

Pre-Pupillage Handbook 2026/27

This handbook is intended for Bar Course students & Transferring Legal Professionals
as a guide to Qualifying Sessions & Pre-Pupillage support for members



Welcome!

This handbook is full of details to help you in your Pre-Pupillage stage at the Inner Temple. Please do refer to it in the first instance if you have questions about our programme.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us:

Email QS@innertemple.org.uk

Telephone [020 7438 2311](tel:02074382311)

Contents

	<u>Page no.</u>
Section 1: Qualifying Sessions	
Programme Eligibility Checker	3
Qualifying Sessions	4
- QS Requirements - How to book - Attending QS events - Dress Codes	
Student Advocacy Weekends	6
Learning Support & Development	7
Student Safety & Wellbeing	8
Professional Conduct	9
Section 2: Pre-Pupillage Support	
Student Financial Support	10
Student Support Schemes	11
Student Societies & Specialist Bar Associations & Services	12
Section 3: Further Information & Tools	
Call to the Bar	13
Student Checklist	14
Print & Keep: QS Record Tracker	15
Your Membership	16
Beyond the Requirements	17

Programme Eligibility Checker

Open to...

Event Type	Current Bar Course Student	Past Bar Course Student	TLPs*	Post-Call/ Pre-Pupillage
Qualifying Sessions (except Student Advocacy Weekends)	☒	☒	☒	
Student Advocacy Weekends	☒			
QS Grants	☒			
QS Travel Subsidy	☒			
Mock Interviews	☒	☒		☒
Marshalling	☒			☒
Mentoring	☒			
Lecture Series	☒	☒	☒	☒
Dinners & Receptions etc. (unless otherwise advertised)	☒	☒	☒	☒

*Transferring Legal Professionals

Qualifying Sessions

Qualifying Sessions, sometimes referred to as **QS**, are a part of the requirement for Call to the Bar.

The following information can be found on our website:

- [A full listing of the planned Qualifying Sessions for the 2026-2027 academic year](#)
- [Further information about the Qualifying Sessions rules and purpose of the programme](#)
- [Qualifying Session FAQs](#)

Qualifying Session Requirements

Before the date of your Call to the Bar ceremony, you must have completed a minimum of:

10 Qualifying Session points in total

1 in each of the 5 themes below

1. Ethics, Standards and Values;
2. Advocacy Skills;
3. Legal Knowledge, Justice and the Rule of Law;
4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion;
5. Preparation for Pupillage, Career Development and Wellbeing.

2 Advanced Preparation and Interactive

Any session in the above themes may also include an Advanced Preparation and Interactive element. This will be advertised at the point of booking and in our email.

This is a separate requirement to the above themes.

- Preparation sent by email a week in advance, unless advised otherwise.
- 1 hour total preparation, unless advised otherwise.
- Full participation in the session is expected. Non-participation may result in the QS point for the session not being awarded.

1 In Person session strongly recommended

Whilst we are aware that travel can be difficult to plan, the Inn strongly recommends that all students make an effort to attend at least one Qualifying Session in person, whether this be an Inn-based QS, a Circuit QS or a Residential Weekend.

How to Book

Inner Temple Qualifying Sessions are booked via our website:

www.innertemple.org.uk/events

**Please do not forget to log in to the Members' Area
to get access to the full QS programme!**

Booking for Qualifying Sessions opens before the start of each term. Student Members will be notified by email when they are available to book. Events are booked on a first come, first served basis.

Term	Event Dates	Email to Student Members
Michaelmas	September – December	1 st week of September
Hilary	January – March	2 nd week of December
Easter & Trinity	April – July	Last week of March

Cancellations should be made in accordance with our [Refunds and Cancellations policy](#).

Attending QS events

- Please read our [Attendance Guidelines and Rules](#) before your first Qualifying Session event.
- The Inn keeps attendance records for every QS event in their database.
- You should sign a registration sheet when attending events in person.
- Online events are checked via Zoom logs. Please ensure that you sign in using a name known to the Inn.
- Please note that regarding Online Qualifying Sessions, you are required to keep your camera on throughout every session (except at certain lectures, which will be run as webinars). You will be reminded of this ahead of each relevant online QS.
- Event attendance for every session is updated manually within a week of the event date.
- You can view your attendance record via the Members Area of the website. If you notice any discrepancies, please notify us by email.

