



Top 10 Pupillage Application Tips

1. Before you start, do your research to make sure you are targeting your application at the right sets. It is a waste of an application to apply (say) to a commercial set if you want to practise in public law.

2. Don't be put off if all the junior tenants seem to have amazing academic CVs on the website. The website is just a marketing tool. The reasons for choosing pupils are likely to be more complex, and most chambers are anxious to widen the diversity of their intake.

3. Show some evidence of interest in the kind of work which the set does. Look at the news feed of the set for examples of some recent cases that barristers have been involved with. Do these excite you? Could you see yourself arguing cases like this? Why?

4. Barristers are advocates, not simply lawyers. Consider how

you can show that you have the ability to persuade someone of your argument, in writing or orally. This does not have to be in a legal context.

5. In particular, try to get some mooting experience under your belt before you apply. Chambers will expect applicants to show an interest in oral advocacy, and to have the initiative to find some mooting opportunities. Your university or Inn will run mooting competitions.

6. Don't be too modest. Sell yourself, as you would sell a friend whom you rate highly. But don't just make assertions about what you are good at. Provide specific examples instead. It is easy to say that you are good with people, or respond well to pressure, but that proves nothing. Give an example of an incident which shows how you are good with people or respond well to pressure.

7. Don't assume that you need to provide evidence of legal experience. Chambers will

know that it is not always possible to obtain such experience, particularly since the pandemic, and do not expect it. Examples from non-legal work or voluntary experience can be just as powerful.

8. Keep your written application as short as you can while doing justice to your experience and aspirations. The ability to express yourself concisely is highly valued in a barrister (particularly by judges!).

9. Avoid pompous or over-elaborate language. It is a mistake to assume that barristers will be impressed. Write clearly, using language which comes naturally to you. But also avoid too much informality. Write full sentences and do not use contractions such as "I've" or "don't", or slang.

10. Get someone to proof-read your application for spelling and grammatical errors before you submit it.

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