BRIDGING THE BAR

England & Wales · Charity number 1190369

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2020-07-13
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Blackstone Chambers Ltd Blackstone House 3 Garden Court Temple London EC4Y 9BW
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Website	www.bridgingthebar.org

Activities

Objects: THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO, FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT, ARE: THE PROMOTION OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AND THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL INCLUSION AMONGST THOSE WHO SOCIALLY EXCLUDED DUE TO BEING MEMBERS OF A SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY DEPRIVED COMMUNITY, AT THE BAR OF ENGLAND AND WALES BY:A) THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION ON THE GROUNDS OF RACE, GENDER, DISABILITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION OR RELIGION;B) ADVANCING EDUCATION AND RAISING AWARENESS IN EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY;C) PROMOTING ACTIVITIES TO FOSTER UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN PEOPLE FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS; AND D) CULTIVATING A SENTIMENT IN FAVOUR OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY.

Activities: Bridging the Bar is a charity that aims to support aspiring barristers from a range of statistically underrepresentedgroups at the Bar. We exist to bridge the gap between aspiring barristers from non-traditional backgrounds and the skills,experience and networks required to develop a thriving career at the Bar.

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Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Individuals, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity
- **Who:** Other Defined Groups

Geography

- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-04-01	£208,008	£157,692	-	-
2024-04-01	£133,427	£94,099	-	-
2023-04-01	£83,455	£102,928	-	-
2022-04-01	£47,947	£37,481	-	-
2021-04-01	£65,874	£4,245	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Mass Ndow-Njie	Chair	2020-07-13
Aaron Mayers		2020-07-13
Matheu Armel Swallow		2021-12-15

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BRIDGING THE BAR

England & Wales - Charity number 1190369

Accounts

BRIDGING THE BAR

Annual Report 24/25

A bar that represents also benefits society

Charity No: 1190369 | Blackstone House, Temple, London, EC4Y 9BW

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BRIDGING THE BAR

THE TEAM

"Launching the Bridging the Bar Academy is the natural next step for our charity.
We intend to take our activities to a new higher level."

- Mass Ndow-Njie, Founder and Chairperson

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THE TEAM

TRUSTEES

Mass Ndow-Njie, Chairperson

Aaron Mayers, Vice Chairperson

Matt Swallow, Treasurer

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Srishti Suresh

Sonia Masaun

Abdul Qadim

Emma Hughes

Ishan Kolhatkar

Eleanor Tack

STAFF

Imogen Sheriff, Head of Operations and Programmes

Fatima Ali, Deputy Programmes Co-ordinator

Ayesha Begum, Partnerships Officer

Aimee Li, Programmes Assistant

Ella Griffin, Partnerships Officer

BRIDGING THE BAR

INTRODUCTION

"It is a privilege to see the next generation from all walks of life shine and be elevated. They are the future of the bar and what a bright future that will be."

- Emma Hughes, Board of Directors

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INTRODUCTION

Get to know us and our mission...

Bridging the Bar ('BTB') is a charitable organisation that exists to bridge the gap between students from non-traditional backgrounds and the skills, experience, and networks required to develop a career at the Bar. We believe that for the Bar to reach its full potential, it must reflect the diverse society in which we live.

Diversity and inclusion is a cornerstone issue for Bridging the Bar; founded with the mission of producing a bar that reflects society so that it may serve society, the issue of diversity and inclusion has guided every step the Charity has taken as we disrupt the status quo. However, this bold aim has not come without its challenges and setbacks. Bridging the Bar was a start up charity that had to carve the path for our successes to follow.

Whilst we recognise the positive work being carried out to establish greater equality of access to opportunities at the Bar, it is clear that gaps still exist. BTB works towards closing that gap by supporting aspiring barristers and those organisations and individuals already championing diversity at the Bar. We believe that by actively providing opportunities and resources to bridge the gap between traditional and non-traditional applicants, Bridging the Bar is helping to drive the kind of high-quality applications from diverse aspiring barristers that will eventually change the face of the profession.

Join over 4,000 Bridging the Bar Alumni, 70 barrister Chambers across the UK, 22 sponsorship partners and over 300 legal professionals in supporting BTB in achieving our vision for a society where the Bar is accessible for everyone regardless of race, sex, class or other characteristics.

Who we help

Low Income Background

BAME

LGBTQ+

Disability

+ More

OUR VISION

At BTB, we believe that in order to truly serve society the Bar must reflect society; without being able to pull from a wealth of differing perspectives and experience, we as practitioners will be less able to serve those who come from backgrounds that are dissimilar to our own.

BTB was founded to address this issue. We believe that the “bridge” between today’s Bar and the diverse Bar that our society needs can be built by achieving three core objectives:

EQUAL ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

An integral part of equal access to opportunity at the Bar is to provide students from non-traditional backgrounds with the ability to gain practical work experience with barristers. The internship, mentoring, POD, mini-pupillage, and other opportunities that candidates receive as part of the Academy provides students from all backgrounds with the opportunity to gain exposure to life at the Bar. This is the insight needed for students to understand what career options are available to them, and specifically, what a career at the Bar looks like.

OUR VISION

COLLABORATION

We welcome any dynamic support of our initiative, whether via the methods suggested, through tailored networking events, educational panels, or entirely new ideas. There is an abundance of creative enterprises working to tackle many of the aims we share. BTB is continuously willing to discuss collaborating with organisations who share our aims. We recognise that in addition to helping people at a grassroots level, a pillar of what we do is forming strategic relationships with our regulators so that we can engage in conversations at a decision making level, provide feedback and create new schemes to help those who need and deserve it.

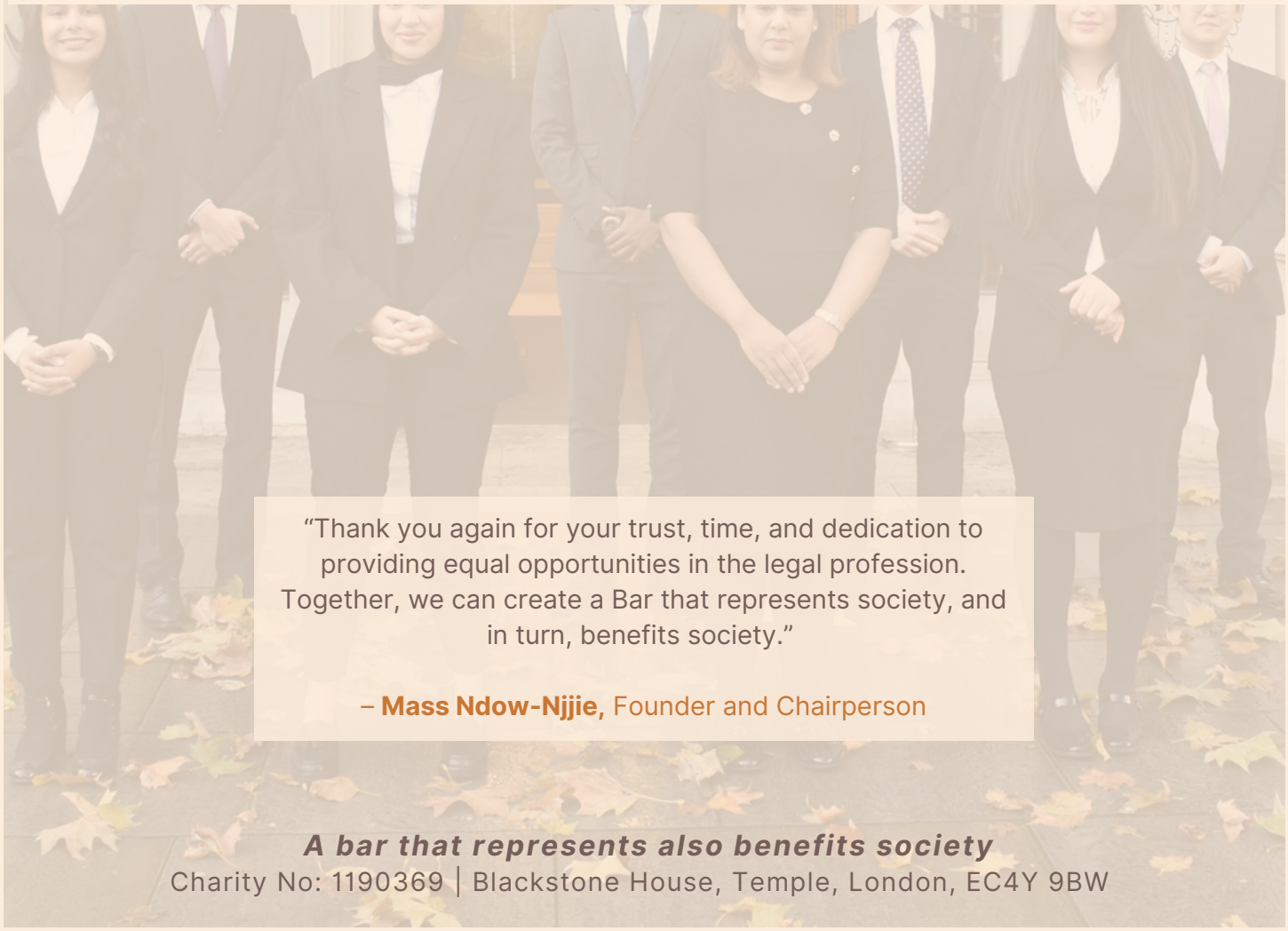
RAISING ASPIRATIONS

In order for diversity at the Bar to flourish, diversity in aspirations must be encouraged. At BTB we are dedicated to cultivating and sustaining the courage and belief it takes to opt for the Bar as a career path. Such cultivation runs through the heart of our Academy and can be seen most prominently in our personal development 'Pod' sessions, which focus on issues which typically undermine the aspirations of non-traditional applicants.

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

Sponsored by BPP UNIVERSITY

THE ACADEMY



"Thank you again for your trust, time, and dedication to providing equal opportunities in the legal profession. Together, we can create a Bar that represents society, and in turn, benefits society."

– **Mass Ndow-Njjie,** Founder and Chairperson

A bar that represents also benefits society

Charity No: 1190369 | Blackstone House, Temple, London, EC4Y 9BW

ACADEMY OVERVIEW

THE IDEA

The Academy was born from a desire to maximise BTB's impact on our candidates, both in terms of number and in terms of outcomes. This led to the idea of a comprehensive programme, which would provide not only tangible experience and skills to those who traditionally may suffer from a lack of access to the profession, but also assist candidates in obtaining the mindset needed to succeed in such a competitive field.

From one application process, 100 candidates are provided access to internships, mentoring, mini-pupillage schemes, professional development workshops, interview advocacy training, application feedback, and networking opportunities. In running such a comprehensive Academy programme, we hope to both assist our candidates in securing pupillage, while also creating a future generation of barristers who will become champions of diversity at the Bar in their own right.

ACADEMY OVERVIEW

OBJECTIVES

In designing the Academy Programme, we identified five core objectives that would shape the structure, content, and delivery of the year:

1. To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
2. To improve the quality of candidates' written pupil applications.
3. To improve the quality of each candidate's pupillage interview technique.
4. To equip our candidates with the mindset tools required to succeed within the profession.
5. To equip our candidates with the tools to champion diversity and inclusion within the profession and throughout their careers.

These objectives were selected as those most likely to meaningfully improve pupillage outcomes. They reflect the dual focus of the programme: enhancing technical competence while supporting candidates' personal development and sense of belonging at the Bar. Each component of the Academy is designed with these objectives in mind.

ACADEMY SELECTION

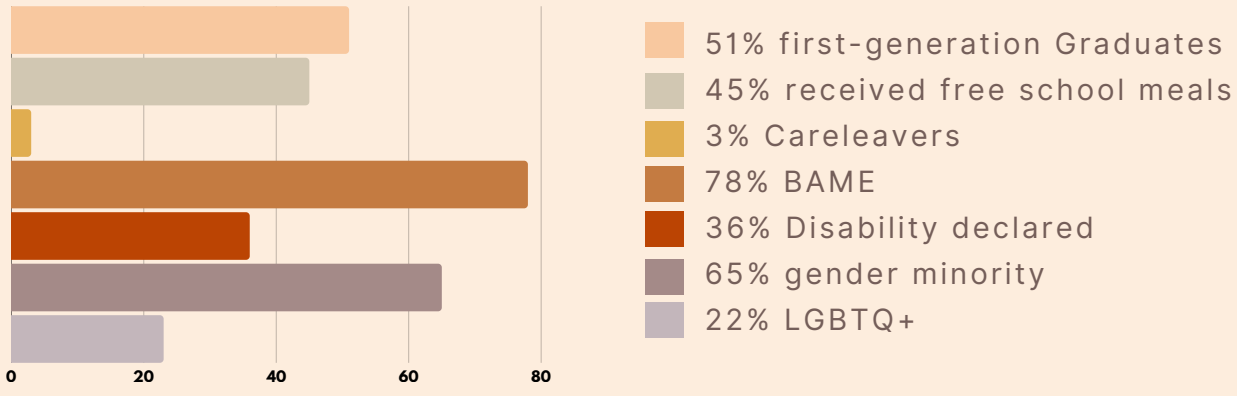
SELECTION PROCESS

We utilised a volunteer force of legal professionals in our marking process, who each marked a single answer for all applications. By adopting this vertical marking process, we aimed to increase consistency during our application marking process.

The markers were asked to assess answers against seven criteria:
1. A commitment to academic excellence through achieving strong grades at university.
2. An understanding of what a career at the Bar entails.
3. Clear and persuasive written communication skills i.e., appropriate structure, use of language and sentence structure.
4. Clear, persuasive and engaging oral advocacy skills.
5. Understanding of issues faced by candidates and barristers from underrepresented backgrounds at the Bar and a commitment to remedying these issues.
6. Ability of a candidate to share their background and experiences in a way which will facilitate mutual learning with fellow candidates and stakeholders.
7. Likelihood to benefit from participating in BTB Academy.

SUCESSFUL CANDIDATES

We are pleased to report that this method resulted in a pool of candidates who's diversity characteristics closely mirror that of the applicant pool.



Example data taken from cohort 22/23

ACADEMY STRUCTURE

DESIGN

The overall structure of the Academy mimics the academic year with events running from September until June. The design of the programme has been undertaken with our overall aims in mind, and so each Academy event has been tailored to both address a specific issue that candidates from non-traditional backgrounds face, while also targeting at least one of our stated objectives.

Event	Summary	Objectives
Personal & Professional Development Sessions	Five sessions, led by legal professionals, covering topics such as confidence building, alongside practical workshops.	Interview Technique Mindset Championing Diversity
Mini-pupillages	Two rounds of mini-pupillages in a candidates area of interest.*	Content of Applications Written Applications
Internships	Selected candidates will intern at either the UK Supreme Court, High Court, Court of Appeal, Law Commission, Advocate, or Hallinan Blackburn Gittings & Nott.	Content of Applications Mindset Championing Diversity

* Candidates not shortlisted for an internship will complete 2 mini-pupillages. Shortlisted candidates will complete 1 mini-pupillage.

ACADEMY STRUCTURE

Event	Summary	Objectives
Mooting Competition	Candidates will have the opportunity to take part in Bridging the Bar's annual Mooting Competition, working in teams to compete against one another while developing their advocacy skills.	Content of Applications Mindset Written Applications
Mentoring	Candidates will be paired with a barrister in their preferred practice area for an 8-month mentoring relationship.	Written Applications Interview technique Mindset
Advocacy Training	Candidates will participate in an online advocacy course and also spend time in chambers, working to improve their responses to specific interview advocacy questions.	Content of Applications Written Applications
Essay Competition	Candidates will have the opportunity to participate in both the BTB Essay Competition and the Professor Jo Delahunty KC Neurodiversity Essay Competition.	Written Applications Content of Applications Championing Diversity

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

Sponsored by BPP UNIVERSITY

THE PROGRAMME

"What is the best way to increase the chances of our candidates securing pupillage, whilst also preparing them for professional life at the Bar?
The BTB Academy is the answer."

- **Aaron Mayers**, Vice-Chairperson

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THE WELCOME EVENT

The Academy year begins with a dedicated Welcome Event, designed to orient candidates and prepare them for the year ahead. It provides the foundation for their Academy experience, helping them to understand what to expect, what is expected of them, and how to make the most of the opportunities available.

At this session, candidates are given a clear overview of the programme's structure, introduced to key Academy policies, and guided through the various strands of support available throughout the year. The event also provides practical insights into how the Academy aligns with the pupillage recruitment timeline and where different elements will support their development.

Beyond orientation, the event serves as a key moment for building early connections. Candidates are introduced to the core strands of our offer through engaging taster sessions and take part in structured icebreakers designed to lay the groundwork for a strong, supportive peer network. The event concludes with informal networking, giving candidates the chance to meet fellow cohort members, volunteers, and programme staff in a relaxed setting.

THE WELCOME EVENT

OSCAR MINTO

The welcome event was a great first start to the academy. It involved an opportunity to meet other pod members, to hear from the organisers and to reflect on the benefits of the programme. We also got to hear from academy alumni that got us excited about the sessions to come. It really helped me to understand the structure of the year and what to expect from the academy.

With the day being low-pressure, it felt like a very supportive and friendly environment to truly meet and bond with other aspiring barristers. Studying my Bar Course online, this was especially important for me and a rare chance to meet others in a similar position. Being busy, we often under-value opportunities like this. This event was a perfect introduction to friends that still form part of my support network to this day.

> *"The event captures the very essence of the academy."*

So, in my opinion, the event captures the very essence of the academy. It was cemented by the speech that organisation founder Mass gave on the day. His story is about how simple ideas can come to fruition through hard work and collaboration. This really epitomises the journey ahead for each academy member. It was clear this introduction to Bridging the Bar is about supporting one another and building a sense of community above all else.

> *"This event was a perfect introduction to friends that still form part of my support network to this day."*

CANDIDATE VOICES

The BTB welcome event was the perfect start to a very exciting year ahead for this year's candidates. From meeting likeminded people at similar points in their career, it really felt like I fit in and hearing from the speakers made me certain that I am going to get a lot out of this experience.

- Talia Webster

The event was truly inspiring. I often feel like the Bar is out of reach for me, but after the session, I felt it was actually achievable.

- Shemaiah Fenteng

My first session with BTB was friendly, welcoming and genuinely enjoyable. It was great to go into a totally non-judgemental environment, meet other likeminded individuals and to get a comprehensive overview of what to expect from the year.

- Holly Jensen

PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Personal and Professional Development Programme, known in the Academy as “Pod” sessions, is a core part of the BTB model. It is designed to offer tailored, small-group support that blends personal growth with practical legal training, creating space for candidates to build confidence, community, and key professional skills.

This year, the cohort is divided into Pods of 10, grouped by shared areas of legal interest. Each Pod attends five in-person coaching days in London. These sessions are structured to maximise both peer support and sector-specific insight.

Each workshop day is split into two halves: one focusing on personal development, the other on practical skills. In the morning, half of each Pod engages in personal coaching led by a dedicated “Pod Leader” – a returning BTB alumnus or experienced facilitator. The other half joins practical sessions led by volunteer practitioners working in their chosen practice areas to focus on professional skill development. In the afternoon, the groups switch, ensuring each candidate benefits from both strands.

The Pod structure is designed not only to further personal and professional development, but also to build a deeper sense of belonging, create more opportunities for honest dialogue, and ensure that candidates feel supported as individuals, not just as applicants. It remains one of the most valued elements of the Academy experience.

PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

SESSION OVERVIEW

POD A: Pod Icebreaker & CV-Building

An introductory session that sets the tone for Pod collaboration. Candidates build relationships within their group and attend a practical CV-building workshop, where practitioners offer guidance on strengthening CV's prior to pupillage applications.

POD B: Courage Before Confidence & Written Applications

A session exploring how courage can bridge confidence gaps for those from non-traditional backgrounds. This is followed by a workshop focused on written pupillage applications, with feedback from practitioners.

POD C: The Power of Professional Narrative & Written Interview Tasks

Candidates are encouraged to reframe their personal journeys as strengths, not setbacks. The following session addresses the written components of pupillage interviews, with support from sector specialists.

POD D: Being vs Doing & Interview Skills

This session challenges narratives around disadvantage and suitability for the Bar. The second half includes a workshop on interview techniques, including practice interviews with volunteers.

POD E: Fear of Failure & Next Steps Panel

A reflective session aimed at reframing comparison as collaboration. The day ends with a "Next Steps" session featuring a panel of speakers who help candidates focus on planning the final stages of their pupillage journey.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS

OLUWAKAYODE EMMANUEL ASEWEJE

Of the fantastic array of programmes offered by the Bridging the Bar Academy, my most memorable were the Personal Development Workshops, known as 'Pod' sessions.

It goes without saying, that the journey to the bar of England and Wales is quite unlike any other, requiring a great degree of fortitude and resilience to weather the storms of competition and rejection and the consequent self-doubt. It is heartening that the Bar is beginning to recognise this, and several mentoring and access schemes now exist, providing useful avenues of support to assist aspiring barristers into the profession.

Where Bridging the Bar excels is the recognition that the beyond the now well-articulated barriers to accessing the Bar, the biggest barrier is perhaps the one in the mind. This certainly resonates with me. As a Black African man, who was born and raised abroad before pursuing a legal education and thereafter the Bar of England and Wales, imposter/trespasser syndrome is always crouching at my door. It advocates flimsy reason after reason why I surely do not belong in this profession.

With dismal statistics and monochromatic chambers' members' profiles, it relentlessly reinforces its false pitch and eats away at my confidence.

The Pod sessions were a safe space where I got to meet my peers. Hailing from wonderfully different backgrounds, we were united in our susceptibility to the struggle for our minds and our confidence. We worked through exercises that prompted intense self-reflection and required a courageous vulnerability. At the Pod sessions I questioned my negative thought patterns. I learned to sit with my with fear of failure. I learned that courage comes before confidence. As my late Father would say, 'Courage is simply fear that has said its prayers'. Most of all, I learned to recognise the uniqueness of my atypical history, and not hide it, like a lamp under a bushel, but appreciate the attributes I have obtained by it and let them shine.

The saying goes 'If you want to go fast go alone but if you want to go far, travel with others.' I would like to give credit to every member of my Pod group. Nothing builds a sense of community more than sharing one's journey with others. I commend their unselfishness in sharing their stories, their highs and lows. It was a privilege to genuinely rejoice with those who obtained success in the form of scholarships or pupillage and encourage others who had to endure disappointment and rejection. Every trip I had to make from South Wales to Central London, on weekends following long working weeks, while exhausting at the time, has been most certainly worth it.

I conclude with a statement by one of my Pod leaders which will always resonate strongly:

> *"If you ever find yourself the exception in the room, it is because you are exceptional."*

PRACTICAL DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS

MILES JANES

Throughout the entire academy, I found the practical sessions with barristers to be by far the most useful. We had several of these sessions, usually straight after meeting with our Pod group. They covered aspects such as a CV check, an advocacy-based session and questions that arise on pupillage applications. However, there were also wider sessions around applications and interviews. These practical's were immensely helpful during what was a very heavy pupillage application round for me. At the time I was applying for work and wider opportunities. I believe these sessions helped me to focus my CV and answers in my interviews which eventually landed me work and a pupillage.

Often barristers in these sessions were able to give us 1-1 support during these sessions. It was reassuring to talk to and hear from people who have reviewed pupillage applications during these sessions and alleviated some of my worries. Perhaps the most useful of all the practical's was the pupillage gateway questions session. We were always assigned groups with barristers from our preferred area of practice. During this session, I was able to ask several questions of a chancery-set barrister around my applications but also wider skillset that gave me a new perspective and approach. Overall, these sessions kept me motivated and were perfect trial-runs before the application window opened.

> *"These sessions kept me motivated and were perfect trial-runs before the application window opened"*

> *"It was reassuring to talk to and hear from people who have reviewed pupillage applications during these sessions and alleviated some of my worries."*

COMMUNITY BUILDING AT PODS

Applying for pupillage is a notoriously gruelling and often isolating process. What makes the BTB academy special is its ability to ease this pressure - not only with workshops and group sessions, but also by creating a supporting, non-judgmental community of staff, volunteers and candidates. The structure of the BTB Academy is unique, the sessions encourage candidates to bond with each other - not just as aspiring barristers, but as talented individuals with distinct backgrounds, values, and personalities.

The Pod Sessions is where this community truly develops - the topics discussed allow candidates to share their vulnerabilities and thoughts, in a judgement-free, safe environment. It is during these candid conversations that a foundation of trust, respect, and mutual understanding is built amongst all. As a candidate, it has been incredible to see how these relationships develop throughout the Academy. In just nine months, my Pod Group evolved from strangers to close friends—supporting each other through mock interviews, assessments, and even hosting sleepovers the night before graduation.

These connections are not artificial; they're rooted in a shared belief - that we will all succeed in our careers at the Bar. This community formed organically over the Programme as we grew to acknowledge and appreciate our differences.

“These connections are not artificial; they're rooted in a shared belief - that we will all succeed in our careers at the Bar.”

CHLOE GABRIEL

The BTB Academy creates more than a network of likeminded individuals - it creates a community of ambitious young professionals who are bonded by their experience on the Academy. The best thing is that this community doesn't dissolve after the BTB Graduation; these friendships will last throughout our careers, whatever they shall be!

“The sessions encourage candidates to bond with each other - not just as aspiring barristers, but as talented individuals with distinct backgrounds, values, and personalities.”

CANDIDATE VOICES

The pod sessions create a supportive environment where leaders and candidates share their personal experiences honestly, helping us challenge negative self-talk and build confidence. Through honest self-reflection and learning from others' experiences, I'm becoming more mindful of how I can evolve both personally and professionally.

- Cynthia Garba

It's great to have a community of people in the same boat, going through the same things, who you can talk to frankly, feel like you're not alone, and learn from.

- Eilidh Rowan

My pod leader shared constructive stories of professional failure and how those experiences ultimately made them a better barrister. It was reassuring and inspiring to see vulnerability framed as strength, and it reinforced the idea that growth often comes through challenge. This honesty helped normalise setbacks and offered practical insight into how to learn from them.

- Holly Jensen

MINI-PUPILLAGE PROGRAMME

Mini-pupillages remain one of the most impactful elements of the Academy. Delivered in partnership with a wide range of chambers, the programme ensures that every candidate gains meaningful, practice-area-specific experience within a professional legal environment.

We run two mini-pupillage rounds across the Academy year. The first sees all 100 candidates placed, while the second if offered to non-internship candidates. These placements provide vital early experience and support candidates in strengthening their pupillage applications.

This direct exposure not only deepens candidates' understanding of their chosen area but also strengthens their pupillage applications and interview responses. By guaranteeing placements to all candidates, the programme removes the access barriers that disproportionately affect those without existing legal networks, and ensures that everyone can speak from experience when applying to join the profession.

MINI-PUPILLAGE PROGRAMME SUPPORTED BY THE BEST OF THE BAR

Fountain Court Chambers	4 New Square	25 Bedford Row
15NBS Chambers	39 Essex Chambers	One Essex Court
4-5 Gray's Inn Square	Littleton	Garden Court Chambers
1GC Family Law	Deans Court Chambers	Pump Court Tax Chambers
Matrix Chambers	Hailsham Chambers	Parklane Plowden Chambers
Landmark Chambers	Coram Chambers	Outer Temple Chambers
Francis Taylor Building	Atlantic Chambers	3 Verulam Buildings
College Chambers	Keating Chambers	4 Stone Buildings
Brick Court Chambers	Temple Garden Chambers	7KBW
Three Raymond Buildings	Spire Barristers	2 Temple Gardens
New Court Chambers	8 New Square Chambers	3DJB
11KBW	Two Harcourt Buildings	Ten Old Square
Mountford Chambers	The 36 Group	Essex Court Chambers

Partner chambers for cohort 23/24

MINI-PUPILLAGE PROGRAMME

> *Connecting with people from a wide range of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives was both fascinating and inspiring.*

JADE WRAY

I spent five days shadowing a criminal barrister from 33 Bedford Row during a Crown Court drug trial. The case was a retrial involving complex EncroChat evidence, with a large volume of material for both sides to navigate.

From the outset I was struck by the pace of proceedings and the need for rapid, strategic thinking. One of the most memorable moments came during the closing speech, which was meticulously argued yet deeply human, centring on the relationship between a father and son. It was a powerful reminder that even in cases built on technical digital evidence, the human story lies at the heart of advocacy.

Midway through the trial, a logistical issue forced a complete change of plan when a key witness could not attend due to a shortage of prison vans. Instead, his evidence from the previous trial was read aloud. This demonstrated the adaptability required in criminal law, where unexpected changes can occur without warning. It was equally fascinating to hear the procedural exchanges between counsel and the judge when the jury was absent, offering insight into the tactical decisions shaping the trial.

Having completed mini-pupillages across criminal and other practice areas, I recommend taking five minutes at the end of each day to jot down what you have learnt. This is important so you can follow the trial as it unfolds, as the days move quickly. In criminal law especially, be prepared for last-minute changes to courtrooms, travel outside London, and shifting timetables. Most importantly, enjoy the process, this experience truly shaped the practice area I want to pursue.

At appropriate times, I also took the opportunity to speak with barristers about their journey to the Bar. Connecting with people from a wide range of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives was both fascinating and inspiring.

CANDIDATE VOICES

At Reading County Court, I observed a two day final hearing where competing care arrangements were assessed. This enhanced my understanding of evidence, including hair strand tests, and the importance of analysing expert reports holistically. Observing precise cross examinations by 4 counsels for three hours highlighted the skill required to challenge expert evidence effectively.

- Jahangir Khan

The mini pupillage was a real game changer. The skills were invaluable, comprehensive and delivered in a warm and friendly manner.

-Maxine Quintyne-Kolaru

I was in chambers with Robbie Stern looking at live cases for two days and attended the Supreme Court with other members. It was really useful to see what a "non-court" day looked like and Robbie was great as he fully immersed me in all emails coming in and showed me how he juggled various cases in the one day.

-Helena Nugent

INTERNSHIPS

BTB's internship offer connects candidates with exceptional opportunities across the legal sector. Each placement is carefully designed to expose participants to high-level legal environments while building the confidence, insight, and credibility needed to take the next step in their careers.

In 2024/25, we partnered with the UK Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, the High Court, the Law Commission, Advocate, and Hallinan Blackburn Gittings & Nott to deliver a series of paid internships for 39 Academy candidates. These placements provided behind-the-scenes access to some of the most influential legal institutions in the country, from shadowing judges and sitting in on live hearings, to contributing to policy research and legal writing.

For many, these were once-in-a-career experiences that left a lasting impression. They offered candidates the chance to see themselves in these spaces, and to begin imagining futures within them. Internships were co-designed with our hosts to ensure they were intellectually demanding, meaningful, and genuinely valuable, both for the organisations involved and the candidates they welcomed.

The internships continue to be one of the most sought-after aspects of the Academy and remain central to our mission of levelling the playing field at the highest levels of the profession.

UK SUPREME COURT INTERNSHIP

When I received the phone call saying, "We want to send you to the Supreme Court," I could hardly believe it. After a long string of rejections, a common experience for many aspiring barristers, the sense of accomplishment and happiness was indescribable.

I was to meet the other interns at the back door of the Supreme Court to avoid the crowds of guests attending the swearing-in ceremony for the newest Justice, Lady Simler. Due to the large number of people expected, we watched from Courtroom 2, alongside many of Lady Simler's former colleagues from Devereux Chambers. Witnessing Lady Simler receive her robes and take her seat with the other Justices was unexpectedly emotional. Seeing another Lady Justice join Lady Rose was so inspiring and truly tugged at my heartstrings.

The session I was most eager to participate in was the roundtable discussion with Vicky, Lord Lloyd-Jones, Lord Leggatt, and Lord Burrows. We were split into smaller sub-groups, each assigned to a different Justice. Along with two other interns, I was assigned to Lord Leggatt. We had an in-depth conversation about our individual journeys to the Bar and the struggles we had encountered along the way. We discussed issues of diversity, equality, and inclusion, sharing personal experiences about barriers such as fairness in pupillage and mini-pupillage applications. We also explored the term "luck," a common word used in connection with applications, and questioned whether the lack of transparency, paired with the use of this term, might serve to mask discrimination. Lord Leggatt's responses were incredibly insightful and open.

> *"The internship was an unforgettable experience. I learned so much and will cherish it for years to come."*

It was a privilege to discuss such important and often sensitive topics with the Justices, and I felt a deep sense of responsibility as one of only eight interns selected for the program to bring these issues forward. These challenges affect so many aspiring barristers, and having the opportunity to address them directly with such senior figures was immensely rewarding.

Walking to the back entrance of the Supreme Court on the third day was interesting. There was a sea of journalists and camera crews setting up, ready to document the results of the Rwanda judgment as soon as it was given by Lord Reed. Sitting in Courtroom 1 was an unforgettable experience in that moment. The room was full of counsel, legal teams, and journalists. Throughout all the judgments and reasoning behind the Rwanda judgment, you could hear a pin drop. I found myself not even wanting to take a breath. Lord Reed explained the main points leading to the judgment very clearly and in a way that could easily be understood by all members of the public. It was only when he said that the Rwanda policy was unlawful and that the Home Secretary's appeal was dismissed that there was an audible release of the breath those in court had been holding, and suddenly the room burst back to life!

The internship was an unforgettable experience. I learned so much and will cherish it for years to come. I met incredible people, and I'm committed to staying in touch with them. To my fellow interns, you were all brilliant, and working alongside you made the experience truly special. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to Vicky Fox, Rebecca Fry, Bridging the Bar, and the UK Supreme Court, with a special mention to Mannat Malhi and Lord Hamblen for making this internship possible and so memorable. A big thank you to all of you for making us feel like we truly belong at the Bar.

JAYA SUDERA

COURT OF APPEAL INTERNSHIP

NEIL WILLIAMS

> *With a genuine interest in my journey to the Bar and openly inviting questions, Lord Justice Birss showed me that the highest members of the judiciary are just normal people who are very good at what they do.*

The Bridging the Bar internship at the Court of Appeal was an experience I will never forget. Based inside the Royal Courts of Justice in London, the closest I had ever come to setting foot inside these magnificent buildings was passing by on an 'open top' bus while sightseeing with family.

When I first received the phone call in September notifying me that I was successful in my application, I had to pinch myself. I would be working for a week alongside the Judicial Assistants in one of the highest courts in the country. I was going to be spending time with the highest members of the judiciary and actually speaking with them!

I arrived at the Royal Courts of Justice and met my assigned Judicial Assistant, Georgina, where we went straight into preparation for the day's hearing. This hearing involved the Denton principle and imposed sanctions. With less than 30 minutes, I quickly familiarised myself with the facts of the case and then proceeded to meet Lord Justice Birss and Lord Justice Nugee. With a genuine interest in my journey to the Bar and openly inviting questions, Lord Justice Birss showed me that the highest members of the judiciary are just normal people who are very good at what they do.

All three of us attended a pre-court meeting with the other Justices, and I observed a discussion of the facts of the upcoming case and how the expected submissions would affect any potential judgment before heading into court for the hearing. Submissions for both sides of the case continued until the afternoon hearing, when the Justices retired to their chambers to discuss their judgment. I was surprised to hear that, due to the high workload, it can often be a number of weeks before a judgment has been sent across to the relevant parties.

I especially enjoyed when we headed across to the Rolls Building, where the interns each made a presentation to a panel of Justices and Judicial Assistants, discussing their journey to the Bar and what they had taken from the week. I learned so much about my fellow Bridging the Bar interns in this short time that I hadn't realised from our previous interactions. I was humbled, and the presentations gave me great admiration for my colleagues. The stories and obstacles that our interns had overcome, and how they articulated them, were truly admirable.

The week at the Court of Appeal has taught me so much, and I will always be grateful to Bridging the Bar and the Judiciary for facilitating this. However, my key takeaways from the week are:

- There is a huge amount of hard work that goes into each case, which is not always evident from the outside looking in. Before the internship, I only really appreciated the hearing and the judgment that would appear a few weeks following.
- The Judicial Assistants did an excellent job and were outstanding in their support, answering all the questions that the interns and I had throughout the week.
- Finally, it is excellent to hear about the work that is being undertaken by the Judiciary to improve diversity. However, there is an acknowledgement that this has to start at the Bar.

HIGH COURT INTERNSHIP

> *It is comforting knowing that change is coming...*
>
> *I have started to feel like I deserve to be here.*

The Internship Programme has helped me take a step forward in my legal career. I had the opportunity to work closely with judges and judicial assistants at the High Court, discussing cases in depth and gaining valuable insight into witness evidence.

I engaged in roundtable discussions on enhancing diversity within the judiciary and had the opportunity to deliver a presentation to judges, sharing my personal journey to the Bar. My Judicial Assistant really helped with my presentation. In fact, we had a discussion at the end of every day leading up to the presentation and brainstormed ideas. I think this is a good opportunity to see what is being done at the judiciary and how they are actively trying to combat the lack of diversity. It is comforting knowing that change is coming.

The most useful aspect of the internship was learning about Judicial Assistants. I had never come across this position before, and now that I have met a JA and remained in contact with her, it's inspired me to apply for the position if I don't get pupillage.

> *I felt appreciated for being where I am despite my adversities and background.*

This week of experience has been eye-opening and will allow me to develop skills that are crucial for a career at the Bar. I think the Bar feels a lot more reachable. I felt appreciated for being where I am despite my adversities and background. I have started to feel like I deserve to be here.

SAJINI SRIDARAN

> *This experience engrossed me in the world of research and reform, forcing me to become comfortable with my thoughts and opinions while perfecting the intricacies of my research.*

MARY AMARA AZUBUIKE

LAW COMMISSION INTERNSHIP

I was fortunate enough to land the Law Commission internship, which I believed would marry my love of literature with my interest in the social implications of the law to explore how the law is reformed and created. I knew this immersion would provide an eye-opening window into an aspect of law rarely examined at the undergraduate level, and I was not disappointed.

The Law Commission separates itself into four specialised teams: public law, commercial law, criminal law, and property and trust. I was on the incredibly dynamic public law team, amongst passionate researchers and lawyers propelled by the desire to make reform to suit greater society. At the time, the public law team was conducting research into autonomy in aviation, compulsory purchase, and disabled children's social care. To really get stuck into the work of a Law Commission research assistant, each intern was assigned a research task, of varying degrees of scope, that would be presented to a team of research assistants on the final day. I was assigned a case (the GPE Hannover Square dispute) relating to the calculation of compensation regarding the compulsory purchase of commercial property for the benefit of creating entrances to the new Elizabeth Line. Not only was I able to delve into the intricacies of compulsory purchase compensation rules (which disregard the consequence of compulsory purchase on the price of land), but I was given a conversive environment to express my opinions on the case, the implications of the ruling, and discuss where reform could be made. I had numerous legal professionals at my disposal, willing to take time out of their very busy workloads to discuss the case and my ideas openly with me, making me feel like a valued member of the team, despite only being there for three days.

This experience engrossed me in the world of research and reform, forcing me to become comfortable with my thoughts and opinions while perfecting the intricacies of my research. It also opened me up to the world of public law and practice. Prior to this internship, I believed I only wanted to practice in commercial law, but researching and learning about public law, while talking to passionate public law practitioners, showed me the type of career and change I could wield within my profession. From the internship, I became more open-minded about the type of law I want to practice.

The research project was not the only highlight. A notable aspect of my experience was the diverse talks organised by the Commission. Chief Executive Stephanie Hack provided a comprehensive overview of the Commission's objectives, and Ingrid Morgan from the Office of Parliamentary Counsel shared the intricacy of drafting legislation. However, for me, the most impactful moment was the talk with Sir Nicholas Green, the Law Commission's Chair. A conversation I'm sure my fellow colleagues can agree we did not want to leave. Discussing legal reform with someone so senior demonstrated the humility needed to excel in legal reform and how our diverse life experiences shaped different perspectives on the impact of certain laws. This diversity of thought highlighted the need for inclusivity in legal reform discussions. It became clear to me that a broad range of perspectives is essential for ensuring the law remains responsive to the multifaceted needs of society.

From this immersive experience, I had three key takeaways: first, legal practice should be explorative, as you never truly know what you like until you try different areas. Second, legal reform is transformative, offering a deeper understanding of the law's impact. Finally, the Law Commission provides a supportive environment for intellectual growth and self-reflection. I will be applying for the Law Commission's research assistant role in the coming months and would encourage anyone interested in the social benefits of law to do the same. It's an experience I'll never regret.

HALLINAN BLACKBURN GITTINGS & NOTT INTERNSHIP

DOMINIC LIVESEY

> *The internship was entirely transformative to both my approach and my abilities as I apply for pupillage, providing me with knowledge, challenges, experiences and afantastic network that has been continually invaluable.*

Through Bridging the Bar I had the immense fortune of being granted their Paralegal Scholarship. This meant I had the opportunity to take on a 6-month long internship working full-time as a paralegal and Hallinan Blackburn Gittings & and Nott, a Criminal Defence solicitors firm, based in London.

This was transformative experience for me and a wonderful insight into the real working world of criminal law. As a paralegal I was entrusted with full responsibility from the start, meaning that knowledge of the law and the legal system, understanding of how to handle clients, and confidence in my own abilities were tested and developed every day. I was working on a vast array of tasks a criminal firm faces including taking notes in conferences and at court, writing client letters, handling the phones, taking on new clients, writing case summaries and evidence bundles, as well as contacting the courts, police, prosecution and counsel, among much, much more.

Through this fast-paced and hands-on environment I developed crucial skills for any kind of lawyer faster than I could have anticipated.

I am far more intimately aware of how the justice system works, how to communicate with clients in times of stress and difficulty, my written and oral advocacy developed rapidly, and I am overall far more confident in myself as a prospective barrister. The opportunity to work in a real criminal law environment was also an eye-opening glimpse into the true importance of such work in real people's lives, and a thoroughly enjoyable environment for me personally.

The internship was entirely transformative to both my approach and my abilities as I apply for pupillage, providing me with knowledge, challenges, experiences and a fantastic network that has been continually invaluable.

> *The opportunity to work in a real criminal law environment was also an eye-opening glimpse into the true importance of such work in real people's lives, and a thoroughly enjoyable environment for me personally.*

ADVOCATE INTERNSHIP

GRACE ADA OKAFOR

> *As a barrister I know I will donate my time for this organisation.*

Advocate is a charity that finds free legal assistance from volunteer barristers. They are the Bar's national charity that makes it possible for barristers to balance their practice with making a significant contribution to the community. As a caseworker intern, I have had an insightful, eye-opening, and valuable experience. During my role, I learned how Advocate is filling the gap where individuals lack access to justice by providing legal support to those who do not have the means. I am very passionate about Advocates work and grateful to complete this internship, as a barrister I know I will donate my time for this organisation.

As part of my role, I had the opportunity to engage with live work and contribute to discussions with Advocate's caseworkers, further undertaking written work using real case papers. I had to go through the applicant's case information where they were seeking help which varied from advice, drafting documents and/or representation at court/tribunal. From this, I had to draft case summaries which would later be logged and transferred to an available barrister to work on. Drafting the summaries I identified the area of law, what type of help they were seeking, executive summary, procedural history, eligibility criteria and missing documents. Next, I emailed the applicant requesting what was outstanding to have a better understanding of the case. I learned how to refine my time efficiently by swiftly shifting through all the documents, making sure I have included a clear factual background, a chronology/procedural history, court date and checking if there is any further information that is needed. I really enjoyed completing the summary as this was intellectually challenging and stimulating having to identifying

legal and factual issues in complex areas of the law and understand what the applicant was seeking. I enjoyed later sharing ideas with my supervisors and learning effectively on how to tackle the case. I gained a unique and interesting insight into how Advocate operates and the scope of work that Advocate's caseworkers conduct at the organisation.

At the start of each day, I really enjoyed having morning briefings with the other caseworkers discussing our plans for the day and finding out which cases we were working on. I had exposure to work in different legal areas such as commercial chancery, employment, landlord and tenant. I enjoyed working through these areas and gaining new knowledge in new areas such as family and public law, where I had little experience. I really felt from this role I became more neutral in drafting the case summaries and just focused on what documents are needed from the applicant, especially in the more sensitive areas of the law such as family cases. I also enjoyed having afternoon briefings with the caseworkers, having that time to share our day and the opportunity to offload if we had a difficult day dealing with triggering and sensitive cases. From this internship, I felt supported by my supervisors and that I have developed the necessary skillset to succeed at the bar.

CANDIDATE VOICES

The internship gave me a flavour of different areas of law I had not had much experience of previously, such as family and employment law. It has increased my interest in those areas and motivated me to pursue them later in my career. Although I was committed to pro bono work previously, seeing how charities such as Advocate operate and the positive impact they have on people's lives has provided even greater motivation to take on this kind of work.

- James Collier

This internship was incredibly useful for my personal and professional development. It has honed my written and oral advocacy skills and increased my confidence.

- Tamyah Jones

This was a once in a lifetime opportunity and a chance to persuade the UK Supreme Court, of all places, on what I considered important to the future of the legal profession. I am immensely grateful to have listened to 9 other incredibly talented aspiring barristers. I cannot imagine that there is even a single a person, in that room, that did not learn something that day'.

-Oscar Minto

MENTORING PROGRAMME

BTB's mentoring programme offers candidates a rare and valuable opportunity: one-to-one guidance from a practising barrister who reflects both their intended practice area and their lived experience.

It is one of the most comprehensive matching processes available; taking into account general area of law, specific specialism, and intersecting identity characteristics, to ensure each pairing is both meaningful and effective.

Over the course of eight months, candidates meet regularly with their mentors to shape strategy, build confidence, and refine their pupillage preparation. From early application planning to mock interviews and real-time feedback, the mentoring relationship provides tailored support at every key stage.

Mentors are equipped with a detailed guide to help structure the experience, while still allowing space for personal connection and individual goals. For many candidates, their mentor becomes not just a source of advice, but a powerful model of what's possible.

As a core part of the Academy's offer, the mentoring programme continues to be one of the most valued elements of the year and is consistently cited by candidates as pivotal to their development and success.

MENTORING PROGRAMME

ABBAS HUSSAIN

> *Bridging The Bar's Mentoring Programme extends beyond mere application assistance; it provides continuous support and realistic advice throughout one's journey to the Bar.*

Bridging The Bar's Mentoring Programme has been an instrumental part of my journey toward a career at the Bar. Through this programme, I was fortunate to be mentored by an experienced King's Counsel (KC), whose guidance was invaluable in navigating the complex and competitive process of securing a pupillage. The mentorship was comprehensive and tailored to my needs. My mentor shared his extensive experience and insights on various aspects of the pupillage application process. He highlighted the importance of crafting a compelling application, stressing the need to present a well-rounded profile that showcases both legal expertise and unique personal attributes.

My mentor taught me how to effectively showcase my skills, experiences, and motivations in my applications. He stressed the importance of clarity, coherence, and conciseness, ensuring that each application was meticulously tailored to the specific chambers to which I was applying. To distinguish myself from other applicants, my mentor advised me to focus on my unique experiences and achievements, such as my involvement in extracurricular activities and any relevant legal work experience. He encouraged me to articulate my passion for law and my long-term career aspirations convincingly.

Another critical component of the mentoring programme was the mock interviews. These sessions were designed to simulate the real interview environment, providing me with an opportunity to practice and refine my responses. Through these mock interviews, I received constructive feedback on my performance, including my communication skills, body language, and ability to think on my feet. This practice was crucial in building my confidence and honing my interview technique, which are essential for success in the highly competitive pupillage selection process.

Beyond the application process, my mentor provided sage advice regarding my career path. He emphasised the importance of pursuing an area of law that I am passionate about, cautioning against following a path solely for its perceived prestige or financial reward. Taking his advice to heart, I explored various areas of law beyond my initial interest in family law. This exploration led me to develop a keen interest in commercial, insurance, and sports law. Although I received around seven first-round interviews primarily for family pupillages, this experience made me realise that family law might not be the right fit for me.

Bridging The Bar's Mentoring Programme extends beyond mere application assistance; it provides continuous support and realistic advice throughout one's journey to the Bar. My mentor was always available to provide guidance and support, whether it was advice on career choices or navigating challenges during my training. This ongoing support was crucial in maintaining my motivation and focus. Perhaps one of the most valuable aspects of the programme was the honest and realistic advice I received. My mentor did not shy away from giving me the tough truths that I needed to hear, which helped me make informed decisions about my career path.

Bridging The Bars Mentoring Programme has had a profound impact on my professional development. The guidance and support from my KC mentor were pivotal in shaping my approach to the pupillage application process, refining my interview skills, and ultimately helping me to identify the area of law that truly interests me. This programme is not only about helping aspiring barristers secure pupillage but also about providing them with the tools and insights necessary to build a fulfilling and successful career at the Bar.

CANDIDATE VOICES

The most useful part of mentoring was having someone who looks like me and shares my values show me that I can belong at the Bar. Seeing someone with a similar background not only succeed but thrive in this space was incredibly affirming. It made the goal feel more real and achievable, and reminded me that there's space for people like me in the profession.

- Tracy Bossman

Being assigned a mentor has been one of the most valuable opportunities provided by bridging the bar. Having a mentor has allowed me to feel like I have someone in my corner, championing my own success.

- Aaliyah Kisembo

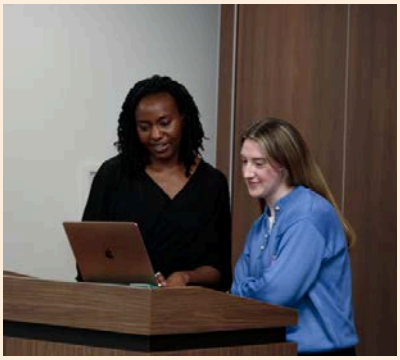
BTB have made an extensive effort to match mentors with your chosen area regardless of how niche it may be. I would like to undertake a clinical negligence and personal injury pupillage therefore, being matched with a leading clinical negligence barrister, as opposed to a General Civil barrister was particularly helpful in terms of asking for specific significant developments within this field

-Amisha Ramdut

FUNDAMENTALS OF ADVOCACY TRAINING

Advocacy training is one of the most skills-focused components of the Academy year. Delivered in partnership with The Advocacy Coach, the programme combines self-directed learning with immersive, in-person training designed to build confidence and develop key courtroom skills.

The course is led by Bibi Badejo, barrister at 4PB, founder of The Advocacy Coach, and host of The Advocacy Podcast. Through a bespoke online platform, candidates are introduced to core advocacy techniques, including case theory development, persuasive oral delivery, and the mechanics of effective cross-examination.



The programme culminates in a live training day, where candidates bring theory into practice. Working with professionally trained actors and supported by experienced practitioners, candidates prepare and deliver advocacy exercises across a range of realistic court scenarios. Each participant receives personalised, constructive feedback, helping them refine their technique and grow in confidence.

This strand of the Academy has quickly become a standout highlight of the programme and offers vital preparation for both interview performance and early practice.

> *The opportunity to gain insight from a leading advocate such as Bibi has been invaluable.*

FUNDAMENTALS OF ADVOCACY

CALLAN WITHERS

The Bridging The Bar 2023/24 Academy had the great fortune to receive advocacy training from The Advocacy Coach and Barrister, Bibi Badejo. This initiative proved valuable in developing candidates skills and understandings of the importance of effective advocacy within proceedings.

The cohort were provided with online teaching components which aimed to build upon the fundamental techniques needed when advocating in court and focused on enhancing those abilities. The modules explored a variety of elements, including how best to approach case analysis thoroughly, effective witness handling, and delivering oral addresses with confidence and substance. The teachings and resources of this training provided both dynamic and forensic approaches to these areas and will be of considerable benefit to all participants going forward in our training. The curriculum also contained a number of practical exercises which proved to be of great benefit in consolidating the learnings, and I believe that these exercises will be of great use especially when first starting out in practice.

The opportunity to gain insight from a leading advocate such as Bibi has been invaluable.