Dress Codes

Most Qualifying Session events will have one of the two dress codes below.

Our guidance regarding the dress code is as follows:

Business Attire

Suits/tailored trousers with a collared, buttoned shirt & tie. Tailored dresses/skirts/similar.

Whilst it is not required, you may wish to know that most members choose to wear dark colour suits and clothing to professional events at the Bar.

Smart Casual

This isn't a strict dress code. We only ask you are mindful of the following:

- the Inn is a safe space for all attending
- the sessions are a professional commitment and a place to network with peers & senior members

Concerned about meeting the QS requirements?

Contact gs@innertemple.org.uk briefly stating the reasons for your concern. We will review your email and database record and advise you accordingly.

Student Advocacy Weekends

What are Student Advocacy Weekends?

The Inn runs three Student Advocacy Weekends a year on niche aspects of the law. These weekends are typically held residentially at venues across the UK, with locations accessible to both London and Circuit Students.

The dates and locations for this year's residential weekends are scheduled as below.

- CIM Business Centre, Moor Hall 4-6 December 2026
- Crewe Hall 5- 7 February 2027
- Inner Temple 7-9 May 2027
(NB the Inner Temple weekend is also residential and we will expect students to stay in a hotel we book for them, as the weekends include dinners and networking in the evenings)

The topics for the weekends will be published with the ballot information in October.

Further Information

These weekends are intended to be free ranging and stimulating and to provoke discussion both in formal sessions and less formal settings. Students will be joined by experts in the area under discussion and senior members of the judiciary and Bar. The [Chatham House Rule](#) applies. In addition to talks and discussion sessions, you will take part in practical advocacy sessions. Each weekend costs £86.70 and counts as 4 Qualifying Sessions. The Qualifying Session framework themes covered will be advertised nearer the time.

How to Book

You cannot book these sessions directly via the website. Places are limited and will be allocated by a lottery system once a year. An email will be sent to student members for the current year on Friday 9 October with a link to the online application form. The application will close at 1pm on Monday 19 October. Anyone enquiring about the weekends after this date will be added to the waiting list.

Please note, submitting an application form will not guarantee a place on a weekend. Initially places are allocated by lottery system. After the initial places have been allocated, waiting lists will operate on a first come, first served basis. You will be informed if you have been allocated a place in the week after the deadline.

Learning Support & Development

The Inner Temple is committed to creating a safe and inclusive culture and has robust policies and procedures in place to support this commitment.

Reasonable Adjustments

The Inner Temple is committed to making reasonable adjustments to ensure its activities are accessible and inclusive, and to providing support and fair opportunity to all.

Many of our sessions and schemes will already include commonly used accessibility tools or address accessibility concerns in developing the framework. We are aware this will not always cover all concerns.

We encourage any members with concerns regarding reasonable adjustments to submit a Reasonable Adjustment request via our website.

[Click here for our Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Application](#)

Feedback

After every student event you attend and scheme you participate in you will be sent a feedback form from the Inn. Most feedback forms will only take a minute or two to complete and we would like to take this opportunity to strongly encourage you to let us know what you think of our programme every step of the way.

All feedback provided via these forms is anonymous and every single piece of feedback is read and taken into consideration when shaping future sessions and programmes.

Student Safety and Wellbeing

The Inn is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment in which all students can learn, develop and participate fully in our activities and events. We recognise that students may experience personal and professional challenges during their studies and we are here to support you.

We have policies and procedures in place to safeguard students, prevent and respond to bullying and harassment, and support equality, diversity and inclusion. All students will have the opportunity to access a mentor and we will also make reasonable adjustments where appropriate. Student safety is also an important consideration in the way our activities are organised and delivered, including the marshalling, mentoring and mock interviewing processes.

Wellbeing Support and Qualifying Sessions

Wellbeing is an important part of your development as a future barrister. The Inn offers Qualifying Sessions that explore wellbeing, resilience and other aspects of maintaining a healthy and sustainable professional life. These sessions provide opportunities to develop practical skills, hear from experienced practitioners and discuss issues that may affect you during your studies, pupillage and future career.

We encourage you to make use of these sessions and other support available through the Inn. You do not need to be experiencing difficulties to benefit from wellbeing support.

