

WILBERFORCE  
CHAMBERS



# Wilberforce Chambers

PUPILLAGE  
AND TENANCY

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'The set is blessed in having individuals with "huge depth of experience and brilliant minds," as well as first-class clerks who "deliver what they promise".'

**Chambers & Partners**

# Welcome to Wilberforce Chambers

Wilberforce Chambers is a set of 50 barristers, including 23 QCs, based in Lincoln's Inn. We are well established as one of the pre-eminent Commercial Chancery sets but our expertise is by no means confined to cases which will be heard in the Chancery Division of the High Court. We pride ourselves on providing a comprehensive service to our clients in relation to litigation and advisory work across the broad spectrum of cases within the Commercial Chancery field.

Members of Chambers regularly appear in the Appellate Courts, the Chancery and Queen's Bench Divisions of the High Court, the Commercial Court, the Administrative Court, the First-tier and Upper Tribunals, various Pensions Tribunals, the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal and the County Courts. Some members of Chambers also have experience dealing with public inquiries and handling criminal cases.

## **Diversity and Innovation**

Wilberforce has an innovative approach to recruitment which has drawn established practitioners to join us from leading Commercial and Common Law sets, from leading Property and Planning sets and from the Intellectual Property departments of major City firms.

## **Areas of expertise...**

Wilberforce Chambers offers above all expertise in commercial work. Most of our work can be described as being of a commercial nature even if it also falls within a narrower practice area. We are leaders in the fields of property, pensions, private client, trusts & taxation and professional liability. The following are examples of the type of work undertaken by members of Chambers.

### **Arbitration & Alternative Dispute Resolution**

We are able to call on a wide range of expertise and experience both in providing first-class advice and representation in arbitrations and mediations and in acting as arbitrator/mediator/expert.

### **Banking & Finance**

Loan agreements, mortgages and charges, guarantees, other forms of security, retail banking, consumer credit, syndicated lending, asset/project finance, asset tracing, preservation and recovery, insolvency issues, professional negligence claims against those advising lenders.

### **Commercial**

Including agency, civil/commercial fraud, confidentiality, construction, contract, energy, joint ventures, partnerships, telecommunications.

### **Company**

Shareholder disputes, section 994 petitions, derivative actions, share and business sale agreements, breach of warranty disputes, shareholder agreements, financial assistance, directors' duties, disqualification of directors, conduct of meetings, restoration of companies to the register, OEICs, corporate insolvency, accounting/auditing negligence.

### **Financial Services**

Financial Service and Markets Act 2000, FSA enforcement and disciplinary proceedings, Unit trusts, OEICs and other collective investment schemes, with profits, mis-selling claims, Financial Ombudsman Service cases, professional negligence claims in the financial services field, insolvency of investment firms.

### **Intellectual Property & Information Technology**

Brand protection and enforcement, designs and copyright, patents and trade secrets, computer contracts and other commercial agreements, databases, data protection, privacy law, EU competition and International law.

### **Insolvency**

Liquidation, administration, receiverships, CVAs, bankruptcy, IVAs, asset tracing, preservation and recovery, avoidance of transactions defrauding creditors, disclaimer of onerous property.

### **International & Offshore**

The nature of the work conducted overseas is varied and often high profile, reflecting the broad spectrum of work which members of Chambers undertake - including trust litigation, company and commercial law, property and intellectual property.

### **Pensions**

Trust law, regulatory and tax issues arising in connection with occupational pension schemes and other employment-related trusts.

### **Private Client, Trusts & Taxation**

Contentious and non-contentious litigation involving both private trusts and trusts in the wider commercial context, both in the UK and worldwide; drafting, advice on administration and construction; taxation of trusts, personal tax and estate planning (including offshore tax planning) and tax litigation.

### **Professional Liability**

Of accountants, actuaries, auditors, company directors, financial advisors, insurance brokers, investment managers, barristers, solicitors, surveyors and trustees and construction-related professional negligence.

### **Property**

Commercial and residential landlord and tenant law, property-related insolvency, proprietary estoppel, property finance and mortgages, restrictive covenants, easements and profits, property-related torts and questions of title, and the sale and registration of land.