The offering concluded with a live event, in which all participants were given the opportunity to advocate in front of a large audience, in the form of a simulated court with trained actors. This was a truly rewarding experience, as it allowed for the cohort to practice the teachings from the online training, and to exercise the skills needed to deliver a high-level of advocacy. Each participant chose to deliver either an examination in chief, a cross examination or a closing speech. I believe that this was a highlight for many on the programme; for those at the start of their legal studies this provided them their first advocacy experience, and for those further on in their studies, it helped to develop skills required when at the bar.

In all, I believe that this offering delivered an immeasurable amount of value to all members of the cohort in our development as advocates. I believe I speak for the whole cohort in relaying our deepest gratitude to Bibi Badejo and the BTB team for providing us with this training experience.

CANDIDATE VOICES

Bibi is an incredible advocate who supported me throughout my opening speech and gave invaluable guidance. The event was a great opportunity to learn, grow, and build confidence in my advocacy skills!

- Noor Saeed

This course was great to develop my skills and also to be more confident when it comes to advocacy. This will definitely help my delivery going forward.

- Leona Walker

Putting what you learnt from the course into practice in front of the advocacy coach was an invaluable experience to practice in front of an audience and receive thorough feedback.

- Vanessa Faye Thomas

A fantastic course which I will definitely refer back to in the future.

- Eilidh Rowan

INTERVIEW ADVOCACY TRAINING

Following a successful pilot in 2022 with 6KBW College Hill, Interview Advocacy Training is now a core part of the Academy programme. Designed to demystify the practical exercises often used in pupillage interviews, the training gives candidates the chance to practise with real problems, receive detailed feedback, and build confidence in a supportive environment.

The programme runs across two Saturdays in autumn, with support from 15 partner Chambers. Each candidate is paired with a participating Chambers that reflects their intended area of practice, allowing them to focus on relevant topics while also making valuable professional connections.

Candidates work on exercises such as statutory interpretation and bail applications, tasks that can be unfamiliar to those without access to targeted preparation or professional networks. Sessions are delivered in small groups and include one-to-one feedback from barrister volunteers.

The training not only develops core legal skills but also helps candidates feel more prepared and better equipped to succeed in high-pressure interview settings. It has become a key element of our wider efforts to level the playing field at the point of pupillage selection.

> *One of the best parts of the Interview Advocacy Sessions was receiving live, constructive feedback that was personal to each Candidate.*

INTERVIEW ADVOCACY TRAINING

JAYA SUDERA

The Interview Advocacy Training element of the Academy was an enriching and informative way to practise our approach to legal interview problems in an environment that is very close to the real thing – in Chambers!

I was paired with One Essex Court with four other members of the BTB Academy. Around a week before the first session, we were emailed a legal interview question and instructions as to what to prepare before arriving in Chambers. To keep it as close to what a real interview for Pupillage would be like, I was reasonable but not overly generous with the time I gave myself to prepare. The problem wanted each Candidate to prepare submissions to extend a freezing injunction, or to argue the alternative. Arriving at Chambers for the first session was exciting. I was looking forward to having the opportunity to practise my interview technique before a tenant at One Essex Court. The Barrister was approachable, welcoming and took the time to get to know a little bit about all of us. Each BTB Candidate went in turn to present their part of the legal problem. Alongside presenting our cases, we also had the odd judicial intervention which, although surprising in the moment, allowed us all to practise delivering confident responses on the spot. It also tested us on how familiar we were with the case papers.One of the best parts of the Interview Advocacy Sessions was receiving live, constructive feedback that was personal to each Candidate. As individual feedback is often hard to come by in the Pupillage Application Process, this feedback was highly appreciated.

In the second and final advocacy session with One Essex Court, I had to prepare submissions stating that the refusal of my “client’s” fictitious application was refused incorrectly. I used statutory interpretation to the advantage of the client. The feedback I received from the second barrister in Chambers was very positive and he gave me constructive feedback that I was able to take away and apply to real interviews during the most recent Pupillage Application Round. Another beneficial part of having the Interview Advocacy Sessions structured this way was being able to watch other BTB Candidates deliver their submissions. Learning from each other was a really positive opportunity to explore different techniques that we saw in each other.

I appreciated that both sessions were conducted in a space where I was comfortable to make mistakes and try new techniques. This is the most important thing necessary to improve and increase my confidence in my abilities. These sessions were incredibly valuable and enabled me to get an insight into some of the finer elements of advocacy that barristers are looking for in a prospective Pupil Barrister.

CANDIDATE VOICES

The interview advocacy training has been instrumental in preparing me for upcoming interviews. I feel confident in how to approach legal questions in pupillage interviews now thanks to the training.

- Simran Chard

The interview advocacy training provided invaluable hands-on advocacy experience, with expert feedback that sharpened my skills and boosted my confidence for pupillage interviews. A must for anyone serious about a career at the Bar!

- Jahangir khan

A practical insight which provided constructive criticism and a great confidence boost. A very special opportunity allowing you to elaborate on your advocacy skills.

- Natalia Squire

This is an excellent attempt for those seeking more experience into the interview process at chambers. BTB provide a realistic opportunity to undergo interview training and work on these skills before pupillage interviews commence.

- Ibrahim Saine

LECTURE SERIES

The Academy launched a two-part lecture series designed to explore the challenges facing aspiring barristers from underrepresented groups and to equip candidates with the tools needed to succeed within the profession. Delivered by Elaine Banton, a barrister at 7BR, elected Bencher of the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple, and co-chair of the Bar Council's Equality, Diversity and Social Mobility Committee, the series focuses on key issues shaping access, retention, and progression at the Bar.

Part one, held at King's College London, focused on access to the Bar and the cultural changes needed to create equitable opportunities. Candidates engaged in discussions about practical steps to improve diversity, informed by real experiences and current initiatives driving change across the profession.

Part two examined retention and progression, addressing the challenges that caused individuals from underrepresented backgrounds to leave practice disproportionately. Elaine led an interactive discussion on the systemic barriers faced within the profession and invited candidates to reflect on strategies for overcoming these challenges in their own careers.

Across both sessions, the lectures combined thought leadership with collaborative discussion, giving candidates the insight and confidence to shape meaningful change within the profession.

LECTURE SERIES

MEGAN CHOONG JIEH YUE

The Bridging the Bar lecture series by Elaine Banton was a profound experience, encompassing the critical issues of "Access & Culture Change" and "Retention & Progression at the Bar." As a participant, this series was instrumental in highlighting the systemic challenges and actionable strategies to foster a more inclusive and equitable legal profession.

Banton's first lecture, "Access & Culture Change," emphasised the intricate relationship between access to the Bar and the need for cultural transformation within the profession. It underscored that while significant strides have been made in improving diversity at the entry level, much work remains to ensure these changes are sustainable and pervasive throughout a barrister's career. Banton highlighted various initiatives aimed at enhancing access, such as the 1 Crown Office Row's assessed mini pupillage scheme and Bridging the Bar's mentorship and conversion programme. I also found the lecture to be incredibly useful in guiding me to various resources. It highlighted initiatives that can support my career and introduced me to a community of individuals who share my background as an Asian woman.

Additionally, it provided crucial information about reporting mechanisms, such as Talk to Spot for anonymous reporting of inappropriate behaviour and the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office, which addresses these issues effectively. These initiatives have been pivotal in providing opportunities for underrepresented groups, but Banton stressed the importance of a sustained cultural shift to support these changes. This requires a strategic and multifaceted approach that addresses various dimensions of diversity and inclusion. The critical factors are:

- Leadership commitment: Leaders must consistently demonstrate their dedication to fostering an inclusive environment. For instance, the *Bar Council's Race Action Plan* sets a precedent by outlining specific goals and actions to improve racial diversity.
- Comprehensive and ongoing training programs: To educate all members on diversity, inclusion, and unconscious bias are essential.
- Open dialogue and continuous learning: Regular forums, workshops, and discussions on diversity and inclusion topics can help maintain momentum and keep these issues at the forefront of the Bar's agenda.

> *This series was instrumental in highlighting the systemic challenges and actionable strategies to foster a more inclusive and equitable legal profession.*

LECTURE SERIES

MEGAN CHOONG JIEH YUE

While entry-level diversity has improved, retention and progression of diverse groups remain significant challenges. This was the focus of Elaine Banton's second lecture. Barristers from ethnic minority backgrounds and women face greater obstacles in advancing to senior positions such as King's Counsel (silk) and higher judicial appointments. Effective retention strategies are crucial for progression to these senior roles.

The first seven years are critical for barristers, with financial stress and demographic intersections (such as sex, race, and disability) significantly impacting their career trajectories. Factors such as legal aid, debt, access to credit, fees, and financial support significantly impact retention. Reports from the Bar Standards Board (BSB) and other surveys illustrate the struggles faced by junior barristers, particularly those from minority ethnic backgrounds and women.

This statistic resonated deeply with me and my peers, prompting in-depth discussions during our mini pupillage. It was encouraging to hear the practice manager and various barristers share how the chambers assist them. For instance, one barrister who aimed to take the New York Bar was able to adjust his workload during revision and exam periods.

> *"We can build a legal profession that supports all its members and reflects the diversity of the society it serves."*

What stood out to me most were the calls to action Elaine Banton mentioned:

- Data-Driven Approaches: Continued use of data to track progress and identify areas needing attention is vital. Regularly publishing diversity statistics, conducting surveys, and analysing trends can help inform and shape effective diversity strategies. Ensuring transparency and accountability through data-driven approaches can lead to more targeted and impactful interventions.

- Intersectionality Considerations: Addressing the unique challenges faced by individuals who belong to multiple underrepresented groups (e.g., women of colour, disabled individuals from minority backgrounds) requires an intersectional approach. Tailored initiatives that consider the overlapping aspects of identity can help address the compounded barriers these individuals face.

It is not enough that people enter the profession when they end up leaving due to systemic barriers and inequities.

Ensuring that talented individuals not only join but also thrive and advance within the legal profession requires a holistic approach that addresses financial stability, support systems, and a culture of inclusion. Retention and progression must be prioritised through targeted interventions, continuous support, and policy reforms that promote equity and diversity. By doing so, we can build a legal profession that supports all its members and reflects the diversity of the society it serves.

CONSULTANCY PANEL

The Consultancy Panel provides candidates with tailored, one-to-one support on all aspects of the pupillage process. Candidates can request targeted assistance, including CV and application reviews, proofreading, general guidance, mock interviews, and help with specific advocacy exercises.

Since its launch, the panel has been met with an overwhelmingly positive response. Over 80 legal professionals from a broad range of practice areas have volunteered their time and expertise to support our candidates. This network of support ensures that candidates receive high-quality, practical feedback from those with real-world experience at the Bar. By offering personalised insight and structured advice, the Consultancy Panel helps demystify the application process and build candidates' confidence, strengthening both the quality of submissions and their readiness for interview.

The consultancy panel was a very helpful part of the academy for me. Whilst I had great mentor, I have also valued getting several opinions on important work and interview preparation. The panel offered a real bridge for me. Often barristers' time is like gold dust, and it is difficult to find people who will help you on a 1-1 basis. The panel gave me the 1-1 support that I needed during pupillage application through pairing me directly with a barrister who really helped to refine my interview technique. I was also able to ask some general questions and even get a last-minute CV-check in.

Whilst you can use mini-pupillages and mentors to get important questions answered, you may often find your most important questions arise during the pressure of an application windows itself. The consultancy panel delivered for me by pairing me with somebody who could be that interim support and give me the reassurance that I needed. The most isolating time is during application season and this opportunity made it much more manageable.

OSCAR MINTO

"The consultancy panel delivered for me by pairing me with somebody who could be that interim support and give me the reassurance that I needed."

GRADUATION

The Academy year concludes with the Graduation Event, held at the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple. This moment marks the culmination of the candidates' journey through the programme and provides an opportunity to come together and celebrate their achievements in a formal and uplifting setting.

The event welcomes guests from across the legal profession, including members of the judiciary, court representatives, and supporting chambers, alongside candidates, mentors, volunteers, and BTB staff. It is both a celebration and a recognition of the dedication, progress, and resilience demonstrated by the cohort throughout the year.

The ceremony includes opening remarks, guest speakers, and the presentation of certificates to all graduates who have successfully completed the programme and met the full set of requirements. Select awards are also presented to individuals who have demonstrated particular excellence or made a notable contribution to the Academy community.

The Graduation Event is a fitting close to the Academy year. It is designed to be joyful, reflective, and inspiring; a space for candidates to feel pride in their work, gratitude for their supporters, and excitement for the professional journey ahead. It serves as a powerful reminder of what they have accomplished and what they are capable of achieving as they take the next step toward a career at the Bar.

ACADEMY GRADUATION

DORCAS BAAH

The Bridging the Bar Graduation for the Class of 2025 was a truly memorable occasion. The evening began with light refreshments and a three-course meal, followed by a series of moving addresses that captured the spirit of the programme. We heard powerful reflections from past graduates Sarah, Cameron and Miah, which reminded us that the path to the Bar is rarely linear, but always worth pursuing.

One of the most striking moments was Professor Jo Delahunty KC's keynote address. Her words resonated deeply: imposter syndrome is not a weakness but proof that you care and refuse to become complacent. She also urged us to guard fiercely those aspects of ourselves that make us unique –our heritage, our accent, our roots– and never to sacrifice them in pursuit of a career at the Bar. This message was raw, thought-provoking, and profoundly affirming.

> *"It embodied BTB's unwavering commitment to supporting us and helping us become not just phenomenal advocates, but empathetic and grounded members of the Bar."*

The formal graduation ceremony, with certificates awarded and prizes announced for the essays, moots, and Candidates' Choice Awards, felt like the culmination of a year's worth of hard work and resilience. Yet, despite its grandeur, the evening remained intimate. The entire evening was defined by the warmth of celebrating alongside friends, peers, Pod Leaders and mentors who had shared the journey.

For me, this graduation symbolised more than a recognition of our achievements. It embodied BTB's unwavering commitment to supporting us and helping us become not just phenomenal advocates, but empathetic and grounded members of the Bar.

"Different Journeys, One Community, One Unforgettable Celebration"

CANDIDATE VOICES

It was lovely celebrating each other's accomplishment and knowing we are now part of a group of like-minded individuals forever.

- *Cynthia Garba*

Graduation was a celebration of unity , success and tangible development; whether practical or professional.

- *Vanessa Thomas*

Graduation is a great time to celebrate what you have achieved and give you motivation to achieve more.

- *Tenishia Prah*

This is the culmination of your Bridging the Bar Academy journey and the opportunity to celebrate your progress with your peers, mentors, BTB staff and volunteers.

- *James Matthes*

THE RESILIENCE FUND

Each year, a portion of the Academy budget is allocated to provide financial assistance to candidates. The Resilience Fund is designed to support those facing financial challenges that could prevent them from participating fully in Academy events or accessing opportunities.

The fund covers travel and accommodation costs, as well as individual needs, such as hiring carers for those with caregiving responsibilities. This initiative ensures that all candidates can engage with the Academy without facing financial or logistical barriers.

Megha Banerjee,
Academy 2024 Graduate

"Coming from a working class background and living in the North-West whilst working part time and completing the Bar Course, finance has been a barrier for me for travelling to London frequently and partaking in important programmes. However, with the assistance received, I have been able to complete such programmes ranging from interview advocacy training, the lecture series and mini-pupillages- all which are crucial to my future at the Bar. I thank Bridging the Bar for this assistance, without which I would be on an unequal playing field to my peers."

Mohamed Major,
Academy 24/25
Candidate & High Court Intern

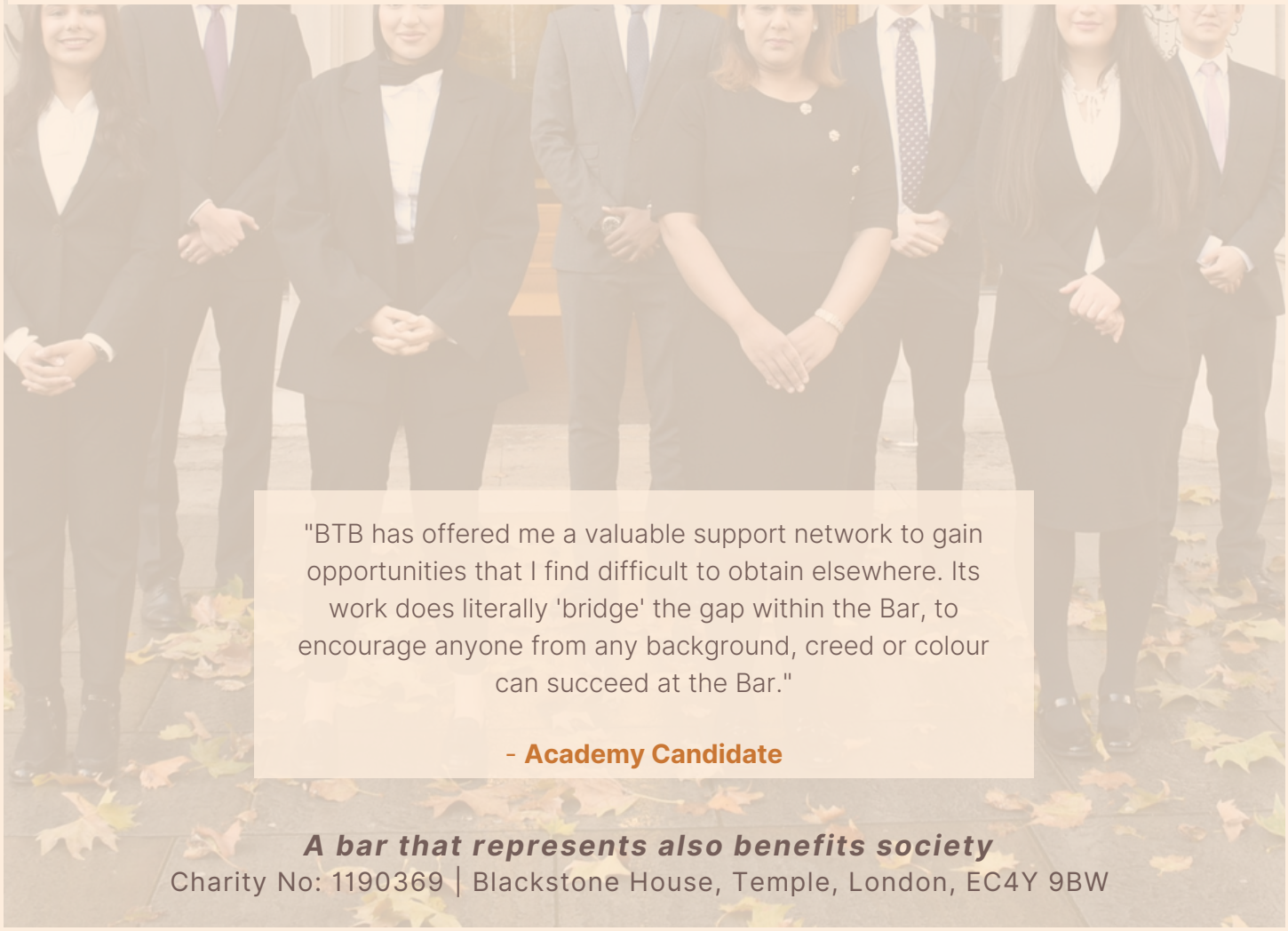
"As a grateful recipient of the Resilience Fund, I have been fortunate to receive financial support from Bridging the Bar's partners. By demonstrating genuine financial need through my bank statements, I was placed within Tier 3 criteria. This covered my travel and accommodation expenses, as well as the cost of hiring an alternative care provider, giving me invaluable peace of mind... This support has been transformative, enabling me to undertake a recent internship at the Royal Courts of Justice and attend personal development workshops.

A heartfelt thank you to the sponsors who made this possible. Your commitment to Diversity and Inclusion is evident, creating access to opportunities for disadvantaged aspiring barristers. These experiences have exceeded my expectations, and I look forward to becoming an alumnus with fond memories and newfound confidence."

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

Sponsored by BPP UNIVERSITY

PROGRAMME EXPANSION



"BTB has offered me a valuable support network to gain opportunities that I find difficult to obtain elsewhere. Its work does literally 'bridge' the gap within the Bar, to encourage anyone from any background, creed or colour can succeed at the Bar."

- Academy Candidate

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PROGRAMME EXPANSION

Since BPP became headline sponsor in 2023, BTB has expanded and refined our core Academy programmes, strengthening both the depth and quality of candidate support. Each year, we gather detailed feedback from candidates, mentors, and chambers, using these insights to enhance programme delivery and ensure we remain responsive to the evolving demands of pupillage recruitment.

A key focus has been increasing meaningful 1-to-1 interaction between candidates and practising barristers. Across advocacy training, POD workshops, mentoring, and consultancy support, we have introduced more personalised coaching and tailored feedback, giving candidates greater opportunities to develop practical skills and confidence in settings that mirror the realities of the Bar. Alongside this, we've enhanced mini-pupillage and internship opportunities so that more candidates gain direct, relevant experience, creating stronger CV and interview outcomes.

These refinements have significantly increased the quality of the candidate experience and the strength of their results. Candidates now benefit from more practical exposure, richer professional networks, and clearer preparation for the pupillage process. By expanding opportunities and raising the standard of delivery, the Academy is better equipped than ever to help candidates succeed.

PROGRAMME EXPANSION

WELCOME EVENT

The Welcome Event has evolved from a purely online introductory session into a fully in-person launch of the BTB Academy year. Initially designed for basic orientation and programme overview, the event has now been expanded to focus on meaningful relationship-building between candidates, senior alumni and BTB staff.

The welcome now includes structured networking segments, informal community-building activities and taster sessions to familiarise candidates with upcoming BTB programmes. This shift to an in-person format has strengthened early cohort cohesion and provided candidates with the opportunity to start forming their professional networks at the outset of the programme.

PROGRAMME EXPANSION

POD PROGRAMME

The Pod Programme has evolved into one of the most distinctive and impactful elements of the BTB Academy. Originally focused on personal coaching and soft skills development, the programme has been expanded to combine these foundations with targeted professional development.

Alongside existing sessions on confidence-building, mindset, and navigating challenges at the Bar, we have introduced specialist workshops delivered by practitioners and sector experts. These sessions focus on the key stages of the pupillage application cycle, giving candidates tailored insight and practical tools to strengthen their written applications, sharpen their interview techniques, and refine their overall professional presentation.

Crucially, candidates now benefit from 1-to-1 feedback from practising barristers, covering everything from CV reviews and written application guidance to advocacy exercises and mock interview practice. This dual approach — combining personal development with targeted, practical preparation — has transformed the Pods into an integrated coaching and skills-development programme.

PROGRAMME EXPANSION

MINI- PUPILLAGE PROGRAMMES

The Mini Pupillage Programme has grown into one of the Academy's most successful and impactful offers, providing candidates with structured opportunities to gain meaningful experience in their intended areas of practice. We have now introduced two clearly defined cycles at distinct points in the year, creating a more strategic and consistent model.

The first cycle guarantees every Academy candidate a mini-pupillage before the pupillage application window opens, ensuring they can draw on first-hand experience when preparing their applications. The second cycle provides additional opportunities for those not selected for internships, enabling them to build further insight and strengthen their applications ahead of interviews.

To meet growing demand, we have significantly expanded our recruitment of chambers partners, securing a wider range of practice areas and creating more placements than ever before. The programme's success has also allowed us to open up excess capacity to Academy Alumni, extending its impact beyond the current cohort.

PROGRAMME EXPANSION

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Additional Opportunities Workshop aims at supporting candidates who have not yet secured pupillage while equipping them with practical ways to strengthen their applications. Originally launched as a small online session focused on Judicial Assistant positions, the workshop has now evolved into a full in-person event.

The workshop now features contributions from a range of leading organisations and practitioners, including UK Supreme Court Judicial Assistants, advocates from Gittings & Knott, and representatives from the Free Representation Unit (FRU). These partners provide invaluable insights into roles and experiences that enhance advocacy skills, expand professional networks, and significantly improve candidates' competitiveness in future recruitment cycles.

By expanding its scope and building stronger partnerships, the workshop has grown into a flagship event within BTB's programme. Candidates are empowered to take control of their progression, identifying meaningful opportunities to build their CVs and develop their professional experience.

PROGRAMME EXPANSION

INTERNSHIPS

The Internship Programme has developed into one of the Academy's most competitive and rewarding opportunities, offering candidates unparalleled access to high-profile legal environments. Building on strong relationships and consistently excellent feedback from both partners and participants, we have significantly expanded the scale and diversity of placements available.

For the 2024/25 cycle, opportunities at the UK Supreme Court have grown from 8 to 10 placements, while positions at the High Court and Court of Appeal have increased from 16 to 19. This year also marked the introduction of a new paralegal internship with Hallinan Blackburn Gittings & Nott, giving candidates the chance to gain hands-on experience within a leading criminal defence practice.

Looking ahead to 2025/26, we are excited to launch a new partnership with Cumberland Lodge, adding an additional strand of placements focused on research, policy, and social justice. These developments reflect our ongoing commitment to ensuring candidates can access meaningful, CV-enhancing experience while deepening their understanding of the legal system at its highest levels.

PROGRAMME EXPANSION

MENTORING

The Mentoring Programme has evolved into one of the most tailored elements of the Academy experience. Where candidates were previously matched to mentors based only on broad practice areas, we now deliver the most comprehensive matching process BTB has ever offered. Candidates are paired not just by general area of practice but also by specialism — for example, clinical negligence — ensuring that guidance is directly relevant to their individual career ambitions.

In addition, the programme now incorporates diversity and inclusion considerations into the matching process. Candidates are offered the opportunity to be paired with mentors who share, or have experience supporting, relevant diversity characteristics, creating space for open and informed conversations about navigating the profession as someone from an underrepresented background.

This refined approach has significantly deepened the quality of the mentoring relationships, providing candidates with more relevant, personalised support and ensuring they have trusted spaces to seek both practical advice and lived-experience insights.

PROGRAMME EXPANSION

FUNDAMENTALS OF ADVOCACY

The Fundamentals of Advocacy series has developed into one of the Academy's most impactful training offers. Previously delivered entirely online, the programme has now evolved into a blended model that combines structured digital learning with a live, in-person event. Candidates first work through online modules designed and delivered by Bibi Badejo, founder of The Advocacy Coach, which introduce the core techniques of effective advocacy and build candidates' confidence step by step.

The programme culminates in a practical advocacy day, where candidates put their learning into action in simulated courtroom scenarios. Working alongside professionally trained actors as witnesses, participants practise exercises such as cross-examination and submissions before receiving detailed, tailored feedback directly from Bibi and a team of experienced practitioners.

PROGRAMME EXPANSION

INTERVIEW ADVOCACY

The Interview Advocacy Programme has been redesigned to deliver a more consistent, structured, and impactful experience for all candidates.

To ensure standardisation across all sessions, BTB has developed tailored training exercises and provided these directly to participating chambers, ensuring a consistently high-quality experience regardless of where candidates are placed. Candidates are now matched with chambers not only by their intended practice area but also by geographical location, allowing them to engage in advocacy exercises that reflect the realities of their chosen path.

The programme has been so successful that additional places are now offered to alumni, extending its benefits beyond the Academy year. Candidates leave the training with strengthened advocacy techniques, increased confidence, and a clear understanding of how to approach practical exercises commonly tested at interview.

PROGRAMME EXPANSION

GRADUATION

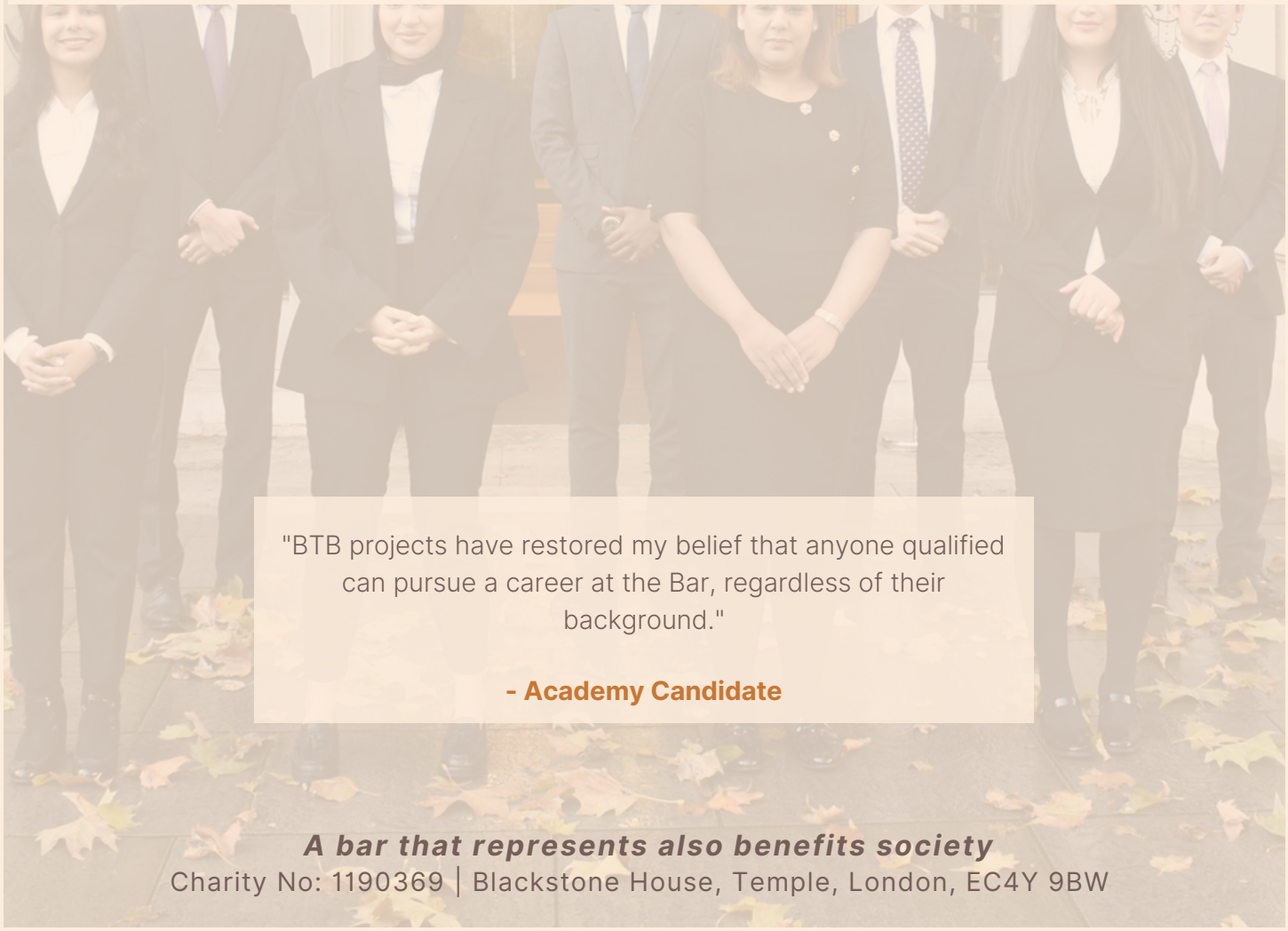
The Graduation Ceremony has evolved into one of the highlights of the Academy calendal. Hosted at Inner Temple, the event marks the culmination of the Academy year and provides a moment for candidates, alumni, supporters, and members of the wider BTB network to come together and celebrate.

In recent years, the tone of the event has shifted from educational to truly celebratory, with speeches, certificate presentations, and opportunities for networking. The ceremony now attracts guests from some of the most prestigious institutions in the profession, including representatives from the UK Supreme Court, Blackstone's Chambers, and other leading organisations.

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

Sponsored by BPP UNIVERSITY

NOVEL PROGRAMMES



"BTB projects have restored my belief that anyone qualified can pursue a career at the Bar, regardless of their background."

- Academy Candidate

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NOVEL PROGRAMMES

CREATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Since BPP became headline sponsor in 2023, we have launched a series of new Academy initiatives aimed at deepening impact, widening access, and better preparing candidates for the realities of pupillage. These programmes were developed in direct response to candidate feedback and sector insight.

With a view to strengthening both written and oral advocacy skills, we introduced the Academy Mooting Competition, giving candidates the chance to practise live submission in a formal, competitive setting. We also launched two Essay Competitions, encouraging deeper engagement with topical legal issues and giving candidates an additional platform to demonstrate critical thinking, written expression, and professional insight.

Each of these new programmes is designed to deliver direct CV and interview value, while reflecting BTB's commitment to academic rigour, progression and practical skills. They are open to all Academy candidates, and represent important steps towards diversifying the range of experiences candidates can draw on during pupillage recruitment.

BPP's sponsorship funding has been used to design, deliver and grow these offers, enabling us to secure venues, produce professional materials, and ensure high-quality feedback and follow-up for candidates. This investment helps ensure that the Academy is not only relevant and ambitious, but also responsive to what aspiring barristers need.

NOVEL PROGRAMMES

BTB MOOTING COMPETITION

As part of the 25/26 Academy Programme, candidates had the opportunity to participate in BTB'S first ever Mooting Competition. The competition allowed candidates to practise and enhance their advocacy skills while gaining firsthand experience in mooting.

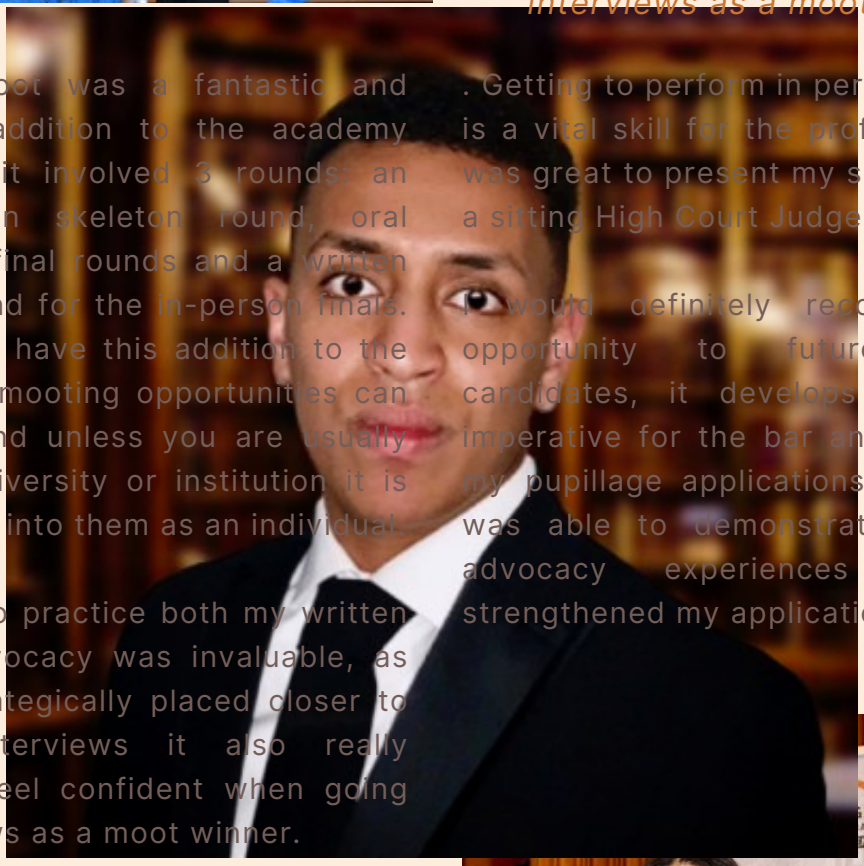
Candidates took part in three rounds of competition, working across both civil and criminal problem questions. The first round, open to all Academy participants, drew 76 competitors. Across each round, candidates prepared skeleton arguments, delivered oral submissions, and received structured feedback from experienced practitioners. Each successive round brought increasing challenge and higher expectations, with judges including practising barristers, former pupils, and members of BTB's volunteer network.

The final took place in person at 7BR and was judged by His Honour Judge Bennethan, a High Court Judge. Four finalists mooted a live problem before an audience of peers, volunteers and invited guests; a high-profile moment that several candidates have since cited in interviews and applications. The Mooting Competition remains one of the most skills-focused and CV-relevant elements of the programme, and its placement early in the year ensures candidates can refer to it throughout the pupillage process.

MOOTING COMPETITION

SIMRAN CHARD

> *To be able to practice both my written and oral advocacy was invaluable, as this was strategically placed closer to pupillage interviews it also really helped me feel confident when going into interviews as a moot winner.*



The BTB Moot was a fantastic and worthwhile addition to the academy programme, it involved 3 rounds: an initial written skeleton round, oral online semi final rounds and a written and oral round for the in-person finals. It is great to have this addition to the academy as mooting opportunities can be sparse and unless you are usually part of a university or institution it is hard to enter into them as an individual.

To be able to practice both my written and oral advocacy was invaluable, as this was strategically placed closer to pupillage interviews it also really helped me feel confident when going into interviews as a moot winner.

The moot was organised as an online semi final which allows more people, and those not in London, to participate and the finals are held in chambers which is always a great experience and allows you to network after the moot.

> *I would definitely recommend this opportunity to future academy candidates, it develops many skills imperative for the bar and has helped my pupillage applications stand out.*

. Getting to perform in person advocacy is a vital skill for the profession and it was great to present my submissions to a sitting High Court Judge.

I would definitely recommend this opportunity to future academy candidates, it develops many skills imperative for the bar and has helped my pupillage applications stand out. I was able to demonstrate successful advocacy experiences and this strengthened my applications.

CANDIDATE VOICES

Participating in BTB Mooting competition allowed me to work with my partner to consider diverse perspectives and prepare a written piece of advocacy. I enjoyed the challenge!

- *Cynthia Garba*

The mooting competition allowed us to work on written and oral advocacy and get really good feedback on how to develop.

-Tenishia Prah

The BTB Mooting Competition is a great experience to practise advocacy and network with fellow students.

- *Ethan Naish*

NOVEL PROGRAMMES

BTB ESSAY COMPETITION

As part of the 25/26 Academy Programme, candidates were invited to take part in BTB's inaugural Essay Competition. Designed to support written advocacy, critical thinking and legal analysis, the competition gave participants the chance to explore a complex topic in depth and showcase their ideas to a senior legal audience.

Candidates were asked to respond to the question:

"Evaluate the role of unconscious bias in legal decision-making. What measures can be implemented to promote fairness within the judiciary and legal practice?"

Submissions were judged by Margaret Purdasy, a barrister, Bencher of Lincoln's Inn, and senior lawyer at the Commonwealth and Development Office. Candidates were assessed on the clarity, originality and rigour of their arguments, as well as their awareness of how bias can manifest within legal systems and what reforms might address it.

Finalists were announced publicly and recognised across BTB's social and digital platforms. The competition offered a meaningful way for candidates to express their views on issues at the heart of BTB's mission, while also producing strong material to draw on in pupillage applications and interviews. It will remain a key academic feature of the Academy's annual programme.

NOVEL PROGRAMMES

JO DELAHUNTY KC ESSAY COMPETITION

As part of the 24/25 Academy Programme, candidates were invited to submit entries to the first annual Jo Delahunty KC Essay Competition. This opportunity encouraged participants to engage critically with evolving areas of legal practice while developing skills in structured argument, legal research and written expression.

The question set for this year was:

“Consider the legal framework and practice guidance that the UK has in place to accommodate the needs of neurodiverse individuals in legal proceedings. Does it achieve its aims? Discuss.”

Entries were judged by Professor Jo Delahunty KC, a highly respected barrister and academic, known for her work in the most complex family law cases and for championing access to justice across the profession.

Candidates responded with insight and thoughtfulness to a timely and socially relevant topic. The competition offered the chance to explore underexamined areas of law and reflect on fairness and procedural justice within the court system. Finalists’ essays were recognised across BTB channels and contributed to strong interview material for pupillage applications. The competition will remain a key part of the Academy’s academic and advocacy offer in future cycles.

> *Receiving the award at the BTB graduation was an immense honour. Professor Jo Delahunty KC has long inspired me, so having my work read and recognised by her was profoundly affirming.*

THE PROFESSOR JO DELAHUNTY KC ESSAY COMPETITION

MONIQUE FREMDER

The Professor Jo Delahunty KC Essay Competition invites BTB Academy candidates to submit up to 1,000 words on a legal question exploring neurodiversity in the justice system. Judged and funded by Professor Jo Delahunty KC of 4PB, the competition awards a £500 prize to the winning entry.

This year's question asked: "Consider the legal framework and practice guidance that the UK has in place to accommodate the needs of neurodiverse individuals in legal proceedings. Does it achieve its aims? Discuss." I approached the topic through the lens of family law, drawing on my observations of intermediaries and adaptations in counsel's approach to the cross-examination of vulnerable witnesses during mini-pupillages and marshalling.

Researching and writing the essay was both rigorous and rewarding. It enabled me to examine how procedural mechanisms operate in practice and to assess their role in securing access to justice.

Engaging with the theme of neurodiversity deepened my perspective, reinforcing my belief that neurodivergence is a vital dimension of human diversity that enriches society and must be meaningfully included within our legal system.

Receiving the award at the BTB graduation was an immense honour. Professor Jo Delahunty KC has long inspired me, so having my work read and recognised by her was profoundly affirming. The prize has strengthened my confidence as an aspiring barrister and sharpened my focus on advocating for greater inclusivity in family justice.

This competition reflects BTB's commitment to advancing inclusivity and meaningful change within the legal system. It offers candidates a rare opportunity to engage with real legal issues and to contribute to conversations that matter.

> *This competition reflects BTB's commitment to advancing inclusivity and meaningful change within the legal system.*

CANDIDATE VOICES

The essay competition, was thought provoking and a great way to keep legal skills fresh whilst advocating for change.

- Tenishia Prah

Good opportunity for those who have not been able to participate in legal essay competitions before and to write about unconscious bias in the legal profession.

- Mandy Heer

The essay competition was a good opportunity to practice my legal research and written skills.

- Enehuwa Adagu

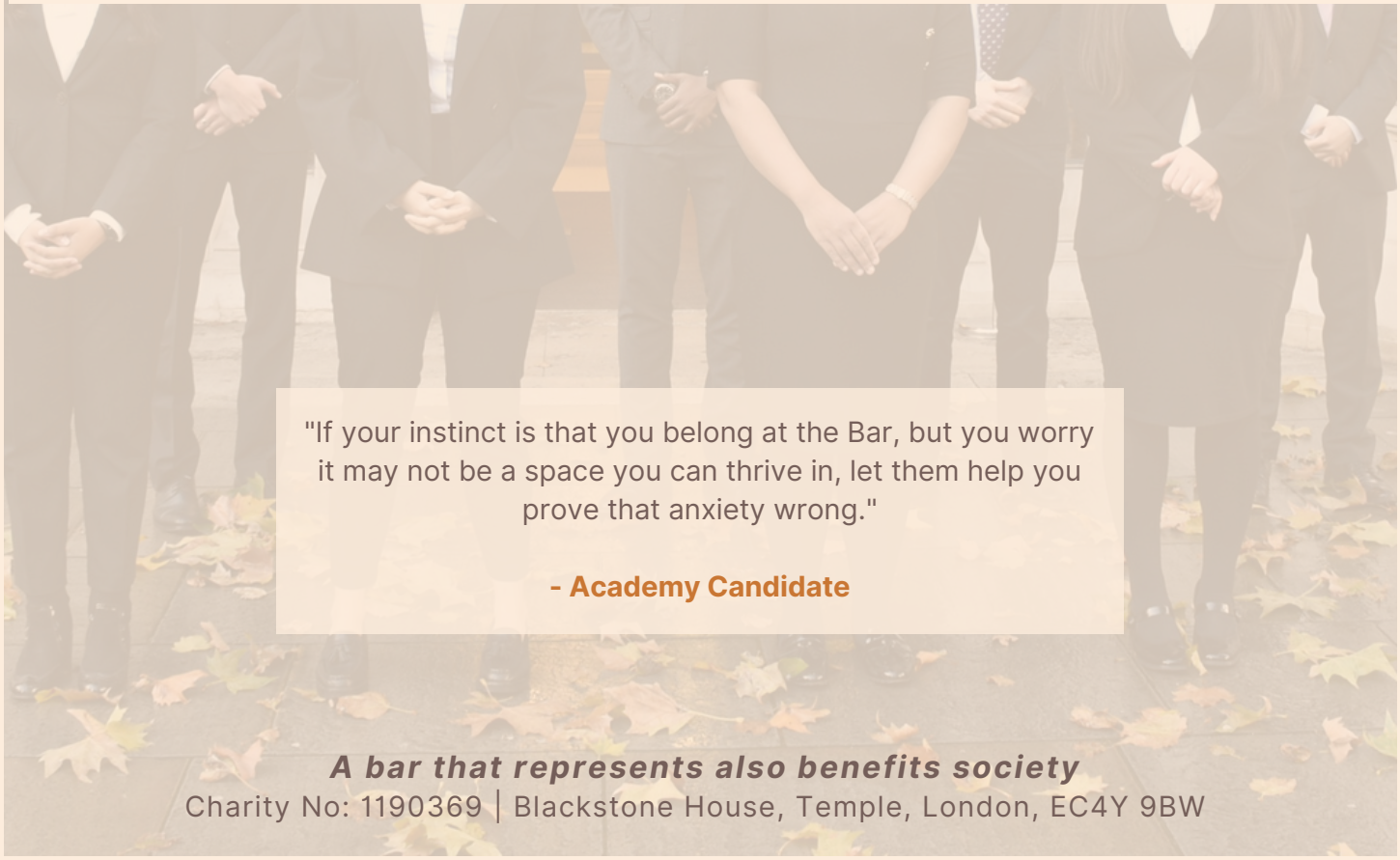
It gives people an opportunity to be involved in a competition and research something new.

- Raymah Selvaraj

BRIDGING THE BAR

ALUMNI

ALUMNI PROGRAMME



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ALUMNI NETWORK

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

As the number of Academy graduates grows, so too has demand for continued development and connection. Since the beginning of BTB and BPP's partnership in 2023, BTB has formalised its alumni activity and begun delivery of a sustained programme. It is designed to provide continued access to development opportunities while sustaining the values, community and momentum built during the core Academy year.

Alumni receive structured pre-pupillage support, including written application reviews, mock interviews and practical recommendations for CV development. Alongside this, BTB provides guidance on the practical realities of junior practice, from chambers culture and work allocation to confidence, resilience and long-term development. To maintain connection and shared identity, the programme also includes regular community-building and networking events, designed to keep alumni engaged

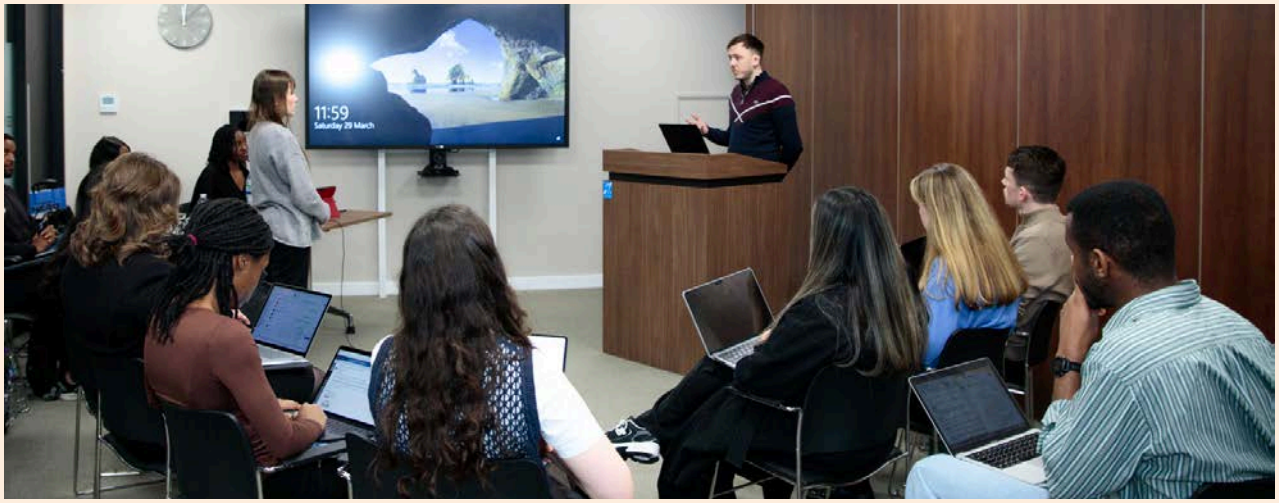
The Alumni Network has three key goals:

- Professional development: Continuing to equip alumni with the skills, mindset and practical experience required to succeed at the Bar.
- Community building: Maintaining and strengthening the sense of belonging created during the Academy, and mitigating the isolation often experienced by those entering the profession from non-traditional backgrounds.
- Pay-it-forward culture: Encouraging alumni to support the next generation of BTB candidates through volunteering and peer-led activities.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MOCK TRIAL

The BTB Alumni Mock Trial gives alumni a hands-on opportunity to deepen their advocacy skills and gain realistic courtroom experience in a supported, structured environment. Taking place over three in-person Saturday rounds at a London Magistrates' Court, with the pilot in summer 2026, the programme offers participants the chance to act as counsel across both civil and criminal trials, developing fluency in case theory, examination, and submissions under pressure.



In the lead-up to the competition, BTB will deliver pre-trial workshops on case preparation, advocacy structure, and courtroom conduct. Alumni will also be offered team-based coaching to help them work collaboratively, think tactically, and reflect on performance. Each round will be presided over by volunteer barristers, with the final round judged by a senior judicial stakeholder, offering participants high-quality exposure to feedback from professionals across the system.

The Mock Trial is a key part of BTB's commitment to building the skills alumni need to succeed at pupillage interview and in the early years of practice. It gives candidates the opportunity to refine their advocacy in realistic conditions, build confidence in court procedure, and demonstrate readiness for the demands of junior practice.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ADVOCACY TRAINING

In Autumn 2026, the Alumni Network will pilot a new Advocacy at the Junior Bar workshop series in partnership with Coram Chambers, aimed at alumni pursuing pupillage and early practice at the Family Bar. These specialist sessions are designed to strengthen candidates' readiness for practice by focusing on the specific demands of advocacy in family proceedings including the communication, positioning, and professional judgement required at junior level.

The workshop series will explore the types of advocacy alumni are likely to encounter both during second six and in early tenancy, as well as the soft skills essential for managing clients, handling sensitive subject matter, and working constructively with judges and opponents. It will also support candidates in understanding how to communicate these skills effectively in pupillage interviews when applying to family-focused sets.

This event reflects BTB's growing focus on sector-specific development for alumni, providing not only general support for progression, but tailored preparation that speaks directly to candidates' chosen areas of practice.

If successful, the model will be expanded into other areas of law, helping alumni to develop targeted confidence and credibility across their targeted sector of the Bar.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PUPILLAGE POST MORTEM

As part of BTB's Alumni Programme, we run an annual Post-Pupillage Applications Workshop to support alumni preparing for the next pupillage recruitment cycle. Held in person at Littleton Chambers, the session helps candidates reflect on their most recent applications and develop targeted action plans to strengthen their prospects in the year ahead.

Led by a team of volunteer barristers, the workshop offered small-group discussions tailored to candidates' preferred practice areas. Alumni received practical, honest feedback on their current profiles, explored common pitfalls in the selection process, and gained insight into how best to address gaps in experience or confidence. The format encouraged open, constructive conversation and gave participants a clearer sense of how their applications are viewed by practitioners within their chosen fields.

This event was particularly significant as it was organised by BTB alumna Mia, now a pupil at Littleton Chambers. Her leadership and initiative ensured that the session was directly shaped by the alumni perspective and rooted in real-time understanding of what applicants need.

It was a powerful example of the BTB community in action: alumni taking ownership, practitioners giving back, and candidates progressing with the tools they need. The workshop will now run annually and form a model for future peer-led activity within the wider Alumni Programme.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

RESOURCE ACCESS

Recognising that many candidates secure pupillage months or even years after completing the programme, we offer ongoing, flexible support to help alumni stay pupillage-ready throughout the recruitment process.