Whilst you are studying on the bar course we encourage you to also seek support from Wellbeing Services through your provider as they are well resourced to support you. If you have completed the bar course but not yet commenced pupillage, the Inn can provide a suite of wellbeing resources and individual support through our Pre-Pupillage Wellbeing Assistance Programme

(<https://www.innertemple.org.uk/membership-services-support/wellbeing/pre-pupillage-wellbeing-assistance-programme/>).

In addition the Bar Council also provides additional resources and guidance

<https://www.wellbeingatthebar.org.uk/help-for-students/>

Raising concerns

If you have a concern about your own safety or wellbeing, or that of another student at the Inn, you are encouraged to speak to a member of the Education and Training team or another appropriate member of staff, including the [Inn's Designated Complaint Handlers](#). All of our Education and Training staff have completed physical and mental health first aid training.

Concerns can be raised **confidentially or anonymously**. Where you provide your details, we will handle your concern sensitively and share information only where necessary and appropriate. If you choose to remain anonymous, the information you give will still help us identify and respond to potential risks or patterns of concern, although we may be more limited in terms of taking action. Often, we will also signpost you to wellbeing support which is provided as a core service by your bar course provider.

You do not need to wait until a situation becomes serious before seeking support. **If something is affecting your ability to feel safe, well or able to participate at the Inn, please ask for help.**

Further information is available in our Complaints policy <https://www.innertemple.org.uk/who-we-are/how-we-operate/policy-statements/complaints/>

Professional Conduct

The Inn works hard to ensure that all its members are reasonably catered for and treated fairly and professionally at all times.

As Student Members of the Inn, you must read the following policies on our website:

- [Volunteer and Participant Code](#)
- [Qualifying Sessions Attendance Guidelines and Rules](#)

We also recommend that you take some time to familiarise yourself with the following policies:

- [Refunds and Cancellations Policy](#)
- [EDI policy](#)

Student Financial Support

QS Grant Scheme

The Inn heavily subsidises the cost of its educational provision to ensure sessions are accessible and affordable. However, we understand that many students will find themselves under financial pressure and unexpected financial hardship may make it difficult to acquire the correct number of Qualifying Sessions.

To this end, the Inn will provide a flat rate of £100 as a contribution towards QS costs for students who meet the requirements (NB this does not include the fees for residential advocacy weekends, as these have their own bursary scheme which is opened to students if and when they are allocated a place on a weekend.)

Qualifying Session Travel Subsidies

There is also a Travel Subsidy available for students studying the Bar Course at an out of London provider. This subsidy is intended to help with the cost of attending in person Qualifying Session and Student Society events in London.

Please note applications should be submitted after your bookings for Qualifying Session events are made.

- Please note that any award granted further to application will be paid in one go once approved.
- The responsibility remains on the student to ensure they are circumspect in booking and attending Qualifying Sessions.
- Additional funds will not be allocated. If you book and cancel sessions at short notice or fail to attend sessions you have booked, the Inn will not provide more money to cover the shortfall in QS points.
- Transferring Legal Professionals are not eligible for this scheme.

[Details on how to apply for Qualifying Sessions Financial Assistance detailed above can be found here.](#)

Student Society Travel Subsidies

The Student Society Travel Subsidy Scheme is intended to assist students studying the Bar Course outside of London/the South Eastern Circuit with travel costs to events hosted by Inner Temple Student Societies in-person at the Inn.

[Please email us for information on how to access Student Societies Events Financial Assistance.](#)

Marshall Hall Trust

Please note that additional financial assistance can be sought, if necessary, via the Marshall Hall Trust. The object of the Trust is to give assistance by way of loan or grant to members of the Inner Temple who are in need. The Trust is intended to cover costs for members who, through no fault of their own, e.g. loss of a parent or financial support being withdrawn, would not otherwise be able to complete the course or their pupillage.

Further information can be found via the Inner Temple Website:

<https://www.innertemple.org.uk/membership-services-support/financial-support-members/marshall-hall/>

Student Support Schemes

Marshalling Scheme

The Marshalling Scheme affords student members of the Inn the opportunity to spend up to a week sitting with a judge in England or Wales. We are pleased to announce that applications for the Inner Temples 2027 Marshalling Scheme will open on Tuesday 1 September 2026!

Mentoring Scheme

The Inner Temple Mentoring Programme brings together experienced barristers and student members to support learning, career development and professional growth. For you, as students, mentoring provides valuable insight into the profession, helping you build confidence, develop skills, expand your networks, prepare for pupillage and make informed decisions about your careers.