### **Regulatory & Associated Law**

Financial services (banking and financial advisors), professionals (barristers, solicitors, accountants, architects and doctors), sport (football, Formula 1, greyhounds and horse racing), utilities (electricity, telecoms), transport (freight transport, coaches and railways), environmental and planning (waste licences and planning enquiries).



'I started a 12 month pupillage at Wilberforce in October 2010, during which I sat with Rupert Reed, Martin Hutchings QC, Julian Greenhill, Jonathan Evans and Edward Sawyer. The opportunity to sit with five different supervisors over the course of the year was a great benefit. It allowed me to gain some experience of a wide range of the work undertaken in chambers, including general commercial work, property, professional negligence and pensions, and provided an opportunity to observe different styles of drafting and advocacy.

Much of my time was spent undertaking legal research and producing written work, usually on "live" cases my supervisors were engaged on at the time. I was always given ample time to complete these tasks, and there was a real emphasis on the importance of producing quality, accurate work, rather than on speed of delivery. It was hugely satisfying to see work that I had produced be used by my supervisors, and I always received helpful feedback.

Attending court with supervisors was always interesting, highlights included a two week professional negligence trial against a firm of solicitors, and a two-day Court of Appeal hearing in a rectification claim. I also had the opportunity to do a few small hearings in my own right during my second six. Aside from work, my fellow pupil and I were always made to feel very welcome at Chambers' social events, they were a great opportunity to get to know the barristers and staff.'

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**Tom Roscoe, Junior Barrister**

# General Information About Pupillage

We look to offer **two 12-month pupillages** each year to pupils with high intellectual ability, good communication skills and an interest in Commercial Chancery work, who are mature and confident, have the ability to work with others and who can analyse legal problems well, demonstrating good practical and commercial sense.

Our policy is to offer pupillage only to those candidates we think possess real potential to join Chambers as tenants at the end of their time with us. This means that we set high selection standards, take great care in our selection process and put effort into providing an excellent pupillage. We assess pupils for their suitability as tenants throughout their time in Chambers by means of a process of continual assessment, rather than by a separate, formal assessment procedure at the end of pupillage.

We are not members of the Pupillage Portal, choosing to manage the application and selection process ourselves.

We have a minimum requirement of a 2:1 degree in law or another subject.

Chambers funds attendance at the compulsory courses which pupils are required by the Bar Council to undertake.

We offer a **generous pupillage award**. This is reviewed annually and is intended to be in line with the highest awards available. The award for a 12-month pupillage

commencing in October 2013 will be up to **£65,000** and will be paid monthly. A proportion of the pupillage award (currently up to £20,000) can be drawn down during the BPTC year.

## **Pupils can expect:**

- a well-structured pupillage
- to sit with at least four different pupil supervisors during their 12 months with us
- to share the daily professional life of their pupil supervisor
- to produce pleadings and opinions in their pupil supervisor's cases
- to attend conferences with their pupil supervisor, the solicitor and the lay client
- to attend Court with their pupil supervisor and other members of Chambers
- to receive regular feedback on their work from their pupil supervisor
- to have their work-load monitored by their pupil supervisor
- to have an opportunity to work with a variety of junior tenants and silks
- to get to know our clerks and begin to learn what skills and approaches will assist in building a successful practice
- to have an opportunity to contribute to life in Chambers.

# Mini-Pupillages

Although a mini-pupillage with us is not a formal requirement in the pupillage selection process, interested students are encouraged to meet our members in order to learn how we operate and to see the sort of work we do.

## General information about the structure of our mini-pupillages

Each mini-pupil will be assigned to a member of Chambers who will act as mini-pupil supervisor. There will be plenty of opportunities to discuss with that person and with other members of Chambers practice both at the Bar generally and in Chambers in particular.

Mini-pupils are invited to visit Chambers for 3 days. Inevitably the content of each mini-pupillage will vary, but a week with us will usually include visiting Court with members of Chambers, attending conferences with clients, reading and discussing paperwork and participating in various talks and discussions with members of Chambers and staff.

Our mini-pupillages are not assessed but you may be asked to consider a problem question with a mini-pupil supervisor.