Alumni continue to have access to the BTB Consultancy Panel, where they can request feedback on applications, schedule mock interviews, and receive tailored guidance from experienced practitioners. Where capacity allows, they can also take up places on mini-pupillages or interview advocacy training sessions offered during the Academy year, ensuring they don't miss out on key opportunities for further development.

This offer is designed to meet alumni where they are, allowing them to engage with support as and when they need it, while staying connected to BTB's wider community. It ensures that candidates can continue to develop and refine their applications over time, with the tools and feedback needed to approach each round of the pupillage process with greater confidence and clarity.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICE PREPERATON

The Alumni Programme includes a series of professional development sessions designed to prepare candidates for the realities of practice. Delivered in collaboration with sector experts, these sessions focus on the wider skills needed to build a sustainable career at the Bar.

We are working with Michaela Hardwick of Beyond Compliance to offer a session on the Professional Statement competencies and broader principles of regulatory compliance. This practical workshop will help alumni understand their professional obligations from the outset and support confident, compliant early practice.

BTB is currently in discussions with Azets UK, specialists in legal accounts, accounting, and advisory services, to deliver a practical session tailored for future self-employment. The talk will cover essential topics like tax efficiency, cash-flow planning, and financial systems that help junior practitioners manage the complex realities of self-employed life. Drawing on Azets' experience supporting barristers at all career stages, the session will combine clarity, technical insight, and realistic guidance; a useful addition to BTB's wider practical training offer.

BTB will continue to expand its workshop offerings to reflect the evolving needs of alumni, with a focus on practical, skills-based sessions that support confident, well-rounded entry into practice.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

ANNUAL HIKE

The Annual Hike is a relaxed, informal opportunity for community-building across BTB's extended network. Open to Alumni, current Academy candidates, and BTB-associated barristers, the event brings together multiple cohorts in a setting that encourages genuine connection away from the formality of legal events.

Taking place each August, the hike follows a guided route through Virginia Water, past the Magna Carta monument, and into the Enchanted Forest in Surrey. Along the way, participants join in light-touch activities including rounders, mindfulness and guided reflection sessions: these aim to foster connection, wellbeing, and peer support. The walk concludes at a local pub, offering space for informal conversation and cross-cohort exchange.

The hike provides a unique opportunity for barristers and candidates at different stages to meet, share experiences and build relationships in a low-pressure, inclusive environment. The event reflects BTB's wider commitment to sustaining a diverse, values-led professional community; one that supports each other not only in CVs and courtrooms, but also in everyday moments of belonging.

As the Alumni Programme develops, the hike will remain a key part of BTB's approach to long-term engagement and cultural continuity.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

ANNUAL REUNION

The Annual Reunion is the flagship Alumni Network event and serves as a key opportunity for alumni to reconnect, meet new members of the BTB community, and expand their professional networks. Designed to create a relaxed and inclusive atmosphere, the event brings together current Academy candidates, Alumni, and BTB-associated volunteer barristers in an informal setting.

Planned to launch in London on 5 December 2025, the evening will begin with welcome drinks and light catering, followed by short acknowledgements, informal networking and community-building activities such as games and raffles.

By providing a social and professional platform for Alumni to remain engaged with one another, and with BTB more broadly, the Reunion supports long-term community cohesion, reduces the isolation often experienced at the Bar, and embeds a culture of mutual support throughout the BTB ecosystem.

PAY-IT-BACK CULTURE

CONTINUING ENAGEMENT

In addition to structured events and training, the BTB Alumni Programme offers a range of opportunities for graduates to remain actively involved in the Academy. Alumni are encouraged to support the next cohort by taking on meaningful roles within the programme.

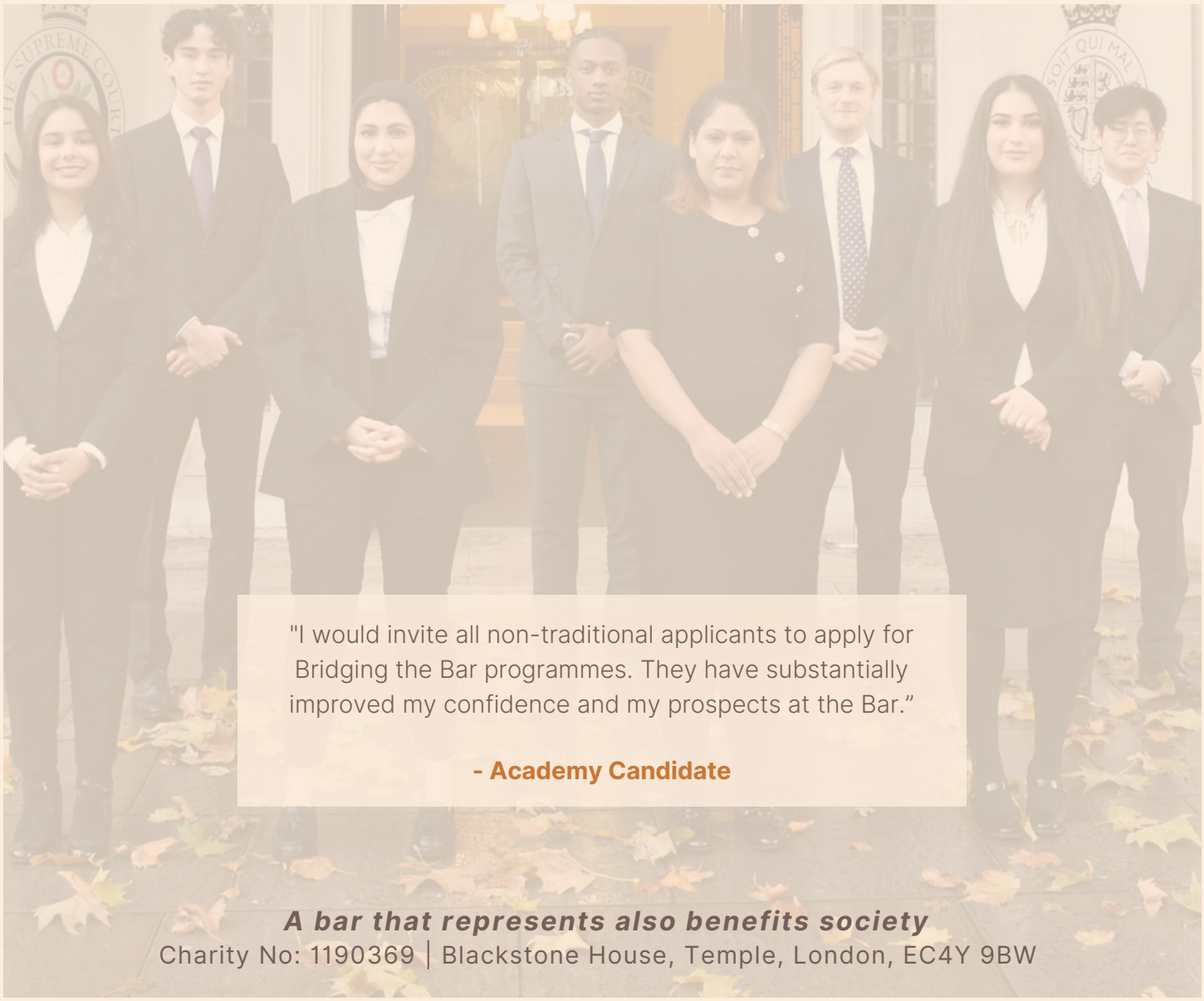
Each year, alumni return as mentors, session facilitators, and POD leaders, helping to guide candidates through the academic and emotional demands of the Academy. Their recent, lived experience of the process allows them to offer practical advice, encouragement and perspective.

For those who want to take on a more public-facing role, the Alumni Ambassador scheme provides a structured route to champion BTB externally. Ambassadors speak at events, contribute to written and video content, and help raise awareness of the programme across the profession. These roles offer valuable opportunities for alumni to develop their public speaking, storytelling and leadership skills, while visibly modelling what success can look like.

Together, these roles help to foster a culture of continuity and shared investment across the BTB community. Alumni are given meaningful ways to stay involved, pass on what they've learned, and contribute to an experience they themselves have shaped. As more graduates step into these roles, they help ensure the Academy remains responsive, grounded and informed by the realities of the path to pupillage.

BRIDGING THE BAR

ACADEMY IMPACT



"I would invite all non-traditional applicants to apply for Bridging the Bar programmes. They have substantially improved my confidence and my prospects at the Bar."

- Academy Candidate

A bar that represents also benefits society

Charity No: 1190369 | Blackstone House, Temple, London, EC4Y 9BW

ACADEMY FIGURES

100

CANDIDATES

Selected for the Academy Programme

164

MINI PUPILLAGES

Undertaken by Bridging the Bar candidates

39

INTERNSHIPS

With the UK Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, High Court, Advocate, the Law Commission and Hallians, Gitting and Nott.

ACADEMY FIGURES

21

SPONSORSHIP PARTNERS

Supporting
Bridging the Bar

199

PROFESSIONAL VOLUNTEERS

Assigned as mentors,
Pod Leaders, or Consultancy
Panel contributors

49

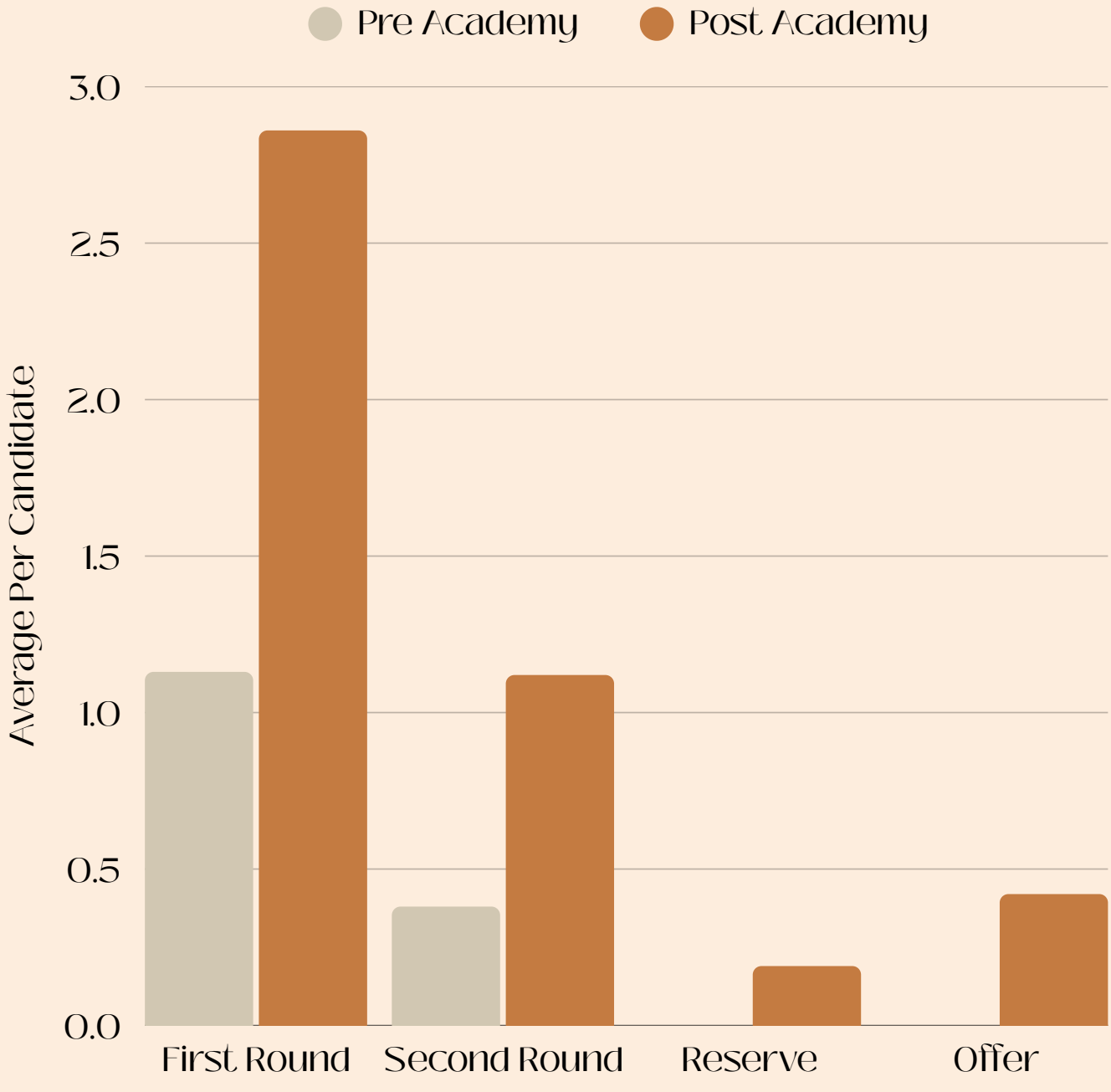
PARTNER CHAMBERS

Offering mini-pupillages or
interview advocacy
training to BTB candidates

ACADEMY IMPACT

220% INCREASE IN TOTAL SECOND-ROUND INTERVIEWS

173.3% INCREASE IN TOTAL FIRST-ROUND INTERVIEWS



Reported data from BTB Academy's 24/25 cohort at onboarding and at exit.

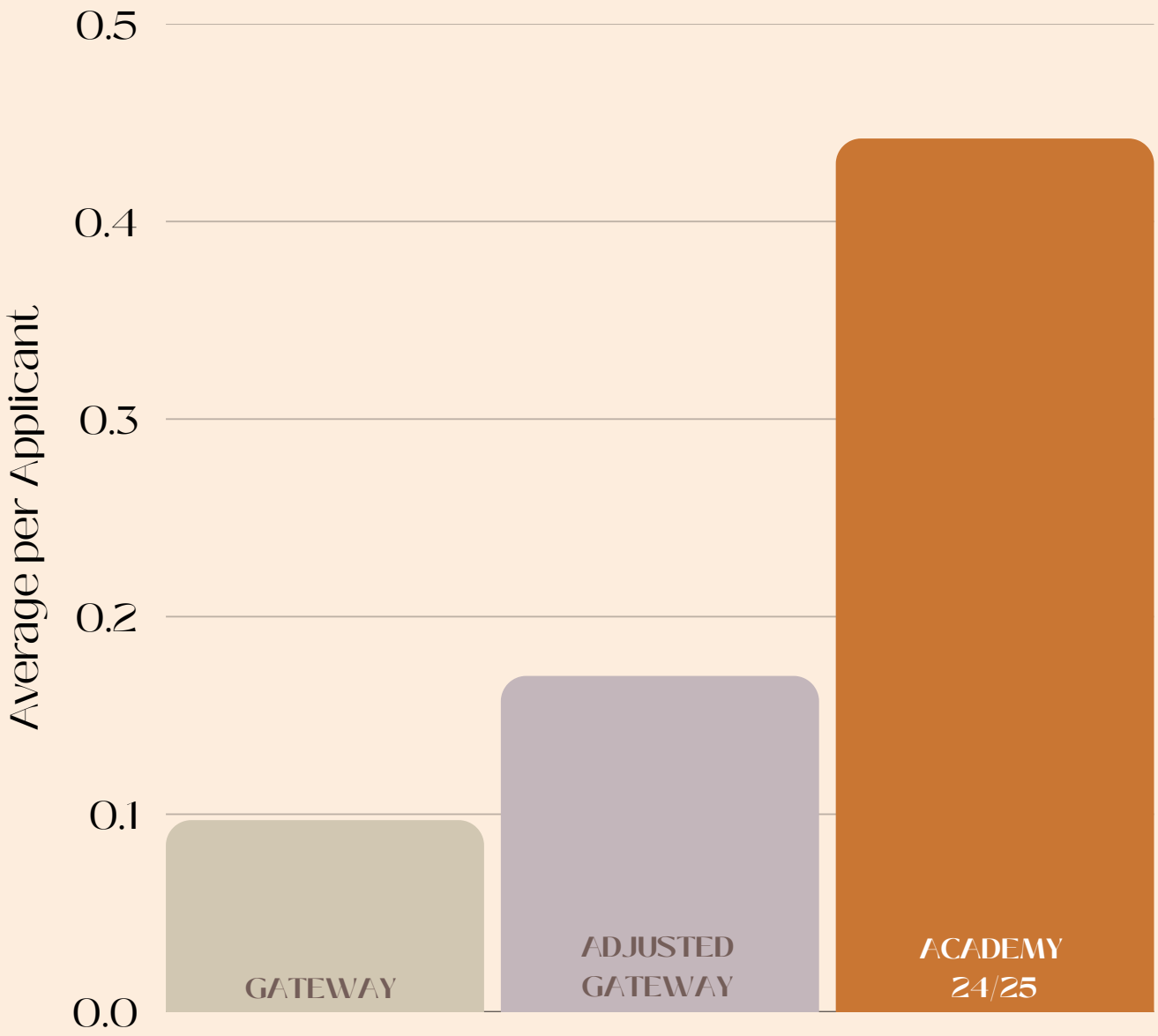
ACADEMY IMPACT

5.74X MORE LIKELY TO GET PUPILLAGE

AGAINST RAW GATEWAY DATA

2.60X MORE LIKELY TO GET PUPILLAGE

AGAINST ADJUSTED GATEWAY DATA



Pupillage Gateway Report 2023/34 in comparison with reported data from BTB Academy's 24/25 cohort.

ACADEMY IMPACT

OUR CANDIDATES ARE....

Low Income Background*

3.39x

more likely to succeed

20.0% vs Gateway 5.9%

BAME

3.16 x

more likely to succeed

13.6% vs Gateway ≈4.3% (derived)

LGBTQ+

3.72 x

more likely to succeed

28.6% vs Gateway overall 7.7%

Disability

4.33 x

more likely to succeed

33.3% vs Gateway overall 7.7%

*Using free school meals as a proxy for socio-economic status
Multipliers compare Academy per-applicant success from reported data (24/25 cohort) with the latest national benchmarks. FSM uses Gateway 2022/23 (latest with counts). BAME uses derived 2023/24 rates (offer share ÷ applicant share). Disability and LGBTQ+ use the overall 2023/24 success rate (7.7%) because subgroup success rates aren't published. Small-n caution applies.

ACADEMY IMPACT

Sarah Stearne, Incoming Pupil Barrister

"The programme has given me more than I could have hoped for – I'm sure I would not have obtained pupillage without the opportunities it has provided. My wholehearted thanks to the BTB team, I know you work phenomenally hard and it really is so appreciated."

Simran Chard, Incoming Pupil Barrister

"I don't think this would have been possible without BTB and the support I have got over the past few months. I truly think it has made such a tangible difference and just wanted to let you know that. I am indebted to the academy for making me a better candidate."

James Matthews, Incoming Pupil Barrister

"The BTB Academy gave me more than I could have ever imagined. The Academy did so much for me from helping me with my pupillage apps to being paired with a fantastic mentor and networking with some amazing likeminded people. I can't thank the Academy enough for their support over this year. I can honestly say, without a doubt, I would not have got pupillage this year with you! I am immensely grateful."

ACADEMY IMPACT

James Collier, Incoming Pupil Barrister

"I would like to thank the Academy for allowing me to be a part of the programme. I would not have got pupillage without it. Through the Academy I gained the experience and resources I needed to obtain pupillage. I met great people going through the same experience as myself and I could not recommend the Academy enough!

Theresa Guodaa, Incoming Pupil Barrister

“The mentorship, opportunities, and sense of community I found through Bridging the Bar were invaluable in helping me secure pupillage. The programme support gave me the confidence to keep going, and I’m incredibly grateful to have been a part of such a brilliant programme. Thank you for everything BTB team!”

Ethan Naish, Incoming Pupil Barrister

“The BTB academy has given me more than I could imagine - The Academy provided advocacy training, mentorship and networking opportunities that helped me secure pupillage during my bar course. As someone from a non-typical background I felt accepted and celebrated. BTB has played a foundational role in facilitating my success, I would recommend it to any aspiring barrister.”

ACADEMY IMPACT

Miles Janes, Incoming Pupil Brister

"The academy was instrumental for me this year and I believe was key to me securing pupillage. I am grateful to have joined and learnt from such a valuable community of aspiring barristers. In a predominately self-employed profession, a supportive friend group and a helping hand cannot be understated. I have learnt and grown from the people I have met at BtB."

Jesler van Houdt, Incoming Pupil Barrister

"The BTB Academy has opened many doors, including to the Supreme Court, that allowed me to secure pupillage. It has given me the self-confidence, tools and energy to succeed. Most importantly, I gained a network of brilliant, inspiring and hard-working peers that I am proud to call my friends."

Helena Nugent, Incoming Pupil Barrister

"The impact the BTB academy has had on me both personally and professionally cannot be overstated. After multiple years of failing to secure pupillage, I am delighted to say that this year I was successful. This was in large part due to the incredible opportunities and support provided by BTB. From my fantastic mentor's input to mock interviews and supportive POD sessions, this was the first year that I didn't feel alone in the application process and the outcome speaks for itself. BTB has reinforced my belief in myself and the future of a bar that represents society as a whole. I couldn't be more thankful to you all."

ACADEMY IMPACT

100%

of pupillage offer holders

reported that obtaining the offer was materially aided by the Academy

89.5%

of Academy Candidates

reported improved written applications

63.2% 5★; 26.3% 4★; 10.5% 3★; avg 4.53/5; median 5

94.7%

of Academy Candidates

reported improved interviews

42.1% 5★; 52.6% 4★; 5.3% 3★; avg 4.37/5;median 4

Reported data from BTB Academy's 24/25 cohort.

ACADEMY IMPACT

100%

of Academy Candidates

would recommend the Academy. 89.5% 5★; 10.5% 4★; avg 4.89/5; median 5

89.5%

of Academy Candidates

reported improved community building
36.8% 5★ ; 52.6% 4★; 5.3% 3★; avg 4.21/5; median 4

84.2%

of Academy Candidates

reported improved confidence
52.6% 5★ ; 31.6% 4★; 15.8% 3★; avg 4.37/5; median 5

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

Sponsored by BPP UNIVERSITY

GET IN TOUCH

www.bridgingthebar.org

programmes@bridgingthebar.org
candidatecommunications@bridgingthebar.org

for group, press and media enquiries
info@bridgingthebar.org

@BridgeTheBar

Bridging The Bar

Bridging The Bar

@bridgingthebar

A bar that represents also benefits society

Charity No: 1190369 | Blackstone House, Temple, London, EC4Y 9BW

ANNUAL REPORTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1ST APRIL 2025

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

CHARITY REGISTRATION No: 1190369

Castle View Accounting Ltd
Ground Floor Offices
53 High Street
Arundel
West Sussex
BN18 9AJ

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

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Pages 102 to 107	Notes to the Financial Statements
Page 108	Independent Examiner's Report

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

CHARITY NUMBER	1190369
DATE OF REGISTRATION	13th July 2020
START OF FINANCIAL YEAR	2nd April 2024
END OF FINANCIAL YEAR	1st April 2025
TRUSTEES AT 1ST APRIL 2025	Aaron Mayers Mass Ndow-Njie Matheu Armel Swallow
LEGAL STATUS	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
GOVERNING INSTRUMENT	CIO - Foundation Registered 13th July 2020

OBJECTS

The promotion of equality and diversity and the promotion of social inclusion amongst those who socially excluded due to being members of socially and economically deprived community, at The Bar of England and Wales by: **a**) The elimination of discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religion. **b**) Advancing education and raising awareness in equality and diversity. **c**) Promotion activities to foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds. **d**) Cultivating a sentiment in favour of equality and diversity.

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS	Blackstone Chambers Ltd Blackstone House 3 Garden Court Temple London EC4Y 9BW
PRIMARY BANKERS	Coutts & Co 440 Strand London WC2R 0QS Zempler Bank Ltd Cottons Centre Cottons Lane London SE1 2QG
INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS	Castle View Accounting Ltd Ground Floor Offices 53 High Street Arundel West Sussex BN18 9AJ

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1ST APRIL 2025

Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable Law and the United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice GAAP).

The Law applicable to Charities in England and Wales, the Charities Act 2011, Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations and the provisions of the Governing Document requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure of the Charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the CIO will continue to operate.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations and the provisions of the Governing Document. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Trustees on 24 January 2026

Signed on their behalf by Trustee

Printed Name: MASS NDOW-NJIE

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1ST APRIL 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2024/25 £	TOTAL 2023/24 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Incoming Resources from Generated Funds					
Donations, Grants & Legacies	**3a**	202,231	-	202,231	131,690
Investment Income	**3b**	26	-	26	66
Other Incoming Resources	**3c**	5,751	-	5,751	1,671
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		**208,008**	**-**	**208,008**	**133,427**
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Costs of Generating Funds					
Cost of Charitable Activities	**4a**	156,042	-	156,042	92,749
Governance Costs	**4b**	1,650	-	1,650	1,350
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		**157,692**	**-**	**157,692**	**94,099**
NET INCOMING (OUTGOING) RESOURCES		**50,317**	**-**	**50,317**	**39,328**
Funds Brought Forward		91,950	-	91,950	52,622
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		**142,267**	**-**	**142,267**	**91,950**

Movements on all reserves and all recognised gains and losses are shown above. All of the organisation's operations are classed as continuing.

The notes on pages 102 to 107 form part of these financial statements.

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 1ST APRIL 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 01-Apr-25 £	TOTAL 01-Apr-24 £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Assets	2	-	-	-	-
Investments	6	-	-	-	-
Total Fixed Assets		-	-	-	-
Current Assets					
Debtors & Prepayments	8	-	-	-	-
Cash at Bank and in Hand	7	144,727	-	144,727	93,990
Total Current Assets		**144,727**	-	**144,727**	**93,990**
Creditors: Amounts due within one year	9	2,460	-	2,460	2,040
NET CURRENT ASSETS		142,267	-	142,267	91,950
TOTAL ASSETS less current liabilities		**142,267**	-	**142,267**	**91,950**
Creditors: Amounts falling due in more than one year	10	-	-	-	-
NET ASSETS		**142,267**	-	**142,267**	**91,950**
Funds of the Charity					
General Funds		142,267	-	142,267	91,950
Restricted Funds	5	-	-	-	-
Total Funds		**142,267**	-	**142,267**	**91,950**

Approved by the Trustees on 24 January 2026

Signed on their behalf by Trustee

Printed Name: MASS NDOW-NJIE

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1ST APRIL 2025

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Preparation & Assessment of Going Concern

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP 2015) (Second Edition, effective 1 January 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Assessment of Going Concern

Preparation of the accounts is on a going concern basis. The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Incoming Resources

Recognition of Incoming Resources

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- the trustees are virtually certain they will receive the resources; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability

Incoming Resources with Related Expenditure

Where incoming resources have related expenditure (as with fundraising or contract income) the incoming resource and related expenditure are reported gross in the SOFA.

Grants and Donations

Grants and Donations are only included in the SOFA when the charity has unconditional entitlement to the resources.

Tax Reclaims on Donations and Gifts

Incoming resources from tax reclaims are included in the SOFA at the same time as the gift to which they relate.

Contractual Income and Performance Related Grants

This is only included in the SOFA once the related goods or services have been delivered.

Gifts in Kind

Gifts in kind are accounted for at a reasonable estimate of their value to the charity or the amount actually realised. Gifts in kind for sale or distribution are included in the accounts as gifts only when sold or distributed by the charity. Gifts in kind for use by the charity are included in the SOFA as incoming resources when receivable.

Donated Services and Facilities

These are only included in incoming resources (with an equivalent amount in resources expended) where the benefit to the charity is reasonably quantifiable, measurable and material. The value placed on these resources is the estimated value to the charity of the service or facility received.

Volunteer Help

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts.

Investment Income

This is included in the accounts when receivable.

Investment Gains and Losses

This included any gain or loss on the sale of investments and any gain or loss resulting from revaluing investments to market value at the end of the year.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Expenditure and Liabilities

Liability Recognition
Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

Governance Costs
Include costs of the preparation and examination of statutory accounts, the costs of the trustees meetings and cost of any legal advice to trustees on governance or constitutional matters.

Grants with Performance Conditions
Where the charity gives a grant with conditions for its payment being a specific level of service or output to be provided, such grants are only recognised in the SOFA once the recipient of the grant has provided the specified service or output.

Grants Payable without Performance Conditions
These are only recognised in the accounts when a commitment has been made and there are no conditions to be met relating to a grant which remain in control of the charity.

Investments
Investments quoted on a recognised stock exchange are valued at market value at the year end. Other investment assets are included at trustees' best estimate of market value.

Unrestricted Funds
These funds can be used for the general objectives of the charity as set out in the trustees report. The movements of the unrestricted funds are given in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Restricted Funds
These funds are where the donor has specified a purpose for the donation made. These restrictions often arise as a result of appeals for special offerings for specific purposes.

Designated Funds
These funds are funds set aside by the trustees out of unrestricted general funds for particular purposes or projects.

Fixed Assets
Fixed Assets are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year and cost at least £1,500. They are valued at cost or, if gifted, at the value to the charity on receipt.

Depreciation Expense
Depreciation is calculated at a rate to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets over their estimated useful lives. The rates applied are as follows:

Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment	25% - Straight Line Basis

2. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

The CIO held no fixed assets during this or the previous financial year.

The annual commitments under non-cancelling operating leases and capital commitments are as follows:

1st April 2025: None
1st April 2024: None

3. INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**TOTAL 2024/25** £	**TOTAL 2023/24** £
a) Donations, Grants & Legacies				
Gifts & Donations	202,231	-	202,231	131,690
	202,231	**-**	**202,231**	**131,690**
b) Investment Income				
Interest	26	-	26	66
	26	**-**	**26**	**66**
c) Other Incoming Resources				
Sundry Income	5,751	-	5,751	1,671
	5,751	**-**	**5,751**	**1,671**

4. RESOURCES EXPENDED

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**TOTAL 2024/25** £	**TOTAL 2023/24** £
a) Cost of Charitable Activities					
Academy Programme Costs		22,728	-	22,728	13,106
Administrative Expenses		1,132	-	1,132	2,160
Advertising & Publicity		1,987	-	1,987	1,246
Award & Prizes		342	-	342	860
Bank Charges		57	-	57	98
Catering Costs		9,009	-	9,009	-
Gifts & Donations		-	-	-	2,328
Insurance Costs		424	-	424	266
Photography Costs		2,990	-	2,990	1,650
Staff Costs	**12**	104,377	-	104,377	58,095
Staff Expenses		8,950	-	8,950	3,700
Sundry Expenses		625	-	625	2,367
Venue Hire		240	-	240	4,240
Volunteers Costs		50	-	50	-
Website Costs		3,130	-	3,130	2,633
		156,042	**-**	**156,042**	**92,749**
b) Governance Costs					
Independent Examiners Fees	**9**	1,320	-	1,320	1,140
Legal & Professional Fees		330	-	330	210
		1,650	**-**	**1,650**	**1,350**

5. RESTRICTED FUNDS

The CIO held no restricted funds during this or the previous financial year.

6. INVESTMENTS

The CIO held no fixed assets investments during this or the previous financial year.

7. CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	**TOTAL 01-Apr-25 £**	**TOTAL 01-Apr-24 £**
Cash at Bank & in Hand	144,727	-	144,727	93,990
	144,727	**-**	**144,727**	**93,990**

8. DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	**TOTAL 01-Apr-25 £**	**TOTAL 01-Apr-24 £**
Sundry Debtors	-	-	-	-
	-	**-**	**-**	**-**

9. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	**TOTAL 01-Apr-25 £**	**TOTAL 01-Apr-24 £**
Independent Examiners Fees	1,320	-	1,320	1,140
Sundry Creditors	1,140	-	1,140	900
	2,460	**-**	**2,460**	**2,040**

10. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE IN MORE THAN ONE YEAR

The CIO held no long term liabilities during this or the previous financial year.

11. NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**TOTAL 01-Apr-25 £**	**TOTAL 01-Apr-24 £**
Fixed Asset Investments	-	-	-	-
Net Current Assets	142,267	-	142,267	91,950
Long Term Liabilities	-	-	-	-
	142,267	**-**	**142,267**	**91,950**

12. STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS

	TOTAL 2024/25	TOTAL 2023/24
	£	£
Gross Wages, Salaries & Fees	100,363	53,845
Employer's National Insurance Costs	4,014	4,250
Pension Contributions	-	-
	104,377	**58,095**

Employees who were engaged in each of the following activities:

	TOTAL 2024/25	TOTAL 2023/24
Charitable Activities	5	3

The Charity engages with staff on a Self-employed basis and is therefore not liable to Income Tax and National Insurance Costs and no employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000. (2023/24:None)

13. TRUSTEES AND OTHER RELATED PARTIES

No payments were made to trustees or any persons connected with them during this financial period. No material transaction took place between the organisation and a trustee or any person connected with them. (2023/24:None)

14. RISK ASSESSMENT

The Trustees actively review the major risks which the charity faces on a regular basis and believe that maintaining the free reserves stated, combined with the annual review of the controls over key financial systems carried out on an annual basis will provide sufficient resources in the event of adverse conditions. The Trustees have also examined other operational and business risks which they face and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate the significant risks.

15. RESERVES POLICY

The Trustees have considered the level of reserves they wish to retain, appropriate to the CIO's needs. This is based on the CIO's size and the level of financial commitments held. The Trustees aim to ensure the CIO will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in income or unexpected expenditure. The Trustees will endeavour not to set aside funds unnecessarily.

16. PUBLIC BENEFIT

The CIO acknowledges its requirement to demonstrate clearly that it must have charitable purposes or ‘aims’ that are for the public benefit. Details of how the CIO has achieved this are provided in the Trustees report. The Trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit before deciding what activities the CIO should undertake.

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS

Report to the trustees/ members of Bridging the Bar on the accounts for year ended 1st April 2025 set out on pages 100 to 107.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect, the requirements:
   - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
   - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act

   have not been met; or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

K. Collaku MAAT
Castle View Accounting Ltd
Ground Floor Offices
53 High Street
Arundel
West Sussex
BN18 9AJ

Date: 28th January 2026

BRIDGING THE BAR

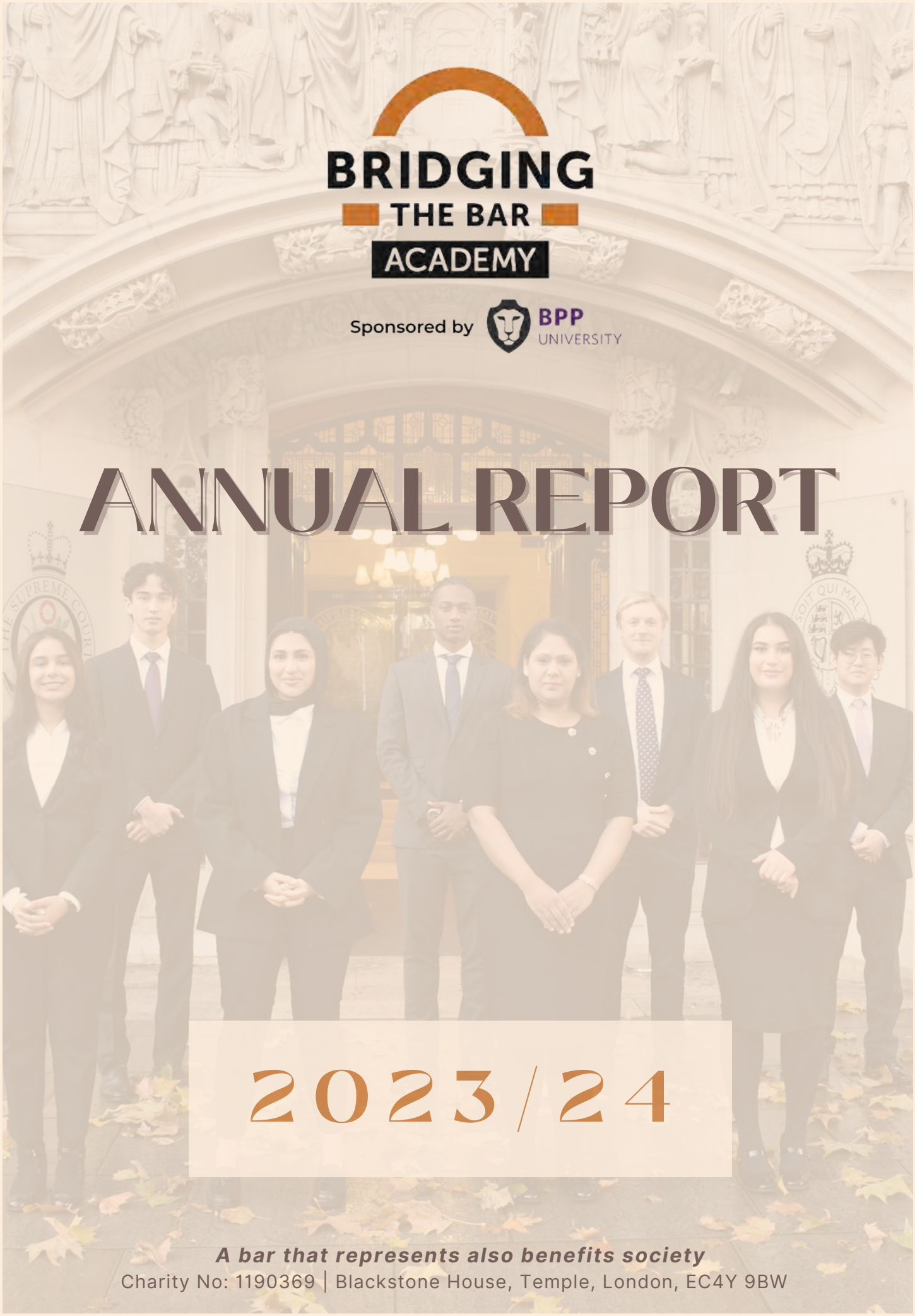
England & Wales - Charity number 1190369

Accounts

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

Sponsored by BPP UNIVERSITY

ANNUAL REPORT



2023/24

A bar that represents also benefits society

Charity No: 1190369 | Blackstone House, Temple, London, EC4Y 9BW

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FOREWARD

Mass Ndow-Njie,
Founder and Chairperson

I am delighted to present the fourth edition of our Annual Report, celebrating another year of significant progress and achievements by Bridging the Bar and our Academy Programme. This year has marked substantial growth in the Academy's offerings and the success of our graduates, who continue to lead the way as future leaders at the Bar.

The highlight of the 2023/24 cycle has undoubtedly been the graduation of the most recent Academy class, which has set a new standard for excellence. Witnessing the determination and development of each candidate has been inspiring, with many of the cohort already securing pupillage at leading Chambers across the country. The statistics are compelling: Academy graduates are two to three times more likely to secure pupillage, highlighting the profound impact of our programme - made possible by the generosity of our valued sponsors, partners, volunteers and other supporters. The graduation ceremony, held for the second consecutive year at the historic Middle Temple Hall, perfectly merged tradition with innovation as we celebrated our achievements and launched the Bridging the Bar Alumni Network, a new initiative aimed at providing ongoing support, opportunities, and a sense of community for our graduates as they progress in their careers.

In 2023, we were thrilled to commence working with BPP University Group as the headline sponsor of the Bridging the Bar Academy. Their support has been crucial in extending the Academy's reach and ensuring its sustainability. This partnership, renewed for a second year in early 2024, has provided a central base for hosting Academy events and further strengthened our capacity to empower aspiring barristers while broadening the programme's impact.

The latter half of 2024 saw the entire cohort complete mini-pupillages with 49 partner Chambers, allowing them to explore their areas of interest and gain valuable exposure to practice. Thanks to our Resilience Fund, which subsidises travel, accommodation, and caring expenses, financial barriers were removed, ensuring that candidates could fully engage with confidence.

Our partnership with Advocate was extended to provide an opportunity for three Bridging the Bar candidates to complete month-long, paid internships as caseworkers - an experience that proved influential in preparing them for the demands of the profession, as our candidate testimonials will show. This is in addition to our other internship programmes delivered in partnership with some of the most prestigious legal institutions in our land. The UK Supreme Court welcomed yet another cohort of Bridging the Bar interns for a paid week-long internship, as did the Court of Appeal, the High Court and the Law Commission. We are grateful to each of them for their continued trust and support.

Looking ahead, the progress we've made this year drives us to further our efforts in creating lasting change within the legal profession. The journey towards equality and diversity at the Bar is far from over, but Bridging the Bar remains resolute in its mission to break down barriers to access and open the doors to opportunity for all.

We are incredibly grateful to our partners, sponsors, and supporters for their ongoing belief in our vision. Your support is instrumental in helping us work towards a legal profession that truly represents and serves the society that it is meant to reflect.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

Sponsored by BPP UNIVERSITY

THE TEAM

"Launching the Bridging the Bar Academy is the natural next step for our charity. We intend to take our activities to a new higher level."

- Mass Ndow-Njie, Founder and Chairperson

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THE TEAM

TRUSTEES

Mass Ndow-Njie, Chairperson

Aaron Mayers, Vice Chairperson

Matt Swallow, Treasurer

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Srishti Suresh

Sonia Masaun

Abdul Qadim

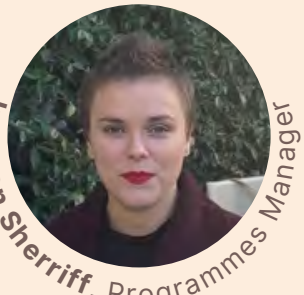
Emma Hughes

Ishan Kolhatkar

Anu Lal

Eleanor Tack

STAFF

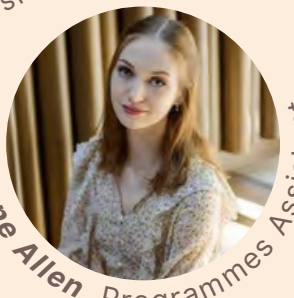


Imogen Sherriff, Programmes Manager

Ronnie Evans, Partnerships Manager

Fatima Ali, Programmes Assistant

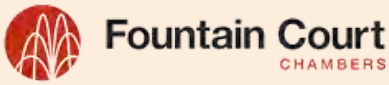
Adila Hilmi, Business Development Assistant

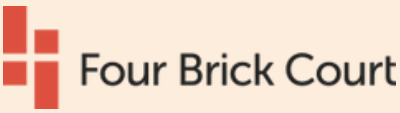


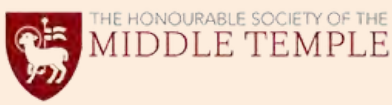
Marianne Allen, Programmes Assistant

OUR 23/24 SPONSORS

WITH THANKS TO...







OUR FOUNDING PARTNERS

WITH THANKS TO...

Blackstone CHAMBERS

combar
The Commercial Bar Association

GATEHOUSE CHAMBERS

3VB Three Verulam Buildings Barristers

KEATING CHAMBERS

LITTLETON

ftb
Francis Taylor Building

Normanton CHAMBERS

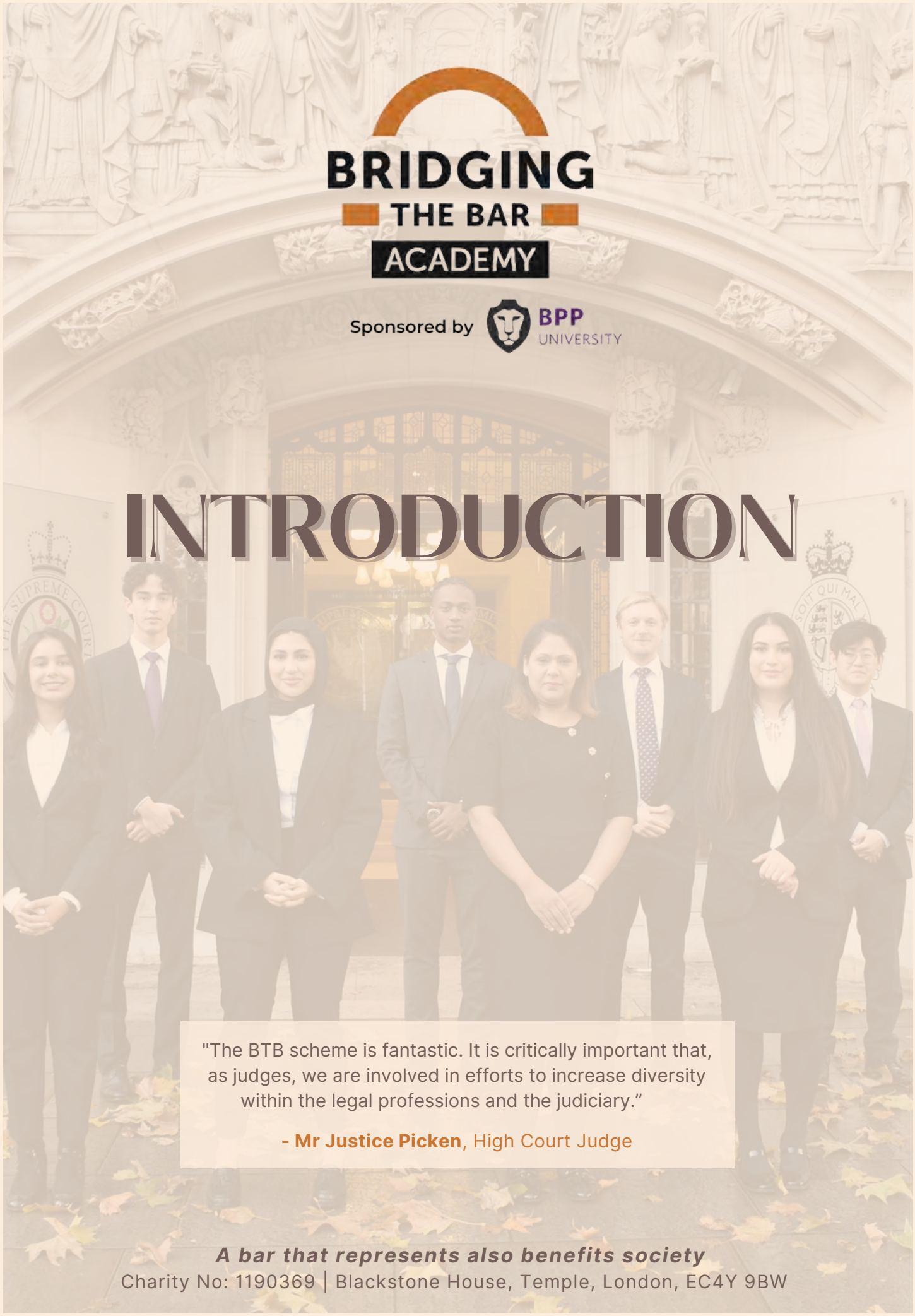
4 NEW SQUARE CHAMBERS

PUMP COURT CHAMBERS

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

Sponsored by BPP UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION



"The BTB scheme is fantastic. It is critically important that, as judges, we are involved in efforts to increase diversity within the legal professions and the judiciary."

- Mr Justice Picken, High Court Judge

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INTRODUCTION

Get to know us and our mission...

Bridging the Bar ('BTB') is a charitable organisation that exists to bridge the gap between students from non-traditional backgrounds and the skills, experience, and networks required to develop a career at the Bar. We believe that for the Bar to reach its full potential, it must reflect the diverse society in which we live.

Diversity and inclusion is a cornerstone issue for Bridging the Bar; founded with the mission of producing a bar that reflects society so that it may serve society, the issue of diversity and inclusion has guided every step the Charity has taken as we disrupt the status quo. However, this bold aim has not come without its challenges and setbacks. Bridging the Bar was a start up charity that had to carve the path for our successes to follow.

Whilst we recognise the positive work being carried out to establish greater equality of access to opportunities at the Bar, it is clear that gaps still exist. BTB works towards closing that gap by supporting aspiring barristers and those organisations and individuals already championing diversity at the Bar. We believe that by actively providing opportunities and resources to bridge the gap between traditional and non-traditional applicants, Bridging the Bar is helping to drive the kind of high-quality applications from diverse aspiring barristers that will eventually change the face of the profession.

Join over 4,000 Bridging the Bar Alumni, 70 sets of Chambers across the UK, 22 sponsorship partners and over 300 legal professionals in supporting BTB in achieving our vision for a society where the Bar is accessible for everyone regardless of race, sex, class or other characteristics.

Who we help

Low Income Background

BAME

LGBTQ+

Disability

+ More

OUR VISION

At BTB, we believe that in order to truly serve society the bar must reflect society; without being able to pull from a wealth of differing perspectives and experience, we as practitioners will be less able to serve those who come from backgrounds that are dissimilar to our own.

BTB was founded to address this issue. We believe that the “bridge” between today’s Bar and the diverse Bar that our society needs can be built by achieving three core objectives:

EQUAL ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

An integral part of equal access to opportunity at the Bar is to provide students from non-traditional backgrounds with the ability to gain practical work experience with barristers. The internship and mini-pupillage opportunities that candidates receive as part of the Academy provides students from all backgrounds with the opportunity to gain exposure to life at the Bar. This is the insight needed for students to understand what career options are available to them, and specifically, what a career at the Bar looks like.

OUR VISION

COLLABORATION

We welcome any dynamic support of our initiative, whether via the methods suggested, through tailored networking events, educational panels or entirely new ideas. There is an abundance of creative enterprises working to tackle many of the aims we share. BTB is continuously willing to discuss collaborating with organisations who share our aims. We recognise that in addition to helping people at a grassroots level, a pillar of what we do is forming strategic relationships with our regulators so that we can engage in conversations at a decision making level, provide feedback and create new schemes to help those who need and deserve it.

RAISING ASPIRATIONS

In order for diversity at the Bar to flourish, diversity in aspirations must be encouraged. At BTB we are dedicated to cultivating and sustaining the courage and belief it takes to opt for the Bar as a career path. Such cultivation runs through the heart of our Academy and can be seen most prominently in our personal development 'Pod' sessions, which focus on issues which typically undermine the aspirations of non-traditional applicants.

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

Sponsored by BPP UNIVERSITY

THE BAR IN NUMBERS

"It is a privilege to see the next generation from all walks of life shine and be elevated. They are the future of the bar and what a bright future that will be."