You must be studying the Bar Course to qualify for the mentoring scheme. More information about the scheme, and how to apply, will be provided in September 2026.

Mock Interview Scheme

The Mock Interview Scheme aims to help students build up confidence in preparation for imminent pupillage interviews. Members are given the opportunity to practise their interview technique in front of an established barrister.

In the first instance, if you have been allocated a mentor, you should arrange a mock interview either with or via them. If this is not possible, the Education & Training team will aim to match you with a volunteer.

Interviews can be conducted online or in person. Interviewers and interviewees should consult together when deciding upon an appropriate interview format.

The scheme is open to Student Members who have a pupillage interview scheduled.

[Further information on all Student Support Schemes and how to apply can be found on our website](#)

Student Societies

Inner Temple Student Societies are run by students with assistance from the Inn.

The five Societies are:-

- Debating Society
- Drama Society
- ITSA (Inner Temple Students' Association)
- Mooting Society
- Racial Equality Society

You will have the opportunity to speak with representatives from each of these societies at the Introductory Events in September.

It is free to become a member of each society, however, it is important that you opt-in to membership of the societies you wish to take part in so that the society can send you dedicated information about their events and opportunities. Further information about this and contact details for each society can be found on [the Student Society pages of our website](#).

To ensure you receive information from the societies you would like to engage with, please complete the [student society membership form](#).

Specialist Bar Associations & Services

There are 24 Specialist Bar Associations (SBAs). These associations are dedicated to the interests of groups of barristers within specific practice areas and geographical regions.

The Bar is also split into geographical Circuits. Each Circuit has its own events and networks available to its members. These are generally on offer to practising members of the Bar, but some Circuits have student offerings available and if you have a good idea of which circuit you may be working on, it's worth looking at their websites.

Finally, there are many associations, networks and other groups that aim to bring together sub sections of the Bar and provide support. Some of these organisations will be represented at the Inn's Introductory Evenings.

For more information on SBAs, visit the [Bar Council Website to find a directory](#).

Call to the Bar

When can I apply for Call?

As a student studying this academic year

Applications for Call to the Bar open each year in mid-April.

An email will be sent to all student members when the new application form is published to the website. Applications should not be made before this date.

As a Transferring Legal Professional or student from previous academic years

Applications work in a yearly cycle. Please consider which cycle you would like to be Called within before starting your Call application. (Further details on this cycle can be found below).

Further information

There are a minimum of 4 Call ceremonies held each yearly cycle.

Applications for each cycle open in April covering ceremonies over the following 12 months.

Ceremony Name	Ceremony Month	Ceremony Venue
Trinity	July	Temple Church
Deferred Trinity	October	Temple Church
Michaelmas	November	Temple Church
Hilary	March	Treasury Building

- If required, you may defer your Call to a later Call cycle. Please contact us for more information on this process.
- All ceremonies are followed by a celebratory reception for you and your guests.
- To be eligible to be called to the Bar each student member must meet the following pre-Call requirements:
 - Be certified as having successfully completed the Bar course or Bar Transfer Test (for Transferring Legal Professionals only);
 - Obtained the requisite number of Qualifying Session (QS) points;
 - Undergone the necessary fit and proper person checks (including criminal record checks). The Inn will not be able to accept any DBS checks previously obtained as the criminal record check must be obtained through the provider selected by all 4 Inns of Court;
 - Be interviewed by a Master of the Bench and have them agree to propose your Call to the Bar prior to applying. Further information about this process will be included in the guidelines due to be sent out early next year. We will assign a Master of the Bench if you do not know one personally.
- You must complete all the above requirements two weeks prior to your chosen Call date.
- Please note that you can apply via the online application portal before you have completed the Bar course/Bar Transfer Test, before attending all necessary QS and before obtaining your criminal record check.
- Student members are expected to attend the Call to the Bar ceremony in person.

Further information, including dress code, how to book tickets for your guests, other FAQs and contact details can be found [here](#).