The programme for mini-pupillages for the year 2011/2012 will be:

	Session 1	Session 2
<b>Maximum number of places</b>	7	7
<b>Primarily aimed at</b>	Final year law and GDL students	Final year law and GDL students
<b>Applications by</b>	14 November 2011	14 November 2011
<b>Notification by</b>	21 November 2011	21 November 2011
<b>Start date</b>	6 December 2011	13 December 2011
<b>Finish date</b>	8 December 2011	15 December 2011
	Session 3	Session 4
<b>Maximum number of places</b>	7	7
<b>Primarily aimed at</b>	Second year law and Final year non law students	Second year law and Final year non law students
<b>Applications by</b>	27 February 2012	1 June 2012
<b>Notification by</b>	12 March 2012	18 June 2012
<b>Start date</b>	27 March 2012	3 July 2012
<b>Finish date</b>	29 March 2012	5 July 2012

'As a new tenant in Wilberforce, you hit the ground running. As soon as pupillage was complete, I was brought in as a junior on a large international pensions/professional negligence case which is still on-going, giving me the opportunity to work as an integral part of a team on a complex, high-value matter. I have also been involved in many smaller matters on my own account, allowing me to gain advocacy and general litigation experience. The work is varied and interesting, and there is always someone on hand to provide support and advice.'

**Emer Murphy, Junior Barrister**

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As soon as pupillage was complete, I was brought in as a junior

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'Right from the start of my time as a tenant, my practice has combined working as a junior to silks on high-value litigation together with my own cases, both litigious and advisory. The work tends to be complex, and from the outset you have to take responsibility for important and valuable decisions; it's challenging, exciting and rewarding, and whenever I've found myself wondering what to do in a particular case, I've always been able to find a more senior member of Chambers to give me some time and put me on the right track.'

**James McCreath  
Junior Barrister**

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You have to take responsibility for important and valuable decisions

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# Applications

Applications for pupillage and mini-pupillage are made using the application form which is available on-line. Please visit our website at [www.wilberforce.co.uk](http://www.wilberforce.co.uk) for further information.

Applicants for mini-pupillage are not required to attend an interview.

Following consideration of your pupillage application we may invite you to attend a long-list interview. This will be a general interview with 2 members of Chambers involving discussion of matters of topical and legal interest. You may then be asked back for a short-list interview which will include analysis and discussion of a legal problem with up to 4 members of Chambers.

Please consult the table opposite for relevant dates regarding applications for pupillage commencing October 2013.

It is our policy not to consider repeat applications for pupillage save in exceptional circumstances.

We aim to make offers in the week following short-list interviews.

	October 2012
<b>Number of pupillages available</b>	2
<b>Closing date for applications</b>	1 February 2012
<b>Notification for interviews</b>	10 February 2012
<b>Long-list interviews w/c</b>	13 February 2012
<b>Short-list interviews w/c</b>	20 February 2012
<b>Pupillage award</b>	Up to £65,000
<b>Max. draw down in BVC year</b>	£20,000
<b>Offers made</b>	Before 31 March 2012

# Tenancy

## **Tenancy Offers**

We aim to reach a decision about tenancy after approximately 9-10 months of pupillage. All pupils, whether or not they are offered a tenancy, are entitled to remain with us for the remainder of their pupillage on a full pupillage award. Any money earned by pupils during their second 6 months will be in addition to the pupillage award and expense-free.

We regard the recruitment of exceptional pupils and junior tenants as crucial to our continuing success and have a policy of selecting tenants from among our pupils.

## **New Tenants**

Members of Chambers share the expense of administering Chambers. Contributions are based in part upon the rent of the room occupied and in part upon income received. The senior members of Chambers pay the greater part of the costs. In the first year of practice tenants are not required to pay room rent and only pay general expenses on income received over £65,000.

To assist with the financial constraints at the start of practice, junior tenants are able to draw funds in their first year against fee notes issued (up to a maximum amount of £15,000). They then have a maximum of two years to repay this interest free loan to Chambers.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Wilberforce Chambers is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities.

Equality of opportunity is essential for the maintenance of high standards and the provision of a quality service to clients. It also ensures a harmonious working environment for members of Chambers and staff.