- Emma Hughes, Board of Directors

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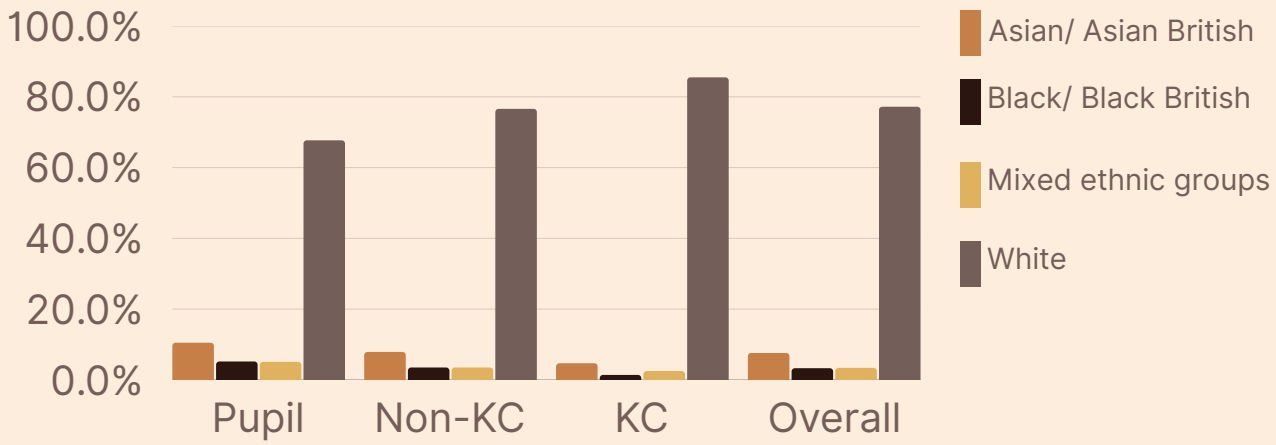
NUMBERS & STATISTICS

ETHNICITY AT THE BAR
(BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2023)

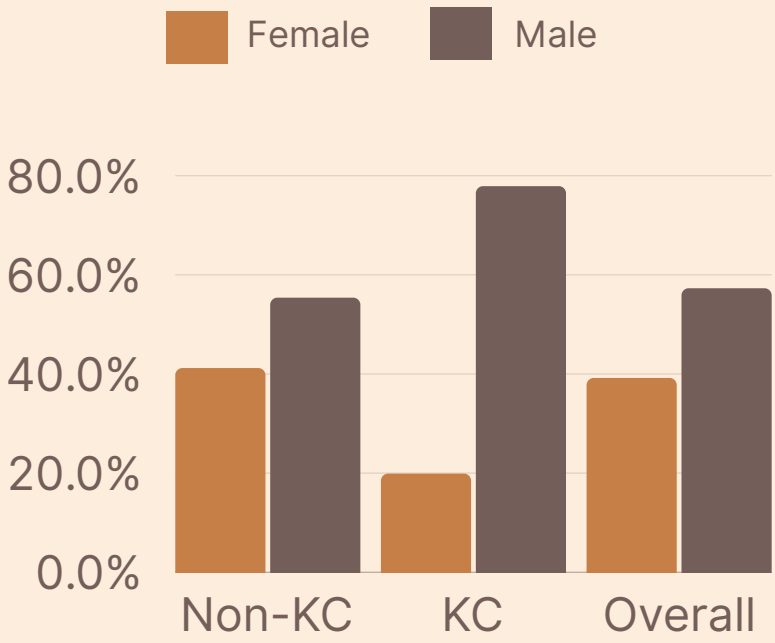


GENDER AT THE BAR
(BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2023)

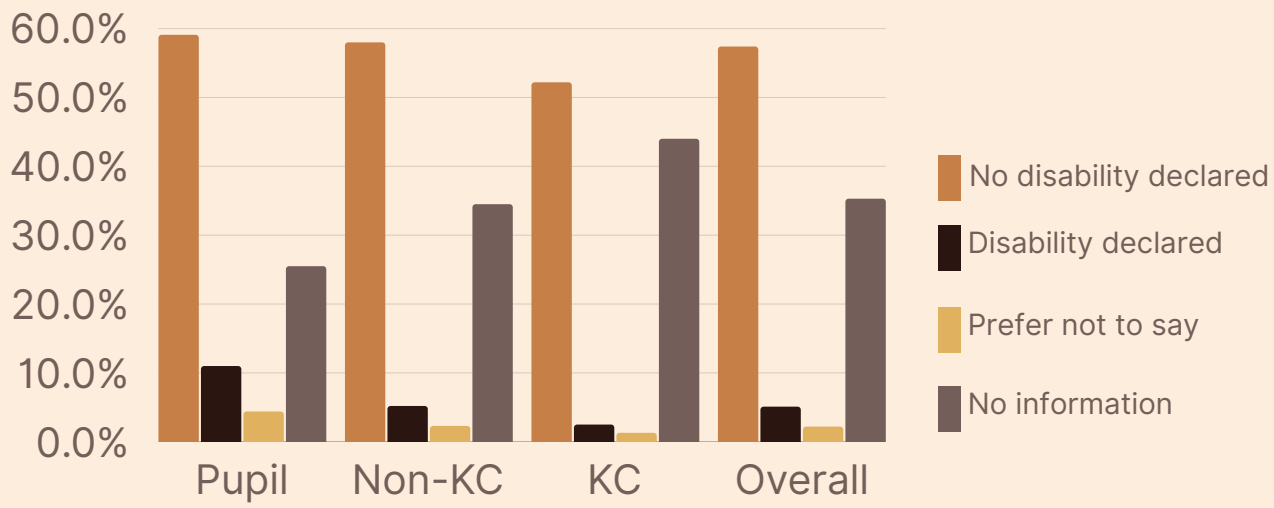
588
Pupil Barristers

15,739
Non-KC Barristers

2,045
King's Counsel



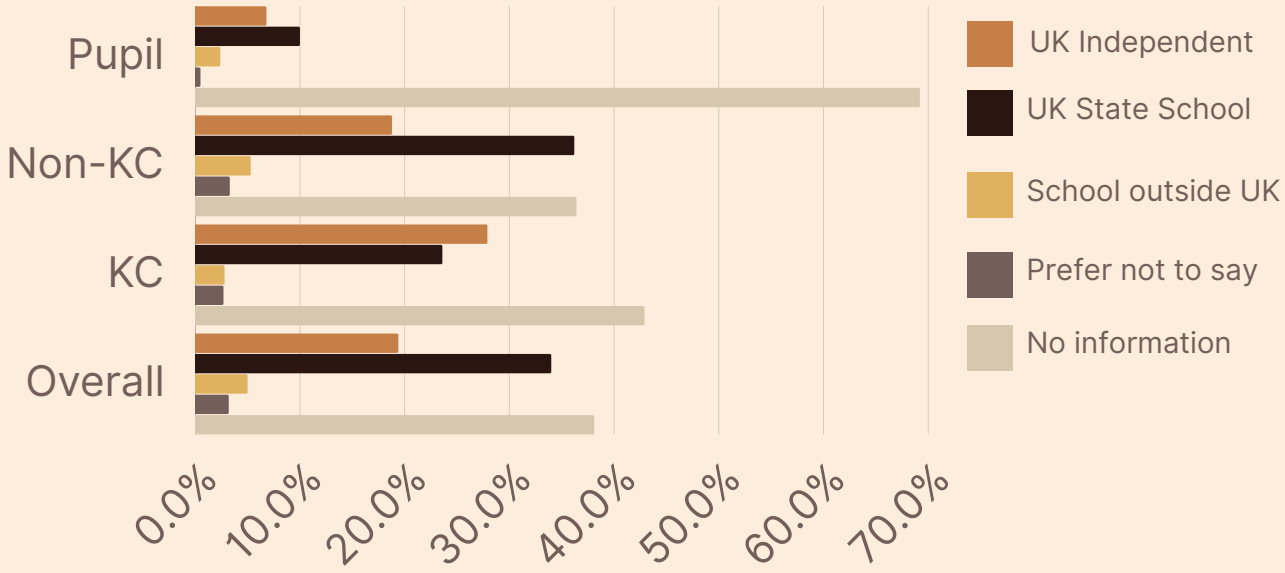
DISABILITY DECLARED AT THE BAR
(BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2023)



19.4%
of respondents attended a UK Independent School

6.5%
of UK children attend Independent Schools

TYPE OF SCHOOL ATTENDED
(BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2023)



BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

Sponsored by BPP UNIVERSITY

THE ACADEMY

"Thank you again for your trust, time, and dedication to providing equal opportunities in the legal profession. Together, we can create a Bar that represents society, and in turn, benefits society."

– **Mass Ndow-Njjie,** Founder and Chairperson

A bar that represents also benefits society

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ACADEMY OVERVIEW

THE IDEA

The Academy was borne from a desire to maximise BTB's impact on our candidates, both in terms of numbers and in terms of outcomes.

This led to the idea of a comprehensive programme, which would provide not only tangible experience and skills to those who traditionally may suffer from a lack of access to the profession, but also assist candidates in obtaining the mindset needed to succeed in such a competitive field.

From one application process, 100 candidates are provided access to internships, mentoring, mini-pupillage schemes, professional development workshops, interview advocacy training, application feedback, and networking opportunities.

In running such a comprehensive Academy programme, we hope to both assist our candidates in securing pupillage, while also creating a generation of barristers who we hope will become champions of diversity at the Bar in their own right.

ACADEMY OVERVIEW

OBJECTIVES

In designing the Academy programme, we adopted five objectives:

1. To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
2. To improve the quality of candidates' written pupil applications.
3. To improve the quality of each candidate's pupillage interview technique.
4. To equip our candidates with the mindset tools required to succeed within the profession.
5. To equip our candidates with the tools to champion diversity and inclusion within the profession and throughout their careers.

These objectives were selected as those that best assisted with our more general aim of helping our candidates to improve their pupillage prospects. These objectives guided the structure of each event, in addition to the programme as a whole, and gave us metrics by which to measure our successes.

ACADEMY STRUCTURE

DESIGN

The overall structure of the Academy mimics the academic year with events running from September until June. The design of the programme has been undertaken with our overall aims in mind, and so each Academy event has been tailored to both address a specific issue that candidates from non-traditional backgrounds face, while also targeting at least one of our stated objectives.

Event	Summary	Objectives
Personal Development Sessions	Five sessions led by legal professionals covering topics that include 'courage before confidence' and 'collective community success'	Interview technique Mindset Tools Championing Diversity
Mini-pupillages	Two rounds of mini-pupillages in candidates' area/s of interest	Content of Applications Written Applications
Access to the Bar, Culture Change, Retention & Progression Lecture	Candidates will participate in a lecture which focuses on issues surrounding non-traditional legal professionals	Content of Applications Mindset Tools Championing Diversity

ACADEMY STRUCTURE

CONTINUED...

Event	Summary	Objectives
Internships	Selected candidates will spend a week shadowing at either the UK Supreme Court, High Court/Court of Appeal, Law Commission or Advocate	Content of Applications Mindset Tools Championing Diversity
Mentoring	Candidates will be paired with a barrister in their preferred practice area for a year long mentoring relationship	Written Applications Interview technique Mindset Tools Championing Diversity
Advocacy Training	Candidates will participate in an online advocacy course and also spend time in Chambers, working to improve their responses to specific interview advocacy questions	Content of Applications Written Applications

OUR HEADLINE SPONSOR

BPP UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL

In 2023, the BPP University Group became the headline sponsor for the BTB Academy, and in early 2024, the partnership was renewed for a second year. BPP has also supported the BTB Academy by hosting events on their campuses, including the All-Interns Workshop, which provided candidates with pre-training on what to expect from their internships in a legal education environment, as well as our Personal Development Sessions.

Jo-Anne Pugh
Dean of BPP University Law School

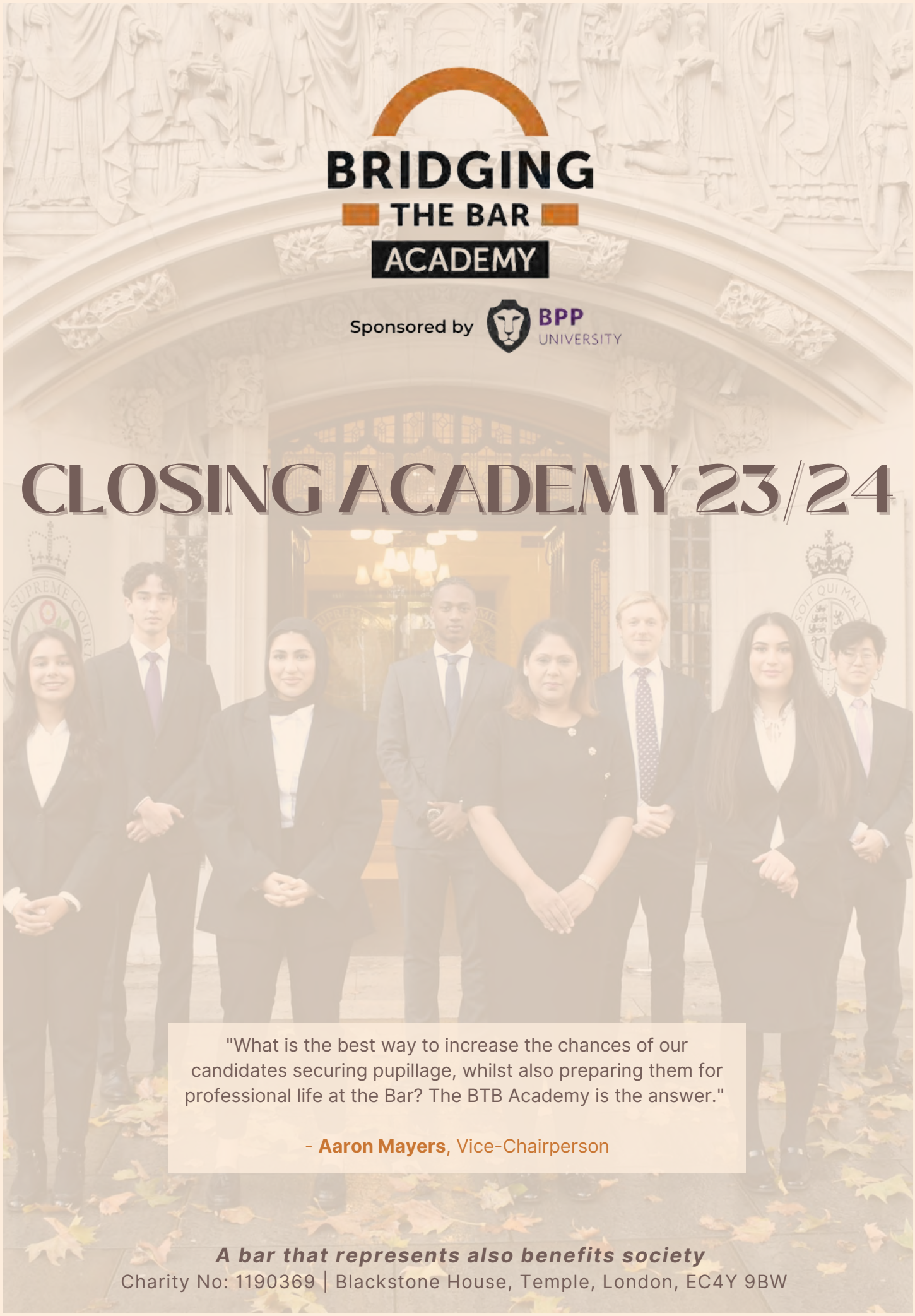
"It is a mission of ours at BPP, alongside our partners like Bridging the Bar, to change the composition of the profession, so that it more accurately reflects the society in which we live. So, at BPP, we are proud to be supporting initiatives like the BTB Academy, because it is important for all of us in the profession to make more of a collective effort to tackle the inequality which still sadly persists.

BPP University Law School is delighted to be renewing our partnership with Bridging the Bar for a second year. As Bridging the Bar's exclusive partner of the BTB Academy, this year, we will, again, be supporting the Academy both with financial resources and by offering our facilities at BPP centres. We have committed to continue supporting BTB because in its first few years, it has already started to develop a reliable track record of delivering life-changing opportunities to so many aspiring barristers from a wide range of backgrounds. This year, again, there will be another 100+ BTB candidates passing through the Academy's ground-breaking programme of training, seminars and workshops, which I know will enhance significantly the employability of every candidate."

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

Sponsored by BPP UNIVERSITY

CLOSING ACADEMY 23/24



"What is the best way to increase the chances of our candidates securing pupillage, whilst also preparing them for professional life at the Bar? The BTB Academy is the answer."

- **Aaron Mayers**, Vice-Chairperson

THE COHORT

SELECTION PROCESS

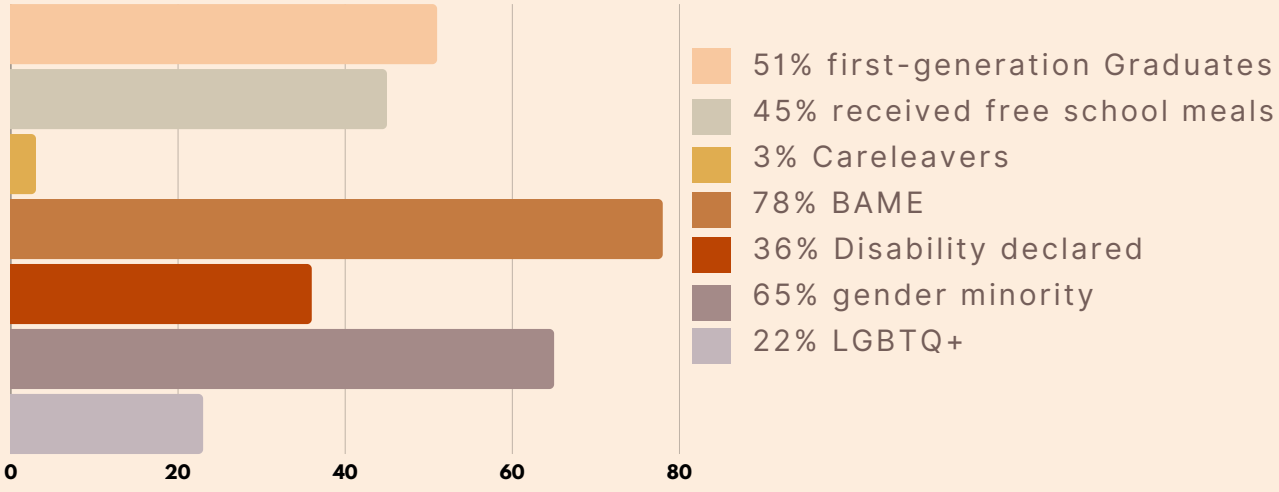
We utilised a volunteer force of legal professionals in our marking process, who each marked a single answer for all applications. By adopting this vertical marking process, we aimed to increase consistency during our application marking process.

The markers were asked to assess answers against seven key criteria:

- A commitment to academic excellence through achieving strong grades at university.
- An understanding of what a career at the Bar entails.
- Clear and persuasive written communication skills.
- Clear, persuasive and engaging oral advocacy skills.
- Understanding of issues faced by candidates and barristers from underrepresented backgrounds at the Bar and a commitment to remedying these issues.
- Ability of a candidate to share their background and experiences in a way which will facilitate mutual learning with fellow candidates and stakeholders.
- Likelihood of benefiting from participating in BTB Academy.

SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

We are pleased to report that this method resulted in a pool of candidates whose diversity characteristics closely mirror that of the applicant pool.



MINI-PUPILLAGE CYCLE 2

Candidates from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to have existing legal connections from which they can secure mini-pupillages. Additionally, they are less likely to have the time to complete multiple applications because of other pressures such as work or caring responsibilities. By providing a guaranteed mini-pupillage for our candidates we hope to expose them to life at the Bar.

Therefore, we have partnered with various Chambers to provide all of our candidates with at least 1 mini-pupillage during the academic year. Our two cycle mini-pupillage process ensures that all our candidates who have not secured an internship are matched with a set of chambers in their practice area of interest to undertake a mini-pupillage between November and January 2023 (Cycle 1). Our second cycle of the programme allows all our candidates to be assigned a mini-pupillage with a Chamber in their practice area of interest to be undertaken between February and June 2024.

The continuation of the mini-pupillage programme targeted two of our Academy objectives:

- To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
- To improve the quality of candidates' written pupil applications.

Our candidates have found this approach very beneficial as it allows them to undertake at least one mini-pupillage before the Pupillage Gateway opens so that they are able to discuss their experience and the lessons they have learnt in their applications.

WITH THANKS TO THE CHAMBERS THAT SUPPORTED OUR MINI-PUPILLAGE PROGRAMME THIS YEAR

Fountain Court Chambers	4 New Square	25 Bedford Row
15NBS Chambers	39 Essex Chambers	One Essex Court
4-5 Gray's Inn Square	Littleton	Garden Court Chambers
1GC Family Law	Deans Court Chambers	Pump Court Tax Chambers
Matrix Chambers	Hailsham Chambers	Parklane Plowden Chambers
Landmark Chambers	Coram Chambers	Outer Temple Chambers
Francis Taylor Building	Atlantic Chambers	3 Verulam Buildings
College Chambers	Keating Chambers	4 Stone Buildings
Brick Court Chambers	Temple Garden Chambers	7KBW
Three Raymond Buildings	Spire Barristers	2 Temple Gardens
New Court Chambers	8 New Square Chambers	3DJB
11KBW	Two Harcourt Buildings	Ten Old Square
Mountford Chambers	The 36 Group	Essex Court Chambers

ADVOCATE INTERNSHIP

This internship saw three candidates undertake one month of paid work as caseworkers at Advocate. During this period, interns were able to engage with live work, undertaking written tasks using real case papers and discussing these cases with other caseworkers at Advocate. Interns were also given the opportunity to write advice, draft documents for court/tribunal representation, and even write case summaries that were then logged and transferred to available barristers working on these cases.

The internship programme meets three objectives:

- To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
- To equip our candidates with the mindset tools required to succeed within the profession.
- To equip our candidates with the tools to champion diversity and inclusion within the profession and throughout their careers.

This experience allowed our interns to gain further insight into the inner workings of pro-bono cases and the steps practitioners take during this process. You can hear directly from one of our 2024 interns, Grace Ada Okafor, on page 32 about the impact this internship has had on our candidates.

We are delighted to offer this opportunity to our next cohort of candidates to ensure they are also able to benefit from this experience.

GRADUATION CONFERENCE

On the 21st of June, at the end of the Academy year, we held our annual graduation conference at the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple to celebrate the candidates who successfully completed the 2023/24 Academy Programme. This event was a commemorative occasion to recognise and honour their achievements throughout the year.

Graduates received a certificate of completion, are now verifiable as graduates of the Bridging the Bar Academy by chambers, and were granted access to our Alumni Network for ongoing support and professional development. They also had the opportunity to network with BTB Partners and Stakeholders at the event. Graduates then reunited with their Pod Coaching groups and Pod Leaders one final time, bringing their Academy journey to a close with a strong sense of camaraderie and accomplishment!

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

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RESILIENCE FUND

"In its first few years, it has already started to develop a reliable track record of delivering life-changing opportunities to so many aspiring barristers from a wide range of backgrounds."

- Jo-Anne Pugh, Dean of BPP University Law School

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THE RESILIENCE FUND

Within the Academy budget, we reserved £10,000 to provide financial assistance to candidates during the 2023/24 Academy cycle. The Resilience Fund is specifically designed to support candidates facing financial difficulties that might otherwise prevent them from fully participating in Academy events or accessing the opportunities provided.

In addition to travel and accommodation costs, it also addresses needs unique to individual candidates, such as hiring carers for those with caregiving responsibilities while they attend programme elements. This initiative ensures that candidates can engage with the Academy without financial or logistical barriers.

Megha Banerjee,
Academy 23/24 Candidate

"Coming from a working class background and living in the North-West whilst working part time and completing the Bar Course, finance has been a barrier for me for travelling to London frequently and partaking in important programmes. However, with the assistance received, I have been able to complete such programmes ranging from interview advocacy training, the lecture series and mini-pupillages- all which are crucial to my future at the Bar. I thank Bridging the Bar for this assistance, without which I would be on an unequal playing field to my peers."

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

Sponsored by BPP UNIVERSITY

ACADEMY IMPACT

"Focus on the best version of yourself. By being your best self, you can take back that power because the truth is, a barrister looks like all of you."

- Mass Ndow-Njie, Founder and Chairperson.

A bar that represents also benefits society

Charity No: 1190369 | Blackstone House, Temple, London, EC4Y 9BW

ACADEMY FIGURES 2023/24

100

CANDIDATES

Selected for the Academy Programme

160

MINI PUPILLAGES

Undertaken by Bridging the Bar candidates

36

INTERNSHIPS

With the UK Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, High Court, Advocate, and the Law Commission.

ACADEMY FIGURES 2023/24

19

SPONSORSHIP PARTNERS

Supporting
Bridging the Bar

199

PROFESSIONAL VOLUNTEERS

Assigned as mentors,
Pod Leaders, or Consultancy
Panel contributors

49

PARTNER CHAMBERS

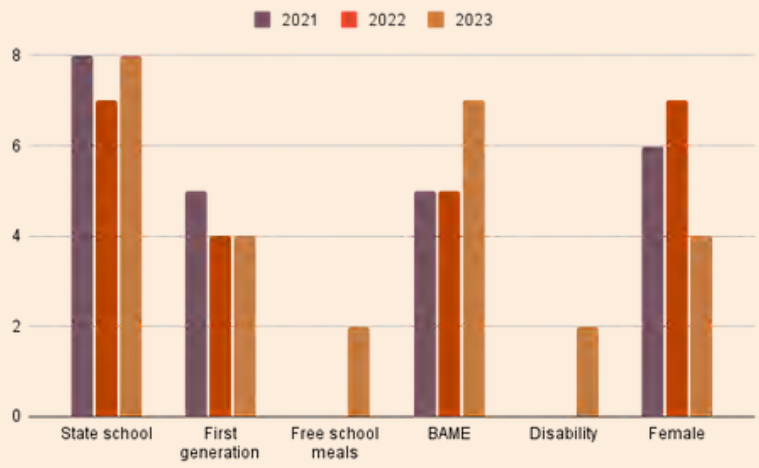
Offering mini-pupillages or
interview advocacy
training to BTB candidates

THE UKSC INTERNSHIP

In February 2021 BTB made a pitch to the UK Supreme Court (UKSC) who subsequently agreed to collaborate with us and create an internship programme.

We're happy to report that November 2023 saw our third cohort of candidates participate in this yearly internship programme.

CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERNS BY INTERNSHIP YEAR



"It was a privilege to welcome the eight Bridging the Bar interns to the Court. They were a thoughtful and engaging group of people, who enriched our discussions about the appeals being heard in the Supreme Court that week. The Judicial Assistants were delighted to have them as colleagues."

- **Rebecca Fry,** UKSC Head JA

3

UKSC internship cycles completed

24

UKSC internships undettaken

85%

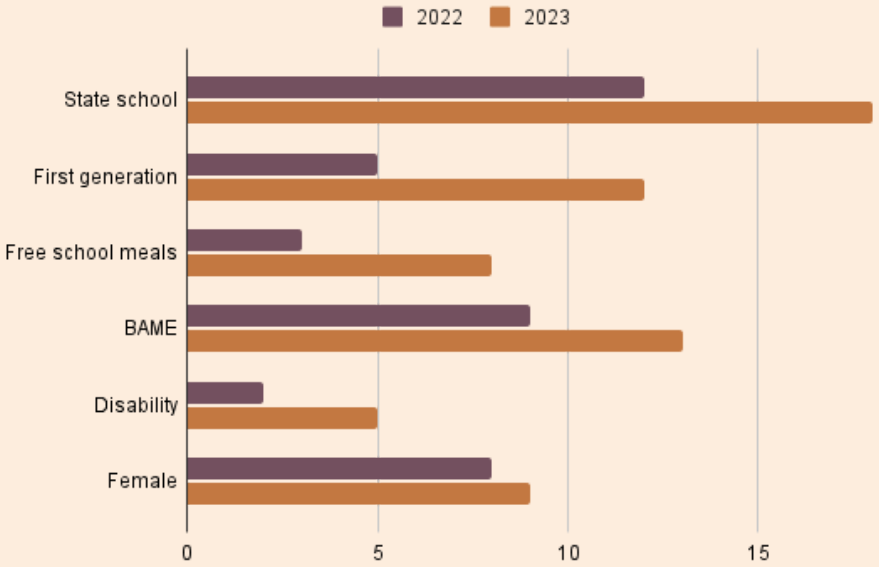
Of 2021 UKSC Interns Secured Pupillage

HIGH COURT & COURT OF APPEAL INTERNSHIPS

In March 2022, BTB, the High Court & Court of Appeal agreed to collaborate on a pilot internship for aspiring barristers from statistically under-represented backgrounds at the Bar.

The design of the internship sees successful candidates assigned to a judge and supported by their Judicial Assistant(s) in the High Court / Court of Appeal.

18 Interns



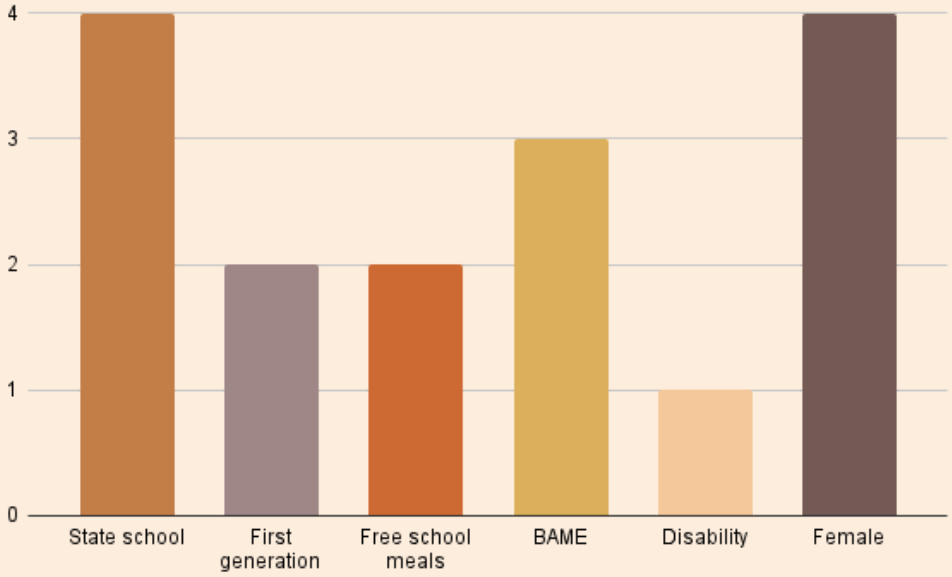
We are delighted to report that, due to the success of last year's pilot internship, it was agreed between BTB and the High Court / Court of Appeal (HC/COA) to increase the number of interns for this year's intake to 18. This allowed us to expand this opportunity to more candidates from this year's cohort, exposing them to new experiences.

> *"The BTB scheme is fantastic. My intern was clearly destined for great things. It was a pleasure to get to know her and to discuss her plans for the future. It is critically important that, as judges, we are involved in efforts to increase diversity within the legal professions and the judiciary. Those efforts include trying to demystify what to somebody with no connection with the law can appear both obscure and, worse still, unwelcoming. I look forward to taking further part in the scheme in the future."*
>
> - **Mr Justice Picken**, High Court Judge

THE LAW COMMISSION INTERNSHIP

This year, we are delighted to introduce the Law Commission internship which saw four aspiring barristers from non-traditional backgrounds undertake paid work with the Law Commission.

This internship gave candidates an opportunity to be immersed within an organisation that reforms some of the most challenging areas of law.



Each intern was paired with a Law Commission research assistant to get an insight in to the day-to-day of Law Commission work. Alongside this, candidates where given a research task task into a potential project of law reform suitable for the Law
Commission, related to the work of their allocated team. Throughout the internship, interns were able to speak with Commissioners, lawyers, and research assistants about their legal journeys and being a non-traditional candidate within the legal field.

> *'I've always been fascinated by the work of the Law Commission and was really excited when I found out I was chosen to do the internship. The internship was a fantastic experience. From day one I felt as though I was a part of the team. I met with different staff members and had meaningful conversations with the lawyers in my team. The research presentation was my favourite part of the internship. I was asked to present reform proposals on the topic I was given. I felt really confident and supported throughout. The Law Commission was everything I imagined and more!*

- **Latanya Gordon**, Law Commission Intern 2023

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

Sponsored by BPP UNIVERSITY

TESTIMONIALS

"In this new normal, there will be no such thing as the 'conventional' image of a barrister. Instead, barristers will be as diverse as the society that we live in and diverse as the clients that we represent."

- **Mass Ndow-Njie**, Founder and Chairperson

A bar that represents also benefits society

Charity No: 1190369 | Blackstone House, Temple, London, EC4Y 9BW

“The opportunity to gain insight from a leading advocate such as Bibi has been invaluable.”

FUNDAMENTALS OF ADVOCACY

CALLAN WITHERS

The Bridging The Bar 2023/24 Academy had the great fortune to receive advocacy training from The Advocacy Coach and Barrister, Bibi Badejo. This initiative proved valuable in developing candidates skills and understandings of the importance of effective advocacy within proceedings.

The cohort were provided with online teaching components which aimed to build upon the fundamental techniques needed when advocating in court and focused on enhancing those abilities. The modules explored a variety of elements, including how best to approach case analysis thoroughly, effective witness handling, and delivering oral addresses with confidence and substance. The teachings and resources of this training provided both dynamic and forensic approaches to these areas and will be of considerable benefit to all participants going forward in our training. The curriculum also contained a number of practical exercises which proved to be of great benefit in consolidating the learnings, and I believe that these exercises will be of great use especially when first starting out in practice.

The opportunity to gain insight from a leading advocate such as Bibi has been invaluable.

The offering concluded with a live event, in which all participants were given the opportunity to advocate in front of a large audience, in the form of a simulated court with trained actors. This was a truly rewarding experience, as it allowed for the cohort to practice the teachings from the online training, and to exercise the skills needed to deliver a high-level of advocacy. Each participant chose to deliver either an examination in chief, a cross examination or a closing speech. I believe that this was a highlight for many on the programme; for those at the start of their legal studies this provided them their first advocacy experience, and for those further on in their studies, it helped to develop skills required when at the bar.

In all, I believe that this offering delivered an immeasurable amount of value to all members of the cohort in our development as advocates. I believe I speak for the whole cohort in relaying our deepest gratitude to Bibi Badejo and the BTB team for providing us with this training experience.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

OLUWAKAYODE EMMANUEL ASEWEJE

Of the fantastic array of programmes offered by the Bridging the Bar Academy, my most memorable were the Personal Development Workshops, known as 'Pod' sessions.

It goes without saying, that the journey to the bar of England and Wales is quite unlike any other, requiring a great degree of fortitude and resilience to weather the storms of competition and rejection and the consequent self-doubt. It is heartening that the Bar is beginning to recognise this, and several mentoring and access schemes now exist, providing useful avenues of support to assist aspiring barristers into the profession.

Where Bridging the Bar excels is the recognition that the beyond the now well-articulated barriers to accessing the Bar, the biggest barrier is perhaps the one in the mind. This certainly resonates with me. As a Black African man, who was born and raised abroad before pursuing a legal education and thereafter the Bar of England and Wales, imposter/trespasser syndrome is always crouching at my door. It advocates flimsy reason after reason why I surely do not belong in this profession.

With dismal statistics and monochromatic chambers' members' profiles, it relentlessly reinforces its false pitch and eats away at my confidence.

The Pod sessions were a safe space where I got to meet my peers. Hailing from wonderfully different backgrounds, we were united in our susceptibility to the struggle for our minds and our confidence. We worked through exercises that prompted intense self-reflection and
required a courageous vulnerability. At the Pod sessions I questioned my negative thought patterns. I learned to sit with my with fear of failure. I learned that courage comes before confidence. As my late Father would say, 'Courage is simply fear that has said its prayers'. Most of all, I learned to recognise the uniqueness of my atypical history, and not hide it, like a lamp under a bushel, but appreciate the attributes I have obtained by it and let them shine.

The saying goes 'If you want to go fast go alone but if you want to go far, travel with others.' I would like to give credit to every member of my Pod group. Nothing builds a sense of community more than sharing one's journey with others. I commend their unselfishness in sharing their stories, their highs and lows. It was a privilege to genuinely rejoice with those who obtained success in the form of scholarships or pupillage and encourage others who had to endure disappointment and rejection. Every trip I had to make from South Wales to Central London, on weekends following long working weeks, while exhausting at the time, has been most certainly worth it.

I conclude with a statement by one of my pod leaders which will always resonate strongly:

> *"If you ever find yourself the exception in the room, it is because you are exceptional."*

> *One of the best parts of the Interview Advocacy Sessions was receiving live, constructive feedback that was personal to each Candidate.*

INTERVIEW ADVOCACY TRAINING

JAYA SUDERA

The Interview Advocacy Training element of the Academy was an enriching and informative way to practise our approach to legal interview problems in an environment that is very close to the real thing – in Chambers!

I was paired with One Essex Court with four other members of the BTB Academy. Around a week before the first session, we were emailed a legal interview question and instructions as to what to prepare before arriving in Chambers. To keep it as close to what a real interview for Pupillage would be like, I was reasonable but not overly generous with the time I gave myself to prepare. The problem wanted each Candidate to prepare submissions to extend a freezing injunction, or to argue the alternative. Arriving at Chambers for the first session was exciting. I was looking forward to having the opportunity to practise my interview technique before a tenant at One Essex Court. The Barrister was approachable, welcoming and took the time to get to know a little bit about all of us. Each BTB Candidate went in turn to present their part of the legal problem. Alongside presenting our cases, we also had the odd judicial intervention which, although surprising in the moment, allowed us all to practise delivering confident responses on the spot. It also tested us on how familiar we were with the case papers.One of the best parts of the Interview Advocacy Sessions was receiving live, constructive feedback that was personal to each Candidate. As individual feedback is often hard to come by in the Pupillage Application Process, this feedback was highly appreciated.

In the second and final advocacy session with One Essex Court, I had to prepare submissions stating that the refusal of my "client's" fictitious application was refused incorrectly. I used statutory interpretation to the advantage of the client. The feedback I received from the second barrister in Chambers was very positive and he gave me constructive feedback that I was able to take away and apply to real interviews during the most recent Pupillage Application Round. Another beneficial part of having the Interview Advocacy Sessions structured this way was being able to watch other BTB Candidates deliver their submissions. Learning from each other was a really positive opportunity to explore different techniques that we saw in each other.

I appreciated that both sessions were conducted in a space where I was comfortable to make mistakes and try new techniques. This is the most important thing necessary to improve and increase my confidence in my abilities. These sessions were incredibly valuable and enabled me to get an insight into some of the finer elements of advocacy that barristers are looking for in a prospective Pupil Barrister.

ADVOCATE INTERNSHIP

GRACE ADA OKAFOR

> *As a barrister I know I will donate my time for this organisation.*

Advocate is a charity that finds free legal assistance from volunteer barristers. They are the Bar's national charity that makes it possible for barristers to balance their practice with making a significant contribution to the community. As a caseworker intern, I have had an insightful, eye-opening, and valuable experience. During my role, I learned how Advocate is filling the gap where individuals lack access to justice by providing legal support to those who do not have the means. I am very passionate about Advocates work and grateful to complete this internship, as a barrister I know I will donate my time for this organisation.

As part of my role, I had the opportunity to engage with live work and contribute to discussions with Advocate's caseworkers, further undertaking written work using real case papers. I had to go through the applicant's case information where they were seeking help which varied from advice, drafting documents and/or representation at court/tribunal. From this, I had to draft case summaries which would later be logged and transferred to an available barrister to work on. Drafting the summaries I identified the area of law, what type of help they were seeking, executive summary, procedural history, eligibility criteria and missing documents. Next, I emailed the applicant requesting what was outstanding to have a better understanding of the case. I learned how to refine my time efficiently by swiftly shifting through all the documents, making sure I have included a clear factual background, a chronology/procedural history, court date and checking if there is any further information that is needed. I really enjoyed completing the summary as this was intellectually challenging and stimulating having to identifying legal and factual issues in complex areas of the law and understand what the applicant was seeking. I enjoyed later sharing ideas with my supervisors and learning effectively on how to tackle the case. I gained a unique and interesting insight into how Advocate operates and the scope of work that Advocate's caseworkers conduct at the organisation.

At the start of each day, I really enjoyed having morning briefings with the other caseworkers discussing our plans for the day and finding out which cases we were working on. I had exposure to work in different legal areas such as commercial chancery, employment, landlord and tenant. I enjoyed working through these areas and gaining new knowledge in new areas such as family and public law, where I had little experience. I really felt from this role I became more neutral in drafting the case summaries and just focused on what documents are needed from the applicant, especially in the more sensitive areas of the law such as family cases. I also enjoyed having afternoon briefings with the caseworkers, having that time to share our day and the opportunity to offload if we had a difficult day dealing with triggering and sensitive cases. From this internship, I felt supported by my supervisors and that I have developed the necessary skillset to succeed at the bar.

LECTURE SERIES

MEGAN CHOONG JIEH YUE

The Bridging the Bar lecture series by Elaine Banton was a profound experience, encompassing the critical issues of "Access & Culture Change" and "Retention & Progression at the Bar." As a participant, this series was instrumental in highlighting the systemic challenges and actionable strategies to foster a more inclusive and equitable legal profession.

Banton's first lecture, "Access & Culture Change," emphasised the intricate relationship between access to the Bar and the need for cultural transformation within the profession. It underscored that while significant strides have been made in improving diversity at the entry level, much work remains to ensure these changes are sustainable and pervasive throughout a barrister's career. Banton highlighted various initiatives aimed at enhancing access, such as the 1 Crown Office Row's assessed mini pupillage scheme and Bridging the Bar's mentorship and conversion programme. I also found the lecture to be incredibly useful in guiding me to various resources. It highlighted initiatives that can support my career and introduced me to a community of individuals who share my background as an Asian woman.

Additionally, it provided crucial information about reporting mechanisms, such as Talk to Spot for anonymous reporting of inappropriate behaviour and the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office, which addresses these issues effectively. These initiatives have been pivotal in providing opportunities for underrepresented groups, but Banton stressed the importance of a sustained cultural shift to support these changes. This requires a strategic and multifaceted approach that addresses various dimensions of diversity and inclusion. The critical factors are:

- Leadership commitment: Leaders must consistently demonstrate their dedication to fostering an inclusive environment. For instance, the *Bar Council's Race Action Plan* sets a precedent by outlining specific goals and actions to improve racial diversity.
- Comprehensive and ongoing training programs: To educate all members on diversity, inclusion, and unconscious bias are essential.
- Open dialogue and continuous learning: Regular forums, workshops, and discussions on diversity and inclusion topics can help maintain momentum and keep these issues at the forefront of the Bar's agenda.

> *"This series was instrumental in highlighting the systemic challenges and actionable strategies to foster a more inclusive and equitable legal profession."*

LECTURE SERIES

MEGAN CHOONG JIEH YUE

While entry-level diversity has improved, retention and progression of diverse groups remain significant challenges. This was the focus of Elaine Banton's second lecture. Barristers from ethnic minority backgrounds and women face greater obstacles in advancing to senior positions such as King's Counsel (silk) and higher judicial appointments. Effective retention strategies are crucial for progression to these senior roles.

The first seven years are critical for barristers, with financial stress and demographic intersections (such as sex, race, and disability) significantly impacting their career trajectories. Factors such as legal aid, debt, access to credit, fees, and financial support significantly impact retention. Reports from the Bar Standards Board (BSB) and other surveys illustrate the struggles faced by junior barristers, particularly those from minority ethnic backgrounds and women.

This statistic resonated deeply with me and my peers, prompting in-depth discussions during our mini pupillage. It was encouraging to hear the practice manager and various barristers share how the chambers assist them. For instance, one barrister who aimed to take the New York Bar was able to adjust his workload during revision and exam periods.

> *"We can build a legal profession that supports all its members and reflects the diversity of the society it serves."*

What stood out to me most were the calls to action Elaine Banton mentioned:

- Data-Driven Approaches: Continued use of data to track progress and identify areas needing attention is vital. Regularly publishing diversity statistics, conducting surveys, and analysing trends can help inform and shape effective diversity strategies. Ensuring transparency and accountability through data-driven approaches can lead to more targeted and impactful interventions.

- Intersectionality Considerations: Addressing the unique challenges faced by individuals who belong to multiple underrepresented groups (e.g., women of colour, disabled individuals from minority backgrounds) requires an intersectional approach. Tailored initiatives that consider the overlapping aspects of identity can help address the compounded barriers these individuals face.

It is not enough that people enter the profession when they end up leaving due to systemic barriers and inequities.

Ensuring that talented individuals not only join but also thrive and advance within the legal profession requires a holistic approach that addresses financial stability, support systems, and a culture of inclusion. Retention and progression must be prioritised through targeted interventions, continuous support, and policy reforms that promote equity and diversity. By doing so, we can build a legal profession that supports all its members and reflects the diversity of the society it serves.

MENTORING PROGRAMME

ABBAS HUSSAIN

> *Bridging The Bar's Mentoring Programme extends beyond mere application assistance; it provides continuous support and realistic advice throughout one's journey to the Bar.*

Bridging The Bars Mentoring Programme has been an instrumental part of my journey toward a career at the Bar. Through this programme, I was fortunate to be mentored by an experienced King's Counsel (KC), whose guidance was invaluable in navigating the complex and competitive process of securing a pupillage. The mentorship was comprehensive and tailored to my needs. My mentor shared his extensive experience and insights on various aspects of the pupillage application process. He highlighted the importance of crafting a compelling application, stressing the need to present a well-rounded profile that showcases both legal expertise and unique personal attributes.

My mentor taught me how to effectively showcase my skills, experiences, and motivations in my applications. He stressed the importance of clarity, coherence, and conciseness, ensuring that each application was meticulously tailored to the specific chambers to which I was applying. To distinguish myself from other applicants, my mentor advised me to focus on my unique experiences and achievements, such as my involvement in extracurricular activities and any relevant legal work experience. He encouraged me to articulate my passion for law and my long-term career aspirations convincingly.

Another critical component of the mentoring programme was the mock interviews. These sessions were designed to simulate the real interview environment, providing me with an opportunity to practice and refine my responses. Through these mock interviews, I received constructive feedback on my performance, including my communication skills, body language, and ability to think on my feet. This practice was crucial in building my confidence and honing my interview technique, which are essential for success in the highly competitive pupillage selection process.

Beyond the application process, my mentor provided sage advice regarding my career path. He emphasised the importance of pursuing an area of law that I am passionate about, cautioning against following a path solely for its perceived prestige or financial reward. Taking his advice to heart, I explored various areas of law beyond my initial interest in family law. This exploration led me to develop a keen interest in commercial, insurance, and sports law. Although I received around seven first-round interviews primarily for family pupillages, this experience made me realise that family law might not be the right fit for me.

Bridging The Bar's Mentoring Programme extends beyond mere application assistance; it provides continuous support and realistic advice throughout one's journey to the Bar. My mentor was always available to provide guidance and support, whether it was advice on career choices or navigating challenges during my training. This ongoing support was crucial in maintaining my motivation and focus. Perhaps one of the most valuable aspects of the programme was the honest and realistic advice I received. My mentor did not shy away from giving me the tough truths that I needed to hear, which helped me make informed decisions about my career path.

Bridging The Bars Mentoring Programme has had a profound impact on my professional development. The guidance and support from my KC mentor were pivotal in shaping my approach to the pupillage application process, refining my interview skills, and ultimately helping me to identify the area of law that truly interests me. This programme is not only about helping aspiring barristers secure pupillage but also about providing them with the tools and insights necessary to build a fulfilling and successful career at the Bar.

MINI-PUPILLAGE PROGRAMME

> *Bridging the Bar's mini-pupillage scheme gave me invaluable insight into a barrister's daily life, diverse practice areas, the court environment, and Chambers' culture.*

Mini-pupillages provide crucial insight into barristers' daily lives and are a necessary step for anyone who is considering a career at the Bar. They can confirm your aspirations or completely dissuade you from a legal area in the span of a week. Conscious of this impact, Bridging the Bar included two in its program.

Many benefits can be extracted from mini-pupillages. Shadowing barristers generates captivating conversations, and mini-pupils are often met with honesty and genuine interest. Barristers will happily discuss their struggles with last-minute bundles or difficult clients, as well as the successes that make up for it.

Secondly, I found that while some mini-pupillages solely focus on court attendance, it is beneficial to visit the enigmatic building itself. It allows applicants to de-mystify less discussed parts of the profession, such as the role of clerks, and to develop a well-rounded perspective of practicing at the Bar. During my mini-pupillage at Three Raymond Buildings, I was taken on a tour of Chambers. I met barristers, staff members, and benefited from the kind guidance of the Chambers Administrative Officer, Donna Garner. Meeting the Chambers' staff and barristers without the urgency of court favours more casual interactions and empowers applicants to make informed choices regarding their pupillage and tenancy.

Thirdly, mini-pupillages are an excellent chance to get a taste of a wide diversity of practice areas. I once attended the family, immigration and criminal courts in a week. I had never studied family law before, and this experience later led me to start a position as a paralegal in care proceedings.

Finally, mini-pupillages are also the opportunity to develop helpful skills. 4-5 Gray's Inn took an original approach to

CLARA CHABERLOT

mini-pupillages and focused on advocacy experience rather than court attendance. Mini-pupils met in small groups with barristers, practiced advocacy exercises such as cross-examination, and discussed advocacy styles and court etiquette, which was enriching and did wonders for my confidence.

There are a few tips for mini-pupillage applicants. Refrain from overapplying; select wisely which chambers could provide you with the insight you need at your stage. In your application, clarify why you specifically would benefit from this opportunity. A friend in Law School told me she thought her prospects were low because "I don't have that much legal experience because I was so busy working alongside my studies". I responded, "Tell them exactly that. That is why you, among all the others, could use the experience". She obtained three mini-pupillages in the span of six months.

In conclusion, Bridging the Bar's mini-pupillages scheme gave me invaluable insight into a barrister's daily life, diverse practice areas, the court environment, and Chambers' culture. It also amplified my confidence in advocacy. Mini-pupillages have a meaningful influence on aspiring barristers, and they have assisted me in defining my interests and confirming my dedication to a career at the Bar. A lovely thanks to Bridging the Bar!

> *This experience engrossed me in the world of research and reform, forcing me to become comfortable with my thoughts and opinions while perfecting the intricacies of my research.*

MARY AMARA AZUBUIKE

LAW COMMISSION INTERNSHIP

I was fortunate enough to land the Law Commission internship, which I believed would marry my love of literature with my interest in the social implications of the law to explore how the law is reformed and created. I knew this immersion would provide an eye-opening window into an aspect of law rarely examined at the undergraduate level, and I was not disappointed.

The Law Commission separates itself into four specialised teams: public law, commercial law, criminal law, and property and trust. I was on the incredibly dynamic public law team, amongst passionate researchers and lawyers propelled by the desire to make reform to suit greater society. At the time, the public law team was conducting research into autonomy in aviation, compulsory purchase, and disabled children's social care. To really get stuck into the work of a Law Commission research assistant, each intern was assigned a research task, of varying degrees of scope, that would be presented to a team of research assistants on the final day. I was assigned a case (the GPE Hannover Square dispute) relating to the calculation of compensation regarding the compulsory purchase of commercial property for the benefit of creating entrances to the new Elizabeth Line. Not only was I able to delve into the intricacies of compulsory purchase compensation rules (which disregard the consequence of compulsory purchase on the price of land), but I was given a conversive environment to express my opinions on the case, the implications of the ruling, and discuss where reform could be made. I had numerous legal professionals at my disposal, willing to take time out of their very busy workloads to discuss the case and my ideas openly with me, making me feel like a valued member of the team, despite only being there for three days.

This experience engrossed me in the world of research and reform, forcing me to become comfortable with my thoughts and opinions while perfecting the intricacies of my research. It also opened me up to the world of public law and practice. Prior to this internship, I believed I only wanted to practice in commercial law, but researching and learning about public law, while talking to passionate public law practitioners, showed me the type of career and change I could wield within my profession. From the internship, I became more open-minded about the type of law I want to practice.

The research project was not the only highlight. A notable aspect of my experience was the diverse talks organised by the Commission. Chief Executive Stephanie Hack provided a comprehensive overview of the Commission's objectives, and Ingrid Morgan from the Office of Parliamentary Counsel shared the intricacy of drafting legislation. However, for me, the most impactful moment was the talk with Sir Nicholas Green, the Law Commission's Chair. A conversation I'm sure my fellow colleagues can agree we did not want to leave. Discussing legal reform with someone so senior demonstrated the humility needed to excel in legal reform and how our diverse life experiences shaped different perspectives on the impact of certain laws. This diversity of thought highlighted the need for inclusivity in legal reform discussions. It became clear to me that a broad range of perspectives is essential for ensuring the law remains responsive to the multifaceted needs of society.

From this immersive experience, I had three key takeaways: first, legal practice should be explorative, as you never truly know what you like until you try different areas. Second, legal reform is transformative, offering a deeper understanding of the law's impact. Finally, the Law Commission provides a supportive environment for intellectual growth and self-reflection. I will be applying for the Law Commission's research assistant role in the coming months and would encourage anyone interested in the social benefits of law to do the same. It's an experience I'll never regret.

COURT OF APPEAL INTERNSHIP

NEIL WILLIAMS

> *With a genuine interest in my journey to the Bar and openly inviting questions, Lord Justice Birss showed me that the highest members of the judiciary are just normal people who are very good at what they do.*

The Bridging the Bar internship at the Court of Appeal was an experience I will never forget. Based inside the Royal Courts of Justice in London, the closest I had ever come to setting foot inside these magnificent buildings was passing by on an 'open top' bus while sightseeing with family.

When I first received the phone call in September notifying me that I was successful in my application, I had to pinch myself. I would be working for a week alongside the Judicial Assistants in one of the highest courts in the country. I was going to be spending time with the highest members of the judiciary and actually speaking with them!

