

# Pupillage Selection Policy

*Approved by EC on 1 December 2025.*

## **Advertisement**

1. Five Paper is a member of the Pupillage Gateway (**the “Gateway”**). Advertisements for pupillage will be placed on the Gateway and accessible according to the Gateway’s timetable. Details of pupillage vacancies may also be posted on social media, sent to institutions delivering the bar course, and to university law faculties. We will also endeavour to hold either one or two pupillage open evenings in the months leading up to the application window, where prospective applicants can meet members face to face and raise any questions they may have.

## **General Guidance**

2. Five Paper looks for applicants who seek a non-practising and a practising pupillage. Pupillages will be offered for 12 months, save where the pupil has been granted an exemption by the Bar Council and may therefore undertake a shorter period of non-practising and practising pupillage. Any candidate seeking a pupillage other than a 12 month pupillage is advised to email [pupillage@fivepaper.com](mailto:pupillage@fivepaper.com) in advance of making an application.
3. Applicants are generally expected to have, as a minimum, a 2:1 in their undergraduate degree, unless the applicant has extenuating circumstances.
4. An applicant seeking pupillage in an area of law which does not constitute a significant proportion of the work done by members of Five Paper is very likely to be rejected.

## **The Selection Process**

5. Five Paper recruits through the Gateway.
6. Following receipt of applications, Five Paper will endeavour to adhere to the following timetable:
  - a. February – March: internal marking of applications;
  - b. March: first round interviews;
  - c. April: second round interviews;
  - d. May: offers made.

7. This timetable may change if the Gateway timetable changes and/or to accommodate unforeseen events.
8. Two rounds of interviews will take place. The first-round interview will last approximately 15 to 30 minutes. We aim to interview around 40 candidates. All candidates will be asked the same questions, which will be directed at your experience, your motivations, and your suitability for a career at the Bar. Candidates are likely to be given an advocacy question, which will involve a short presentation on a subject that will be conveyed to the candidate during the interview. The interview panel will consist of at least three members of Five Paper. The panel will not have seen your application form in advance of the interview.
9. Successful applicants will be notified in writing of an invitation to the second round of interviews within 14 days of the completion of the first round of interviews. The second-round interview is structured around a legal problem, which will be made available to applicants half an hour before the interview commences. Applicants will be expected to familiarise themselves with the problem, then present their position to the panel. Candidates should expect the panel to ask questions of the Applicant and challenge their position. The interview panel will consist of at least three members of Five Paper.
10. Interview panels will be drawn, so far as practicable, from as wide a cross-section of Five Paper (by reference to all protected characteristics) as possible. This will not always be achievable, given the unpredictability of members' practices.
11. Successful applicants will be notified of an offer of pupillage orally and in writing in line with the Pupillage Gateway timetable.
12. During the paper sift and in each interview round, Applicants will be assessed in accordance with our Selection Criteria. Applicants are advised that the assessment is objective, and evidence-based. Applicants are therefore advised to use examples to demonstrate their satisfaction of the Assessment Criteria at each round.
13. Five Paper's Selection Criteria are:
  - a. Intellectual achievement
  - b. Oral advocacy
  - c. Interpersonal skills
  - d. Written advocacy
  - e. Commitment to the Bar
  - f. Commitment to Five Paper
  - g. Analytical ability
  - h. Ability to work independently

- i. Resolve under pressure

### **Contextual Recruitment**

14. Chambers utilises the CRS / Rare recruitment system (“**Rare**”) on the Gateway. Information as to what this system entails can be found on the Gateway and on the Bar Council website at (<https://www.barcouncil.org.uk/bar-council-services/for-chambers-and-aetos/pupillage-gateway/contextual-recruitment.html>).

15. Five Paper deploys Rare in its selection process as follows:

- a. After the paper sift, the top bracket of candidates (approximately the top 30 candidates, though this depends on where marks fall in a given year) will automatically be invited to first round interview;
- b. Those in the middle bracket (i.e. those who are on the boundary between being invited to interview and not being invited. Approximately the 30<sup>th</sup> to 50<sup>th</sup> candidates) will have Rare applied to their scores. Candidates will be given additional point(s) for each ‘flag’ generated by Rare. Scores will then be counted again, with these additional points included, and the top candidates will be invited to interview;
- c. We do not apply Rare to candidates’ scores after the first round of interviews. The top candidates will be invited to second round interview;
- d. After second round interviews, we add together candidates’ scores from the paper sift, the first round and the second round interviews. If any candidates have not already had Rare applied to their scores, it will be applied to their scores at this stage using the same points system as above.

16. The only individuals that will be able to access candidates’ Rare data are the Pupillage Selection Coordinator (currently Joseph Mahon) and Chambers’ Operations Manager (currently Vicky Hanson). Candidates’ Rare data will not be available to the interview panels at any point.

17. Any questions as to Chambers’ use of Rare data should be directed in the first instance to [pupillage@fivepaper.com](mailto:pupillage@fivepaper.com).

### **Offers of Pupillage**

18. Five Paper will make offers of pupillage to the top two candidates. Candidates who are not offered a pupillage in the first instance but who meet our criteria will be reserved, and that will be communicated to them.

19. Any offer of pupillage is subject to:

- a. The candidate having the legal right to work in the United Kingdom before they commence pupillage. Five Paper is legally obliged pursuant to immigration legislation to see and take copies of relevant documentation (e.g. passport, birth certificate, residence permit etc.);
  - b. Five Paper receiving satisfactory references; and
  - c. The candidate verifying their academic qualifications. Five Paper must see and take copies of the original certificates for all relevant qualifications.
20. Five Paper will endeavour to provide written feedback to second round candidates, if the candidate requests. Feedback will not be provided to first round candidates.

### **Equality and Diversity**

21. The Chambers Equal Opportunities and Equality Code will be complied with throughout the selection process. Five Paper complies with the equality provisions of the Bar Standards Board Handbook and BSB Guidance, and has due regard for the Bar Council's Fair Recruitment Guide.
22. Pupils will be selected objectively and wholly on their overall merits, without distinction by any of the protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010, namely age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
23. Five Paper will make reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process pursuant to its duty under the Equality Act 2010. This includes reasonable adjustments at the interview stage. Five Paper asks that applicants inform us as soon as possible if they require a reasonable adjustment.
24. After an offer is made and/or accepted, Five Paper will consider an applicant's disability in order to carry out its duty to make reasonable adjustments to pupillage under the Equality Act 2010. Five Paper will work with the applicant to identify reasonable adjustments to enable applicants to undertake pupillage.
25. Five Paper's Equality and Diversity Officer will monitor the selection process as he or she considers appropriate, and may call for an explanation of any decision taken in that process. He or she may sit in on any interviews where he or she considers it necessary or desirable to do so.
26. All personal data which is supplied by an applicant is held in accordance with Five Paper's Privacy Policy (a copy of which is available on Five Paper's website). All personal data is

held confidentially, securely and in accordance with Five Paper's Pupillage Data Retention Policy.

27. Information about, and copies of, both the Privacy Policy and Data Retention Policy can be obtained by contacting either the Pupillage Selection Coordinator or the Chambers' Operations Manager.