In particular we adopt good equal opportunities practice in our recruitment process which involves the use of application forms, a two-tier interview process and the use of objective selection criteria in accordance with the recommendations of the Bar Council's Equality and Diversity Code for the Bar.

Disabled applicants are encouraged to contact Chambers if there are any reasonable adjustments that may be made in relation to their applications.

## **Continuing Development**

Wilberforce Chambers recognises that the need for training and support does not end with the acceptance of the offer of a tenancy and the beginning of practice. We pride ourselves on providing a supportive environment in which all barristers can practice and junior tenants are encouraged to discuss their cases with other members of Chambers and appropriate members of staff. Many of us organise regular meetings with the clerks in order to monitor practice development and work-load.

'I chose Wilberforce for my pupillage because of the breadth of work it offered, combining commercial work with trusts and other equitable doctrines. I was not disappointed: there was real range in the work I saw with my supervisors in both style and substance. The pensions work, for example, involved paperwork and often solely legal arguments on agreed facts, whereas the property or commercial cases can lead to some fierce factual disputes that can only be resolved by cross-examination at trial. The high point was attending a mediation in Dubai in relation to a civil fraud claim worth hundreds of millions of pounds. I learnt most about how the business world operates in practice, especially the financial markets, which I didn't expect. My work would normally be research or a first draft for my supervisor, which meant I got a real buzz hearing arguments I had helped put together being put before a judge. The emphasis was always on taking the time to get it right and the year was treated very much as a learning process – though I did some of my own cases in my second six. Members of Chambers and staff put me at my ease at Chambers' social functions and parties throughout the year, and the junior juniors, particularly, were very friendly. Getting on with my co-pupil really helped – and we still get on now we are next door to each other in Chambers.'

**Jonathan Chew, Junior Barrister**

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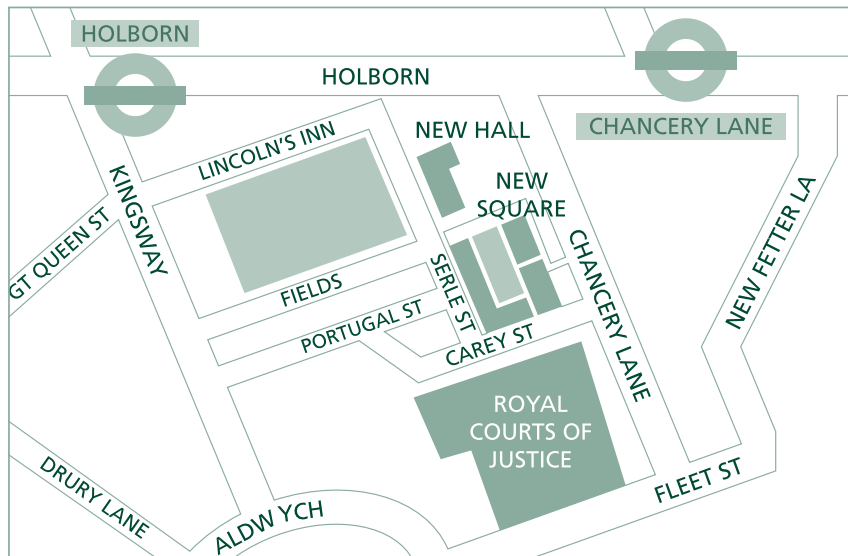
I learnt most about how the business world operates in practice, especially the financial markets

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# Contact Details



**Declan Redmond** - Chief Executive/Senior Clerk

**Danny Smillie** - First Junior Clerk/Member of Pupillage Committee

Email: [pupillage@wilberforce.co.uk](mailto:pupillage@wilberforce.co.uk)

Tel: +44 (0)20 7306 0102

Fax: +44 (0)20 7306 0095

LDE No 311

## **Wilberforce Chambers**

8 New Square

Lincoln's Inn

London WC2A 3QP



**Wilberforce Chambers**

8 New Square  
Lincoln's Inn  
London WC2A 3QP

Tel: +44 (0)20 7306 0102  
Fax: +44 (0)20 7306 0095  
LDE No 311