I arrived at the Royal Courts of Justice and met my assigned Judicial Assistant, Georgina, where we went straight into preparation for the day's hearing. This hearing involved the Denton principle and imposed sanctions. With less than 30 minutes, I quickly familiarised myself with the facts of the case and then proceeded to meet Lord Justice Birss and Lord Justice Nugee. With a genuine interest in my journey to the Bar and openly inviting questions, Lord Justice Birss showed me that the highest members of the judiciary are just normal people who are very good at what they do.

All three of us attended a pre-court meeting with the other Justices, and I observed a discussion of the facts of the upcoming case and how the expected submissions would affect any potential judgment before heading into court for the hearing. Submissions for both sides of the case continued until the afternoon hearing, when the Justices retired to their chambers to discuss their judgment. I was surprised to hear that, due to the high workload, it can often be a number of weeks before a judgment has been sent across to the relevant parties.

I especially enjoyed when we headed across to the Rolls Building, where the interns each made a presentation to a panel of Justices and Judicial Assistants, discussing their journey to the Bar and what they had taken from the week. I learned so much about my fellow Bridging the Bar interns in this short time that I hadn't realised from our previous interactions. I was humbled, and the presentations gave me great admiration for my colleagues. The stories and obstacles that our interns had overcome, and how they articulated them, were truly admirable.

The week at the Court of Appeal has taught me so much, and I will always be grateful to Bridging the Bar and the Judiciary for facilitating this. However, my key takeaways from the week are:

- There is a huge amount of hard work that goes into each case, which is not always evident from the outside looking in. Before the internship, I only really appreciated the hearing and the judgment that would appear a few weeks following.
- The Judicial Assistants did an excellent job and were outstanding in their support, answering all the questions that the interns and I had throughout the week.
- Finally, it is excellent to hear about the work that is being undertaken by the Judiciary to improve diversity. However, there is an acknowledgement that this has to start at the Bar.

ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE HIGH COURT INTERNSHIP

> *It is comforting knowing that change is coming...*
>
> *I have started to feel like I deserve to be here.*

The Internship Programme has helped me take a step forward in my legal career. I had the opportunity to work closely with judges and judicial assistants at the High Court, discussing cases in depth and gaining valuable insight into witness evidence.

I engaged in roundtable discussions on enhancing diversity within the judiciary and had the opportunity to deliver a presentation to judges, sharing my personal journey to the Bar. My Judicial Assistant really helped with my presentation. In fact, we had a discussion at the end of every day leading up to the presentation and brainstormed ideas. I think this is a good opportunity to see what is being done at the judiciary and how they are actively trying to combat the lack of diversity. It is comforting knowing that change is coming.

The most useful aspect of the internship was learning about Judicial Assistants. I had never come across this position before, and now that I have met a JA and remained in contact with her, it's inspired me to apply for the position if I don't get pupillage.

This week of experience has been eye-opening and will allow me to develop skills that are crucial for a career at the Bar. I think the Bar feels a lot more reachable. I felt appreciated for being where I am despite my adversities and background. I have started to feel like I deserve to be here.

SAJINI SRIDARAN

UK SUPREME COURT INTERNSHIP

When I received the phone call saying, "We want to send you to the Supreme Court," I could hardly believe it. After a long string of rejections, a common experience for many aspiring barristers, the sense of accomplishment and happiness was indescribable.

I was to meet the other interns at the back door of the Supreme Court to avoid the crowds of guests attending the swearing-in ceremony for the newest Justice, Lady Simler. Due to the large number of people expected, we watched from Courtroom 2, alongside many of Lady Simler's former colleagues from Devereux Chambers. Witnessing Lady Simler receive her robes and take her seat with the other Justices was unexpectedly emotional. Seeing another Lady Justice join Lady Rose was so inspiring and truly tugged at my heartstrings.

The session I was most eager to participate in was the roundtable discussion with Vicky, Lord Lloyd-Jones, Lord Leggatt, and Lord Burrows. We were split into smaller sub-groups, each assigned to a different Justice. Along with two other interns, I was assigned to Lord Leggatt. We had an in-depth conversation about our individual journeys to the Bar and the struggles we had encountered along the way. We discussed issues of diversity, equality, and inclusion, sharing personal experiences about barriers such as fairness in pupillage and mini-pupillage applications. We also explored the term "luck," a common word used in connection with applications, and questioned whether the lack of transparency, paired with the use of this term, might serve to mask discrimination. Lord Leggatt's responses were incredibly insightful and open.

> *"The internship was an unforgettable experience. I learned so much and will cherish it for years to come."*

It was a privilege to discuss such important and often sensitive topics with the Justices, and I felt a deep sense of responsibility as one of only eight interns selected for the program to bring these issues forward. These challenges affect so many aspiring barristers, and having the opportunity to address them directly with such senior figures was immensely rewarding.

Walking to the back entrance of the Supreme Court on the third day was interesting. There was a sea of journalists and camera crews setting up, ready to document the results of the Rwanda judgment as soon as it was given by Lord Reed. Sitting in Courtroom 1 was an unforgettable experience in that moment. The room was full of counsel, legal teams, and journalists. Throughout all the judgments and reasoning behind the Rwanda judgment, you could hear a pin drop. I found myself not even wanting to take a breath. Lord Reed explained the main points leading to the judgment very clearly and in a way that could easily be understood by all members of the public. It was only when he said that the Rwanda policy was unlawful and that the Home Secretary's appeal was dismissed that there was an audible release of the breath those in court had been holding, and suddenly the room burst back to life!

The internship was an unforgettable experience. I learned so much and will cherish it for years to come. I met incredible people, and I'm committed to staying in touch with them. To my fellow interns, you were all brilliant, and working alongside you made the experience truly special. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to Vicky Fox, Rebecca Fry, Bridging the Bar, and the UK Supreme Court, with a special mention to Mannat Malhi and Lord Hamblen for making this internship possible and so memorable. A big thank you to all of you for making us feel like we truly belong at the Bar.

JAYA SUDERA

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

Sponsored by BPP UNIVERSITY

GET IN TOUCH

www.bridgingthebar.org

programmes@bridgingthebar.org
candidatecommunications@bridgingthebar.org

for group, press and media enquiries
info@bridgingthebar.org

@BridgeTheBar

Bridging The Bar

Bridging The Bar

@bridgingthebar

A bar that represents also benefits society

Charity No: 1190369 | Blackstone House, Temple, London, EC4Y 9BW

ANNUAL REPORTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1ST APRIL 2024

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

CHARITY REGISTRATION No: 1190369

Castle View Accounting Ltd
Ground Floor Offices
53 High Street
Arundel
West Sussex
BN18 9AJ

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

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BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

CHARITY NUMBER	1190369
DATE OF REGISTRATION	13th July 2020
START OF FINANCIAL YEAR	2nd April 2023
END OF FINANCIAL YEAR	1st April 2024
TRUSTEES AT 1ST APRIL 2024	Aaron Mayers Mass Ndow-Njie Matheu Armel Swallow
LEGAL STATUS	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
GOVERNING INSTRUMENT	CIO - Foundation Registered 13th July 2020

OBJECTS

The promotion of equality and diversity and the promotion of social inclusion amongst those who socially excluded due to being members of socially and economically deprived community, at The Bar of England and Wales by: **a**) The elimination of discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religion. **b**) Advancing education and raising awareness in equality and diversity. **c**) Promotion activities to foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds. **d**) Cultivating a sentiment in favour of equality and diversity.

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS	Blackstone Chambers Ltd Blackstone House 3 Garden Court Temple London EC4Y 9BW
PRIMARY BANKERS	Cashplus Bank 6th Floor One London Wall London EC2Y 5EB
INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS	Castle View Accounting Ltd Ground Floor Offices 53 High Street Arundel West Sussex BN18 9AJ

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1ST APRIL 2024

Trustees' Responsibilities

The Charities Act 2011 requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the CIO and of the surplus of the CIO for that period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- Prepare financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the CIO will continue in existence.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the CIO. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the CIO and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Trustees on 31 January 2025

Signed on their behalf by Trustee

Printed Name: Mass Ndow-Njie

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1ST APRIL 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2023/24 £	TOTAL 2022/23 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Incoming Resources from Generated Funds					
Donations, Grants & Legacies	**3a**	131,690	-	131,690	83,455
Investment Income	**3b**	66	-	66	-
Other Incoming Resources	**3c**	1,671	-	1,671	-
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		**133,427**	**-**	**133,427**	**83,455**
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Costs of Generating Funds					
Cost of Charitable Activities	**4a**	92,749	-	92,749	102,028
Governance Costs	**4b**	1,350	-	1,350	900
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		**94,099**	**-**	**94,099**	**102,928**
NET INCOMING (OUTGOING) RESOURCES		**39,328**	**-**	**39,328**	**(19,473)**
Funds Brought Forward		52,622	-	52,622	72,095
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		**91,950**	**-**	**91,950**	**52,622**

Movements on all reserves and all recognised gains and losses are shown above. All of the organisation's operations are classed as continuing.

The notes on pages 57 to 62 form part of these financial statements.

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 1ST APRIL 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total 01-Apr-24 £**	**Total 01-Apr-23 £**
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Assets	**2**	-	-	-	-
Investments	**6**	-	-	-	-
Total Fixed Assets		**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**
Current Assets					
Debtors & Prepayments	**8**	-	-	-	-
Cash at Bank and in Hand	**7**	93,990	-	93,990	53,522
Total Current Assets		**93,990**	**-**	**93,990**	**53,522**
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	**9**	2,040	-	2,040	900
NET CURRENT ASSETS		91,950	-	91,950	52,622
TOTAL ASSETS less current liabilities		**91,950**	**-**	**91,950**	**52,622**
Creditors: Amounts falling due in more than one year	**10**	-	-	-	-
NET ASSETS		**91,950**	**-**	**91,950**	**52,622**
Funds of the Charity					
General Funds		91,950	-	91,950	52,622
Restricted Funds	**5**	-	-	-	-
Total Funds		**91,950**	**-**	**91,950**	**52,622**

Approved by the Trustees on 31 January 2025

Signed on their behalf by Trustee .....

Printed Name: Mass Ndow-Njie

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1ST APRIL 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Preparation & Assessment of Going Concern

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP 2015) (Second Edition, effective 1 January 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Assessment of Going Concern

Preparation of the accounts is on a going concern basis. The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Incoming Resources

Recognition of Incoming Resources

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- the trustees are virtually certain they will receive the resources; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability

Incoming Resources with Related Expenditure

Where incoming resources have related expenditure (as with fundraising or contract income) the incoming resource and related expenditure are reported gross in the SOFA.

Grants and Donations

Grants and Donations are only included in the SOFA when the charity has unconditional entitlement to the resources.

Tax Reclaims on Donations and Gifts

Incoming resources from tax reclaims are included in the SOFA at the same time as the gift to which they relate.

Contractual Income and Performance Related Grants

This is only included in the SOFA once the related goods or services have been delivered.

Gifts in Kind

Gifts in kind are accounted for at a reasonable estimate of their value to the charity or the amount actually realised. Gifts in kind for sale or distribution are included in the accounts as gifts only when sold or distributed by the charity. Gifts in kind for use by the charity are included in the SOFA as incoming resources when receivable.

Donated Services and Facilities

These are only included in incoming resources (with an equivalent amount in resources expended) where the benefit to the charity is reasonably quantifiable, measurable and material. The value placed on these resources is the estimated value to the charity of the service or facility received.

Volunteer Help

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts.

Investment Income

This is included in the accounts when receivable.

Investment Gains and Losses

This included any gain or loss on the sale of investments and any gain or loss resulting from revaluing investments to market value at the end of the year.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Expenditure and Liabilities

Liability Recognition
Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

Governance Costs
Include costs of the preparation and examination of statutory accounts, the costs of the trustees meetings and cost of any legal advice to trustees on governance or constitutional matters.

Grants with Performance Conditions
Where the charity gives a grant with conditions for its payment being a specific level of service or output to be provided, such grants are only recognised in the SOFA once the recipient of the grant has provided the specified service or output.

Grants Payable without Performance Conditions
These are only recognised in the accounts when a commitment has been made and there are no conditions to be met relating to a grant which remain in control of the charity.

Investments
Investments quoted on a recognised stock exchange are valued at market value at the year end. Other investment assets are included at trustees' best estimate of market value.

Unrestricted funds
These funds can be used for the general objectives of the charity as set out in the trustees report. The movements of the unrestricted funds are given in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Restricted funds
These funds are where the donor has specified a purpose for the donation made. These restrictions often arise as a result of appeals for special offerings for specific purposes.

Designated funds
These funds are funds set aside by the trustees out of unrestricted general funds for particular purposes or projects.

Fixed Assets
Fixed Assets are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year and cost at least £1,500. They are valued at cost or, if gifted, at the value to the charity on receipt.

Depreciation Expense
Depreciation is calculated at a rate to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets over their estimated useful lives. The rates applied are as follows:

Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment	25% - Straight Line Basis

2. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

The CIO held no fixed assets during this or the previous financial period.

The annual commitments under non-cancelling operating leases and capital commitments are as follows:

1st April 2024:None
1st April 2023:None

3. INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**TOTAL 2023/24** £	**TOTAL 2022/23** £
a) Donations, Grants & Legacies				
Gifts & Donations	131,690	-	131,690	83,455
	131,690	**-**	**131,690**	**83,455**
b) Investment Income				
Interest	66	-	66	-
	66	**-**	**66**	**-**
c) Other Incoming Resources				
Sundry Income	1,671	-	1,671	-
	1,671	**-**	**1,671**	**-**

4. RESOURCES EXPENDED

		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**TOTAL 2023/24** £	**TOTAL 2022/23** £
a) Cost of Charitable Activities					
Academy Programme Costs		12,106	-	12,106	24,692
Administrative Expenses		2,160	-	2,160	-
Advertising & Publicity		1,246	-	1,246	1,438
Award & Prizes		860	-	860	-
Bank Charges		98	-	98	52
Gifts & Donations		2,328	-	2,328	-
Insurance Costs		266	-	266	266
Lecture Series		1,000	-	1,000	-
Photography Costs		1,650	-	1,650	885
Staff Costs		58,095	-	58,095	52,050
Staff Expenses		3,700	-	3,700	-
Sundry Expenses		2,367	-	2,367	1,652
Venue Hire		4,240	-	4,240	-
Website Costs		2,633	-	2,633	20,991
		92,749	**-**	**92,749**	**102,028**
b) Governance Costs					
Independent Examiners Fees	**9**	1,140	-	1,140	900
Legal & Professional Fees		210	-	210	-
		1,350	**-**	**1,350**	**900**

5. RESTRICTED FUNDS

The CIO held no restricted funds during this or the previous financial period.

6. INVESTMENTS

The CIO held no fixed assets investments during this or the previous financial period.

7. CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	**Total 01-Apr-24 £**	**Total 01-Apr-23 £**
Cash at Bank & in Hand	93,990	-	93,990	53,522
	93,990	**-**	**93,990**	**53,522**

8. DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	**Total 01-Apr-24 £**	**Total 01-Apr-23 £**
Sundry Debtors	-	-	-	-
	-	**-**	**-**	**-**

9. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	**Total 01-Apr-24 £**	**Total 01-Apr-23 £**
Independent Examiners Fees	1,140	-	1,140	900
Sundry Creditors	900	-	900	-
	2,040	**-**	**2,040**	**900**

10. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE IN MORE THAN ONE YEAR

The CIO held no long term liabilities during this or the previous financial period.

11. NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total 01-Apr-24 £**	**Total 01-Apr-23 £**
Fixed Asset Investments	-	-	-	-
Net Current Assets	91,950	-	91,950	52,622
Long Term Liabilities	-	-	-	-
	91,950	**-**	**91,950**	**52,622**

12. STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS

	TOTAL 2023/24	TOTAL 2022/23
	£	£
Gross Wages, Salaries & Fees	53,845	52,050
Employer's National Insurance Costs	4,250	-
Pension Contributions	-	-
	58,095	**52,050**

Employees who were engaged in each of the following activities:

	TOTAL 2023/24	TOTAL 2022/23
Charitable Activities	3	3

The Charity engages with staff on a Self-employed basis and is therefore not liable to Income Tax and National Insurance Costs and no employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

13. TRUSTEES AND OTHER RELATED PARTIES

No payments were made to trustees or any persons connected with them during this financial period. No material transaction took place between the organisation and a trustee or any person connected with them.

14. RISK ASSESSMENT

The Trustees actively review the major risks which the charity faces on a regular basis and believe that maintaining the free reserves stated, combined with the annual review of the controls over key financial systems carried out on an annual basis will provide sufficient resources in the event of adverse conditions. The Trustees have also examined other operational and business risks which they face and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate the significant risks.

15. RESERVES POLICY

The Trustees have considered the level of reserves they wish to retain, appropriate to the CIO's needs. This is based on the CIO's size and the level of financial commitments held. The Trustees aim to ensure the CIO will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in income or unexpected expenditure. The Trustees will endeavour not to set aside funds unnecessarily.

16. PUBLIC BENEFIT

The CIO acknowledges its requirement to demonstrate clearly that it must have charitable purposes or ‘aims’ that are for the public benefit. Details of how the CIO has achieved this are provided in the Trustees report. The Trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit before deciding what activities the CIO should undertake.

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS

Report to the trustees/ members of Bridging the Bar on the accounts for year ended 1st April 2024 set out on pages 55 to 62.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect, the requirements:
   - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
   - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act

   have not been met; or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

K. Collaku MAAT
Castle View Accounting Ltd
Ground Floor Offices
53 High Street
Arundel
West Sussex
BN18 9AJ

Date: 31st January 2025

BRIDGING THE BAR

England & Wales - Charity number 1190369

Accounts

BRIDGING THE BAR

ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

Charity No: 1190369 | 218 Strand, London, WC2R 1AT

access Legal Modern Law Awards 2023 Winner DIVERSITY & INCLUSION AWARD

BAR PRO BONO AWARDS WINNER Social Responsibility Initiative of the Year 2022

BIRMINGHAM LAW SOCIETY one profession · one region · one voice 2023 Legal Awards WINNER

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

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Founder, Mass Ndow-Njie

FOREWORD

With immense pride, I am delighted to present our third Annual Report, a testament to another year of remarkable progress and outstanding achievements.

The pinnacle of this year's success has been the triumph of the Bridging the Bar ('BTB') Academy. The first cohort of 2022/23 has now graduated, setting a new benchmark in excellence. We have seen tremendous growth amongst the entire cohort and a significant number of our graduates have already been successful in securing pupillage at leading Chambers.

The statistics speak volumes: every candidate more than doubled their likelihood of securing pupillage by obtaining a place in our Academy, with second-year applicants even tripling their chances. This success is a testament to the unwavering dedication of our candidates and the efficacy of our programme, made possible only by our generous sponsors.

Another momentous milestone this year has been our flagship partnership with BPP University, now the headline sponsor for the BTB Academy. This collaboration has been especially instrumental in enhancing the Academy's offerings and strengthening its impact.

In a further exciting development, BTB has partnered with Briefed to provide strategic networking and unconscious bias training to all Academy candidates, equipping them with crucial skills for a modern, diverse legal profession.

This year, BTB has also been honoured with prestigious accolades, receiving the Equality and Diversity award at the Birmingham Law Society's 2023 Awards and the Diversity and Inclusion Award at the Modern Law Awards 2023. These awards are not just recognitions of our efforts, but also reflect the collective commitment of our community to fostering a more inclusive legal profession.

Our deepening relationship with the Inns of Court was highlighted by hosting the BTB Academy's first graduation at Middle Temple Hall and welcoming the class of 2023/24 at Gray's Inn Hall. These historic venues provided a fitting backdrop to these landmark events, symbolizing the bridge we are building between tradition and progress.

As we look to the future, these achievements inspire us to continue our work towards a legal profession that truly represents and benefits society. The journey towards equality and diversity in the Bar is ongoing, and BTB is committed to being at the forefront of this change. Our heartfelt thanks go to all our partners, sponsors, and supporters who share in this vision.

Thank you all for your continued support.

"The Scoial Responsibility Initiative of the Year: An honour which represents what can be achieved when all the best parts of the legal profession collaborate for a greater cause."

- **Mass Ndow-Njie**, Founder and Chairperson

A bar that represents also benefits society.

OUR TEAM

CHAMPIONS

PROFESSOR JO DELAHUNTY KC

PROFESSOR LESLIE THOMAS KC

MR JUSTICE PUSHPINDER SAINI KC

Board of Directors

CHAIRPERSONS

MASS NDOW-NJIE
Founder and Chairperson

AARON MAYERS
Vice Chairperson

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ABDUL QADIM

SONIA MASAUN

ISHAN KOLHATKAR

EMMA HUGHES

ELEANOR TACK

SRISHTI SURESH

MAT SWALLOW

ANU LAU

STAFF

IMOGEN SHERRIFF

RONNIE EVANS

FATIMA ALI

MEET THE BTB TEAM

With thanks to our Sponsors:

THE HONOURABLE SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE

Normanton CHAMBERS

GRAY'S INN

BRIEFED

7BR

BPP

Fountain Court CHAMBERS

3PB BARRISTERS

Blackstone CHAMBERS

KEATING CHAMBERS

TWENTY ESSEX

4pb Four Paper Buildings

serle court

Essex CHAMBERS

3VB

LITTLETON

4 NEW SQUARE CHAMBERS

combar The Commercial Bar Association

GATEHOUSE CHAMBERS

ftb Francis Taylor Building

ESSEX COURT CHAMBERS BARRISTERS

The University of Law

Four Brick Court

With thanks to our Founding Partners:

Blackstone Chambers

combar
The Commercial Bar Association

Gatehouse Chambers

3VB Three Verulam Buildings Barristers

Keating Chambers

Littleton

ftb Francis Taylor Building

Normanton Chambers

4 New Square Chambers

Pump Court Chambers

INTRODUCTION TO BTB

"It is a privilege to see the next generation from all walks of life shine and be elevated. They are the future of the bar and what a bright future that will be."

- **Emma Hughes**, Board of Directors

INTRODUCTION

Bridging the Bar ('BTB') is a charitable organisation that exists to bridge the gap between students from non-traditional backgrounds and the skills, experience and networks required to develop a career at the Bar. We believe that for the Bar to reach its full potential, it must reflect the diverse society in which we live. This year saw the continuation of BTB's flagship programme, the BTB Academy. This is a comprehensive programme which aims to provide a cohort of candidates with the skills, knowledge, and mindset needed to succeed in applications for pupillage. From a single application, candidates gain access to professional development training, personal development training, mentoring, interview advocacy training, mini-pupillages, application guidance, and opportunities for internships.

The Academy programme has been specially designed to tackle issues that candidates from underrepresented backgrounds face. The professional development sessions focus on key issues, ranging from imposter syndrome to the importance of courage before confidence, which pose an access barrier between non-traditional applicants and a career at the Bar. The paid internship opportunities we provide aim to close the gap in experience for those who are less able, due to their backgrounds, to take on unpaid work experience opportunities. Our mentorship programme provides candidates with access to professionals who share their diversity characteristics, in order to help candidates have confidence that there is a place at the Bar for people like them.

Whilst we recognise the positive work being carried out to establish greater equality of access to opportunities at the Bar, it is clear that gaps still exist. BTB works towards closing that gap by supporting aspiring barristers and those organisations and individuals already championing diversity at the Bar. We believe that by actively providing opportunities and resources to bridge the gap between traditional and non-traditional applicants, the Academy is helping to drive the kind of high-quality applications from diverse aspiring barristers that will eventually change the face of the profession.

WHO WE HELP

Low Income Background

BAME

LGBTQ+

Disability

+ More

OUR VISION

At BTB, we believe that in order to truly serve society the bar must reflect society; without being able to pull from a wealth of differing perspectives and experience, we as practitioners will be less able to serve those who come from backgrounds that are dissimilar to our own.

BTB was founded to address this issue. We believe that the "bridge" between today's Bar and the diverse Bar that our society needs can be built by achieving three core objectives:

EQUAL ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

An integral part of equal access to opportunity at the Bar is to provide students from non-traditional backgrounds with the ability to gain practical work experience with barristers. The internship and mini-pupillage opportunities that candidates receive as part of the Academy provides students from all backgrounds with the opportunity to gain exposure to life at the Bar. This is the insight needed for students to understand what career options are available to them, and specifically, what a career at the Bar looks like.

OUR VISION

COLLABORATION

We welcome any dynamic support of our initiative, whether via the methods suggested, through tailored networking events, educational panels or entirely new ideas. There is an abundance of creative enterprises working to tackle many of the aims we share. BTB is continuously willing to discuss collaborating with organisations who share our aims. We recognise that in addition to helping people at a grassroots level, a pillar of what we do is forming strategic relationships with our regulators so that we can engage in conversations at a decision making level, provide feedback and create new schemes to help those who need and deserve it.

RAISING ASPIRATIONS

In order for diversity at the Bar to flourish, diversity in aspirations must be encouraged. At BTB we are dedicated to cultivating and sustaining the courage and belief it takes to opt for the Bar as a career path. Such cultivation runs through the heart of our Academy and can be seen most prominently in our personal development 'Pod' sessions, which focus on issues which typically undermine the aspirations of non-traditional applicants.

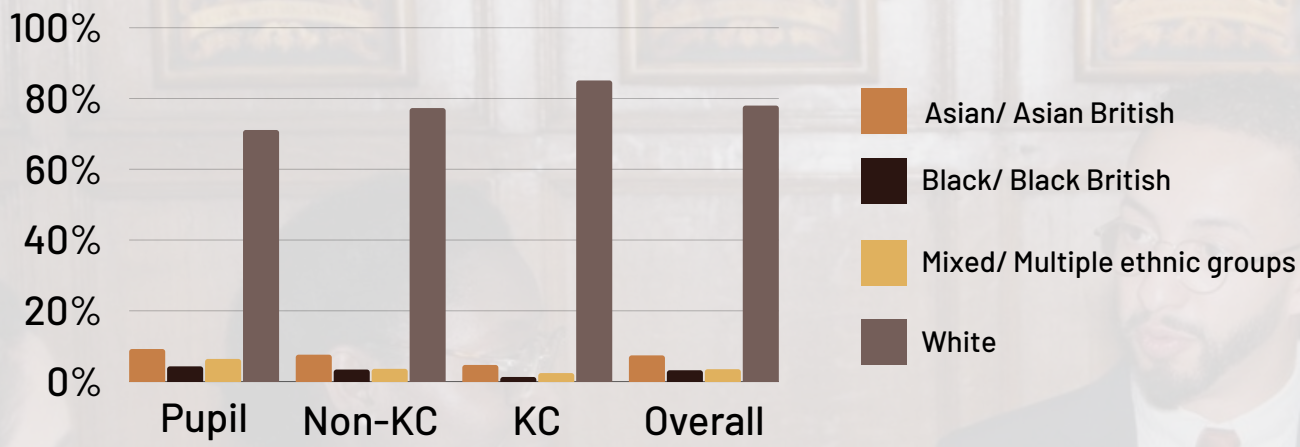
THE BAR IN NUMBERS

"Focus on the best version of yourself. By being your best self, you can take back that power because the truth is, a barrister looks like all of you."
- **Mass Ndow-Njie**, Founder and Chairperson.

Diversity at the Bar, 2021

NUMBERS & STATISTICS

ETHNICITY AT THE BAR (BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2022)

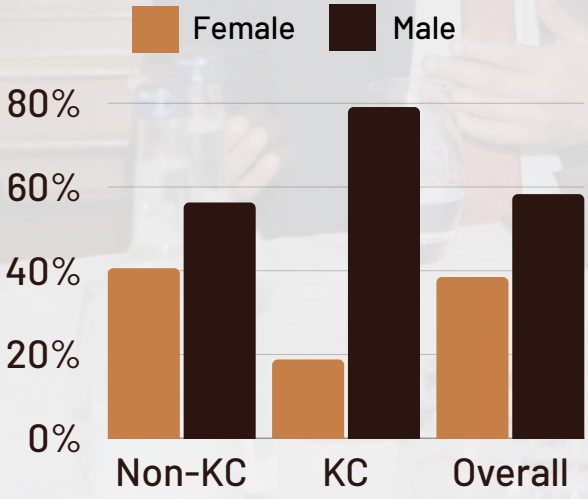


488
Pupil Barristers

15,522
Non-KC Barristers

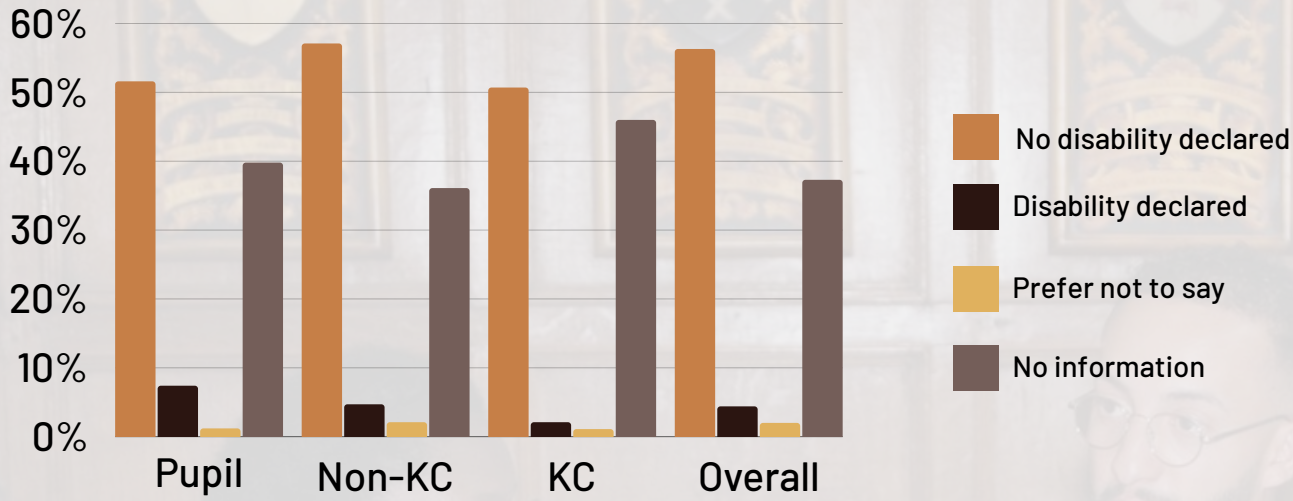
2,016
King's Counsel

GENDER AT THE BAR (BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2022)



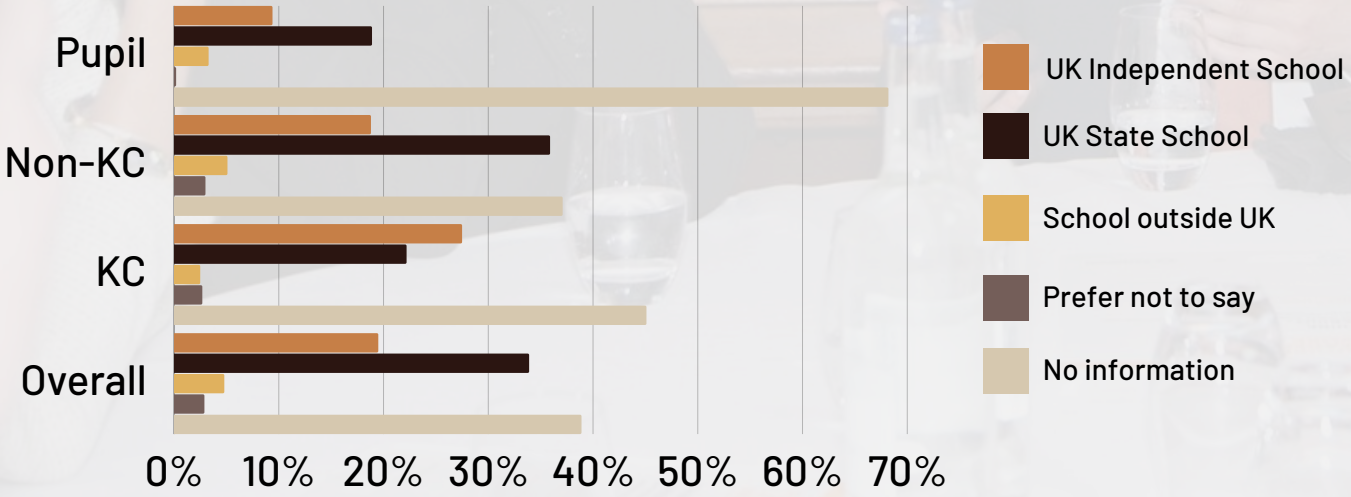
Diversity at the Bar, 2021

DISABILITY DECLARED AT THE BAR (BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2022)



19.5%
of respondents attended a UK Independent School

6%
of UK children attend Independent Schools



TYPE OF SCHOOL ATTENDED (BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2021)

INTROUCTION TO THE ACADEMY

"Launching the Bridging the Bar Academy is the natural next step for our charity. We intend to take our activities to a new higher level."

- **Mass Ndow-Njie**, Founder and Chairperson

BPP BECOMES HEADLINE SPONSOR

In early 2023 the BPP University Group became the headline sponsor for the BTB Academy, allowing BTB to continue to provide opportunities for those with a passion for a career at the Bar, even when they may not see themselves represented within the profession.

Jonny Hurst, a senior lecturer and law marketing lead at BPP stated: “We’re extremely excited about this new partnership and share BTB’s passion and commitment to widen participation at the bar so that the profession better reflects the diverse world we inhabit. As a university, we are absolutely committed to training and supporting anyone who aspires to become a legal professional, regardless of their ethnic or socio-economic background, sexuality, disability, or long-term health condition.”

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY
Sponsored by BPP UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL

In BPP’s joint commitment with BTB to widen participation at the Bar so that the profession can better reflect the diverse world we inhabit BPP has also supported the BTB Academy by utilising their campuses to host BTB events. BPP hosted our All-Interns Workshop which allowed candidates to receive pretraining as to what they can expect from their internships, in a legal education environment.

BPP is also hosting our personal development sessions, in both their London and Manchester campuses. Providing BTB with a hub in the north with their Manchester campus for pods to reduce travel costs and increase accessibility for candidates to our programmes.

ACADEMY OVERVIEW

THE IDEA

The Academy was born from a desire to maximise BTB's impact on our candidates, both in terms of numbers and in terms of outcomes.

This led to the idea of a comprehensive programme, which would provide not only tangible experience and skills to those who traditionally may suffer from a lack of access to the profession, but also to assist candidates in obtaining the mindset needed to succeed in such a competitive field.

OVERVIEW

From one application process, 100 candidates are provided with access to internships, mentoring, mini-pupillage schemes, professional development workshops, interview advocacy training, application feedback, and networking opportunities.

In running such a comprehensive Academy programme, we hope to both assist our candidates in securing pupillage, while also creating a future generation of Barristers who will become champions of diversity at the Bar in their own right.

ACADEMY OVERVIEW

OBJECTIVES

In designing the Academy programme, five objectives were adopted:

1. To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
2. To improve the quality of candidates' written pupil applications.
3. To improve the quality of each candidate's pupillage interview technique.
4. To equip our candidates with the mindset tools required to succeed within the profession.
5. To equip our candidates with the tools to champion diversity and inclusion within the profession and throughout their careers.

These objectives were selected as those that best assisted with our more general aim of helping our candidates to improve their pupillage prospects. These objectives guided the structure of each event, in addition to the programme as a whole, and gave us metrics by which to measure our successes.

ACADEMY STRUCTURE

DESIGN

The overall structure of the Academy mimics the academic year with events running from October until July. The design of the programme has been undertaken with our overall aims in mind, and so each Academy event has been tailored to both address a specific issue that candidates from non-traditional backgrounds face, while also targeting at least one of our stated objectives

Event	Summary	Objectives
Personal Development Sessions	Four sessions led by legal professionals covering topics that include 'courage before confidence' and 'collective community success'.	Interview technique Mindset Championing Diversity
Mini-pupillages	Two rounds of mini-pupillages in a candidates area of interest.	Content of Applications Written Applications
Lecture Series	A lecture series which focuses on issues surrounding non-traditional legal professionals.	Contents of Application Mindset Championing Diversity

ACADEMY STRUCTURE CONTINUED

Event	Summary	Objectives
Internships	Selected candidates spend a week shadowing at either the UK Supreme Court, High Court, Court of Appeal, Law Commission, or Advocate.	Content of Applications Mindset Championing Diversity
Mentoring	Candidates are paired with a Barrister in their preferred practice area for a year long mentoring relationship	Written Applications Interview technique Mindset Championing Diversity
Advocacy Training	Candidates participate in both an online course and also spent time in Chambers improving on their answers to advocacy questions	Content of Applications Written Applications

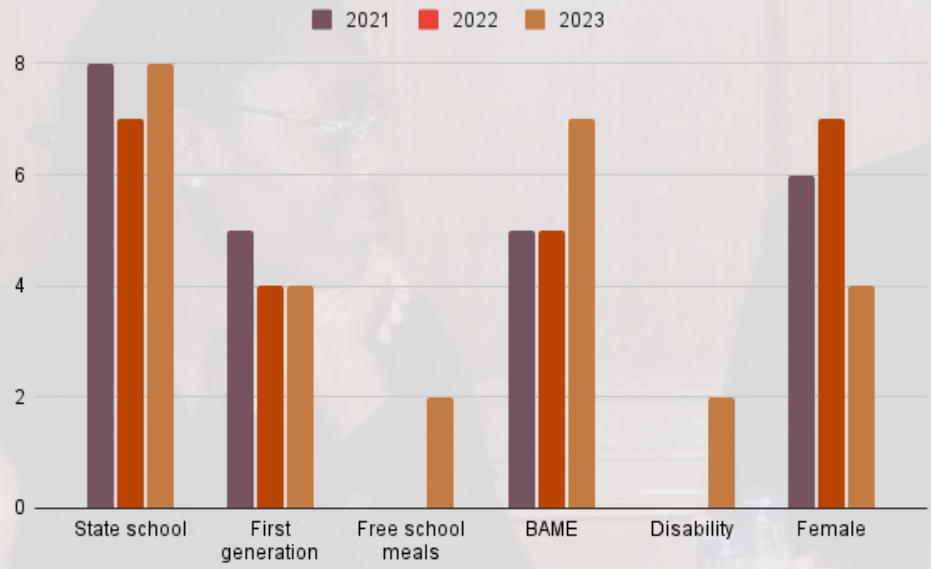
CONCLUDING ACADEMY 2022/23

"Thank you again for your trust, time, and dedication to providing equal opportunities in the legal profession. Together, we can create a Bar that represents society, and in turn, benefits society."

– **Mass Ndow-Njjie,** Founder and Chairperson

ADVOCATE INTERNSHIP

In June 2023, BTB & Advocate collaborated on an internship for aspiring barristers from statistically under-represented backgrounds at the Bar. The design of the internship saw 5 successful candidates assigned the role of a caseworker at Advocate, undertaking tasks including writing case summaries and preparing court standard bundles. The interns were also invited to meet with a high court judge, see a working court and engage in a Q&A with Sir Robin.



The interns were able to develop core skills necessary for their career development and were provided with exposure to the legal environment, from the perspective of a case worker. Diverse aspiring barristers, face barriers to accessing opportunities that provide such development and so it is an honour to be able to provide this alongside Advocate for our candidates, to continue to work to diversify the Bar.

We are delighted to report that, due to the success of last year's pilot internship, it was agreed between BTB and Advocate to provide this internship for another cohort in 2024.

THE GRADUATION CONFERENCE

To conclude the pilot of our BTB Academy 22/23 programme last year, we hosted our first ever Graduation Conference in June 2023 in partnership with the Honourable Society of Middle Temple Inn. This was a great opportunity to allow us to reflect on all the progress we had made over the past academic year, to thank our partners and sponsors for all their support as well as to celebrate the achievements of all of our candidates.

During this event candidates attended the Future Leader's workshop which was hosted in partnership with Gatehouse Chambers and the Bar Council. This workshop gave our candidates a chance to learn about initiatives which equip barristers with ways to promote diversity and inclusion within the profession.

Additionally, our candidates also attended a Mental Health at the Bar workshop which was hosted in partnership with Malvika Jaganmohan, a barrister at St Ives Chambers, and Millie Benson, a barrister at 1KBW. This workshop highlighted to our candidates the importance of prioritising one's mental health while pursuing a career at the bar.

Our Academy Headline Sponsor BPP rounded the event off with a speech from Claire Wardell, Programme Leader who noted BPP's commitment to improving access to the Bar, and their active steps through sponsoring the BTB Academy.

The event ended with a graduation ceremony where all our candidates were awarded a certificate to authenticate their participation with the programme.

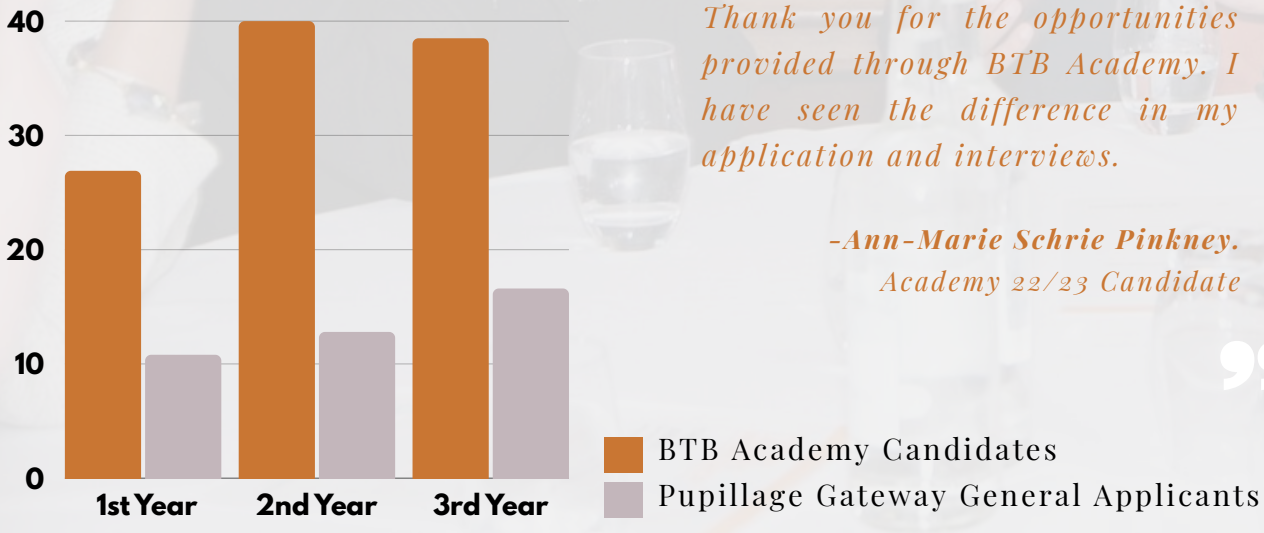
OUTCOMES

We are delighted to share that our 22/23 Bridging the Bar Academy Programme has been shown to increase a candidate's chances of obtaining pupillage in comparsion to the general population of applicants.

For candidates who are applying through the pupillage gateway for the first time, those who attended the BTB Academy are 2.76 times more likely to obtain pupillage. For second-time applicants, there is an increase to 3.12 times more likely for BTB candidates to obtain pupillage. BTB candidates applying through the pupillage gateway for the third time were seen to be 2.32 times more likely to obtain pupillage.

Our Academy programme is tailored to provide the necessary skills and opportunities to obtain pupillage, and the increased chance of obtaining pupillage seen in our candidates is a trend we will aim to continue.

We will continue to review our outcomes alongside our Academy programme to analyse what aspects of our academy are linked to this increased sucess. By analysing our Academy programme content we can home in on excelling in these areas to continue to provide diverse aspiring barristers with the tools to access a career at the Bar.



Statistics obtained from the Pupillage Gateway Report 2022.

Thank you for the opportunities provided through BTB Academy. I have seen the difference in my application and interviews.

-Ann-Marie Schrie Pinkney.
Academy 22/23 Candidate

APPLICATIONS

APPLICATION DESIGN

While the aim of the Academy is to upskill candidates from non-traditional backgrounds, we were also mindful of the need to select those applicants with the drive, academic rigour, and passion needed for successful completion of the programme. With this in mind, we selected questions which would test both an Applicants advocacy skills, as well as their understanding of and commitment to both the legal field and the Academy programme. The application required both written and oral answers given in video format, so as to assess both oral and written advocacy.

The Questions:

1. How has your background helped you develop the skill(s) needed to become a good barrister and how do you think Academy membership will continue this development?
2. "The biggest factor affecting retention and progression of disabled aspiring barristers is the lack of wheelchair access at the Bar." Do you agree?
3. How has your background posed a challenge for you when pursuing a career at the bar and how will Academy membership help you overcome these specific barriers?
4. Please select one of the Academy programmes, then prepare a 1-minute presentation on how this programme will benefit you in relation to one or more of your D&I characteristics.
5. How will you benefit from being a BTB Academy candidate?
6. Do you think that incorporation of digital technology into courts improves
7. access to justice for those from underrepresented backgrounds? Why or why not?

APPLICATIONS

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Upon reviewing the cohort and outcomes data for our pilot year, alongside the BSB statistics for incoming pupil barristers, we made a decision to revise our entry criteria in order to better focus our efforts on those groups who are most under-represented.

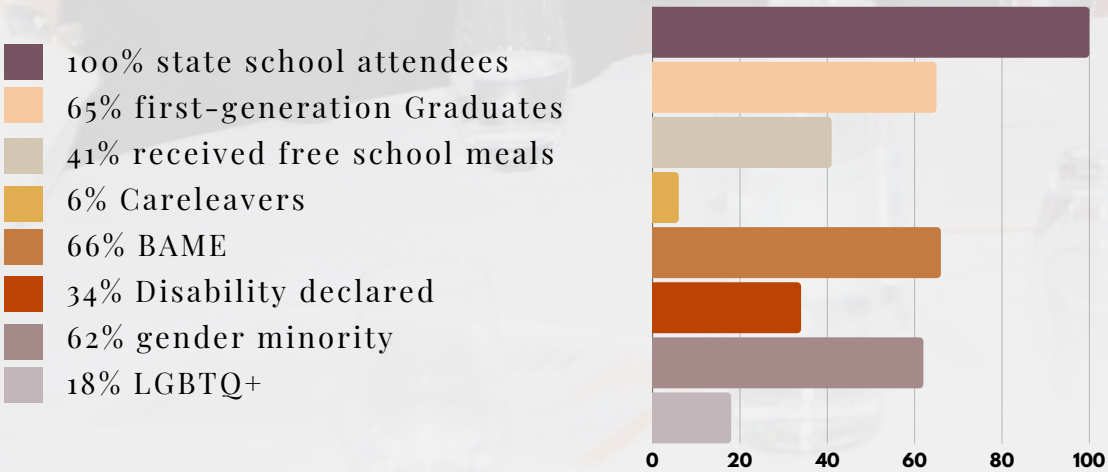
As such, we introduced two new eligibility criteria:

- All applicants must be state school educated
- No applicant can be an Qxbridge graduate

RECEIVED APPLICATIONS

For Academy 23/24, we saw an increase of 57% in received applications. We did see a slight drop of 7% and 3% in gender minority applicants and applicants from an LGBT background respectively, however generally we saw a rise in our targeted diversity characteristics within the applicant pool.

Inline with our 23/24 eligibility criteria, 100% of applicants were state school educated; first-generation graduates rose from 53% to 65% of applicants; those who had received free school meals comprised 41% of the pool in comparison to last year's 29%; careleavers rose from 4% to 6%; BAME applicants increased from 66% to 79%; and those with a disability or long-term health condition made up 34% of applicants apposed to 33% from the prior cycle.



THE ACADEMY 2023/24

"From day one, the Bridging the Bar team has asked itself: what is the best way to increase the chances of our candidates securing pupillage, whilst also preparing them for professional life at the bar? The BTB Academy is the answer."

– **Aaron Mayers**, Vice-Chairperson

COHORT

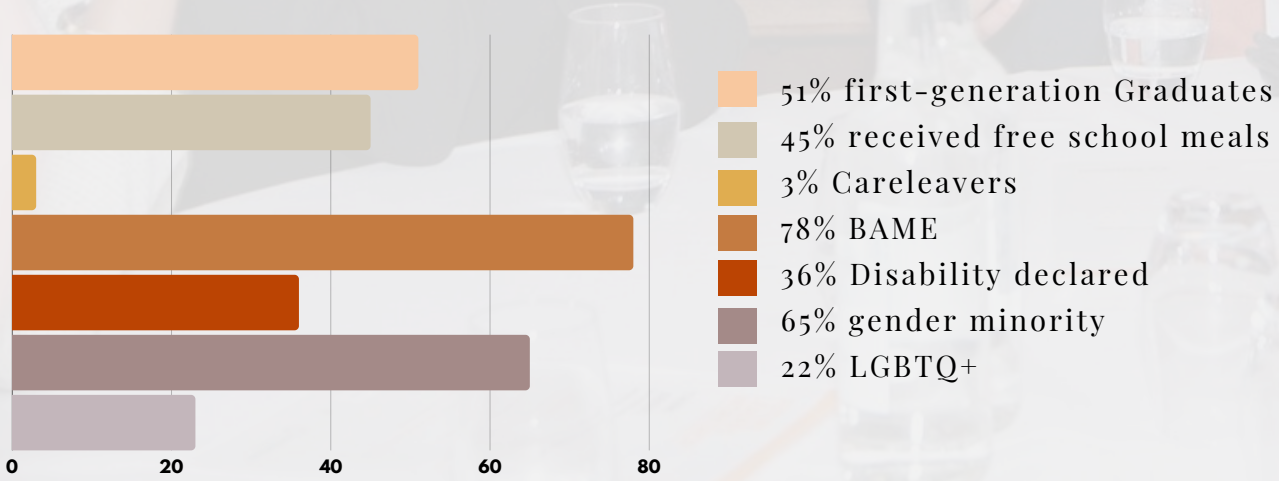
SELECTION PROCESS

We utilised a volunteer force of legal professionals in our marking process, who each marked a single answer for all applications. By adopting this vertical marking process, we aimed to increase consistency during our application marking process.

The markers were asked to assess answers against seven key criteria:
1. A commitment to academic excellence through achieving strong grades at university.
2. An understanding of what a career at the Bar entails.
3. Clear and persuasive written communication skills i.e., appropriate structure, use of language and sentence structure.
4. Clear, persuasive and engaging oral advocacy skills.
5. Understanding of issues faced by candidates and barristers from underrepresented backgrounds at the Bar and a commitment to remedying these issues.
6. Ability of a candidate to share their background and experiences in a way which will facilitate mutual learning with fellow candidates and stakeholders.
7. Likelihood to benefit from participating in BTB Academy.

SUCESSFUL CANDIDATES

We are pleased to report that this method resulted in a pool of candidates who's diversity characteristics closely mirror that of the applicant pool.



FEEDBACK

APPLICATION FEEDBACK

We acknowledged the significant value of feedback for aspiring barristers. Despite feedback being central to an applicant's growth and development, we recognise that it is often not provided to applicants when applying for pupillage.

In order to address this within our own application process, candidates, regardless of whether their application was successful or not, were each provided with feedback on their applications. We asked those marking applications to provide positive and constructive feedback on each answer that they marked. In practice, this means that every Applicant received at least one line of feedback from every marker, according to the question assigned to that marker. With this breadth of feedback, we hope that each and every Applicant is able to make significant improvements to any application they complete going forward.

QUESTION	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	PANELLIST FEEDBACK
1) What strength(s) do you possess which will make you a good barrister? Please discuss relevant work experience, legal or otherwise, to demonstrate these strengths. (250 words, 6 points available)	Criteria 2 - An understanding of what a career at the Bar entails	Good engagement with the skills that are required to succeed at the Bar.
	Criteria 3 - Clear and persuasive written communication skills i.e., appropriate structure, use of language and sentence structure	Overall, excellent but think about the amount of development in your second paragraph.
2) "Childcare commitments are the biggest factor preventing the retention and progression of women at the Bar." Do you agree?	Criteria 2 - An understanding of what a career at the Bar entails	This is a fair answer with some research, addressing other aspects of the Bar which may impede retention or progression.
	Criteria 3 - Clear and persuasive written communication skills i.e., appropriate	Broadly well written and clearly structured.