Student Checklist

- Please use this list as a student member to check if you have used all the services available throughout the academic year.
- Whilst we are aware that the Bar Course has varying start dates, our student provision runs on a traditional academic year calendar (Sep- Jul)
- Please note that this list may not be comprehensive and is not mandatory.
- If you have any questions please contact qs@innertemple.org.uk

Aug	
☐	Did you receive an email from the Inn asking you to confirm your Bar Course provider? Are your details correct in this email?
☐	Can you log in to the Inner Temple Members Area ?
☐	Do you have Zoom account set up? - <i>Is it linked to the email address we have recorded?</i> - <i>Is it under the name we have recorded for you?</i>
Sep/Oct	
☐	Have you read the relevant policies (p.9)?
☐	Have you booked any QS or other Inn events this term?
☐	Have you completed the Student Advocacy Weekend application form, if you are interested? Opens 9 October. Closes 19 October
☐	Look at the Pupillage Gateway Applicants' Timetable for the coming year
Dec	
☐	Have you booked any QS or other Inn events next term?
☐	Have you applied for our Marshalling Scheme?
Feb	
	Got a pupillage interview lined up? Apply for our Mock Interview Scheme
Apr	
☐	Have you booked any QS or other Inn events next term?
☐	Do you want to apply for Call to the Bar this year? Check our website to find application forms and relevant information

Print & Keep: QS Record Tracker

In the Members' Area of our website under the Events Attended tab there is a record of your QS attendance. However, you may like to keep your own record as well.

This table is meant for personal use only. If you believe there are any discrepancies in the Inn's records, please contact qs@innertemple.org.uk

Session Title & Date	Number of QS Points	Theme	Interactive & Advanced Preparation?

Themes:

AS – Advocacy Skills
LK – Legal Knowledge, Justice and the Rule of Law
EDI – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
ESV – Ethics, Standards and Values
PCW- Preparation for Pupillage, Career Development and Wellbeing

Remember:

- You need 10 sessions in total.
- You need at least 1 in each of the 5 themes.

You need at least 2 that are interactive and advanced preparation

Your Membership

On joining the Inn

When you joined the Inn, you should have received an admission letter by email. This letter will include your membership number. Please make a note of this. We have many members with similar or even the same names and using this as an identifier can help us avoid any confusion.

Signing the book

You may hear other members talk about signing the book. There will also be details about this in your admission letter.

The book is a historic record of our membership. You are welcome to sign the members book any time after becoming a member. Please make an appointment with our colleagues in the Treasury office during office hours by emailing admissions@innertemple.org.uk

Member's Card

You do not need a member's card but some members choose to have one. It can help identify you when using the library and a valid student member card will qualify you for a student discount at Hall Lunch and the Pegasus Bar. You will need to make an appointment with our colleagues in the Treasury Office to have your member's card made. Many members choose to do this at the same time as signing the book (above).

Membership

Your membership fee is not annual. You will not pay any further membership fees at the Inn unless you become a governing member of the Inn (a Master of the Bench). If you are Called to the Bar your membership of the Inn will be life-long. If you do not take up Bar Course studies or you are not Called to the Bar, your membership will expire after 5 years.

Your membership includes access to the libraries of all 4 Inns, to the dining facilities on site and to book members only events held at the Inn and around the country.

Please note that the 3rd and 4th floors of the Inner Temple are available to book by members but should not be used for meetings, study or social purposes without prior approval from [the Inn's catering department](#).

[Keep up to date with what's happening at the Inn with our Yearbook & Newsletter](#)

Beyond the Requirements

It's your Inn – make the most of it!

We know that our Student Members will be very busy throughout their year of study, however we urge you to make the most of all the opportunities that the Inn offers you.

The Bar is a small profession filled with people who are passionate about their vocation. Attending more than just our Qualifying Sessions programme can help to build your relationship with the Inn and the profession. Making these connections now will be invaluable to you as your career progresses.

Additional Education Events

As well as our comprehensive Qualifying Sessions programme, Inner Temple offer opportunities to make the most of our wide network of expertise at other events in our programme, including:

- Volunteering
- Various lecture & panel series, providing up to date information and unique perspectives from experts in the profession.
- Inner Temple Library Training on site and online.

Socialising at the Inn

The Inn also hosts a variety of social activities giving you time to relax and get to know our members in a less education focused setting.

These include:

- formal dinners at the Inn and on Circuit
- celebratory receptions
- family picnics
- student society events

These events or opportunities will be advertised every term, alongside the Qualifying Session events in the Members' Area and in our regular email updates.

Come in a group or by yourself. The Inner Temple staff will be there to greet you, guide you and facilitate introductions where requested.

Follow us on social media for regular updates!

