

CHANCERY PUPILLAGE EVENT

15 March 2018, 6-7pm

Wilberforce Chambers, Lincoln's Inn

The Panel	<p>Chancery Bar Association (“ChBA”) Amanda Tipples QC (<i>Chairman</i>) (“AT”) Joe Curl (<i>Chairman of the Academic Liaison Sub-Committee</i>) (“JC”)</p> <p>Bar Council Joanne Wicks QC (<i>Vice-Chair of the Education and Training Committee, and member of Wilberforce Chambers</i>) (“JW”) Sam Mercer (<i>Head of Policy, Equality and Diversity and CSR</i>) (“SM”) Benjamin Burns (<i>Education & Training Analyst</i>) (“BB”)</p> <p>In attendance (in part): Andrew Walker QC, Chair of Bar Council.</p>
Attendees	21 sets of Chambers represented (see list annexed to this Note). Apologies received from Serle Court.
Amanda Tipples QC:	<p>At the ChBA we are concerned to ensure that we reach out to the widest range of students possible so that, in deciding which area of law they wish to practise in students know about the Chancery Bar and they understand the enormous range of work that is undertaken by those who practise at the Chancery Bar.</p> <p>However, one of the points for us is whether, as an Association, we are doing enough and whether we are getting our message across. It is wonderful to have so many of you here this evening, and we know that over 20 sets of Chancery chambers are represented. Thank you very much for coming. We want to hear your views on three important matters:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Careers Fair for students.2. The Pupillage Gateway.3. Improving diversity generally <p>These are all matters where, as an Association, we wish to work with the Bar Council and in my discussions with JW and Guy Fetherstonhaugh QC (<i>Chair of the Education & Training Committee of the Bar Council; (“GF”)</i>) it is clear that we are all working to the same end. However, for me, as the Chairman of the Association I am concerned about the best way to achieve this and, on some matters, I am not sure that always joining with the Bar Council is the right way forward. It is for that reason that you are all here tonight,</p>





	<p>as we want to hear your views as to what you, as our members, want the ChBA, or the Bar Council, to do.</p> <p>We will divide the time we have into 15/20 minute sessions on each of the three topics identified.</p>
AT	<p>1. Careers fair</p> <p>The ChBA for many years ran its own careers fair. It was very well attended by students, members and chambers. In 2016 the Bar Council decided to launch its own event for students. The ChBA agreed to participate in the Bar Council event, but to keep this decision under review to assess whether it was working from our perspective and the perspective of our members.</p> <p>We attended the Bar Council Careers Fair in 2016 and 2017 and, on our Committee, we think that, in joining with the Bar Council, we have lost a very valuable event for students.</p> <p>We are concerned that (i) we are no longer connecting effectively with students who might be, or might become, interested in Chancery work, so that they understand what we do, and (ii) we are not getting our message across that a career at the Chancery Bar is open to all those with the necessary ability.</p> <p>We would like to hold our own Chancery Careers Fair again. We envisage our event will be on the same day as, and as close as possible to, the Bar Council event, so that students do not have to pay travel costs twice over for attending our Careers Fair, together with the Bar Council's Careers Fair.</p> <p>Now it is fair to say that that approach has caused some dismay with the Bar Council. It is probably best for JW to explain the reasons for this, and also to explain what can be done to alleviate the ChBA's concerns. Then, having heard from JW, we will hear from you.</p>
Joanne Wicks QC:	<p>I totally agree we are all moving in the same direction. We want open access. We want to make the Bar more diverse. The Chancery Bar has particular challenges. Our concern is in the ChBA holding a separate event to the Bar Council Careers Fair. This is because a separate event underscores the impression that the Chancery Bar is elitist, separate, and prioritises those students with existing contacts or attending universities where more information is available. We recognise we need to work with SBAs. The ChBA is close to Chancery chambers. The Bar Council wants to listen to your views and ensure that Chancery work is promoted within the careers event.</p> <p>There are currently ideas around having a fair within a fair, with attendance by dedicated Chancery chambers, dedicated events, chambers promoting events to candidates, including those for whom Chancery is a vague thing out there.</p>