At BTB, we hope that in the coming years, providing feedback becomes more widespread across the profession.

"I had high expectations as to the quality of the candidates' work. Those expectations were massively surpassed - the written answers were very impressive. BTB has clearly sourced excellent candidates, who are already impressive advocates in writing".

- **Alexander Echlin**, Academy 22/23 Marker

THE WELCOME EVENT

To launch the Academy year, all the candidates attended the Welcome Event which aimed to orient candidates in anticipation of the Academy course and prepare them for the upcoming programmes. This event was hosted in partnership with the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn.

During this event, candidates had the programme explained in more detail, were familiarised with the Academy's policies, and were also given direction as to how and where they can access any additional Academy support that they might need. This was also the first opportunity that candidates had to meet their Coaching Pod groups and so familiarise themselves with the Academy support network they will be relying on during the year.

The event contained a Welcoming speech from our founder Mass Ndow-Njie, ice-breaker games and a talk about the benefits of life coaching sessions. Candidates also benefitted from time to network with each other.

BRIEFED

This year Briefed, a barrister's service training provider, offered all our BTB Academy candidates with Unconscious Bias Training and Networking Training. This training is designed to help the candidates get the most out of their BTB Academy experience, helping them know how best to make contacts and how to leverage their network once they graduate from the Academy as Alumni.

The candidates underwent this training at the very beginning of their BTB Academy journey. The training was conducted through an online course whereby candidates had access to the course for one week and could complete the activities in their own time. Upon completion, candidates were awarded a certificate from Briefed.

OBJECTIVES

This training was intended to address three Academy objectives:

1. To equip our candidates with the mindset tools required to succeed within the profession.
2. To equip our candidates with the tools to champion diversity and inclusion within the profession and throughout their careers.

Orlagh Kelly, CEO at BRIEFED

BRIEFED

"I'm delighted to be in partnership with Bridging the Bar and help promote their mission for social mobility within the legal community. As a barrister myself, breaking down these barriers and unlocking the potential of aspiring barristers is a cause close to my heart and I'm pleased to have the opportunity to enrol BTB pupils in the Briefed training courses, as this will not only aid their professional development but also contribute to their personal growth for their future at the Bar."

CANDIDATE TESTIMONIES

Sonia Jassi, 23/24 Academy Candidate

The training provided by BTB and Briefed was exceptional. The courses broadened my thoughts on unconscious bias, and challenged the way I would approach networking in the future. I believe that these courses have aided me on my journey to the Bar.

The Briefed Training gave me an introduction to situations I will encounter at the Bar and how to best navigate them. By the end of the training I felt empowered to face difficult situations and more prepared to enter a room with confidence.

Rhiannon Hobby, 23/24 Academy Candidate

THE COACHING POD PROGRAMME

OBJECTIVES

Prior to the UKSC internship in 2021, all 8 interns received a personal coaching session to prepare them. Post internship, it was highlighted to us just how much of a difference coaching can make to the interns' confidence. Therefore, we intended on replicating this success by providing coaching for all our 100 candidates on the BTB Academy.

This coaching was intended to address three Academy objectives:

1. To improve the quality of each candidate's pupillage interview technique.
2. To equip our candidates with the mindset tools required to succeed within the profession.
3. To equip our candidates with the tools to champion diversity and inclusion within the profession and throughout their careers.

THE COACHING POD PROGRAMME

THE PODS

In order to implement this we split our BTB Academy candidates into groups which we dubbed 'Pods'. Each pod consists of around 7/8 candidates, as well as a coach who takes the role of pod leader. We wanted to ensure that candidates feel supported in sharing, and so have adopted small groups in order to facilitate a safe and comfortable environment.

THE COACHES

We recruited volunteer practitioners to lead coaching sessions for the Pod to which they have been assigned. Each Pod leader attends a four-hour coaching training session led by Helen Gazzi, a performance and leadership coach with years of experience in the industry.

We also provided Volunteer Coaches with training from an accredited mediator on facilitating conversations, de-escalating conflict and dealing with difficult questions, training on organising content for the sessions and gave advice on leading the sessions.

THE COACHING POD PROGRAMME

Coaching Pod Sessions are designed to help support our BTB Academy candidates throughout the Academic year. From last year's BTB Academy pilot, we found that the candidates within each Coaching Pod groups provided further support to each other beyond the scheduled sessions. This formed a strong support network between BTB candidates which extended after the conclusion of last year's BTB Academy.

THE SESSIONS

We have organised four sessions for each Pod, consisting of 7/8 candidates and led by one coach and, in some groups one deputy pod coach, to take place throughout the academic year with four hours provided for each session. Each session has been designed to tackle a specific issue faced by those from non-traditional backgrounds when pursuing a career at the Bar.

1. **Courage Before Confidence.** This session deals with a lack of confidence which often affects those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and addresses how courage can help fill this gap.
2. **Owning Your Story.** This session focuses on reframing candidates' perceptions of their own stories, by encouraging candidates to find power in their own narratives.
3. **Being vs Doing.** This session helps tackle the idea that being born without certain privileges or qualities can forestall a career at the Bar.
4. **Collective Success.** This seeks to reframe the comparative lens into a collaborative one by focusing on how candidates can help one another.

IMPACT

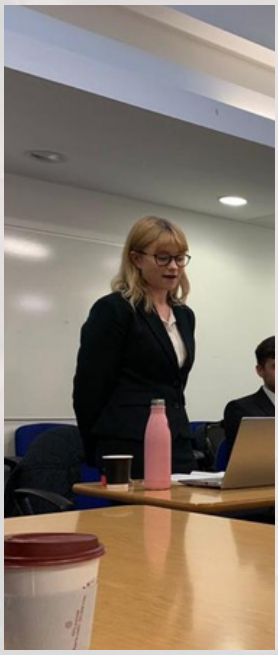
All Pods have now undertaken one session and will continue with the rest of the sessions during 2024. We captured metrics regarding Candidate outlook prior to the commencement of the Pod sessions, and we look forward to sharing an impact assessment on changes in the outlook of our candidates once the programme has been completed.

THE FIRST EVER POD SESSION

A bar that represents also benefits society.

MINI PUPILLAGE PROGRAMME

This year we have partnered with various Chambers to provide our candidates with at least one mini-pupillage during the academic year. We have implemented a two cycle process or mini-pupillages whereby Cycle 1 commences between October 2023-January 2024 and Cycle 2 commences between February-June 2024. Cycle 1 prioritised candidates who were not selected for the integrated internships and Cycle 2 ensured that all 100 candidates were assigned a mini-pupillage.



The continuation of the mini-pupillage programme targeted two of our Academy objectives:

1. To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
2. To improve the quality of candidates' written pupil applications.

Candidates from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to have existing legal connections from which they can secure mini-pupillages. Additionally, they are less likely to have the time to complete multiple applications because of other pressures such as work or caring responsibilities. By providing a guaranteed mini-pupillage for our candidates we hope to expose them to life at the Bar;

MINI PUPILLAGE PROGRAMME

With thanks to those Chambers who supported our mini-pupillage programme this year:

Francis Taylor Building

Fountain Court Chambers

11 Kings Bench Walk

15NBS Chambers

3 Dr Johnson's Buildings

Spire Barristers

Coram Chambers

4 Stone Buildings

4 New Square

New Court Chambers

Mountford Chambers

25 Bedford Row

Garden Court Chambers

Parklane Plowden Chambers

Outer Temple

1 Garden Court

10 Old Square

4-5 Gray's Inn Square

Brick Court

3 Verulam Buildings

8 New Square

One Essex Court

Essex Court

39 Essex

36 Group

Three Raymond Buildings

Two Harcourt Buildings

Pump Court Tax

Littleton Chambers

Matrix Chambers

Hailsham Chambers

Temple Garden

College Chambers

Deans Court Chambers

7 Kings Bench Walk

Keating Chambers

Atlantic Chambers

Landmark Chambers

THE LECTURE SERIES

A bar that represents also benefits society.

Delivered by Elaine Banton

LECTURE SERIES

The Academy held the first lecture of a two-part lecture series, focusing on the challenges facing barristers from underrepresented groups. The lectures are delivered by Elaine Banton, a barrister at 7BR and an elected Bencher at the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple. Elaine is also the co-chair of the Bar Council's Equality, Diversity and Social Mobility Committee.

The lecture series was designed to address three of the Academy's objectives:

1. To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
2. To equip our candidates with the mindset tools required to succeed within the profession.
3. To equip our candidates with the tools to champion diversity and inclusion within the profession and throughout their careers.

The lecture series allows candidates to enter the Bar with these issues at the forefront of their mind, allowing them to enter the profession with the knowledge of these issues, and how to contribute to fixing it. The lectures are followed by lunch and discussions amongst the cohort which encourages candidates to share their thoughts and solutions regarding issues discussed in the lecture.

Delivered by Elaine Banton

LECTURE SERIES

ACCESS TO THE BAR AND CULTURE CHANGE

Part-one of the lecture series, held at King College, University of London, focused on access to, and culture change at the Bar.

Candidates engaged in discussions on how to help improve diversity at the Bar through education, training and schemes, such as this lecture series. Following the lecture, candidates were invited to discuss and share amongst the cohort their thoughts and solutions regarding the goal of ensuring that there are equal access to opportunities at the Bar.

RETENTION AND PROGRESSION

Part two of the lecture series will focus on retention and progression at the Bar. Elaine will discuss issues which cause those from underrepresented groups to leave practice more frequently that their more traditional counterparts. The candidates will then engage in discussions about how they will seek to overcome such issues during their careers, and how these problems might be more widely addressed at a systematic level.

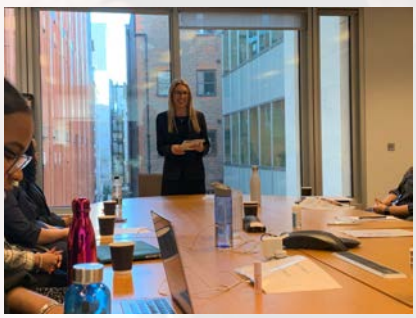
INTERNSHIP PROGRAMMES

OBJECTIVES

During this academic year, BTB has successfully partnered with the UK Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, the High Court, the Law Commission and Advocate to organise paid internships for our BTB candidates. Of these, the judicial internships as well as the Law Commission internship have taken place and we look forward to the remaining internships being run in 2024.

The internship programmes meet three objectives:

1. To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
2. To equip our candidates with the mindset tools required to succeed within the profession.
3. To equip our candidates with the tools to champion diversity and inclusion within the profession and throughout their careers.



The aim was to provide aspiring barristers from non-traditional backgrounds with a chance to gain exposure and feel comfortable in these legal settings. The week was designed in collaboration with our partners to be challenging, intellectually stimulating and rewarding for our candidates.

It was a pleasure to welcome a second group of excellent Bridging the Bar interns to the Supreme Court this year, building on the successes of the first year of the programme in 2021.

*- **Lord Reed**, UKSC Justice*

THE ALL INTERNS WORKSHOP

Prior to the commencement of the UK Supreme Court, High Court and Court of Appeal and Law Commission internships in November 2023, we provided the successful candidates with a pre-training session which gave them an overview of the week ahead and answered any questions they might have. This session included talks from representatives of each internship provider, as well as featuring experiences shared by BTB's Alumni interns from the BTB Academy.

Our candidates attended an important workshop with Performance and Leadership Coach, Helen Gazzi, focusing on confidence and 'owning your own story'. The aim of this workshop was to coach the candidates to help them feel as comfortable as possible in the legal settings in order for them to be able to gain as much experience as they can out of their internships.

JUDICIAL INTERNSHIPS

Following the pre-training, candidates completed a five-day placement where they shadowed Judicial Assistants, took part in roundtable discussions with Judges with the aim of facilitating mutual learning, and, on the final day, gave presentations in front of Judges to conclude their experience.

It was a pleasure to welcome a second group of excellent Bridging the Bar interns to the Supreme Court this year, building on the successes of the first year of the programme in 2021.

*- **Lord Reed**, UKSC Justice*

THE UKSC INTERNSHIP

In February 2021 BTB made a pitch to the UK Supreme Court (UKSC) who subsequently agreed to collaborate with us and create an internship programme. We're happy to report that November 2023 saw our third cohort of candidates participate in this yearly internship programme.

3

UKSC internship cycles completed

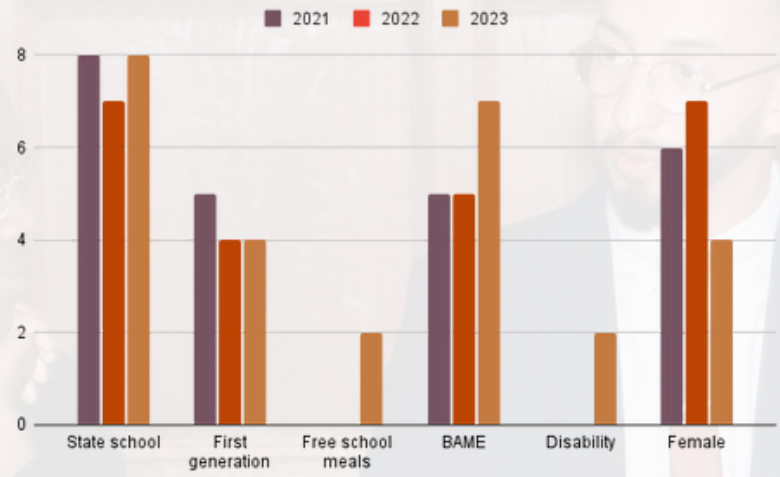
24

UKSC internships undettaken

85%

Of 2021 UKSC Interns Secured Pupillage

Characteristics of interns by internship year



"It was a privilege to welcome the eight Bridging the Bar interns to the Court. They were a thoughtful and engaging group of people, who enriched our discussions about the appeals being heard in the Supreme Court that week. The Judicial Assistants were delighted to have them as colleagues."

– **Rebecca Fry,** UKSC Head JA

UKSC INTERN TESTIMONIALS

Safia Yousaf, UKSC Intern 2023

The internship was a truly golden opportunity which I will carry forward with me in my career. I had unparalleled insight into the workings of the Supreme Court, appellate advocacy and legal analysis. Engaging at length in discussions with the Justices and delivering a speech before them has also boosted my confidence. The internship has left me well equipped to apply for pupillage.

The Supreme Court internship was nothing short of exceptional. The opportunity to engage with the sharpest legal minds in the country, witness effective advocacy, and foster a deeper understanding of the judicial system has been an unparalleled opportunity.

Beyond the academic enrichment, this experience has propelled my confidence and self belief. This experience has allowed me to envision myself at Bar, one that is committed to fostering a more inclusive future

Esmaa Mansour, UKSC Intern 2023

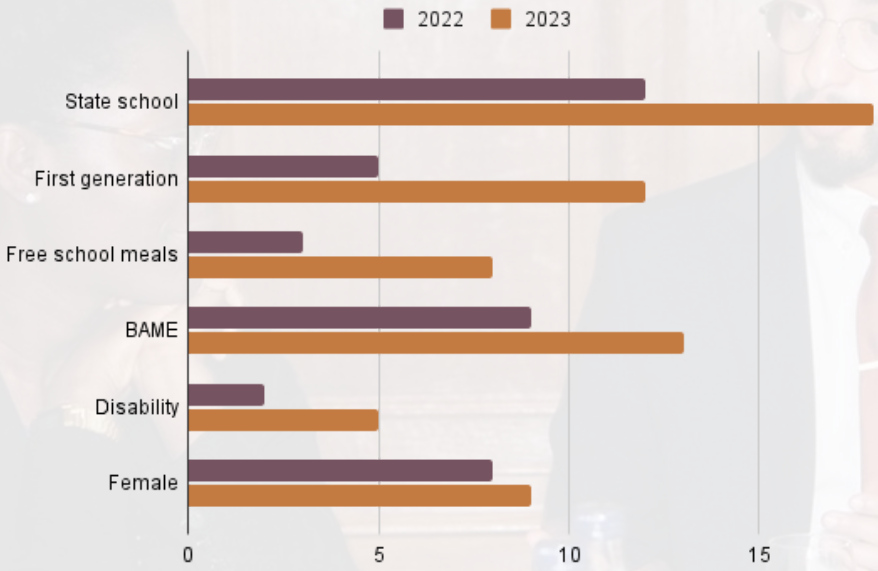
THE UKSC INTERNS

2023

HIGH COURT & COURT OF APPEAL INTERNSHIPS

In March 2022, BTB, the High Court & Court of Appeal agreed to collaborate on a pilot internship for aspiring barristers from statistically under-represented backgrounds at the Bar. The design of the internship sees successful candidates assigned to a judge and supported by their Judicial Assistant(s) in the High Court / Court of Appeal.

18 *Interns*



We are delighted to report that, due to the success of last year's pilot internship, it was agreed between BTB and the High Court / Court of Appeal (HC/COA) to increase the number of interns for this year's intake to 18. This allowed us to expand this opportunity to more candidates from this year's cohort, exposing them to new experiences.

"The BTB scheme is fantastic. My intern was clearly destined for great things. It was a pleasure to get to know her and to discuss her plans for the future. It is critically important that, as judges, we are involved in efforts to increase diversity within the legal professions and the judiciary. Those efforts include trying to demystify what to somebody with no connection with the law can appear both obscure and, worse still, unwelcoming. I look forward to taking further part in the scheme in athe future."

- **Mr Justice Picken**, High Court Judge

COURT OF APPEAL AND HIGH COURT TESTIMONIALS

During my internship at the Court of Appeal, I was immersed in a wealth of knowledge that will undoubtedly shape my path towards becoming a barrister. Witnessing exceptional advocacy firsthand and engaging in discussions with judges offered unparalleled insights into effective courtroom techniques and legal reasoning. Conversations with the judges not only enlightened me about the intricacies of life at the bar but also underscored the imperative need for diversity within the legal profession.

Abbas Hussain, HC/COA Intern 2023

Melissa Jarvis, HC/COA Intern 2023

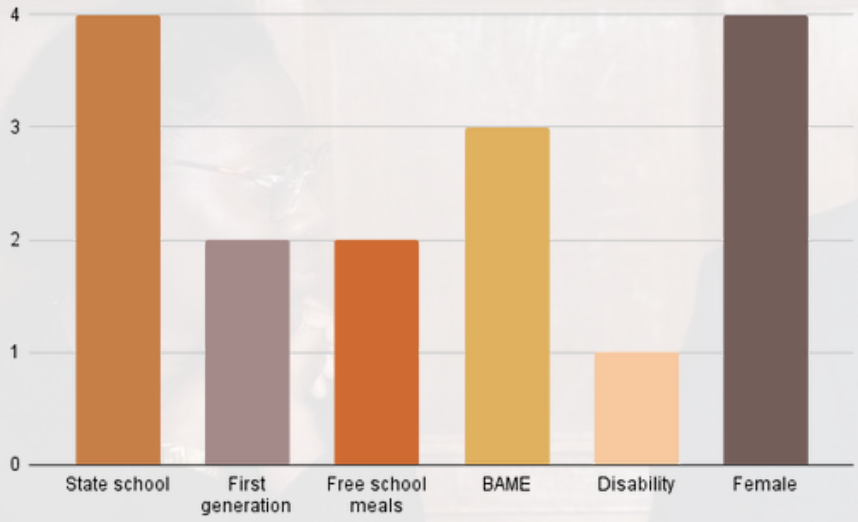
I had the most amazing experience on the Court of Appeal internship. I was made to feel welcome on day 1 by the Lord and Lady Justices, and the Judicial Assistants. I learned so much about case preparation, case management and what the role a judge actually entails. This was by far the best experience I have had in my legal career. Having Lord Justices at the Court of Appeal tell me that I am good enough for this career has massively helped my confidence and I will take this forward into pupillage applications.

THE COURT OF APPEAL INTERNS

THE HIGH COURT INTERNS

THE LAW COMMISSION INTERNSHIP

This year, we are delighted to introduce the Law Commission internship which saw four aspiring barristers from non-traditional backgrounds undertake paid work with the Law Commission. This internship gave candidates an opportunity to be immersed within an organisation that reforms some of the most challenging areas of law.



Each intern was paired with a Law Commission research assistant to get an insight in to the day-to-day of Law Commission work. Alongside this, candidates where given a research task task into a potential project of law reform suitable for the Law Commission, related to the work of their allocated team. Throughout the internship, interns were able to speak with Commissioners, lawyers, and research assistants about their legal journeys and being a non-traditional candidate within the legal field.

'I've always been fascinated by the work of the Law Commission and was really excited when I found out I was chosen to do the internship. The internship was a fantastic experience. From day one I felt as though I was a part of the team. I met with different staff members and had meaningful conversations with the lawyers in my team. The research presentation was my favourite part of the internship. I was asked to present reform proposals on the topic I was given. I felt really confident and supported throughout. The Law Commission was everything I imagined and more!

– **Latanya Gordon**, Law Commission Intern 2023

LAW COMMISSION TESTIMONIALS

"I have always been interested in research and understanding the law for its social benefits. Interning at the Law Commission gave me a platform to achieve both ... and much more. Not only was I able to conduct research directly related to a current reform proposal but I was able to meet interesting practitioners who use their legal knowledge to assist in change for the better. I am a more confident and thoughtful person as a result of the internship".

Mary Amara Azubuike, Law Commission Intern 2023

Digna Kandrataviciute, Law Commission Intern 2023

The Law Commission had always been a body of interest to me studying Law at undergraduate and particularly when I did my dissertation. However, I had never thought of the possibility of working there, it had never crossed my mind as something that was possible for someone of my background. Even better, when on the internship, I met so many amazing people who confronted my preconceptions on what the 'Law Commission' looked like and who all made me feel welcome- from the most senior to my colleague research assistants. In al, the experience taught me that I am more welcome in these 'types of places' than I has ever thought and has inspired me to apply for positions I would have been fearful to in the past.

THE MENTORING PROGRAMME

THE PROGRAMME

Following the success of our pilot mentoring programme in 2020, we decided to incorporate this into the design of the Academy. All 100 candidates have been matched for 1-to-1 mentoring with a practising barrister who shares the Candidate's intended practice area.

In addition to matching practitioners and candidates by area of law, for Academy 23/24 we also looked to match with reference to diversity characteristics, for those who indicated they would like to participate in this aspect. This decision was made based on feedback from our pilot cycle, which highlighted the importance of mentoring, not only with reference to strictly professional advice, but also with relation to the lived experiences of diverse individuals within the bar. As such, we decided to incorporate this feedback through D&I matching within our programme to better aid the candidates in their journey to pupillage.

The year long mentoring relationships commenced in October 2023, and will require the candidates to complete a Personal Development Plan (PDP) over the course of the 8 month programme.

THE MENTORING PROGRAMME

THE OBJECTIVES

The mentoring programme was incorporated to target four key Academy objectives:

1. To improve the quality of candidates' written pupil applications.
2. To improve the quality of each candidate's pupillage interview technique.
3. To equip our candidates with the mindset tools required to succeed within the profession.
4. To equip our candidates with the tools to champion diversity and inclusion within the profession and throughout their careers.

3,600+

Hours of mentoring

MUTAL LEARNING

At BTB, we view mutual learning as crucially important, both to the development of our candidates, but also to our mission of improving diversity and inclusion as a whole. In emphasising mutual learning in our mentee and mentor guides, we hope that, as well as providing invaluable practice and feedback to our candidates, the mentoring relationship also fosters shared learning in our professional volunteers. In this way, we hope to reinforce the importance of diversity inclusion at the Bar to legal professionals practising today.

MENTORING TESTIMONIALS

My mentor was fantastic. We talked through what would, and would not, help me in applications. He gave me helpful tips on how to approach the application cycle. Throughout the sessions he's been approachable, and responsive. I'm now much more confident in becoming a barrister thanks to his help and guidance.

Bradley Murphy, 23/24 Candidate

Callan Withers, 23/24 Candidate

The journey to the bar is not an easy one to navigate alone- especially when you come from a diverse background. That's why the Bridging the Bar mentoring scheme is an opportunity of a lifetime. Visibility matters, and so to be assisted by someone who looks like you, who themselves is thriving at the bar, makes all the difference. My mentor has inspired me, has boosted my self-confidence, and shown me that I am fully capable of reaching the bar.

Delivered by Bibi Badejo

ONLINE ADVOCACY TRAINING

ONLINE ADVOCACY TRAINING

The online advocacy training was led by The Advocacy Coach Bibi Badejo, the head of 4 Brick Court, founder of The Advocacy Coach and host of The Advocacy Podcast. The Advocacy Coach provide all relevant materials and offer practical support enabling candidates to improve their advocacy performance skills. The training is comprised of an online course and a live event.

The online advocacy training course was developed to target three Academy objectives:

1. To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
2. To improve the quality of candidates' written pupil applications.
3. To improve the quality of each candidate's pupillage interview technique.

Delivered by Bibi Badejo

ONLINE ADVOCACY TRAINING

THE ADVOCACY COACH

THE ONLINE COURSE

Candidates are provided with innovative exercises, which allows them to gain a deeper understanding of the techniques which are crucial to a successful advocate. The modules include topics such as, how to develop a case theory, how to be confident in oral addresses and how to be in control as the cross examiner.

THE LIVE EVENT

In April 2024 candidates will be invited to a live virtual event to practice the skills they had learned from the online course.

During the event candidates will be provided with real-life court scenarios, and have to prepare a range of advocacy tasks, including a cross-examination and a closing speech. The candidates will then present and work with professionally trained actors, experiencing in court simulations.

Following the presentations, candidates will be allowed to ask questions about the course and were provided tailored feedback so that our candidates are able to work effectively on their advocacy skills.

INTERVIEW ADVOCACY TRAINING

Following the success of our interview advocacy training pilot delivered last year with 6KBW Chambers, we have decided to incorporate this as an official Academy programme and expand participation to all candidates on the Academy. We have partnered with 15 Chambers, who have run sessions over two Saturdays between November and December 2023. These sessions covered specific advocacy exercises ranging from statutory interpretation to bail applications.

The content of the interview advocacy training has been designed to meet two academy objectives:

1. To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
2. To improve the quality of candidates' written pupil applications.

Many candidates from underrepresented backgrounds may have a lack of experience in handling such exercises. For some, financial concerns may have left little time for such engagement, while others may have simply not had the access to such opportunities. This opportunity exposed our candidates to new interview techniques and allowed them to receive detailed 1-to-1 feedback which they will utilise during their Pupillage interviews.

With thanks to our interview advocacy partner chambers;

Devereaux Chambers	Fountain Court	5 St Andrews Hill	11 Kings Bench Walk
Fourteen Chambers	3 Verulam Buildings	One Essex Court	Matrix Chambers
6 KBW College Hill	Hailsham Chambers	4-5 Gray's Inn Square	39 Essex
7 Bedford Row	QEB Hollis Whiteman	36 Group	7 Brick Court

THE INTERVIEW ADVOCACY TRAINING PILOT

UPCOMING ACADEMY EVENTS

SECOND ROUND OF MINI-PUPILLAGES

While we have already arranged for all candidates to undertake a mini-pupillage at a leading set, we intend to undertake a second round in for all of our BTB Academy candidates. For more information on how the incorporation of mini-pupillages meets our Academy objectives, please see pages 28 & 29.

ADVOCATE INTERNSHIP

We were delighted with the success of the judicial internships that took place earlier in the 23/24 Academy cycle. We look forward to similar success with the Advocate internship later this year. For more information on how the incorporation of internships meets our Academy objectives, please see pages 30 & 31.

UPCOMING ACADEMY EVENTS

GRADUATION CONFERENCE 23/24

The closing conference for The Academy 23/24 will be held in June 2024, and will celebrate the achievement of our candidates in completing the Academy programme. The event will include talks from legal professionals who have been key to our successful delivery of the programme, with networking between candidates and practitioners to follow as well as insightful workshops to equip our candidates with the important information and skills aiding them in their journeys to the Bar.

> "These future barristers will pave the way for a more diverse and inclusive profession, and I cannot wait to see it."
>
> **– Eleanor Tack,**
> BTB Board of Directors

The closing conference aims to target two Academy objectives:

1. To equip our candidates with the mindset tools required to succeed within the profession.
2. To equip our candidates with the tools to champion diversity and inclusion within the profession and throughout their careers.

We hope that the variety of speakers delivering a message of inclusion will reaffirm to candidates of all non-traditional backgrounds that not only are they welcome at the Bar but they themselves could go on to be a championing voice for diversity.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

RESILLIANCE FUND

Within the Academy budget, we reserved £10,000 to provide financial assistance to candidates during the 23/24 Academy cycle. This Resilience fund is accessible to candidates who are experiencing financial difficulties which would prevent them from engaging with Academy events. From this fund, we not only contribute to travel and accommodation costs, but also to costs that can be associated with the diversity characteristics of our candidates such as hiring carers to cover the period that a candidate with caring responsibilities might be at an Academy event.

Coming from a working class background and living in the North-West whilst working part time and completing the Bar Course, finance has been a barrier for me for travelling to London frequently and partaking in important programmes. However, with the assistance received, I have been able to complete such programmes ranging from interview advocacy training, the lecture series and mini-pupillages- all which are crucial to my future at the Bar. I thank Bridging the Bar for this assistance, without which I would be on an unequal playing field to my peers.

-Megha Banerjee,
Academy 23/24 Candidate

ACADEMY 23/24 IN FIGURES

100 **CANDIDATES**
SELECTED FOR THE ACADEMY

160 **MINI PUPILLAGES**
UNDERATKEN BY BTB CANIDATES

36 **INTERNSHIPS**
WITH THE UK SUPREME COURT, COURT OF APPEAL/HIGH COURT, ADVOCATE, & THE LAW COMMISSION

ACADEMY 23/24 IN FIGURES

23 SPONSORSHIP PARTNERS
SUPPORTING BTB

199 PROFESSIONAL VOLUNTEERS
ASSIGNED AS MENTORS, POD LEADERS, OR CONSULTANCY PANEL CONTRIBUTORS

49 PARTNER CHAMBERS
OFFERING MINI PUPILLAGES OR INTERVIEW ADVOCACY TRAINING TO BTB candidates

CONCLUSION

We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone involved in making the pilot year of the BTB Academy a resounding success. The Academy programme would not have been possible without the dedication of our professional volunteers or the generosity of our sponsors. It is only with the support of those who share our mission that we are able to pursue our aim of helping to increase inclusion and diversity at the Bar.

We're happy to report that this support has not waned for cycle 23/24, and that these efforts, in combination with the detailed analysis and revision, are helping to refine and advance the meeting of our objectives.

As we look forward to future successful cycles of the BTB Academy, we hope to continually develop the programme to ensure that all of the objectives for candidates are met. We hope that they leave the Academy having achieved both personal and professional development, and both willing and able to become champions of diversity themselves in their future careers at the Bar.

For students who are interested in applying for the Academy cycle 24/25, the application window will open in Spring of 2024. If you would like to be added to our mailing lists, so that you receive notification of the application window and other BTB events, then please email info@bridgingthebar.org.

For self-employed barristers, Chambers, or other interested organisations or individuals interested in supporting BTB, please reach out to us at partnerships@bridgingthebar.org. Our relationships with those committed to recognising and harnessing the talent of underrepresented individuals are integral to the success of BTB mission, and we would love to have you be a part of that. All of us at BTB look forward to working with you, and we welcome the time, resources and ideas that you are able to bring to this project. Together, we can secure the full potential of a diverse Bar that serves all of society.

WE ARE BRIDGING THE BAR

A bar that represents also benefits society.

GET IN TOUCH

TO FIND OUT MORE
WWW.BRIDGINGTHEBAR.ORG

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
PROGRAMMES@BRIDGINGTHEBAR.ORG

FOR GROUP, PRESS AND MEDIA ENQUIRIES
INFO@BRIDGINGTHEBAR.ORG

@BridgeTheBar

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A bar that represents also benefits society.

ANNUAL REPORTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1ST APRIL 2023

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

CHARITY REGISTRATION No: 1190369

Castle View Accounting Ltd
New Barn
Mudberry Lane
Bosham
Chichester
West Sussex
PO18 8TS

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

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Page 78	Balance Sheet
Pages 79 to 83	Notes to the Financial Statements
Page 84	Independent Examiner's Report

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

CHARITY NUMBER	1190369
DATE OF REGISTRATION	13th July 2020
START OF FINANCIAL YEAR	2nd April 2022
END OF FINANCIAL YEAR	1st April 2023
TRUSTEES AT 1ST APRIL 2023	Aaron Mayers Mass Ndow-Njie Matheu Armel Swallow
LEGAL STATUS	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
GOVERNING INSTRUMENT	CIO - Foundation Registered 13th July 2020

OBJECTS

The promotion of equality and diversity and the promotion of social inclusion amongst those who socially excluded due to being members of socially and economically deprived community, at The Bar of England and Wales by: **a**) The elimination of discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religion. **b**) Advancing education and raising awareness in equality and diversity. **c**) Promotion activities to foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds. **d**) Cultivating a sentiment in favour of equality and diversity.

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS	218 Strand London WC2R 1AT
PRIMARY BANKERS	Cashplus Bank 6th Floor One London Wall London EC2Y 5EB
INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS	Castle View Accounting Ltd New Barn Mudberry Lane Bosham Chichester West Sussex PO18 8TS

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1ST APRIL 2023

Trustees' Responsibilities

The Charities Act 2011 requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the CIO and of the surplus of the CIO for that period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- Prepare financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the CIO will continue in existence.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the CIO. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the CIO and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Trustees on 25/01/2024

Signed on their behalf by Trustee

Printed Name: MASS NDOW - NJIE

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1ST APRIL 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2022/23 £	TOTAL 2021/22 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Incoming Resources from Generated Funds					
Donations, Grants & Legacies	**3a**	83,455	-	83,455	47,947
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		**83,455**	**-**	**83,455**	**47,947**
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Costs of Generating Funds					
Cost of Charitable Activities	**4a**	102,028	-	102,028	36,680
Governance Costs	**4b**	900	-	900	800
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		**102,928**	**-**	**102,928**	**37,480**
NET INCOMING (OUTGOING) RESOURCES		**(19,473)**	**-**	**(19,473)**	**10,467**
Funds Brought Forward		72,095	-	72,095	61,629
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		**52,622**	**-**	**52,622**	**72,096**

Movements on all reserves and all recognised gains and losses are shown above. All of the organisation's operations are classed as continuing.

The notes on pages 79 to 83 form part of these financial statements.

BRIDGING THE BAR
(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 1ST APRIL 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 01-Apr-23 £	Total 01-Apr-22 £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Assets	2	-	-	-	-
Investments	6	-	-	-	-
Total Fixed Assets		-	-	-	-
Current Assets					
Debtors & Prepayments	8	-	-	-	-
Cash at Bank and in Hand	7	53,522	-	53,522	72,895
Total Current Assets		**53,522**	-	**53,522**	**72,895**
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	9	900	-	900	800
NET CURRENT ASSETS		52,622	-	52,622	72,095
TOTAL ASSETS less current liabilities		**52,622**	-	**52,622**	**72,095**
Creditors: Amounts falling due in more than one year	10	-	-	-	-
NET ASSETS		**52,622**	-	**52,622**	**72,095**
Funds of the Charity					
General Funds		52,622	-	52,622	72,095
Restricted Funds	5	-	-	-	-
Total Funds		**52,622**	-	**52,622**	**72,095**

Approved by the Trustees on 25/01/2024

Signed on their behalf by Trustee .....

Printed Name: MASS NDOW - NJIE

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1ST APRIL 2023

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Preparation & Assessment of Going Concern

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant notes. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP - FRS102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Assessment of Going Concern

Preparation of the accounts is on a going concern basis. The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Incoming Resources

Recognition of Incoming Resources

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- the trustees are virtually certain they will receive the resources; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability

Incoming Resources with Related Expenditure

Where incoming resources have related expenditure (as with fundraising or contract income) the incoming resource and related expenditure are reported gross in the SOFA.

Grants and Donations

Grants and Donations are only included in the SOFA when the charity has unconditional entitlement to the resources.

Tax Reclaims on Donations and Gifts

Incoming resources from tax reclaims are included in the SOFA at the same time as the gift to which they relate.

Contractual Income and Performance Related Grants

This is only included in the SOFA once the related goods or services have been delivered.

Gifts in Kind

Gifts in kind are accounted for at a reasonable estimate of their value to the charity or the amount actually realised. Gifts in kind for sale or distribution are included in the accounts as gifts only when sold or distributed by the charity. Gifts in kind for use by the charity are included in the SOFA as incoming resources when receivable.

Donated Services and Facilities

These are only included in incoming resources (with an equivalent amount in resources expended) where the benefit to the charity is reasonably quantifiable, measurable and material. The value placed on these resources is the estimated value to the charity of the service or facility received.

Volunteer Help

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts.

Investment Income

This is included in the accounts when receivable.

Investment Gains and Losses

This included any gain or loss on the sale of investments and any gain or loss resulting from revaluing investments to market value at the end of the year.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Expenditure and Liabilities

Liability Recognition
Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

Governance Costs
Include costs of the preparation and examination of statutory accounts, the costs of the trustees meetings and cost of any legal advice to trustees on governance or constitutional matters.

Grants with Performance Conditions
Where the charity gives a grant with conditions for its payment being a specific level of service or output to be provided, such grants are only recognised in the SOFA once the recipient of the grant has provided the specified service or output.

Grants Payable without Performance Conditions
These are only recognised in the accounts when a commitment has been made and there are no conditions to be met relating to a grant which remain in control of the charity.

Investments
Investments quoted on a recognised stock exchange are valued at market value at the year end. Other investment assets are included at trustees' best estimate of market value.

Unrestricted funds
These funds can be used for the general objectives of the charity as set out in the trustees report. The movements of the unrestricted funds are given in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Restricted funds
These funds are where the donor has specified a purpose for the donation made. These restrictions often arise as a result of appeals for special offerings for specific purposes.

Designated funds
These funds are funds set aside by the trustees out of unrestricted general funds for particular purposes or projects.

Fixed Assets
Fixed Assets are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year and cost at least £1,500. They are valued at cost or, if gifted, at the value to the charity on receipt.

Depreciation Expense
Depreciation is calculated at a rate to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets over their estimated useful lives. The rates applied are as follows:

Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment	25% - Straight Line Basis

2. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

The CIO held no fixed assets during this or the previous financial period.

The annual commitments under non-cancelling operating leases and capital commitments are as follows:

1st April 2023:None
1st April 2022:None

3. INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2022/23 £	TOTAL 2021/22 £
a) Donations, Grants & Legacies				
Gifts & Donations	83,455	-	83,455	47,947
	83,455	**-**	**83,455**	**47,947**

4. RESOURCES EXPENDED

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2022/23 £	TOTAL 2021/22 £
a) Cost of Charitable Activities				
Academy Programme Costs	24,692	-	24,692	5,545
Administrative Expenses	-	-	-	301
Advertising & Publicity	1,438	-	1,438	861
Bank Charges	52	-	52	92
Insurance Costs	266	-	266	-
Photography Costs	885	-	885	1,350
Staff Costs	52,050	-	52,050	20,333
Sundry Expenses	1,652	-	1,652	896
Training Costs	-	-	-	1,900
Website Costs	20,991	-	20,991	5,403
	102,028	**-**	**102,028**	**36,680**
b) Governance Costs				
Independent Examiners Fees **9**	900	-	900	800
	900	**-**	**900**	**800**

5. RESTRICTED FUNDS

The CIO held no restricted funds during this or the previous financial period.

6. INVESTMENTS

The CIO held no fixed assets investments during this or the previous financial period.

7. CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	**Total 01-Apr-23 £**	**Total 01-Apr-22 £**
Cash at Bank & in Hand	53,522	-	53,522	72,895
	53,522	**-**	**53,522**	**72,895**

8. DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	**Total 01-Apr-23 £**	**Total 01-Apr-22 £**
Sundry Debtors	-	-	-	-
	-	**-**	**-**	**-**

9. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	**Total 01-Apr-23 £**	**Total 01-Apr-22 £**
Independent Examiners Fees	900	-	900	800
	900	**-**	**900**	**800**

10. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE IN MORE THAN ONE YEAR

The CIO held no long term liabilities during this or the previous financial period.

11. NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total 01-Apr-23 £**	**Total 01-Apr-22 £**
Fixed Asset Investments	-	-	-	-
Net Current Assets	52,622	-	52,622	72,095
Long Term Liabilities	-	-	-	-
	52,622	**-**	**52,622**	**72,095**

12. STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS

	TOTAL 2022/23	TOTAL 2021/22
	£	£
Gross Wages, Salaries & Fees	52,050	20,333
Employer's National Insurance Costs	-	-
Pension Contributions	-	-
	52,050	**20,333**

Employees who were engaged in each of the following activities:

	TOTAL 2022/23	TOTAL 2021/22
Charitable Activities	3	1

The Charity engages with staff on a Self-employed basis and is therefore not liable to Income Tax and National Insurance Costs and no employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

13. TRUSTEES AND OTHER RELATED PARTIES

No payments were made to trustees or any persons connected with them during this financial period. No material transaction took place between the organisation and a trustee or any person connected with them.

14. RISK ASSESSMENT

The Trustees actively review the major risks which the charity faces on a regular basis and believe that maintaining the free reserves stated, combined with the annual review of the controls over key financial systems carried out on an annual basis will provide sufficient resources in the event of adverse conditions. The Trustees have also examined other operational and business risks which they face and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate the significant risks.

15. RESERVES POLICY

The Trustees have considered the level of reserves they wish to retain, appropriate to the CIO's needs. This is based on the CIO's size and the level of financial commitments held. The Trustees aim to ensure the CIO will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in income or unexpected expenditure. The Trustees will endeavour not to set aside funds unnecessarily.

16. PUBLIC BENEFIT

The CIO acknowledges its requirement to demonstrate clearly that it must have charitable purposes or 'aims' that are for the public benefit. Details of how the CIO has achieved this are provided in the Trustees report. The Trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit before deciding what activities the CIO should undertake.

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS

Report to the trustees/ members of Bridging the Bar on the accounts for year ended 1st April 2023 set out on pages 77 to 83.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect, the requirements:
   - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
   - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act

   have not been met; or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

K. Collaku MAAT
Castle View Accounting Ltd
New Barn
Mudberry Lane
Bosham
Chichester
West Sussex
PO18 8TS

Date: 30th January 2024

BRIDGING THE BAR

England & Wales - Charity number 1190369

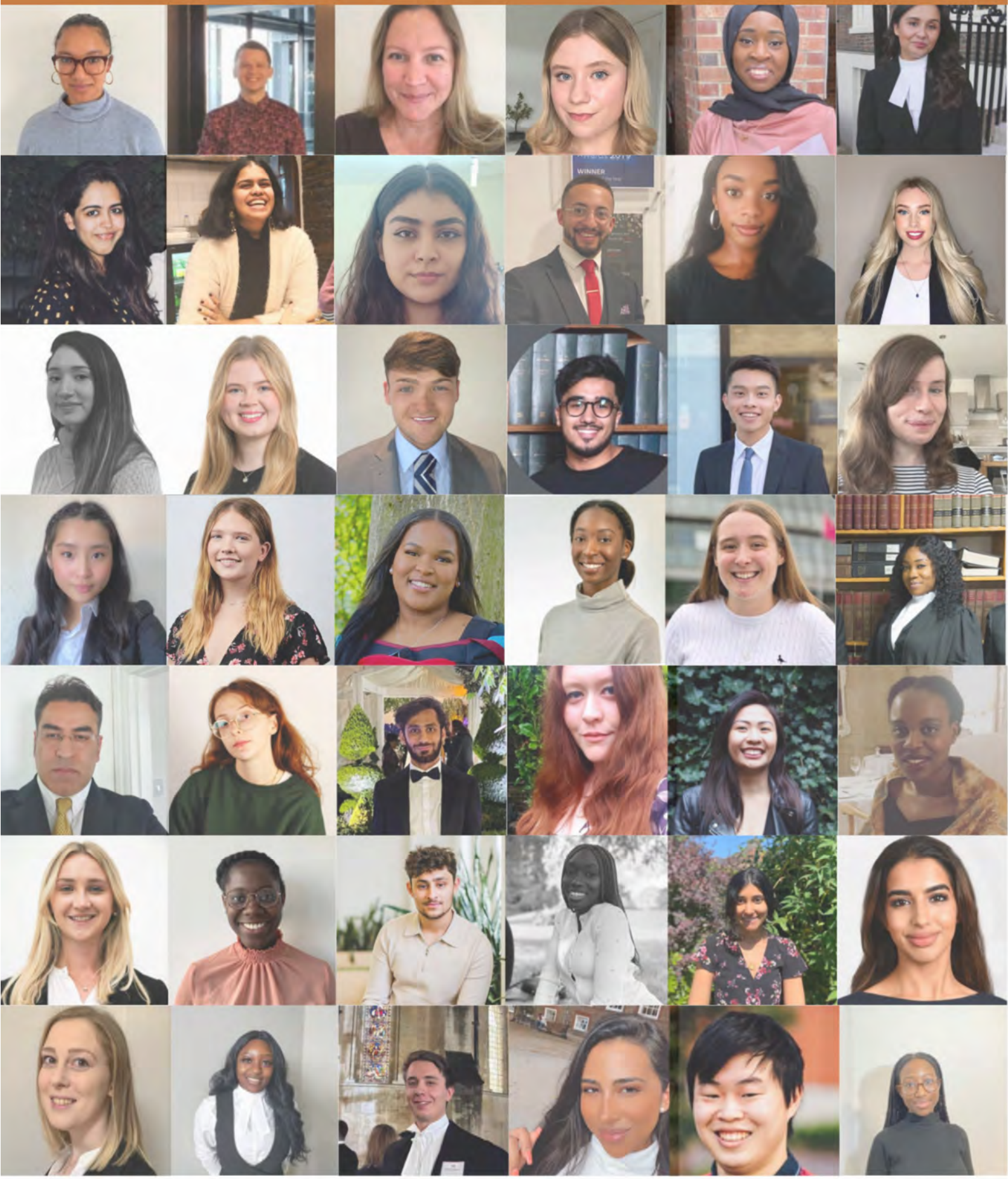
Accounts

BRIDGING THE BAR

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

Charity No: 1190369 | 218 Strand, London, WC2R 1AT

BRIDGING
THE BAR



A bar that represents also benefits society.

BRIDGING THE BAR ACADEMY

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Founder, Mass Ndow-Njie

FOREWORD

I am delighted to introduce the second Annual Report for Bridging the Bar ('BTB') which outlines the charity's key accomplishments over the past year and its objectives moving forward.

BTB has had another extraordinary year and it is still sometimes hard to think that the charity is just two years old. This year has been marked by several major successes which demonstrate the hard work and dedication to our mission from our team members and stakeholders.

One of the most impressive achievements has been the success of our pilot internship program delivered in collaboration with the UK Supreme Court, with 85% of interns who applied for pupillage securing offers at leading Chambers. This is a testament to the skills and potential of these individuals, and it is also indictive of the quality of BTB candidates more generally.

In addition, we are thrilled to have launched the BTB Academy, which has begun providing almost 100 candidates with unprecedented access to a wide range of support including everything from life-coaching, mentoring, advocacy training, work experience and more. This is a major step forward in our mission to improve diversity in the legal profession and ensuring that individuals from all backgrounds have equal opportunities to succeed.

This was also the year that BTB became an award-winning charity. At the 2022 Pro Bono Awards organised by Advocate, BTB was awarded the 'Social Responsibility Initiative of the Year Award'. This is an honour for which we are truly grateful. But it is also an honour which represents what can be achieved when all of the best parts of the legal profession collaborate for a greater cause.

I am grateful to all of our sponsors, partners and volunteers who have supported us in these efforts. I would also like to thank our talented staff members and members of the executive committee who have helped to make all of these successes possible. The remainder of this report will provide further insights into how BTB is working to create a legal profession that is open to individuals from all walks of life. We are committed to continuing to improve and expand our programs in the coming year, and we are grateful for the support of all of our stakeholders in this effort.

Thank you again for your trust, time, and dedication to providing equal opportunities in the legal profession. Together, we can create a Bar that represents society, and in turn, benefits society.

"The Scoial Responsibility Initiative of the Year: An honour which represents what can be achieved when all the best parts of the legal profession collaborate for a greater cause."

- Mass Ndow-Njie, Founder and Chairman

THE PRO BONO AWARDS

A bar that represents also benefits society.

OUR TEAM

CHAMPIONS

PROFESSOR JO DELAHUNTY QC

PROFESSOR LESLIE THOMAS QC

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CHAIRPERSONS

MASS NDOW-NJIE
Founder and Chairperson

AARON MAYERS
Vice Chairperson

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

ABDUL QADIM

SONIA MASAUN

ISHAN KOLHATKAR

EMMA HUGHES

ELEANOR TACK

SRISHTI SURESH

MAT SWALLOW

STAFF

IMOGEN SHERRIFF

RONNIE EVANS

FATIMA ALI

JASMINE MILAN

ANU LAU

MEET THE BTB TEAM

With thanks to our Sponsors:

Francis Taylor Building

3PB BARRISTERS

Atkin Chambers Barristers

KEATING CHAMBERS

MOUNTFORD CHAMBERS

4pb Four Paper Buildings

Blackstone CHAMBERS

LITTLETON

GATEHOUSE CHAMBERS

Four Brick Court

AZIZFOUNDATION

8 NEW SQUARE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

4 NEW SQUARE CHAMBERS

TWENTY ESSEX

GOLDSMITH CHAMBERS

Normanton CHAMBERS

INTRODUCTION TO BTB

"It is a privilege to see the next generation from all walks of life shine and be elevated. They are the future of the bar and what a bright future that will be."

- **Emma Hughes**, Executive Committee Member

INTRODUCTION

Bridging the Bar ('BTB') is a charitable organisation that exists to bridge the gap between students from non-traditional backgrounds and the skills, experience and networks required to develop a career at the Bar. We believe that for the Bar to reach its full potential, it must reflect the diverse society in which we live. This year saw the launch of BTB's new flagship programme, the BTB Academy. This is a comprehensive programme which aims to provide a cohort of candidates with the skills, knowledge, and mindset needed to succeed in applications for pupillage. From a single application, candidates gain access to professional development training, personal development training, mentoring, interview advocacy training, mini-pupillages, application guidance, and opportunities for internships.

The programme has been specially designed to tackle issues that candidates from underrepresented backgrounds face. The professional development sessions focus on key issues, ranging from imposter syndrome to the importance of courage before confidence, which pose an access barrier between non-traditional applicants and a career at the Bar. The paid internship opportunities we provide aim to close the gap in experience for those who are less able, due to their backgrounds, to take on unpaid work experience opportunities. Our mentorship programme provides candidates with access to professionals who share their diversity characteristics, in order to help candidates have confidence that there is a place at the Bar for people like them.

Whilst we recognise the positive work being carried out to establish greater equality of access to opportunities at the Bar, it is clear that gaps still exist. BTB works towards closing that gap by supporting aspiring barristers and those organisations and individuals already championing diversity at the Bar. We believe that by actively providing opportunities and resources to bridge the gap between traditional and non-traditional applicants, the Academy is helping to drive the kind of high-quality applications from diverse aspiring barristers that will eventually change the face of the profession.

WHO WE HELP

Low Income Background

BAME

LGBTQ+

Disability

+ More

OUR VISION

At BTB, we believe that in order to truly serve society the bar must reflect society; without being able to pull from a wealth of differing perspectives and experience, we as practitioners will be less able to serve those who come from backgrounds that are dissimilar to our own.

