, however, mini-pupils will be able to claim reasonable travel expenses on production of proof of the expense, up to a maximum of £50.



“Teeming with very bright and hard-working barristers”

*Chambers UK*

# THE NATURE OF OUR WORK


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We specialise in business, property and finance litigation, all of which fall within the scope of “commercial chancery” work.

Modern cases often do not fit neatly into traditional categories like Chancery, King’s Bench or Commercial Court litigation; nor do they tend to involve wholly discrete areas of law. The reality is that in modern business, property and finance litigation barristers appear before all of these courts, and call upon their knowledge of a range of different legal principles. Commercial chancery barristers have the breadth of practical experience and legal expertise required to advise on and litigate such disputes. This means, for example, that we can deal with an insolvency point in a construction dispute, or a copyright issue in a company law problem. This gives us an advantage over those who specialise more narrowly.

Maitland’s work includes the following areas:

- ADR
- Banking & Financial Services
- Charities
- Civil Fraud
- Commercial Litigation and Arbitration
- Company & Partnership
- Cryptoassets
- Insolvency & Asset Recovery
- Intellectual Property
- Media & Entertainment
- Offshore & Trusts
- Private Client
- Professional Negligence
- Real Estate
- Tax
- Technology



“One of the Bar’s first and finest ports of call for technically complex chancery matters”

*Chambers UK*



# MAITLAND

