

EMILY GAILEY

Year of graduation 2010

University Oxford

Degree Modern History

Current position and areas of

practice Junior Barrister:
Commercial disputes; insolvency;
company; trusts & estates



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Year of graduation 2018

University Oxford

Degree Jurisprudence

Current position and areas of practice

Junior Barrister: Landlord & tenant; real
estate; trusts & estates; commercial,
partnership & insolvency disputes.



Emily: Why Maitland?

I had a slightly unusual route to pupillage in that I qualified and practised as a solicitor before transitioning to the bar. During this time I was aware of Maitland's reputation at the commercial chancery bar, and I thought a pupillage at Maitland would be a chance to learn from practitioners who were operating at the top of their field and doing really interesting work. I was also reassured it was the right choice by meeting some of the junior tenants, all of whom seemed very friendly and welcoming. In the end, all of these things turned out to be true and I genuinely enjoyed (at least most of!) my pupillage.

Joe: the application process

Maitland is a member of the Pupillage Gateway, so applications are made through the Gateway website and follow its timetable. There are two rounds of interviews. For the first round, Chambers selects between 20 and 30 applicants. These interviews are typically conducted by three members of Chambers and consist of a range of general questions. Second round interviews are longer: these take place before around five members of Chambers, and focus on a case study.

While both rounds involve questions which raise legal issues, allowance is made for the fact that applicants will vary in experience (I applied while still an undergraduate) and may not have completed a law degree. Indeed, Chambers has a strong record of recruiting pupils and tenants who studied subjects other than law as undergraduates.

Joe: pupillage experience, and tenancy decision

Pupils are never in competition with each other for tenancy – in fact, all three pupils got taken on in my year. Rather, the emphasis in pupillage is on supporting and training each pupil to reach the high standard which Maitland expects of its members. To this end, Chambers does not normally consider tenancy until around July: no one expects you to be perfect on day one, and the aim is to give plenty of time for pupils to learn and develop before a decision is made.

The assessed stage of pupillage comprises four seats of 10 weeks each. Pupils sit with a different supervisor in each seat: that way you gain experience across the whole range of Chambers' specialisms. On a day-to-day basis, pupils undertake written work (drafting and research) for their supervisors. You get regular feedback to help you improve. The supervisors also

make sure that pupils are not swamped with work. As a rule, pupils are not expected to work late or at weekends: my typical working hours were 9.30am to 6.00pm.

From around February there is a string of formal advocacy exercises which take the form of mock hearings before a senior member of chambers. A couple of other members of chambers are present at all of the exercises to give constructive feedback and tips for improvement. I found this particularly helpful in making the transition from the academic study of law to practice.

Emily: support during pupillage

I was amazed by the effort which members of chambers put in across my pupillage to teach me how to improve as a barrister. All of my pupil supervisors, and indeed the advocacy assessors, were generous with their time and experience, and all were in addition very approachable and friendly. It was the opposite of the horror stories you hear about elsewhere at the bar – I absolutely felt I could ask questions and discuss any problems I had. Moreover, there are two pupil mentors, who take you out for coffee on an alternating basis, and you can confidentially ask them anything you might not want to share with your supervisors. There is also chambers tea every afternoon, and the junior tenants meet for drinks on a Thursday and pupils are very much invited. It's an informal and friendly way to get to know members of chambers.

Emily: life as a junior tenant

The junior tenants at Maitland generally have a broad commercial chancery practice, so really you should anticipate working on a wide range of different cases, with a focus on business and property. The nature of chambers' work means it is not one of those sets where you are in court every day as the junior tenant, but (at least in normal circumstances, prior to the disruption caused by Covid-19) I was in court once or twice a week and have been busy the rest of the time. A typical week might include last minute instructions for an urgent hearing; advising on, and drafting, a pleading or an opinion; and being 'led' as a junior to a silk on some much larger matter. The latter gives you a great opportunity to continue learning from the more experienced members of chambers all of whom, in my experience, have been very generous with their support and advice.