BTB was founded to address this issue. We believe that the "bridge" between today's Bar and the diverse Bar that our society needs can be built by achieving three core objectives:

EQUAL ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

An integral part of equal access to opportunity at the Bar is to provide students from non-traditional backgrounds with the ability to gain practical work experience with barristers. The internship and mini-pupillage opportunities that candidates receive as part of the Academy provides students from all backgrounds with the opportunity to gain exposure to life at the Bar. This is the insight needed for students to understand what career options are available to them, and specifically, what a career at the Bar looks like.

OUR VISION

COLLABORATION

We welcome any dynamic support of our initiative, whether via the methods suggested, through tailored networking events, educational panels or entirely new ideas. There is an abundance of creative enterprises working to tackle many of the aims we share. BTB is continuously willing to discuss collaborating with organisations who share our aims. We recognise that in addition to helping people at a grassroots level, a pillar of what we do is forming strategic relationships with our regulators so that we can engage in conversations at a decision making level, provide feedback and create new schemes to help those who need and deserve it.

RAISING ASPIRATIONS

In order for diversity at the Bar to flourish, diversity in aspirations must be encouraged. At BTB we are dedicated to cultivating and sustaining the courage and belief it takes to opt for the Bar as a career path. Such cultivation runs through the heart of our Academy and can be seen most prominently in our personal development 'Pod' sessions, which focus on issues which typically undermine the aspirations of non-traditional applicants.

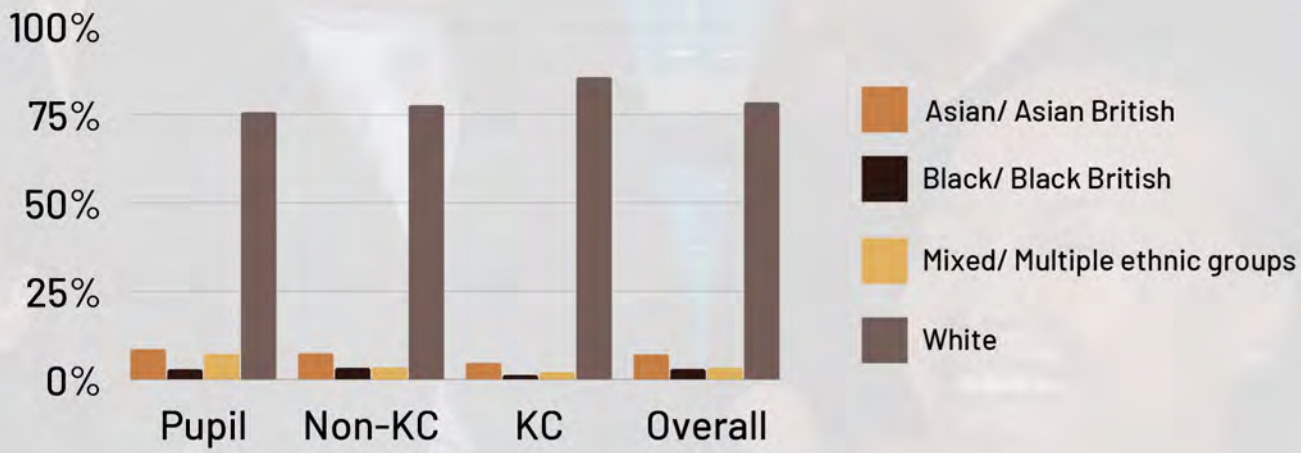
THE BAR IN NUMBERS

"Focus on the best version of yourself. By being your best self, you can take back that power because the truth is, a barrister looks like all of you."
- **Mass Ndow-Njie**, Founder and Chairman.

Diversity at the Bar, 2021

NUMBERS & STATISTICS

ETHNICITY AT THE BAR (BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2021)

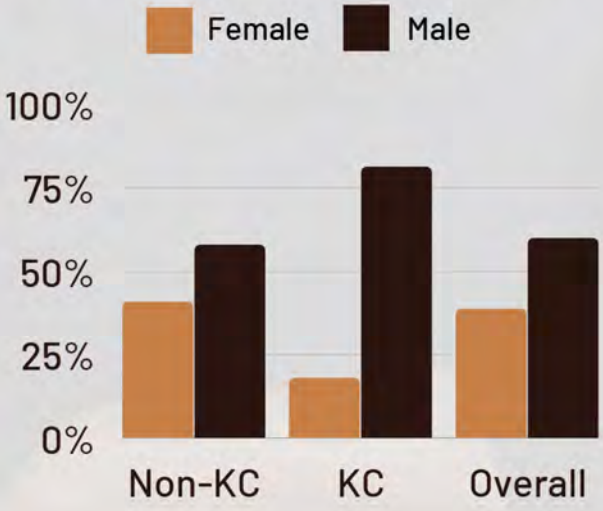


511
Pupil Barristers

15,335
Non-KC Barristers

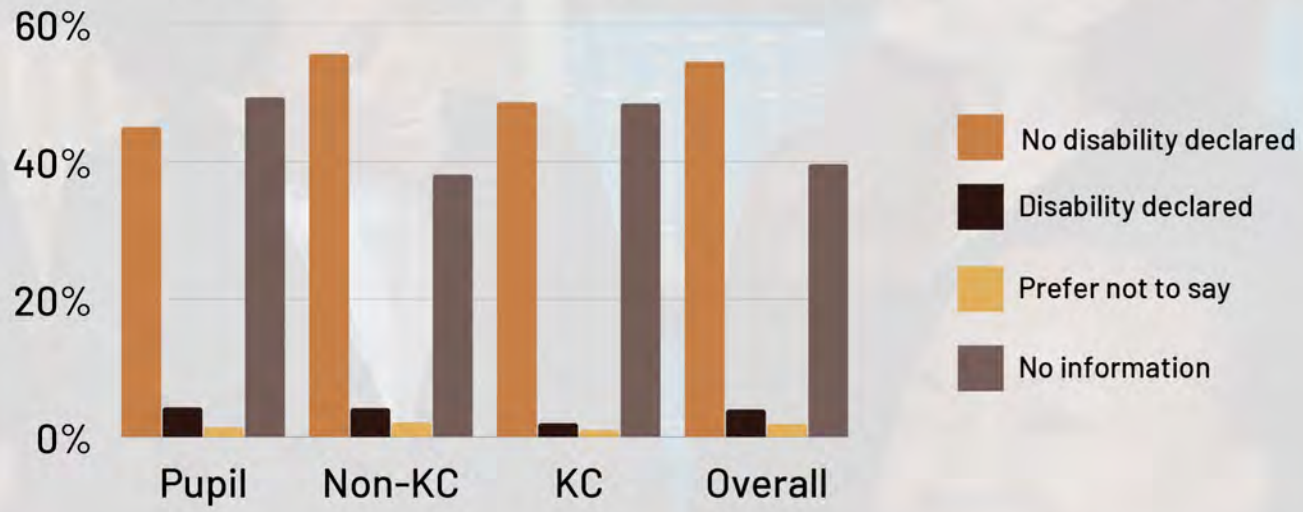
1,928
King's Counsel

GENDER AT THE BAR (BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2021)



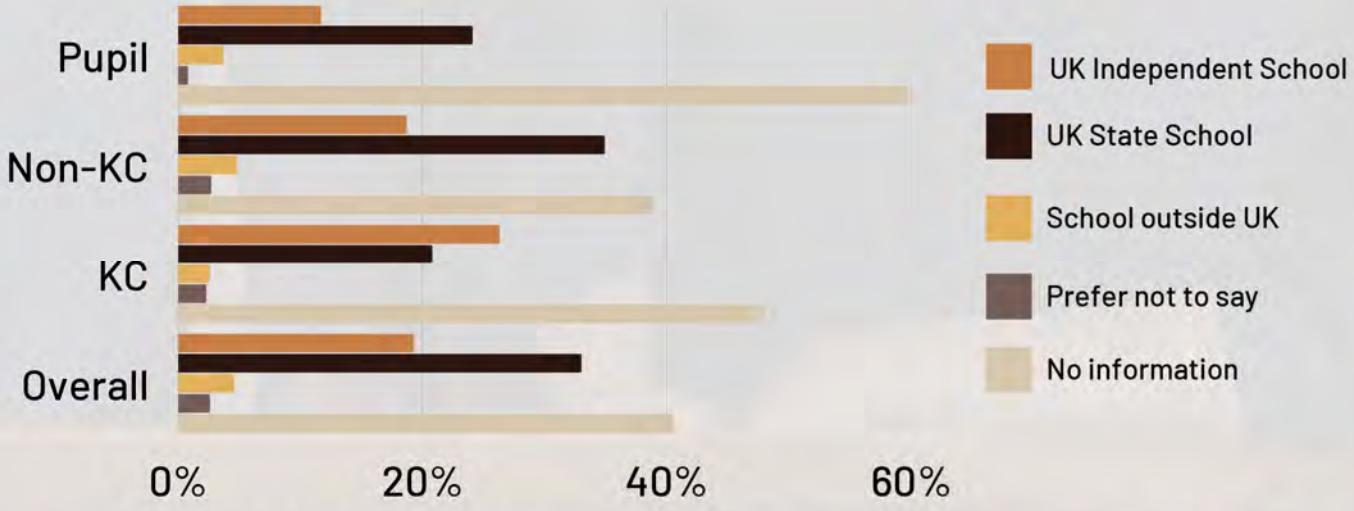
Diversity at the Bar, 2021

DISABILITY DECLARED AT THE BAR (BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2021)



34%
of respondents attended a UK Independent School

7%
of UK children attend Independent Schools



TYPE OF SCHOOL ATTENDED (BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2021)

INTROUCTION TO THE ACADEMY

"Launching the Bridging the Bar Academy is the natural next step for our charity. We intend to take our activities to a new higher level."

- **Mass Ndow-Njie**, Founder and Chairperson

ACADEMY OVERVIEW

THE IDEA

The Academy was born from a desire to maximise BTB's impact on our candidates, both in terms of number and in terms of outcomes.

This led to the idea of a comprehensive programme, which would provide not only tangible experience and skills to those who traditionally may suffer from a lack of access to the profession, but also to assist candidates in obtaining the mindset needed to succeed in such a competitive field.

OVERVIEW

From one application process, 100 candidates are provided access to internships, mentoring, mini-pupillage schemes, professional development workshops, interview advocacy training, application feedback, and networking opportunities.

In running such a comprehensive Academy programme, we hope to both assist our candidates in securing pupillage, while also creating a future generation of Barristers who will become champions of diversity at the Bar in their own right.

ACADEMY OVERVIEW

OBJECTIVES

In designing the Academy programme, five objectives were adopted:

1. To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
2. To improve the quality of candidates' written pupil applications.
3. To improve the quality of each candidate's pupillage interview technique.
4. To equip our candidates with the mindset tools required to succeed within the profession.
5. To equip our candidates with the tools to champion diversity and inclusion within the profession and throughout their careers.

These objectives were selected as those that best assisted with our more general aim of helping our candidates to improve their pupillage prospects. These objectives guided the structure of each event, in addition to the programme as a whole, and gave us metrics by which to measure our successes.

ACADEMY STRUCTURE

DESIGN

The overall structure of the Academy mimics the academic year with events running from October until July. The design of the programme has been undertaken with our overall aims in mind, and so each Academy event has been tailored to both address a specific issue that candidates from non-traditional backgrounds face, while also targeting at least one of our stated objectives

Event	Summary	Objectives
Personal Development Sessions	Four sessions led by legal professionals covering topics that include 'courage before confidence' and 'collective community success'.	Interview technique Mindset Championing Diversity
Mini-pupillages	Two rounds of mini-pupillages in a candidates area of interest.	Content of Applications Written Applications
Lecture Series	Candidates participated in a lecture series which focused on issues surrounding non-traditional legal professionals.	Contents of Application Mindset Championing Diversity

ACADEMY STRUCTURE CONT.

Event	Summary	Objectives
Internships	Selected candidates spent a week shadowing at either the UK Supreme Court, High Court/Court of Appeal, Law Commission, Government Legal Department, or Advocate.	Content of Applications Mindset Championing Diversity
Mentoring	candidates were paired with a Barrister in their preferred practice area for a year long mentoring relationship	Written Applications Interview technique Mindset Championing Diversity
Advocacy Training	candidates participated in both an online course and also spent time in Chambers improving on their answers to advocacy questions	Content of Applications Written Applications

THE ACADEMY 2022/23

"From day one, the Bridging the Bar team has asked itself: what is the best way to increase the chances of our candidates securing pupillage, whilst also preparing them for professional life at the bar? The BTB Academy is the answer."

– **Aaron Mayers**, Vice-Chair

APPLICATIONS

APPLICATION DESIGN

While the aim of the Academy is to upskill candidates from non-traditional backgrounds, we were also mindful of the need to select those applicants with the drive, academic rigour, and passion needed for successful completion of the programme. With this in mind, we selected questions which would test both an Applicants advocacy skills, as well as their understanding of and commitment to both the legal field and the Academy programme. The application required both written and oral answers given in video format, so as to assess both oral and written advocacy.

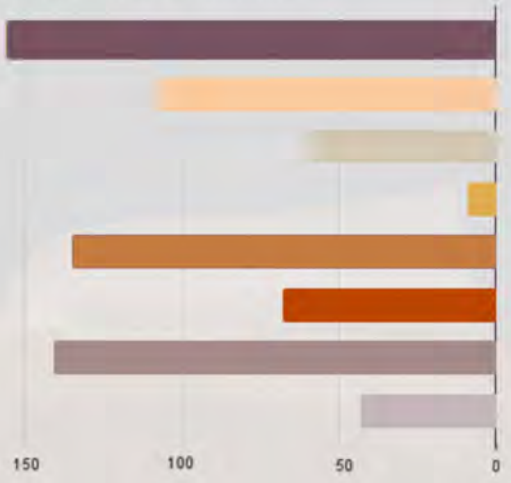
The Questions:

1. What strength(s) do you possess which will make you a good barrister?
2. "Childcare commitments are the biggest factor preventing the retention and progression of women at the Bar." Do you agree?
3. In what ways will your background make you a better barrister?
4. Please prepare a 1-minute presentation talking about why diversity and inclusion is important to you.
5. How will being a member of the BTB Academy benefit you?
6. Do you think that we should have a quota or a target for the judiciary to increase representation of individuals from BAME backgrounds?

RECEIVED APPLICATIONS

In our pilot year we received over 200 applications to the Academy, and we are proud to say that we attracted a truly diverse range of applicants.

- 76% state school attendees
- 53% first-generation Graduates
- 29% received free school meals
- 4% Careleavers
- 66% BAME
- 33% Disability declared
- 69% gender minority
- 21% LGBTQ+



COHORT

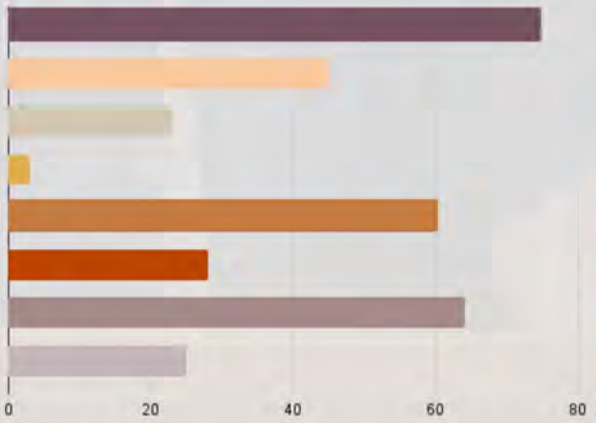
SELECTION PROCESS

We utilised a volunteer force of legal professionals in our marking process, who each marked a single answer for all applications. By adopting this vertical marking process, we aimed to increase consistency during our application marking process.

The markers were asked to assess answers against seven key criteria:
1. A commitment to academic excellence through achieving strong grades at university.
2. An understanding of what a career at the Bar entails.
3. Clear and persuasive written communication skills i.e., appropriate structure, use of language and sentence structure.
4. Clear, persuasive and engaging oral advocacy skills.
5. Understanding of issues faced by candidates and barristers from underrepresented backgrounds at the Bar and a commitment to remedying these issues.
6. Ability of a candidate to share their background and experiences in a way which will facilitate mutual learning with fellow candidates and stakeholders.
7. Likelihood to benefit from participating in BTB Academy.

SUCESSFUL CANDIDATES

We are pleased to report that this method resulted in a pool of candidates who's diversity characteristics closely mirror that of the applicant pool.



- 76% state school attendees
- 46% first-generation Graduates
- 23% received free school meals
- 3% Careleavers
- 61% BAME
- 28% Disability declared
- 65% gender minority
- 25% LGBTQ+

FEEDBACK

APPLICATION FEEDBACK

We acknowledged the significant value of feedback for aspiring barristers. Despite feedback being central to an applicant's growth and development, we recognise that it is often not provided to applicants when applying for pupillage.

In order to address this within our own application process, candidates, regardless of whether their application was successful or not, were each provided with feedback on their applications. We asked those marking applications to provide positive and constructive feedback on each answer that they marked. In practice, this means that every Applicant received at least one line of feedback from every marker, according to the question assigned to that marker. With this breadth of feedback, we hope that each and every Applicant is able to make significant improvements to any application they complete going forward.

QUESTION	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	PANELLIST FEEDBACK
1) What strength(s) do you possess which will make you a good barrister? Please discuss relevant work experience, legal or otherwise, to demonstrate these strengths. (250 words, 6 points available)	Criteria 2 - An understanding of what a career at the Bar entails	Good engagement with the skills that are required to succeed at the Bar.
	Criteria 3 - Clear and persuasive written communication skills i.e., appropriate structure, use of language and sentence structure	Overall, excellent but think about the amount of development in your second paragraph.
2) "Childcare commitments are the biggest factor preventing the retention and progression of women at the Bar." Do you agree?	Criteria 2 - An understanding of what a career at the Bar entails	This is a fair answer with some research, addressing other aspects of the Bar which may impede retention or progression.
	Criteria 3 - Clear and persuasive written communication skills i.e., appropriate	Broadly well written and clearly structured.

At BTB, we hope that in the coming years, providing feedback becomes more widespread across the profession.

"I had high expectations as to the quality of the candidates' work. Those expectations were massively surpassed – the written answers were very impressive. BTB has clearly sourced excellent candidates, who are already impressive advocates in writing".

– **Alexander Echlin**, Academy 22/23 Marker

THE COACHING POD PROGRAMME

OBJECTIVES

Prior to the UKSC internship in 2021, all 8 interns received a personal coaching session to prepare them. Post internship, it was highlighted to us just how much of a difference coaching can make to the interns' confidence. Therefore, we intended on replicating this success by providing coaching for all our 100 candidates on the BTB Academy.

This coaching was intended to address three Academy objectives:

1. To improve the quality of each candidate's pupillage interview technique.
2. To equip our candidates with the mindset tools required to succeed within the profession.
3. To equip our candidates with the tools to champion diversity and inclusion within the profession and throughout their careers.

THE COACHING POD PROGRAMME

THE PODS

In order to implement this we split our BTB Academy candidates into groups which we dubbed 'Pods'. Each pod consisted of around 10 candidates, as well as a coach who took the role of pod leader. We wanted to ensure that candidates felt supported in sharing, and so adopted small groups in order to facilitate a safe and comfortable environment.

THE COACHES

We recruited 12 volunteer practitioners to lead coaching sessions for the Pod to which they have been assigned. Each Pod leader attended a four-hour coaching training session led by Helen Gazzi, a performance and leadership coach with years of experience in the industry.

We also provided Volunteer Coaches with training from an accredited mediator on facilitating conversations, de-escalating conflict and dealing with difficult questions, training on organising content for the sessions and gave advice on leading the sessions.

THE COACHING POD PROGRAMME

THE SESSIONS

We have organised four sessions for each Pod, consisting of ten candidates and led by one coach, to take place throughout the academic year with three hours provided for each session. Each session has been designed to tackle a specific issue faced by those from non-traditional backgrounds when pursuing a career at the Bar.

1. **Courage Before Confidence.** This session deals with a lack of confidence which often affects those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and addresses how courage can help fill this gap.
2. **Owning Your Story.** This session focuses on reframing candidates' perceptions of their own stories, by encouraging candidates to find power in their own narratives.
3. **Being vs Doing.** This session helps tackle the idea that being born without certain privileges or qualities can forestall a career at the Bar.
4. **Collective Success.** This seeks to reframe the comparative lens into a collaborative one by focusing on how candidates can help one another.

IMPACT

All Pods have now undertaken two sessions and will continue with the rest of the sessions during 2023. We captured metrics regarding Candidate outlook prior to the commencement of the Pod sessions, and we look forward to sharing an impact assessment on changes in the outlook of our candidates once the programme has been completed.

THE COACHING POD PROGRAMME

With thanks to our Pod coaches:

Aaron Mayers, Barrister

Fatima Ismail, Paralegal

Srishti Suresh, Barrister

Jake Thorold, Barrister

Anu Lau, Pupil Barrister

Chloe Reddock, Pupil Barrister

Annie Fendrich, Barrister

Olivia Bennett, Barrister

Shel Glaister-Young, Barrister

Luna Spada, Barrister

Shanzé Shah, Pupil Barrister

Tara-Lynn Poole, Barrister

THE FIRST POD SESSION

A bar that represents also benefits society.

MINI PUPILLAGE PROGRAMME

In our pilot year, we have partnered with various Chambers to provide all 100 of our candidates with a mini-pupillage in their intended area of practice. Each mini-pupillage will provide individual candidates with the chance to shadow practising barristers and get a real insight into what life at the Bar actually looks like.

The inclusion of mini-pupillages targeted two of our Academy objectives:

1. To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
2. To improve the quality of candidates' written pupil applications.

Candidates from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to have existing legal connections from which they can secure mini-pupillages. Additionally, they are less likely to have the time to complete multiple applications because of other pressures such as work or caring responsibilities. By providing a guaranteed mini-pupillage for our candidates we hope to expose them to life at the Bar;

MINI PUPILLAGE PROGRAMME

With thanks to those Chambers who supported our mini-pupillage programme this year:

Atkin Chambers	Outer Temple	Pump Court Tax
11 Kings Bench Walk	1 Garden Court	Blackstone Chambers
15NBS Chambers	10 Old Square	Matrix Chambers
3 Dr Johnson's Buildings	No.5 Chambers	Furnivall Chambers
Spire Barristers	Brick Court	2 Temple Gardens
4 Pump Court	8 New Square	Devon Chambers
New Court Chambers	One Essex Court	4 Kings Bench Walk
Mountford Chambers	Essex Court	Keating Chambers
3 Paper Buildings	39 Essex	Atlantic Chambers
Hailsham Chambers	36 Group	Landmark Chambers

Delivered by Elaine Banton

LECTURE SERIES

The Academy held a two-part lecture series, focusing on the challenges facing barristers from underrepresented groups. The lectures are delivered by Elaine Banton, a barrister at 7BR and an elected Bencher at the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple. Elaine is also the co-chair of the Bar Council's Equality, Diversity and Social Mobility Committee.

The lecture series was designed to address three of the Academy's objectives:

1. To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
2. To equip our candidates with the mindset tools required to succeed within the profession.
3. To equip our candidates with the tools to champion diversity and inclusion within the profession and throughout their careers.

The lecture series allows candidates to enter the Bar with these issues at the forefront of their mind, allowing them to enter the profession with the knowledge of these issues, and how to contribute to fixing it. The lectures are followed by networking, to facilitate open discussions between candidates and attending practitioners.

Delivered by Elaine Banton

LECTURE SERIES

ACCESS TO THE BAR AND CULTURE CHANGE

Part-one of the lecture series, held at University College London, focused on access to, and culture change at the Bar. Candidates engaged in discussions on how to help improve diversity at the Bar through education, training and schemes, such as this lecture series.

Following the lecture, candidates were invited to a networking event, where they were able to meet practitioners, who shared the goal of ensuring that there are equal access to opportunities at the Bar.

RETENTION AND PROGRESSION

Part two of the lecture series focused on retention and progression at the Bar. Elaine discussed issues which cause those from underrepresented groups to leave practice more frequently that their more traditional counterparts. The candidates engaged in discussions about how they will seek to overcome such issues during their careers, and how these problems might be more widely addressed at a systematic level.

Following the lecture, another networking event took place, which allowed our candidates to discuss these issues with those already facing these problems in practice.

A bar that represents also benefits society.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAMMES

OBJECTIVES

During this academic year BTB has successfully partnered with the UK Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, the High Court, and Advocate to organise one-week long paid internships for our BTB candidates. Of these, the judicial internships have taken place and we look forward to the remaining internships being run in 2023.

The internship programmes meet three objectives:

1. To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
2. To equip our candidates with the mindset tools required to succeed within the profession.
3. To equip our candidates with the tools to champion diversity and inclusion within the profession and throughout their career.

The aim was to provide aspiring barristers from non-traditional backgrounds with a chance to gain exposure and feel comfortable in these legal settings. The week was designed by in collaboration with our partners to be challenging, intellectually stimulating and rewarding for our candidates.

It was a pleasure to welcome a second group of excellent Bridging the Bar interns to the Supreme Court this year, building on the successes of the first year of the programme in 2021.

*- **Lord Reed**, UKSC Justice*

INTERNSHIP PROGRAMMES

PRE-TRAINING FOR JUDICIAL INTERNSHIPS

Prior to the commencement of the UK Supreme Court, High Court and Court of Appeal internships in November 2022, we provided the successful candidates with a pre-training session which gave them an overview of the week ahead and answered any questions they might have. This session included talks from representatives of the court, as well as featuring experiences shared by BTB's 2021 UK Supreme Court interns.

The aim of this training was to prepare the interns for the rigour of the internship and ensure they were ready to excel during their week-long placement.

JUDICIAL INTERNSHIPS

Following the pre-training, candidates completed a five-day placement where they shadowed Judicial Assistants, took part in roundtable discussions with Judges with the aim of facilitating mutual learning, and, on the final day, gave presentations in front of Judges to conclude their experience.

It was a pleasure to welcome a second group of excellent Bridging the Bar interns to the Supreme Court this year, building on the successes of the first year of the programme in 2021.

*- **Lord Reed**, UKSC Justice*

THE UKSC INTERNSHIP

In February 2021 BTB made a pitch to the UK Supreme Court (UKSC) who subsequently agreed to collaborate with us and create an internship programme. In November 2021 the first ever UKSC paid internship took place with 8 candidates being selected following a rigorous application process.

2

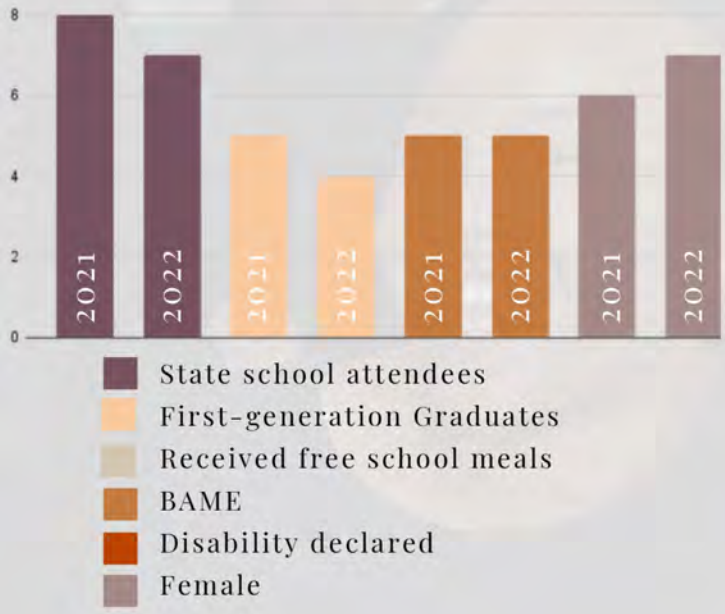
UKSC internship cycles completed

16

UKSC internships undettaken

85%

Of 2021 UKSC Interns Secured Pupillage



"It was a privilege to welcome the eight Bridging the Bar interns to the Court. They were a thoughtful and engaging group of people, who enriched our discussions about the appeals being heard in the Supreme Court that week. The Judicial Assistants were delighted to have them as colleagues."

– **Rebecca Fry,** UKSC Head JA

UKSC INTERN TESTIMONIALS

Lilly Sharma, UKSC Intern 2022

"As a second year UK Supreme Court intern I was provided with such a valuable experience. It was a rewarding opportunity to not only have my voice heard but to also hear the stories of the interns who took this journey with me. I gained a thorough insight into the inner workings of the UK Supreme Court."

"The UKSC internship was unexpectedly profound for me. Not only did the internship greatly improve my confidence in my legal ability, but also my personal confidence. I felt listened to throughout the process of the internship from all Justices and members of staff. Vicky [CEO at the UKSC] truly made us feel as though we are part of the Supreme Court family and always will be. "

Izzy Mackellar, UKSC Intern 2022

THE UKSC INTERNS

2021

UKSC INTERN TESTIMONIALS

"The internship with the UKSC was a week well spent. It was an unforgettable experience both in the content and breadth of activities the week included, but also in the recognition and celebration of my achievements."

Denise Osei, UKSC Intern 2022

Anna Wright, UKSC Intern 2022

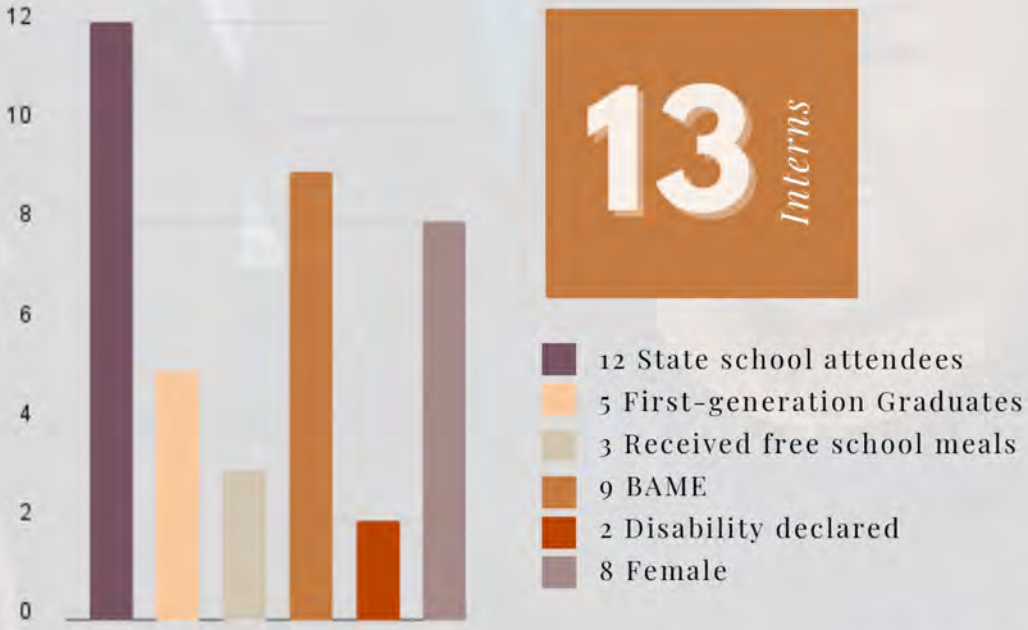
"After completing the internship, I feel empowered, assured, and courageous. The internship has enhanced my self-belief and enabled me to clearly visualise myself at the Bar. It has heightened my strong interest in law and unshakeable drive to achieve my goals. The internship has thus given me the confidence to excel in any legal environment."

THE UKSC INTERNS

2022

HIGH COURT & COURT OF APPEAL INTERNSHIPS

In March 2022, BTB, the High Court & Court of Appeal agreed to collaborate on a pilot internship for aspiring barristers from statistically under-represented backgrounds at the Bar. This internship took place during the first week of November 2022 where successful candidates were assigned to a judge and supported by their Judicial Assistant(s) in the High Court / Court of Appeal.



We are delighted to report that, due to the success of this pilot internship, it has been agreed between BTB and the High Court / Court of Appeal (HC/COA) that this internship programme will be implemented again for our BTB Academy candidates in the next academic year of 2023/24.

"The BTB scheme is fantastic. My intern was clearly destined for great things. It was a pleasure to get to know her and to discuss her plans for the future. It is critically important that, as judges, we are involved in efforts to increase diversity within the legal professions and the judiciary. Those efforts include trying to demystify what to somebody with no connection with the law can appear both obscure and, worse still, unwelcoming. I look forward to taking further part in the scheme in athe future."

– **Mr Justice Picken**, High Court Judge

HIGH COURT & COURT OF APPEAL INTERN TESTIMONIALS

The internship in the Court of Appeal was nothing short of empowering. It allowed me to be shoulder to shoulder with some of the highest placed judges in the UK, many of our brightest legal minds, and surrounded by a supportive community of likeminded peers. I was pushed outside of my comfort zone in many respects but I came out the other side so much the better for it. I have a greater understanding of advocacy, of myself and my interests, and what I need to do to succeed in a career at the Bar.

Emily Girvan-Dutton HC/COA Intern 2022

Nobuhle Sibanda, HC/COA Intern 2022

Being a part of this internship has been an incredible privilege. I have been challenged, encouraged, and made to reflect on my own career aspirations. Access to the Bar is so important to me. Anyone can talk about encouraging diversity and inclusivity, but BTB actively does this and there are no words to describe the feeling of people believing in you, your skills, and your ability to do something you dream of.

THE HIGH COURT & COURT OF APPEAL ROUNDTABLE

THE MENTORING PROGRAMME

THE OBJECTIVES

Following the success of our pilot mentoring programme in 2020, we decided to incorporate this into the design of the Academy. All 100 candidates have been matched for 1-to-1 mentoring with a practising barrister who shares the Candidate's intended practice area and diversity characteristics. The year long mentoring relationships commenced in October 2022, and will require the candidates to complete a Personal Development Plan (PDP) over the course of the mentoring sessions.

The mentoring programme was incorporated to target four key Academy objectives:

1. To improve the quality of candidates' written pupil applications.
2. To improve the quality of each candidate's pupillage interview technique.
3. To equip our candidates with the mindset tools required to succeed within the profession.
4. To equip our candidates with the tools to champion diversity and inclusion within the profession and throughout their careers.

THE MENTORING PROGRAMME

MUTAL LEARNING

At BTB, we view mutual learning as crucially important, both to the development of our candidates, but also to our mission of improving diversity and inclusion as a whole. In emphasising mutual learning in our mentee and mentor guides, we hope that, as well as providing invaluable practice and feedback to our candidates, the mentoring relationship also fosters shared learning in our professional volunteers. In this way, we hope to reinforce the importance of diversity inclusion at the Bar to legal professionals practising today.

3,600+

Hours of mentoring

"Having a Mentor has been life-changing. Seeing how well my mentor is thriving in his practice despite coming from an ethnic minority background gave me a boost of confidence in believing that I can do the same. Mentoring not only empowered me to keep trying even in face of adversity, but it also made me realise how powerful representation can be. This inspired me to give back to the community and help other underprivileged students achieve their aspirations too."

Cason Yong Kwan Xhen, Academy Canidate 22/23

THE MENTORING PROGRAMME

THE MENTORING

All Academy mentors were provided with a mentoring guide to facilitate the mentee-mentor relationship. This document provides a structure for the mentors which covers everything from the initial meeting to final feedback. As the objectives of the mentoring are weighted towards successful pupilage applications, a focus has been put on providing candidates with help in application planning, application guidance, and interview technique practice.

IMPACT

We have collected data about Candidate skills and outlook prior to the commencement of this programme, and look forward to sharing the outcomes via an impact report in 2023.

Delivered by Bibi Badejo

ONLINE ADVOCACY TRAINING

ONLINE ADVOCACY TRAINING

The online advocacy training was led by The Advocacy Coach Bibi Badejo, barrister at 4 Brick Court, founder of The Advocacy Coach and host of The Advocacy Podcast. The Advocacy Coach provide all relevant materials and offer practical support enabling candidates to improve their advocacy performance skills. The training is comprised of an online course and a live event.

The online advocacy training course was developed to target three Academy objectives:

1. To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
2. To improve the quality of candidates' written pupil applications.
3. To improve the quality of each candidate's pupillage interview technique.

Delivered by Bibi Badejo

ONLINE ADVOCACY TRAINING

THE ADVOCACY COACH

THE ONLINE COURSE

Candidates are provided with innovative exercises, which allows them to gain a deeper understanding of the techniques which are crucial to a successful advocate. The modules include topics such as, how to develop a case theory, how to be confident in oral addresses and how to be in control as the cross examiner.

THE LIVE EVENT

In December 2022 candidates were invited to a live virtual event to practice the skills they had learned from the online course.

During the event candidates were provided with real-life court scenarios, and had to prepare a range of advocacy tasks, including a cross-examination and a closing speech. The candidates then presented and worked with professionally trained actors, experienced in court simulations.

Following the presentations, candidates were allowed to ask questions about the course and were provided tailored feedback so that our candidates are able to work effectively on their advocacy skills.

ONLINE ADVOCAY TRAINING TESTIMONIALS

The course has certainly changed how I approach trials and so far my preparation has not let me down. It has forced me to think more objectively, enabling me to anticipate opposing submissions. I thought using the "five whys" alongside my chronologies was particularly useful in predicting opposing arguments and constructing my cross-examination.

Corey James Brenton Boothe, Academy 22/23 Candidate

Katie Bacon, Academy 22/23 Candidate

The content around case theory was very helpful as whichever exercise you picked you would need to identify a case theory. I also found the material on cross-examination beneficial when preparing my questions, as it provided useful guidance to help me pitch my work.

UPCOMING ACADEMY EVENTS

INTERVIEW ADVOCACY TRAINING

Following the success of our interview advocacy training pilot delivered last year with 6KBW Chambers, we have decided to incorporate this as an official Academy event and expand participation to all candidates on the Academy. We have partnered with 16 Chambers, who will run sessions over four consecutive Saturdays in February 2023, which will cover specific advocacy exercises ranging from statutory interpretation to bail applications.

The content of the interview advocacy training has been designed to meet two academy objectives:

1. To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
2. To improve the quality of candidates' written pupil applications.

Many candidates from underrepresented backgrounds may have a lack of experience in handling such exercises. For some, financial concerns may have left little time for such engagement, while others may have simply not had the access to such opportunities.

With thanks to our interview advocacy partner chambers;

Devereaux Chambers	Garden Court North	5 St Andrews Hill	11 Kings Bench Walk
Enterprise Chambers	3 Verulam Buildings	One Essex Court	Matrix Chambers
6 Kings Bench Walk	Hailsham Chambers	4-5 Gray's Inn Square	Four Brick Court
4 Paper Building	QEB Hollis Whiteman	36 Group	7 Brick Court

THE INTERVIEW ADVOCACY TRAINING PILOT

UPCOMING ACADEMY EVENTS

SECOND ROUND OF MINI-PUPILLAGES

While we have already arranged for all candidates to undertake a mini-pupillage at a leading set, we intend to undertake a second round in for all candidates who did not participate in internship programmes. For more information on how the incorporation of mini-pupillages meets our Academy objectives, please see pages 28 & 29.

ADVOCATE INTERNSHIP

We were delighted with the success of the judicial internships that took place earlier in the 22/23 Academy cycle. We look forward to similar success with the Advocate internship later this year. For more information on how the incorporation of internships meets our Academy objectives, please see pages 30 & 31.

UPCOMING ACADEMY EVENTS

LAUNCH OF THE RESOURCES HUB

We are currently in the process of creating a research hub for our candidates, with the aim of providing a resource which comprehensively covers all relevant dates, provides advice, and signposts further resources.

The research hub is being constructed in order to target three Academy objectives:

1. To improve the content of our candidates' pupillage applications.
2. To improve the quality of candidates' written pupil applications.
3. To improve the quality of each candidate's pupillage interview technique.

Candidates from non-traditional backgrounds are less likely to have existing connections with legal professionals. This lack of connection means that such candidates often have a narrower breadth of knowledge when it comes to key dates and locating effective resources. By providing the resource hub to our candidates, we hope to go some way in bridging that gap. .

UPCOMING ACADEMY EVENTS

GRADUATION CONFERENCE

The closing conference for The Academy 22/23 will be held on the 17th June, and will celebrate the achievement of our candidates in completing the Academy programme. The event will include talks from legal professionals who have been key to our successful delivery of the programme, with networking between candidates and practitioners to follow.

> "These future barristers will pave the way for a more diverse and inclusive profession, and I cannot wait to see it."
>
> **– Eleanor Tack,**
> BTB Executive Committee Member

The closing conference aims to target two Academy objectives:

1. To equip our candidates with the mindset tools required to succeed within the profession.
2. To equip our candidates with the tools to champion diversity and inclusion within the profession and throughout their careers.

We hope that the variety of speakers delivering a message of inclusion will reaffirm to candidates of all non-traditional backgrounds that not only are they welcome at the Bar but they themselves could go on to be a championing voice for diversity.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

RESILLIANCE FUND

Within the Academy budget, we reserved £10,000 to provide financial assistance to candidates during the 22/23 Academy cycle. This Resilience fund is accessible to candidates who are experiencing financial difficulties which would prevent them from engaging with Academy events. From this fund, we not only contribute to travel and accommodation costs, but also to costs that can be associated with the diversity characteristics of our candidates such as hiring carers to cover the period that a candidate with caring responsibilities might be at an Academy event.

"My journey to the Bar has been marked by financial barriers. Coming from Lincolnshire, I have struggled to attend many Bar-related events and opportunities in the past. Financial assistance has been invaluable to me in allowing me to fully attend and participate in this scheme. Without it, that simply would not have been possible."

-Charlie Fardon,
Academy 22/23 Candidate

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

CONSULTANCY PANEL

The consultancy panel offers our candidates an opportunity to receive constructive feedback in relation to their upcoming pupillage applications. Candidates can submit requests for help which include: pupillage application review & advice; pupillage application proofreading; CV checks; general advice sessions regarding the pupillage application process; mock pupillage interviews; and help with specific advocacy exercises.

We are delighted to report that we have had an overwhelmingly positive reception to this scheme, with over 80 legal professionals from a wide range of practice areas having signed up to provide this help to our candidates via the consultancy panel.

We hope that having individual tailored feedback on any and all aspects of the pupillage process will empower our candidates with the skills and know-how to excel in the upcoming round of pupillage applications.

A bar that represents also benefits society.

PILOT ACADEMY IN FIGURES

100 **CANDIDATES**
SELECTED FOR THE ACADEMY

160 **MINI PUPILLAGES**
UNDERATKEN BY BTB CANIDATES

34 **INTERNSHIPS**
WITH THE UKSC, COURT OF APPEAL/HIGH COURT, GLD, ADVOCATE, & THE LAW COMMISSION

PILOT ACADEMY IN FIGURES

17 **SPONSORSHIP PARTNERS**
SUPPORTING BTB

178 **PROFESSIONAL VOLUNTEERS**
ASSIGNED AS MENTORS, POD LEADERS, OR CONSULTANCY PANEL CONTRIBUTORS

45 **PARTNER CHAMBERS**
OFFERING MINI PUPILLAGES OR INTERVIEW ADVOCACY TRAINING TO BTB candidates

CONCLUSION

We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone involved in making the pilot year of the BTB Academy a resounding success. The Academy programme would not have been possible without the dedication of our professional volunteers or the generosity of our sponsors. It is only with the support of those who share our mission that we are able to pursue our aim of helping to increase inclusion and diversity at the Bar.

As we look forward to future successful cycles of the BTB Academy, we hope to continually develop the programme to ensure that all of the objectives for candidates are met. We hope that they leave the Academy having achieved both personal and professional development, and both willing and able to become champions of diversity themselves in their future careers at the Bar.

For students who are interested in applying for the Academy cycle 23/24, the application window will open in Spring of 2023. If you would like to be added to our mailing lists, so that you receive notification of the application window and other BTB events, then please email info@bridgingthebar.org.

For self-employed barristers, Chambers, or other interested organisations or individuals interested in supporting BTB, please reach out to us at partnerships@bridgingthebar.org. Our relationships with those committed to recognising and harnessing the talent of underrepresented individuals are integral to the success of BTB mission, and we would love to have you be a part of that. All of us at BTB look forward to working with you, and we welcome the time, resources and ideas that you are able to bring to this project. Together, we can secure the full potential of a diverse Bar that serves all of society.

WE ARE BRIDGING THE BAR

A bar that represents also benefits society.

GET IN TOUCH

TO FIND OUT MORE
WWW.BRIDGINGTHEBAR.ORG

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
PROGRAMMES@BRIDGINGTHEBAR.ORG

FOR GROUP, PRESS AND MEDIA ENQUIRIES
INFO@BRIDGINGTHEBAR.ORG

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ANNUAL REPORTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1ST APRIL 2022

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

CHARITY REGISTRATION No: 1190369

Castle View Accounting Ltd
New Barn
Mudberry Lane
Bosham
Chichester
West Sussex
PO18 8TS

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

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Page 71	Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities
Page 72	Statement of Financial Activities
Page 73	Balance Sheet
Pages 74 to 78	Notes to the Financial Statements
Page 79	Independent Examiner's Report

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

CHARITY NUMBER	1190369
DATE OF REGISTRATION	13th July 2020
START OF FINANCIAL YEAR	2nd April 2021
END OF FINANCIAL YEAR	1st April 2022
TRUSTEES AT 1ST APRIL 2022	Aaron Mayers Mass Ndow-Njie Matheu Armel Swallow (Appointed 15th December 2021)
LEGAL STATUS	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
GOVERNING INSTRUMENT	CIO - Foundation Registered 13th July 2020

OBJECTS

The promotion of equality and diversity and the promotion of social inclusion amongst those who socially excluded due to being members of socially and economically deprived community, at The Bar of England and Wales by: **a**) The elimination of discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religion. **b**) Advancing education and raising awareness in equality and diversity. **c**) Promotion activities to foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds. **d**) Cultivating a sentiment in favour of equality and diversity.

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS	218 Strand London WC2R 1AT
PRIMARY BANKERS	Cashplus Bank 6th Floor One London Wall London EC2Y 5EB
INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS	Castle View Accounting Ltd New Barn Mudberry Lane Bosham Chichester West Sussex PO18 8TS

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1ST APRIL 2022

Trustees' Responsibilities

The Charities Act 2011 requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the CIO and of the surplus of the CIO for that period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- Prepare financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the trust will continue in existence.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the CIO. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the CIO and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Trustees on .....16th January 2023.....

Signed on their behalf by Trustee .....

Printed Name: Mass Ndow-Njie

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1ST APRIL 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2021/22 £	TOTAL 2020/21 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Incoming Resources from Generated Funds					
Donations, Grants & Legacies	**3a**	47,947	-	47,947	65,874
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		**47,947**	**-**	**47,947**	**65,874**
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Costs of Generating Funds					
Cost of Charitable Activities	**4a**	36,681	-	36,681	3,455
Governance Costs	**4b**	800	-	800	790
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		**37,481**	**-**	**37,481**	**4,245**
NET INCOMING (OUTGOING) RESOURCES		**10,466**	**-**	**10,466**	**61,628**
Funds Brought Forward		61,629	-	61,629	-
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		**72,095**	**-**	**72,095**	**61,628**

Movements on all reserves and all recognised gains and losses are shown above. All of the organisation's operations are classed as continuing.

The notes on pages 74 to 78 form part of these financial statements.

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 1ST APRIL 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 01-Apr-22 £	Total 01-Apr-21 £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Assets	2	-	-	-	-
Investments	6	-	-	-	-
Total Fixed Assets		-	-	-	-
Current Assets					
Debtors & Prepayments	8	-	-	-	5,000
Cash at Bank and in Hand	7	72,895	-	72,895	57,379
Total Current Assets		**72,895**	**-**	**72,895**	**62,379**
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	9	800	-	800	750
NET CURRENT ASSETS		72,095	-	72,095	61,629
TOTAL ASSETS less current liabilities		**72,095**	**-**	**72,095**	**61,629**
Creditors: Amounts falling due in more than one year	10	-	-	-	-
NET ASSETS		**72,095**	**-**	**72,095**	**61,629**
Funds of the Charity					
General Funds		72,095	-	72,095	61,629
Restricted Funds	5	-	-	-	-
Total Funds		**72,095**	**-**	**72,095**	**61,629**

Approved by the Trustees on .....16th January 2023.....

Signed on their behalf by Trustee .....

Printed Name: Mass Ndow-Njie

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1ST APRIL 2022

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Preparation & Assessment of Going Concern

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant notes. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP - FRS102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Assessment of Going Concern

Preparation of the accounts is on a going concern basis. The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Incoming Resources

Recognition of Incoming Resources

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- the trustees are virtually certain they will receive the resources; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability

Incoming Resources with Related Expenditure

Where incoming resources have related expenditure (as with fundraising or contract income) the incoming resource and related expenditure are reported gross in the SOFA.

Grants and Donations

Grants and Donations are only included in the SOFA when the charity has unconditional entitlement to the resources.

Tax Reclaims on Donations and Gifts

Incoming resources from tax reclaims are included in the SOFA at the same time as the gift to which they relate.

Contractual Income and Performance Related Grants

This is only included in the SOFA once the related goods or services have been delivered.

Gifts in Kind

Gifts in kind are accounted for at a reasonable estimate of their value to the charity or the amount actually realised. Gifts in kind for sale or distribution are included in the accounts as gifts only when sold or distributed by the charity. Gifts in kind for use by the charity are included in the SOFA as incoming resources when receivable.

Donated Services and Facilities

These are only included in incoming resources (with an equivalent amount in resources expended) where the benefit to the charity is reasonably quantifiable, measurable and material. The value placed on these resources is the estimated value to the charity of the service or facility received.

Volunteer Help

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts.

Investment Income

This is included in the accounts when receivable.

Investment Gains and Losses

This included any gain or loss on the sale of investments and any gain or loss resulting from revaluing investments to market value at the end of the year.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Expenditure and Liabilities

Liability Recognition
Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

Governance Costs
Include costs of the preparation and examination of statutory accounts, the costs of the trustees meetings and cost of any legal advice to trustees on governance or constitutional matters.

Grants with Performance Conditions
Where the charity gives a grant with conditions for its payment being a specific level of service or output to be provided, such grants are only recognised in the SOFA once the recipient of the grant has provided the specified service or output.

Grants Payable without Performance Conditions
These are only recognised in the accounts when a commitment has been made and there are no conditions to be met relating to a grant which remain in control of the charity.

Investments
Investments quoted on a recognised stock exchange are valued at market value at the year end. Other investment assets are included at trustees' best estimate of market value.

Unrestricted funds
These funds can be used for the general objectives of the charity as set out in the trustees report. The movements of the unrestricted funds are given in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Restricted funds
These funds are where the donor has specified a purpose for the donation made. These restrictions often arise as a result of appeals for special offerings for specific purposes.

Designated funds
These funds are funds set aside by the trustees out of unrestricted general funds for particular purposes or projects.

Fixed Assets
Fixed Assets are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year and cost at least £1,500. They are valued at cost or, if gifted, at the value to the charity on receipt.

Depreciation Expense
Depreciation is calculated at a rate to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets over their estimated useful lives. The rates applied are as follows:

Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment	25% - Straight Line Basis

2. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

The CIO held no fixed assets during this or the previous financial period.

The annual commitments under non-cancelling operating leases and capital commitments are as follows:

1st April 2022:None
1st April 2021:None

3. INCOMING RESOURCES

		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2021/22 £	TOTAL 2020/21 £
a) Donations, Grants & Legacies					
Gifts & Donations		47,947	-	47,947	65,874
		47,947	**-**	**47,947**	**65,874**

4. RESOURCES EXPENDED

		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2021/22 £	TOTAL 2020/21 £
a) Cost of Charitable Activities					
Administrative Expenses		301	-	301	787
Advertising & Publicity		861	-	861	457
Bank Charges		92	-	92	69
Books & Publications		81	-	81	174
Event Costs		200	-	200	-
Gifts & Donations		-	-	-	100
Internship Costs		5,345	-	5,345	-
Photography Costs		1,350	-	1,350	-
Software Costs		815	-	815	788
Staff Costs		20,333	-	20,333	-
Training Costs		1,900	-	1,900	-
Website Costs		5,403	-	5,403	1,079
		36,681	**-**	**36,681**	**3,455**
b) Governance Costs					
Independent Examiners Fees	**9**	800	-	800	750
Legal & Professional Fees		-	-	-	40
		800	**-**	**800**	**790**

5. RESTRICTED FUNDS

The CIO held no restricted funds during this or the previous financial period.

6. INVESTMENTS

The CIO held no fixed assets investments during this or the previous financial period.

7. CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	**Total 01-Apr-22 £**	**Total 01-Apr-21 £**
Cash at Bank & in Hand	72,895	-	72,895	57,379
	72,895	**-**	**72,895**	**57,379**

8. DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	**Total 01-Apr-22 £**	**Total 01-Apr-21 £**
Sundry Debtors	-	-	-	5,000
	-	**-**	**-**	**5,000**

9. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	**Total 01-Apr-22 £**	**Total 01-Apr-21 £**
Independent Examiners Fees	800	-	800	750
	800	**-**	**800**	**750**

10. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE IN MORE THAN ONE YEAR

The CIO held no long term liabilities during this or the previous financial period.

11. NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total 01-Apr-22 £**	**Total 01-Apr-21 £**
Fixed Asset Investments	-	-	-	-
Net Current Assets	72,095	-	72,095	61,629
Long Term Liabilities	-	-	-	-
	72,095	**-**	**72,095**	**61,629**

12. STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS

	TOTAL 2021/22	TOTAL 2020/21
	£	£
Gross Wages, Salaries & Fees	20,333	-
Employer's National Insurance Costs	-	-
Pension Contributions	-	-
	20,333	**-**

Employees who were engaged in each of the following activities:

	TOTAL 2021/22	TOTAL 2020/21
Charitable Activities	1	Nil

The Charity engages with staff on a Self-employed basis and is therefore not liable to Income Tax and National Insurance Costs and no employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

13. TRUSTEES AND OTHER RELATED PARTIES

No payments were made to trustees or any persons connected with them during this financial period. No material transaction took place between the organisation and a trustee or any person connected with them.

14. RISK ASSESSMENT

The Trustees actively review the major risks which the charity faces on a regular basis and believe that maintaining the free reserves stated, combined with the annual review of the controls over key financial systems carried out on an annual basis will provide sufficient resources in the event of adverse conditions. The Trustees have also examined other operational and business risks which they face and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate the significant risks.

15. RESERVES POLICY

The Trustees have considered the level of reserves they wish to retain, appropriate to the CIO's needs. This is based on the CIO's size and the level of financial commitments held. The Trustees aim to ensure the CIO will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in income or unexpected expenditure. The Trustees will endeavour not to set aside funds unnecessarily.

16. PUBLIC BENEFIT

The CIO acknowledges its requirement to demonstrate clearly that it must have charitable purposes or ‘aims’ that are for the public benefit. Details of how the CIO has achieved this are provided in the Trustees report. The Trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit before deciding what activities the CIO should undertake.

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS

Report to the trustees/ members of Bridging the Bar on the accounts for year ended 1st April 2022 set out on pages 72 to 78.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect, the requirements:
   - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
   - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act

have not been met; or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

K. Collaku MAAT
Castle View Accounting Ltd
New Barn
Mudberry Lane
Bosham
Chichester
West Sussex
PO18 8TS

Date: 23rd January 2023

BRIDGING THE BAR

England & Wales - Charity number 1190369

Accounts

BRIDGING THE BAR

#BRIDGINGTHEBAR

ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

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Annual Reports & Financial Statements

Founder, Mass Ndow-Njie

OVERVIEW

I am delighted to introduce the first Annual Report for Bridging the Bar ('BTB') which sets out the charity's key accomplishments over the past year and its key objectives moving forwards.

BTB was registered one year ago in the midst of a global pandemic and a national lockdown. Nonetheless, the entire team at BTB remained determined to ensure that these events would not halt the charity's progression.

As one member of the team put it, "social intimacy is no longer a pre-requisite to getting things done" and we kept this at the forefront of our minds as we sought to establish partnerships across the profession.

In the pre-pandemic world, securing partnerships with organisations and institutions across the country would have required numerous face-to-face meetings and extensive travel. However, we were able to achieve such partnerships without ever leaving our homes, by welcoming the transition from face-to-face meetings to video conferences hosted online.

In BTB's first year, the charity has established considerable partnerships and working relationships with organisations and institutions across the profession. 67 barrister's Chambers across the UK have signed up to support the BTB mini-pupillage programme, 19 organisations have become sponsorship partners, over 300 barristers and members of the judiciary have signed up as volunteers, and paid internship schemes have been launched in collaboration with both the UK Supreme Court and The Law Commission.

Yet, this only covers a portion of BTB's achievements to date and does not offer any insight into BTB's plans for the future. The remainder of this report will offer further insights as to how BTB is seeking to ensure that there are equal opportunities at the Bar for aspiring barristers.

I could not close this introduction without thanking all of those that have supported us in our freshman year. To our founding sponsorship partners, our volunteers, our first salaried employee and every organisation that has collaborated with us, I thank you for your trust, time and commitment to providing equal opportunities in our profession. I dedicate a special thanks to the BTB executive committee who, despite being volunteers, have upheld the highest professional standards and shown the utmost dedication to providing new opportunities for our beneficiaries.

All of the programmes that BTB has piloted in our first year will continue into the upcoming academic year. We will learn from the experiences that we have gained and will aim to improve our delivery of these programmes. We will also expand our support for aspiring barristers by launching new programmes, including those targeting younger students who may still be in school or college.

A Bar that represents society also benefits society. That short sentence captures our vision. If you agree, then it is likely that you will also agree with the premise of our charity. We are working to create a Bar that benefits society by ensuring that the profession is open to individuals coming from all walks of life.

> If we embrace ourselves, our unique stories and our varied cultures, we can create a 'new normal' in the profession. In this new normal, there will be no such thing as the 'conventional' image of a barrister. Instead, barristers will be as diverse as the society that we live in and as diverse as the clients that we represent.

- Mass Ndow-Njie, Founder and Chairman

OUR TEAM

CHAMPIONS

PROFESSOR JO DELAHUNTY QC

PROFESSOR LESLIE THOMAS QC

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MASS NDOW-NJIE
Founder and Chairman

AARON MAYERS
Deputy Chairman

ANDRE CARTY
Business Development Assistant

ISHAN KOLHATKAR
Executive Strategy Officer

ABDUL QADIM
Head of Alternative Work Experience

MAT SWALLOW
Treasurer and Head of Business Development

SONIA MASAUN
Operations Officer

ELEANOR TACK
Head of Marshalling

EMMA HUGHES
Head of Mentoring

SRISHTI SURESH
Data and Consulting Officer

With thanks to our Founding Partners:

INTRODUCTION TO BTB

"Bridging the Bar has certainly proven that the ‘equality of opportunity’ mission has a role for everyone."
- **Aaron Mayers**, Deputy Chairman.

INTRODUCTION

Bridging the Bar ("BTB") is a charity, founded in July 2020, that aims to support aspiring barristers from a range of statistically underrepresented groups at the Bar.

BTB exists to bridge the gap between students from non-traditional backgrounds and the skills, experience and networks required to develop a career at the Bar. We achieve this by providing our beneficiaries with work experience opportunities, access to mentoring and key information that will assist them to gain access to the profession.

BTB is committed to increasing the equality of access to opportunities within the legal profession across all underrepresented groups. We support students whom, owing to their disability, ethnic background, socio-economic background, education or sexuality, belong to groups which are statistically underrepresented in the profession.

We believe that for the Bar to reach its full potential, it must reflect the diverse society in which we live. Whilst we recognise the positive work being carried out to establish greater equality of access to opportunities at the Bar, it is clear that gaps still exist. BTB works towards closing that gap by supporting aspiring barristers and those organisations and individuals already championing diversity at the Bar.

WHO WE HELP

Low Income Background | BAME | LGBTQ+ | Disability | + More

OUR VISION

At BTB, we believe that the "bridge" between today's Bar and the diverse Bar that our society needs can be built by achieving three core objectives:

EQUAL ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

An integral part of equal access to opportunity at the Bar is to provide students from non-traditional backgrounds with the ability to gain practical work experience with barristers. Our Mini-Pupillage, Mentoring and Alternative Work Experience Programmes provide students from all backgrounds with the opportunity to gain exposure to life at the Bar. This is the insight needed for students to understand what career options are available to them, and specifically, what a career at the Bar looks like.

COLLABORATION

We welcome any dynamic support of our initiative, whether via the methods suggested, through tailored networking events, educational panels or entirely new ideas. There is an abundance of creative enterprises working to tackle many of the aims we share. BTB is continuously willing to discuss collaborating with organisations who share our aims. We recognise that in addition to helping people at a grassroots level, a pillar of what we do is forming strategic relationships with our regulators so that we can engage in conversations at a decision making level, provide feedback and create new schemes to help those who need and deserve it.

TRANSPARENCY

To be certain of what and where change is taking place, we have identified the importance of providing students with an understanding of how organisations at the Bar are responding to the current inequality of opportunity. BTB intends to publish directories which will highlight Chambers and other organisations which are leading the way towards equal access to opportunity at the Bar.

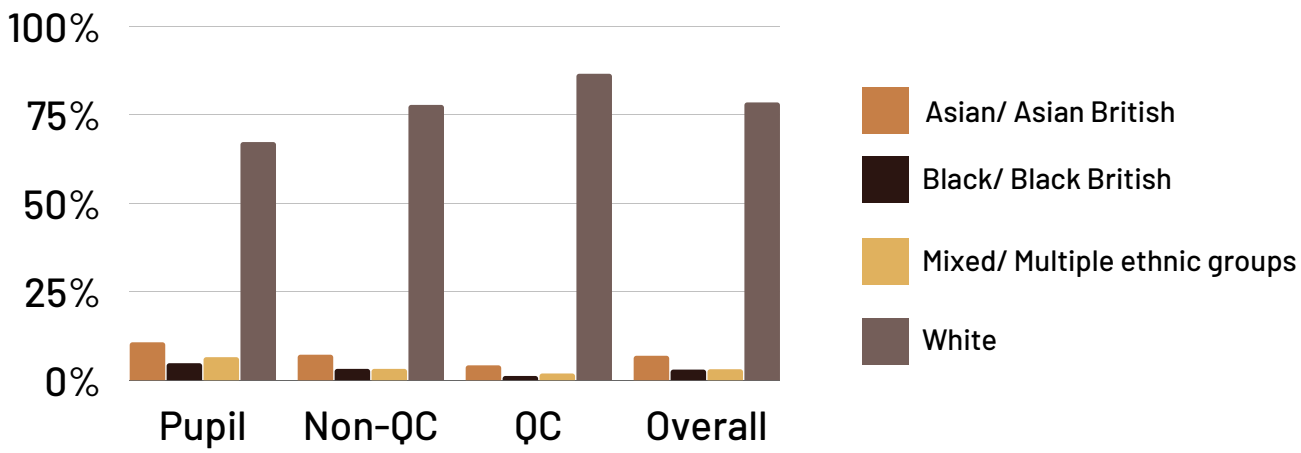
THE BAR IN NUMBERS

"Focus on the best version of yourself. By being your best self, you can take back that power because the truth is, a barrister looks like all of you."
- **Mass Ndow-Njie**, Founder and Chairman.

Diversity at the Bar, 2020

NUMBERS & STATISTICS

ETHNICITY AT THE BAR (BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2020)

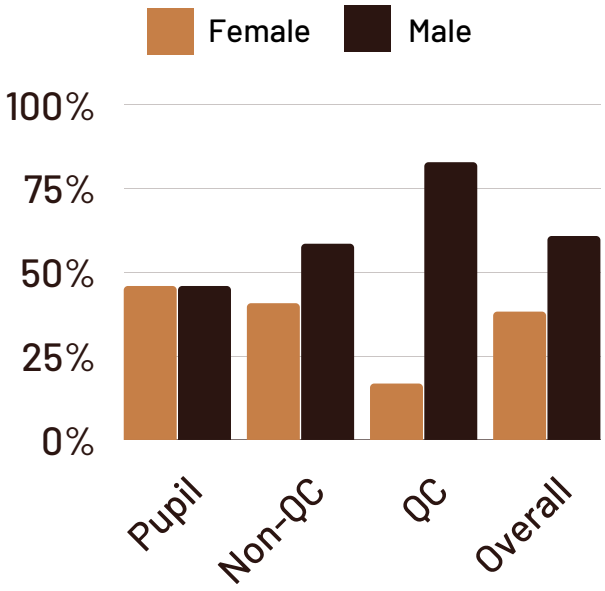


354
Pupil Barristers

15,208
Non-QC Barristers

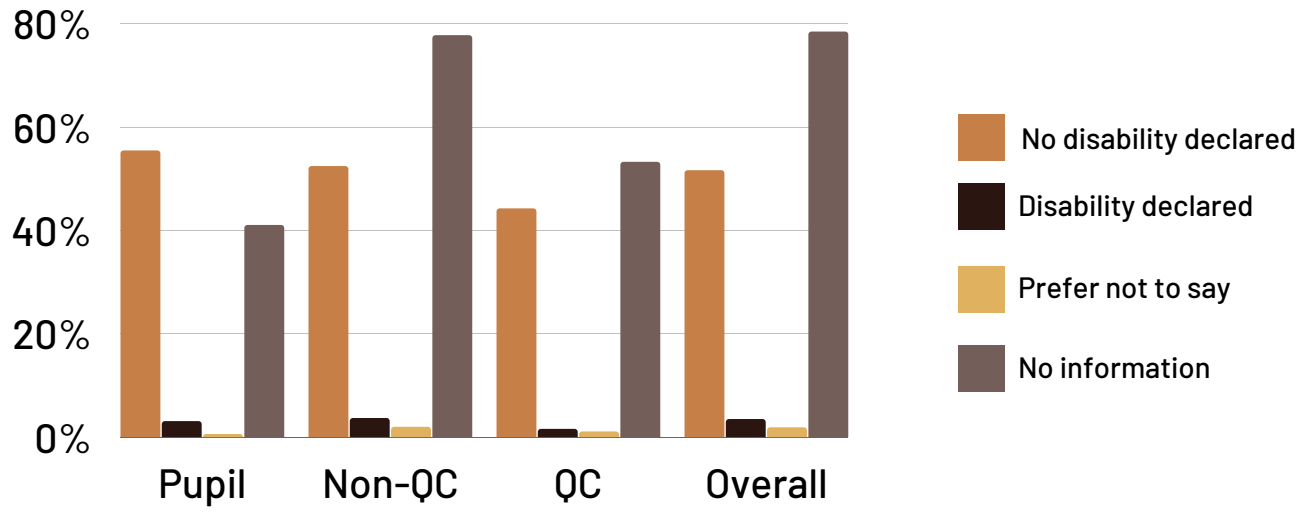
1,870
Queen's Counsel

GENDER AT THE BAR (BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2020)

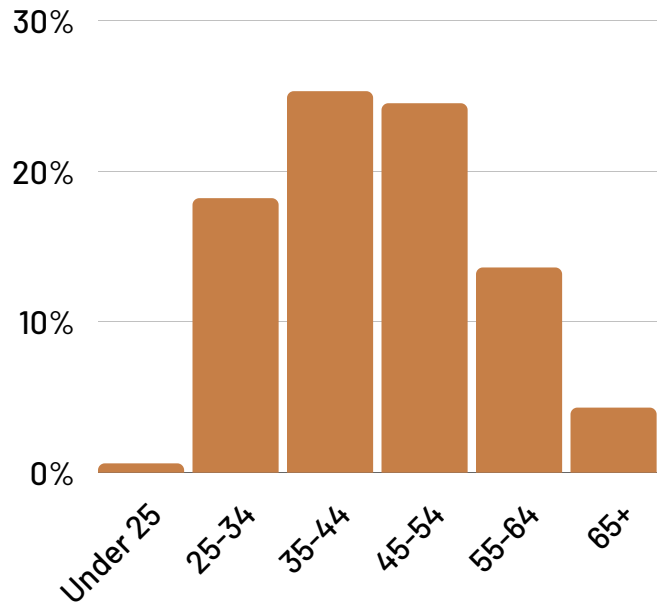


Diversity at the Bar, 2020

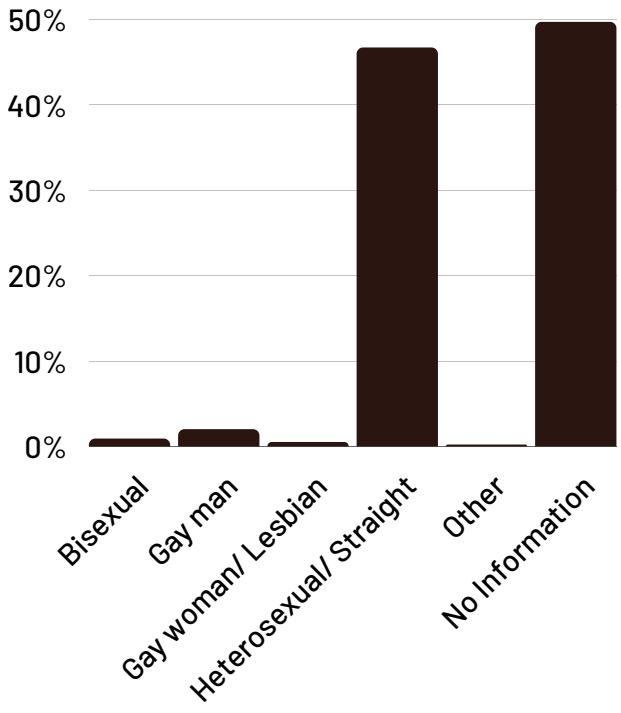
DISABILITY DECLARED AT THE BAR (BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2020)



AGE OF THE BAR (BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2020)

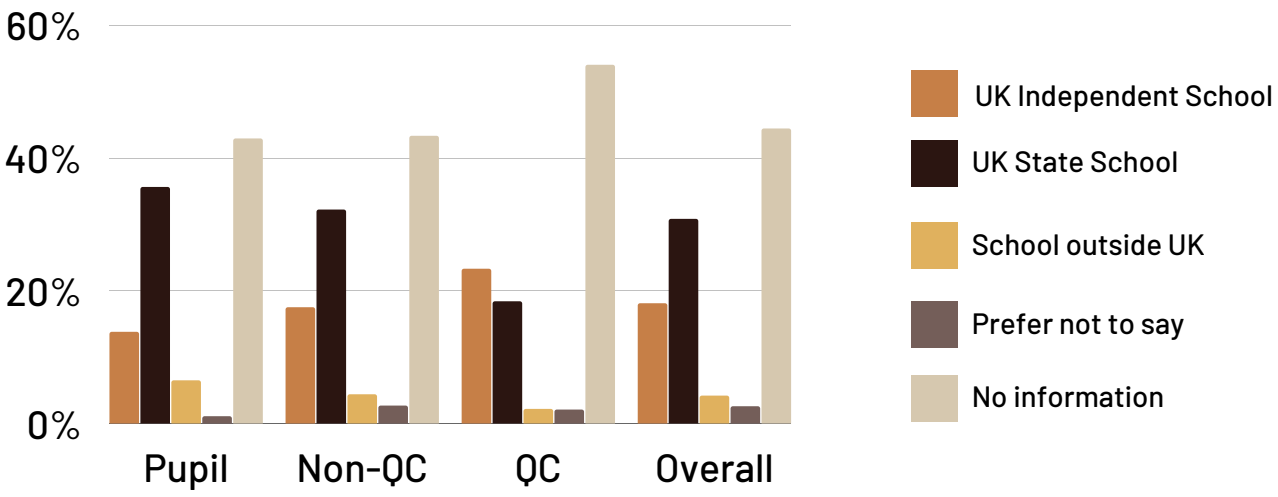


SEXUAL ORIENTATION OF THE BAR (BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2020)

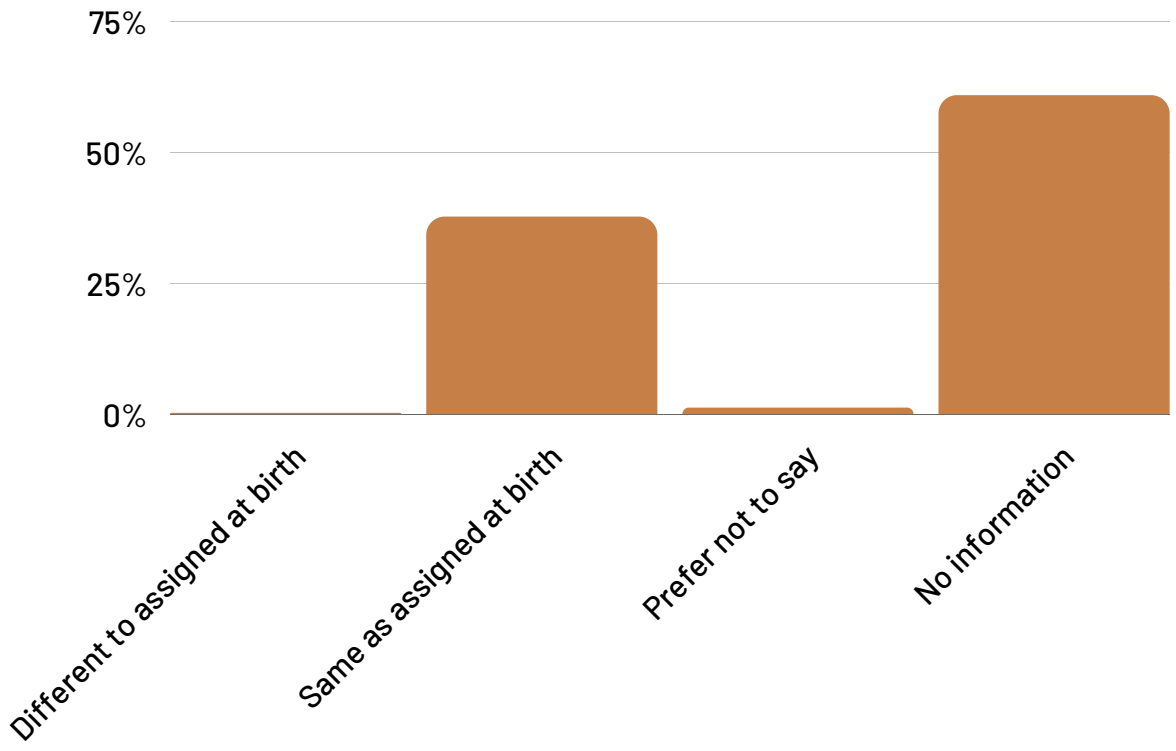


Diversity at the Bar, 2020

TYPE OF SCHOOL ATTENDED (BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2020)



GENDER IDENTITY AT THE BAR (BSB REPORT ON DIVERSITY AT THE BAR, 2020)



ONE YEAR OF BRIDGING THE BAR

"If we can secure the first ever internship at the UK Supreme Court then the sky is truly our limit."
- **Eleanor Tack**, Head of Marshalling

OUR METHODS

BTB have focused on three key methods over the past year:

PILOT MINI-PUPILLAGE PROGRAMME

BTB's pilot mini-pupillage programme has been designed to provide students with the opportunity to understand what the role of a barrister involves, to establish working relationships within the profession and to receive individualised feedback. The programme includes:

- A week-long work experience placement alongside a barrister whom specialises in the student's desired practice area.
- An assessed task with detailed feedback.
- The opportunity for students to attend upcoming conference to share their experiences and learn from the experiences of other students on the programme.

MENTORSHIP

BTB designed a mentoring scheme to facilitate relationship building between professionals and students. We have been committed to building our network of students and professionals with the aim of acting as a conduit between students from diverse backgrounds with little to no contacts within the legal profession, and barristers who are willing and able to guide and mentor them.

EVENTS

An important part of creating a feeling of inclusion and connectivity at the Bar for those from underrepresented groups is to build a community. We have set about achieving this by hosting a range of events which enable us to share the best career advice from leaders within our profession, as well as promote open and honest dialogue around the real issues which influence our experiences at the Bar.

BTB DIRECTORIES

To measure progress, we must be transparent. BTB has been building a directory with the intention of creating a source that aspiring barristers can use to identify which chambers and organisations at the Bar are actively supporting, engaging with and practically contributing to the objective of equal access to opportunity. Within the directories, BTB will provide any chambers and Bar organisation with the opportunity to explain what measures, initiatives and opportunities they have contributed to help the Bar to reach its full, diverse potential.

> Let this serve as a reminder that a committed group of people can effect great change no matter what their age, experience or background.
>
> - **Ishan Kolhatkar**, Executive Strategy Officer

OUR EVENTS

21.10.2020
SCHOLARSHIP ADVICE EVENT

The financial obstacles to reach the Bar are often a barrier for many aspiring barristers from underrepresented groups. Gaining a scholarship from an Inn of Court can be life-changing in assisting aspiring barristers with the significant cost of qualifying as a barrister. However, the application process can be daunting. To help students, BTB organised an event with speakers from each Inn and successful past scholars to provide students with advice for securing a scholarship.

25.02.2021
PUPILLAGE ADVICE EVENT

BTB organised a panel of pupils, tenants and senior barristers (including those sitting on the pupillage panel in Chambers), from a range of practice areas to offer their advice and answered questions about the process of applying for pupillage.

30.03.2021
FLBA AND BTB LAUNCH EVENT

BTB and the FLBA announced the launch of their partnership together. During this event, Judicial Assistant Roles were advertised and top tips for applying for Judicial Assistant roles were discussed.

27.05.2021

MIDDLE TEMPLE QUALIFYING SESSION: "WHAT DOES A BARRISTER LOOK LIKE?"

This was a panel style discussion addressing the barriers to diversity at the bar and the initiatives dedicated to enhancing opportunities. We heard from BTB Chairman Mass Ndow-Njie who encouraged attendees to focus on their unique strengths when applying to join the Bar. The BTB Champions Professor Jo Delahunty QC and Professor Leslie Thomas QC who shared stories about their journeys, the challenges they faced, and the importance of Diversity and Equality at the Bar. We also heard from several BTB mentees, Afiya Amesu, Adenike Onasanya and Sephlin Sam about their experience of the BTB mentoring programme. Lastly, we had special performances from talented artist Jordan and spoken word from Rakaya this evening.

10.06.2021

RENAISSANCE FOUNDATION: MILES AND PARTNERS SOLICITORS EVENT

Speakers at this event included: Lou Crisfield, Julie Nix, Linda Pope, Kaileigh Hazeldine and Musonda Phiri. The panel discussed their areas of practice at the bar, the differences between the role of a barrister and a solicitor, the barriers they faced in pursuing a legal career and what solicitors look for in a barrister when instructing them.

15.07.2021

RENAISSANCE FOUNDATION: PROFESSOR LESLIE THOMAS QC

BTB Champion, Professor Leslie Thomas QC discussed the following topics: Civil liberties, human rights, ECHR, UDHR and the rights granted to nation citizens, who is entitled to human rights/ ECHR/ nation rights, stop and search laws, what the police can do and cannot do, and a discussion of key cases involving a breach of human right laws and the use of excessive force.

BTB PROGRAMMES

"Bridging the Bar has exceeded all expectations and the charity has performed exceptionally over the past 12 months. This is delightful news to cap off an excellent year of hard work from the team."
- **Abdul Qadim**, Head of Alternative Work Experience.

PILOT MINI PUPILLAGE PROGRAMME

BTB's Mini-Pupillage Pilot Scheme launched in December 2020. By completing one application form, aspiring barristers could be considered for a mini-pupillage by 67 leading chambers across the country.

BTB's pilot scheme received over 450 applications and has since organised over 130 mini-pupillages for BTB candidates.

Shortlisted candidates were sifted according to their preferred practice area and were then chosen by or assigned to one – or several – of our partner set of chambers. BTB then introduced the successful candidate to Chambers and encouraged the applicant to liaise directly with Chambers to finalise details regarding their mini-pupillage.

BTB has acknowledged the significant value of feedback for aspiring barristers. For all mini-pupillages offered on the BTB scheme, we require chambers to provide mini pupils with a written task to complete. Chambers are then asked to provide feedback on the written task. We hope this serves to ensure that the mini-pupillages remain substantive opportunities for learning.

Further, BTB candidates, regardless of whether their application is successful or not, are each provided with feedback on their applications. We ask those marking applications to provide positive and constructive feedback on each application.

Despite feedback being central to an applicant's growth and development, we recognise that it is rarely provided to applicants when applying for pupillage. At BTB, we hope that in the coming years, providing feedback becomes more widespread across the profession.

We are currently collecting feedback gained from the pilot scheme to assist with the formulation of the new marking criteria ahead of the next launch. We will be publishing a marking criterion to ensure that applicants know exactly what standard they need to meet to be successful on the scheme. Applicants are likely to be asked to answer a small number of questions which aim to identify those with a demonstratable interest in the Bar, the ability to persuade others and strong written communication skills. Applicants will also gain marks for their academic record, although university institutions will be redacted prior to marking.

The next BTB Mini-Pupillage Scheme will be launching in September 2021. For any chambers wishing to join the scheme, expressions of interest are welcomed by emailing applications@bridgingthebar.org.

> This project is all about empowerment. Its foundation is based fundamentally in positivity and progression.
>
> - **Abdul Qadim**, Head of Alternative Work Experience

PILOT MENTORING PROGRAMME

In September 2020, led by BTB's Head of Mentoring, Emma Hughes, BTB launched its Pilot Mentoring Programme. In one week, BTB received over 175 applications and facilitated 75 mentoring partnerships between barristers and aspiring barristers.

BTB hoped mentoring would equip candidates with knowledge and soft skills that will help them to obtain scholarships and eventually pupillage. BTB launched our mentoring scheme on 28 September 2020. Given the life-changing nature of a BTC scholarship, we felt it was urgent that we target our resources to those students who were applying for such a scholarship before the deadline of 7 November 2020. BTB believes that by assisting those students from our target backgrounds with the scholarship process, our mentors can actively assist in BTB by helping candidates overcome the financial obstacle that often hinder progression.

The BTB Mentoring Scheme consisted of two separate but related parts, namely a 1-1 mentoring matching and access to exclusive professional development events.

Mentees completed applications which were marked taking into consideration academic ability, candidates answers to the application questions, and mitigating circumstances. Mentees indicated their chosen area of interest on their applications and were paired with mentors practicing in that field of practice. We had a total of 75 mentoring pairs. Participants were asked to sign mentoring agreements which set out the standards required of mentees and mentors.

The mentoring relationships were for six months commencing in October 2020. However, next year we propose to extend this to a 1-year period to ensure mentees have support during the exam period and leading up to the commencement of their next academic year/Bar course or pupillage training.

Mentors and mentees were required to complete a Personal Development Plan (PDP) throughout the scheme. PDP's provided structure for mentoring meetings, enabling mentees to set goals and targets to work towards and provide a basis to monitor personal development. This helped to focus and progress mentoring relationships.

We have had a host of events over the course of the year such as a Scholarship Advice event, a pupillage advice event (link to footage here), a session with Miles and Partners Solicitors to learn about the role and relationship between barristers and solicitors, a collaborative event with the Renaissance Foundation in which BTB Champion, Professor Leslie Thomas QC spoke about Civil Liberties and Human Rights on the 15 July 2021. The extremely generous Bridging the Bar Champion, Professor Jo Delahunty QC, provided 10 tickets for BTB mentees and candidates to attend the Bloomsbury Children Law half day online conference on 23 June 2021.

We thought it was imperative to give mentors the opportunity to speak publicly in order to develop their advocacy skills and share their story to inspire others from underrepresented backgrounds. Consequently, mentee Sephlin Sam spoke at the Family Law Bar Association launch event on 30th March 2021. Furthermore, we had mentees Afiya Amesu, Adenike Onasanya and Sephlin Sam speak about their own journeys to pursuing a career at the Bar and about their experience of the BTB mentoring programme at the BTB Middle Temple qualifying session, 'What does a barrister look like?' on 27 May 2021 (link to footage here).

Mentee's testimonials were featured in BTB's social media campaign pioneered by former BTB Media Officer, Peter Jacobs and have featured in a range of articles including FLBA's Family Affairs publication found here. Counsel magazine will soon publish an insightful article regarding mentor, Laurence Cooper future pupil barrister at 3 Dr Johnson's Buildings and mentee, Jake Acock. To hear directly about a dynamic mentoring relationship and what is required of both a mentor and mentee please see the footage of a brief interview with mentee Tracey Bossman and mentor, Lara Izzard-Hobbs here.

Following completion of our survey by BTB mentors and mentees at the conclusion of the programme we were able to ascertain the following statistics. 91.7 % stated their mentoring experience was excellent! A large proportion of our mentees had never applied for pupillage before and many were successful in securing interviews on their first pupillage application cycle. Mentors' assistance in critiquing applications, undertaking mock interviews and highlighting key legal cases and principles for mentee to consider was instrumental in their success. We are delighted that so many of our mentees made significant improvements throughout the year and would like to congratulate all of those that were awarded scholarships and pupillages.

> It has truly been a privilege and pleasure being part of BTB! We have been immensely impressed by the quality of candidates, inspired by mentees personal journeys and touched by the generosity and dedication of the Bar to help enhance diversity and inclusion within the legal profession. The BTB committee is a family and support one another in everything. We are excited to see what next year holds for us!
>
> - **Emma Hughes**, Head of Mentoring

MENTEE TESTIMONIALS

“

AFIYA AMESU
MENTEE

The mentoring programme has been insightful and invaluable. I has enabled me to dig deeper, learn more about my 'why' and receive incredibly useful feedback for my pupillage applications.

SAFIA YOUSAF
MENTEE

My mentor has been stellar. She has consistently supported, guided and advised me through my scholarship, pupillage and work experience applications. I am so grateful for her.

ADENIKE ONASANYA
MENTEE

The BTB scheme has been enriching. I have enjoyed building a strong relationship with my mentor who has provided me with invaluable guidance. I look forward to continuing with the scheme.

KATIE GOODMAN
MENTEE

My mentor was invaluable in pushing me to achieve and keeping me accountable. With her encouragement, I went from feeling like an imposter to recognising myself as a serious candidate.

TAN KIAN LEONG
MENTEE

The BTB mentoring programme offers an invaluable experience. Having a mentor to help me refine my goals and push me to keep challenging myself has been truly enabling for me.

AGNIESZKA WLAZLO
MENTEE

Being able to receive feedback from barristers is an invaluable opportunity I cherish from BTB; an amazing an insightful programme which opened my mind to life at the Bar.

JAMES SMITH
MENTEE

BTB's scheme was instrumental in helping me achieve a Bar course scholarship. My mentor could not have been kinder. He was so generous with his time and his insight.

MARSHALLING PROGRAMME

In May 2021, BTB formed an historic partnership with the UK Supreme Court ("UKSC") to introduce the first work experience scheme at the UKSC for aspiring lawyers from underrepresented backgrounds. The paid internship scheme is led by BTB's Head of Marshalling, Eleanor Tack. BTB initially had a meeting with the late Lord Kerr in September 2019 to discuss the possibility of an internship programme at the UKSC. Following a second and third round of discussions in October 2019 and February 2020 with Vicky Fox, CEO of the UKSC, the highest court in the land agreed that successful candidates to the scheme will receive pre-training with a life coach which focuses on building their confidence and tackling imposter syndrome. This will ensure they are in the best state of mind before gaining an unprecedented insight into the workings of the UKSC.

The UKSC programme will offer eight BTB candidates the chance to take part in a five-day placement at the UKSC. It will be a challenging, intellectually stimulating and rewarding week. By December 2021, the eight successful BTB candidates will have completed the pre-training, five-day placement and evaluation day. In January 2022, BTB intend to begin discussions with additional courts in order to provide further opportunities for our candidates to gain valuable work experience within the judiciary.

Any enquiries about collaborating with BTB to provide candidates with marshalling opportunities are welcomed by Eleanor Tack, Head of Marshalling, at marshalling@bridgingthebar.org.

"I am so proud of Bridging the Bar: the opportunities we have sought for our candidates; the aspiring barristers we have seen flourish; and the inclusive community we have created for everyone and anyone interested in the Bar."
- **Eleanor Tack**, Head of Marshalling

"We made a pitch and we made history."
- **Mass Ndow-Njie**, Founder and Chairman.

ALTERNATIVE WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME

The purpose of BTB's Alternative Work Experience Programmes are to provide legal work experience opportunities for BTB candidates, similar to our flagship Mini-Pupillage Programme.

BTB seek to facilitate alternative experiences through work placements at statutory/public bodies, NGOs and private firms (particularly those with existing advocacy practices).

BTB's vision is to provide aspiring barristers with the opportunities to enhance their CV and develop a well-rounded profile in relation to legal work experience. Through our Alternative Work Experience Programmes, we seek to provide candidates with the opportunity to experience a range of areas of work within the scope of a career in the law. This will allow candidates to understand the variety of work available to them and assist in cementing their understanding of areas of law in which they have a particular interest. Through BTB's work placements, we are seeking to support candidates who are looking for ways to expand their CV, to learn, to network and to develop their skill set.

Led by BTB's Head of Alternative Work Experience, Abdul Qadim, BTB have arranged productive talks with the Law Commission and the Government Legal Department ('GLD"). BTB partnered with the GLD on the GLD Summer Diversity Scheme 2021 where we provided 40 BTB candidates with the opportunity to take part in the Scheme. BTB has also collaborated with the Law Commission to provide a paid internship programme which will see four BTB candidates given the opportunity to work on law reform projects at the highest level.

The successful candidates will work alongside lawyers and research assistants at the Law Commission. They will complete practical tasks including conducting legal research, drafting documents and supporting assistant researchers on their day-to-day work. Candidates will be exposed to a wide breadth of work and the aim of the experience is to provide BTB candidates with an opportunity to engage in interesting legal work, ask questions and gain unique experiences that will bolster their CV's and support their future career ambitions.

BTB aim to help candidates to make informed decisions regarding the area(s) of law in which they wish to practice, the type of barrister they are seeking to become (employed or self-employed) and/or the type of organisation within which they would like to work.

Over the next 12 months, BTB will be seeking to establish strong relationships with a number of organisations in various sectors to create further opportunities that might benefit our candidates. We will be negotiating with legal organisations to create opportunities for BTB candidates and we will be facilitating work placements as we seek to reach our target of 50 paid placements by December 2022.

For any organisation wishing to provide work placement opportunities for BTB candidates, expressions of interest are welcomed by Abdul Qadim, Head of Alternative Work Experience at workexperience@bridgingthebar.org.

ONLINE SUMMER SCHOOL

Led by BTB's Executive Strategy Officer, Ishan Kolhatkar, BTB held its inaugural summer school in July 2021 to help aspiring barristers improve their chances of obtaining pupillage. The online summer school ran over the course of one day beginning with a session on the process of how to become a barrister, including information about the academic, vocational and pupillage stages of training. Aspiring barristers then had opportunity to ask questions about the pupillage application process and received top tips about the application and interview process from specialist barristers across a range of practice area(s) including crime, family, employment, personal injury, commercial and public law.

In the summer of 2022, BTB aims to run an in-person summer school to help aspiring barristers develop the key skills to help with their pupillage applications, including interview techniques, advocacy practice and the opportunity to network with BTB's expert volunteer barristers.

> BTB ran their first online summer school in July 2021. With over 100 students and almost 20 members of the bar participating it was a resounding success, helping the future of the bar hone their applications and improve their interview technique.
>
> - **Ishan Kolhatkar**, Executive Strategy Officer

SUMMER SCHOOL FEEDBACK

JADEN WHITEHILL
ATTENDEE

Thrilled to have spent the day 'with' BTB and all of the excellent panelists. Gained some great tips for the next cycle of pupillage applications - thank you all!

MAYA T.
ATTENDEE

It has been such a great opportunity to take part in BTB's online summer school focusing on obtaining a pupillage and a career at the Bar. The first part of the session included an overview on how to become a barrister. This was incredibly insightful and some key takeaways for me was that it is important not to just have legal experience but to also express your life experience and commercial awareness. The second part of the talk was an eye-opening discussion about how to write a persuasive application for the Bar.

KATIE BACON
ATTENDEE

I had an amazing day at the BTB summer school, expertly chaired by Ishan Kolhatkar. A huge thank you to every panellist who gave up their time to share such practical advice, it really does make a huge difference.

ONE YEAR IN FIGURES

1850+ **MEMBERS**
REGISTERED AS BTB CANDIDATES

380 **MEMBERS OF THE BAR**
SIGNED UP AS VOLUNTEERS

75+ **APPLICANTS PAIRED WITH A MENTOR**
ON BTB'S PILOT MENTORING SCHEME

19 SPONSORSHIP PARTNERS
SUPPORTING BTB

450 MINI PUPILLAGE APPLICATIONS
FOR BTB'S PILOT MINI PUPILLAGE SCHEME

67 PARTNER CHAMBERS
OFFERING MINI PUPILLAGES TO BTB CANDIDATES

130+ STUDENTS PAIRED WITH CHAMBERS
FOR A MINI-PUPILLAGE

CONCLUSION

We would like to express our gratitude to everyone who has supported Bridging The Bar since its launch. BTB's achievements to date have only been possible due to the generosity of our sponsors and expert volunteers. From mentors to application markers and ambassadors of the charity - you have all been integral in allowing BTB to pursue its objectives. Thank you.

As BTB continues to grow, we will be continually working to achieve our mission increasing diversity at the Bar. We will be working together to improve our application processes and marking criteria to ensure all of our activities are aligned to achieving one or more of our objectives.

For students who would like to sign up as a BTB candidate to be eligible to apply for our schemes and programmes, you can do so via our website at www.bridgingthebar.org. Once you have signed up, you will be automatically added to BTB's mailing list. You will then be notified when BTB schemes and opportunities open and how you can apply.

If you would like to support us, or if you have any further questions about how best to develop your relationship with BTB and support our objectives, please contact us at **info@bridgingthebar.org**. Whether you're a self-employed barrister, chambers or an organisation which employs barristers, we know that many of you have been looking for an appropriate way to support the future of the Bar by promoting equality of opportunity and reaching out to underrepresented groups to harness and promote their talent. By working with you, we believe that together we can accelerate the positive changes that are starting to materialise in our profession and secure the full potential of a diverse Bar that serves all of society. All of us at BTB look forward to working with you, and we welcome the time, resources and ideas that you are able to bring to this project.

GET IN TOUCH

TO FIND OUT MORE
WWW.BRIDGINGTHEBAR.ORG

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
INFO@BRIDGINGTHEBAR.ORG

FOR GROUP, PRESS AND MEDIA ENQUIRIES
PRESS@BRIDGINGTHEBAR.ORG

@BridgeTheBar

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A bar that represents also benefits society.

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2020/21

A bar that represents also benefits society.

REPORTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FIRST PERIOD ENDED 1ST APRIL 2021

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

CHARITY REGISTRATION No: 1190369

Castle View Accounting Ltd
New Barn
Mudberry Lane
Bosham
Chichester
West Sussex
PO18 8TS

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

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BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

CHARITY NUMBER	1190369
DATE OF REGISTRATION	13th July 2020
START OF FINANCIAL PERIOD	13th July 2020
END OF FINANCIAL PERIOD	1st April 2021
TRUSTEES AT 1ST APRIL 2021	Aaron Mayers Mass Ndow-Njie
LEGAL STATUS	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
GOVERNING INSTRUMENT	CIO - Foundation Registered 13th July 2020

OBJECTS

The promotion of equality and diversity and the promotion of social inclusion amongst those who socially excluded due to being members of socially and economically deprived community, at The Bar of England and Wales by: a) The elimination of discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religion. b) Advancing education and raising awareness in equality and diversity. c) Promotion activities to foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds. d) Cultivating a sentiment in favour of equality and diversity.

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS	218 Strand London WC2R 1AT
PRIMARY BANKERS	Cashplus Bank 6th Floor One London Wall London EC2Y 5EB
INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS	Castle View Accounting Ltd New Barn Mudberry Lane Bosham Chichester West Sussex PO18 8TS

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE FIRST PERIOD ENDED 1ST APRIL 2021

Trustees' Responsibilities

The Charities Act 2011 requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the CIO and of the surplus of the CIO for that period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- Prepare financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the trust will continue in existence.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the CIO. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the CIO and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Trustees on ..... 6 February 2022 .....

Signed on their behalf by Trustee ..... A.Mayers .....

Printed Name: Aaron Mayers

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE FIRST PERIOD ENDED 1ST APRIL 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2020/21 £
INCOMING RESOURCES				
Incoming Resources from Generated Funds				
Donations, Grants & Legacies	**3a**	65,874	-	65,874
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		**65,874**	**-**	**65,874**
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
Costs of Generating Funds				
Cost of Charitable Activities	**4a**	3,455	-	3,455
Governance Costs	**4b**	790	-	790
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		**4,245**	**-**	**4,245**
NET INCOMING (OUTGOING) RESOURCES		**61,629**	**-**	**61,629**
Funds Brought Forward		-	-	-
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		**61,629**	**-**	**61,629**

Movements on all reserves and all recognised gains and losses are shown above. All of the organisation's operations are classed as continuing.

The notes on pages 45 to 49 form part of these financial statements.

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 1ST APRIL 2021

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total 01-Apr-21 £**
Fixed Assets				
Tangible Assets	**2**	-	-	-
Investments	**6**	-	-	-
Total Fixed Assets		-	-	-
Current Assets				
Debtors & Prepayments	**8**	5,000	-	5,000
Cash at Bank and in Hand	**7**	57,379	-	57,379
Total Current Assets		**62,379**	-	**62,379**
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	**9**	750	-	750
NET CURRENT ASSETS		61,629	-	61,629
TOTAL ASSETS less current liabilities		**61,629**	-	**61,629**
Creditors: Amounts falling due in more than one year	**10**	-	-	-
NET ASSETS		**61,629**	-	**61,629**
Funds of the Charity				
General Funds		61,629	-	61,629
Restricted Funds	**5**	-	-	-
Total Funds		**61,629**	-	**61,629**

Approved by the Trustees on ..... 6 February 2022

Signed on their behalf by Trustee ..... A.Mayers

Printed Name: Aaron Mayers

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE FIRST PERIOD ENDED 1ST APRIL 2021

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Preparation & Assessment of Going Concern

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant notes. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP - FRS102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Assessment of Going Concern

Preparation of the accounts is on a going concern basis. The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Incoming Resources

Recognition of Incoming Resources

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- the trustees are virtually certain they will receive the resources; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability

Incoming Resources with Related Expenditure

Where incoming resources have related expenditure (as with fundraising or contract income) the incoming resource and related expenditure are reported gross in the SOFA.

Grants and Donations

Grants and Donations are only included in the SOFA when the charity has unconditional entitlement to the resources.

Tax Reclaims on Donations and Gifts

Incoming resources from tax reclaims are included in the SOFA at the same time as the gift to which they relate.

Contractual Income and Performance Related Grants

This is only included in the SOFA once the related goods or services have been delivered.

Gifts in Kind

Gifts in kind are accounted for at a reasonable estimate of their value to the charity or the amount actually realised. Gifts in kind for sale or distribution are included in the accounts as gifts only when sold or distributed by the charity. Gifts in kind for use by the charity are included in the SOFA as incoming resources when receivable.

Donated Services and Facilities

These are only included in incoming resources (with an equivalent amount in resources expended) where the benefit to the charity is reasonably quantifiable, measurable and material. The value placed on these resources is the estimated value to the charity of the service or facility received.

Volunteer Help

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts.

Investment Income

This is included in the accounts when receivable.

Investment Gains and Losses

This included any gain or loss on the sale of investments and any gain or loss resulting from revaluing investments to market value at the end of the year.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Expenditure and Liabilities

Liability Recognition
Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

Governance Costs
Include costs of the preparation and examination of statutory accounts, the costs of the trustees meetings and cost of any legal advice to trustees on governance or constitutional matters.

Grants with Performance Conditions
Where the charity gives a grant with conditions for its payment being a specific level of service or output to be provided, such grants are only recognised in the SOFA once the recipient of the grant has provided the specified service or output.

Grants Payable without Performance Conditions
These are only recognised in the accounts when a commitment has been made and there are no conditions to be met relating to a grant which remain in control of the charity.

Investments
Investments quoted on a recognised stock exchange are valued at market value at the year end. Other investment assets are included at trustees' best estimate of market value.

Unrestricted funds
These funds can be used for the general objectives of the charity as set out in the trustees report. The movements of the unrestricted funds are given in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Restricted funds
These funds are where the donor has specified a purpose for the donation made. These restrictions often arise as a result of appeals for special offerings for specific purposes.

Designated funds
These funds are funds set aside by the trustees out of unrestricted general funds for particular purposes or projects.

Fixed Assets
Fixed Assets are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year and cost at least £1,500. They are valued at cost or, if gifted, at the value to the charity on receipt.

Depreciation Expense
Depreciation is calculated at a rate to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets over their estimated useful lives. The rates applied are as follows:

Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment	25% - Straight Line Basis

2. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

The CIO held no fixed assets during this initial financial period.

The annual commitments under non-cancelling operating leases and capital commitments are as follows:

1st April 2021:None

3. INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**TOTAL 2020/21 £**
a) Donations, Grants & Legacies			
Gifts & Donations	65,874	-	65,874
	65,874	**-**	**65,874**

4. RESOURCES EXPENDED

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**TOTAL 2020/21 £**
a) Cost of Charitable Activities			
Advertising & Publicity	457	-	457
Bank Charges	69	-	69
Books & Publications	174	-	174
Gifts & Donations	100	-	100
Licenses & Subscriptions	123	-	123
Office Costs	787	-	787
Software Costs	788	-	788
Website Costs	956	-	956
	3,455	**-**	**3,455**

b) Governance Costs				
Independent Examiners Fees	**9**	750	-	750
Legal & Professional Fees		40	-	40
		790	**-**	**790**

5. RESTRICTED FUNDS

The CIO held no restricted funds during this initial financial period.

6. INVESTMENTS

The CIO held no fixed assets investments during this initial financial period.

7. CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	**Total 01-Apr-21 £**
Cash at Bank & in Hand	57,379	-	57,379
	57,379	**-**	**57,379**

8. DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	**Total 01-Apr-21 £**
Sundry Debtors	5,000	-	5,000
	5,000	**-**	**5,000**

9. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	**Total 01-Apr-21 £**
Independent Examiners Fees	750	-	750
	750	**-**	**750**

10. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE IN MORE THAN ONE YEAR

The CIO held no long term liabilities during this initial financial period.

11. STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS

The CIO employed no members of staff during this initial financial period.

12. TRUSTEES AND OTHER RELATED PARTIES

No payments were made to trustees or any persons connected with them during this financial period. No material transaction took place between the organisation and a trustee or any person connected with them.

13. RISK ASSESSMENT

The Trustees actively review the major risks which the charity faces on a regular basis and believe that maintaining the free reserves stated, combined with the annual review of the controls over key financial systems carried out on an annual basis will provide sufficient resources in the event of adverse conditions. The Trustees have also examined other operational and business risks which they face and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate the significant risks.

14. RESERVES POLICY

The Trustees have considered the level of reserves they wish to retain, appropriate to the CIO's needs. This is based on the CIO's size and the level of financial commitments held. The Trustees aim to ensure the CIO will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in income or unexpected expenditure. The Trustees will endeavour not to set aside funds unnecessarily.

15. PUBLIC BENEFIT

The CIO acknowledges its requirement to demonstrate clearly that it must have charitable purposes or ‘aims’ that are for the public benefit. Details of how the CIO has achieved this are provided in the Trustees report. The Trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit before deciding what activities the CIO should undertake.

16. COMPARATIVE FIGURES

There are no comparative figures available as this is the initial period of registered Incorporated Charitable Activity.

BRIDGING THE BAR

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS

Report to the trustees/ members of Bridging the Bar on the accounts for the first period ended 1st April 2021 set out on pages 43 to 49.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect, the requirements:
   - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
   - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act

   have not been met; or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

W.M Hall LLB
Castle View Accounting Ltd
New Barn
Mudberry Lane
Bosham
Chichester
West Sussex
PO18 8TS

Date: 7th February 2022