Sam Mercer:	The Bar Council is here from a listening perspective. There is a will to make it work for everyone. We want to participate in making it work for the Bar and for students. Nothing is off the table. Rethinking, redesign.
Joseph Curl:	When the ChBA attended the last event in October 2017, we only met about two students all day who knew what Chancery was. And then there were only about another two who, once it was explained to them, thought it sounded like it might be something they'd like to do. It seemed to be mainly first and second years. They all wanted to do human rights or crime. It was also very difficult, despite my best endeavours, to get anyone from the ChBA to help. Other than people from my own set, only a couple of people helped out on the day.
JW:	You were attending as the ChBA not as an individual chambers?
JC:	Yes. Only a few Chancery chambers attended.
William Mackinlay, Chambers Director, South Square	What is the evidence that it is a problem having a separate Chancery event? There seems to be assumed knowledge, based on equality and diversity, that it's a real problem at the ChBA.
JW:	We can't put our heads in the sand.
WM:	Are you sure the two are linked?
JW:	It is pretty obvious that Chancery Bar is less diverse than the Bar as a whole: white, male, privately educated. The occasions when the Chancery Bar ran its own fair hasn't led to an influx of diverse candidates. We know that the picture presented is a fragmented one because the Bar has lots of different leadership organisations. This is a difficulty we know about from not having sets in the Pupillage Gateway. We know from work around diversity that having complex systems to navigate means that people from non-traditional backgrounds find it difficult.
Attendee:	Is Chancery worse than commercial?
SM:	I can do some cuttings and give you stats.
WM:	Do we know why people can't explain what Chancery is?
AT:	I went to an event at a university last week; explaining what barristers do is difficult enough. We are taking small steps to improve. The question is whether holding our own event is the best way to get the message out there. When we ran our own careers event, there were more than 100 students, there were talks, there



	was a buzz. It worked effectively. We were communicating. In the last few years we have not been communicating.
SM:	We are on a journey with doing one pupillage fair for the entire profession. Are there things we can learn that we can bring in?
Francesca Compton (Administrator, ChBA):	It is difficult for me not to be slightly cross listening to this. Because we were doing fine for five years until the BC decided to hold theirs on the very same day that our event was planned for. I told the BC we had been doing this for years and had lots of knowledge and experience to share and could we be involved. Not one person got in touch with me.
SM:	I apologise. Things have changed. I wouldn't have run it in the same way. We want to be collaborative. We want to have representation of SBAs involved in organising or running it. We tried that approach last year but we didn't get engagement. BB is leading on trying to get you very much more involved in design and execution; trying to get an approach that works for you. Every area really has its own needs, its own nuances. We are not trying to stop you and prevent you; we are not trying to straitjacket you. BB and I have much more control now.
Andrew de Mestre:	The Chancery fair was run with all chambers equal. There was a level playing field for everyone. The BC fair has gold, silver and bronze pitches depending how much they pay. This is the sort of thing we get from commercial organisations in our inboxes every day, and it is not very appealing.
SM:	That is not the way I work. There has been a bit of a policy takeover of the commercial aspects. The idea of the fair was where we could create a fair where costs were kept low. It should be designed where financial resources are not important.
WM:	What are you looking for? What is the data?
Olivia Chaffin-Laird, No5:	First and second year students is really the wrong demographic. It is before you know whether you have got a leaning to one area or another. What is the fair designed to do? Is it to tell people about the Bar or for chambers to identify candidates? It sounds like there is some confusion.
Naomi Watts, Ten Old Square:	There is a different kind of candidate as well.
Heather Murphy, 24 Old Buildings:	When it was a Chancery fair at Lincoln's Inn there was a high turnover of people who knew what Chancery was. The hit rate was high. The Bar Council one, you're meeting far fewer people who know what Chancery is, those people don't seem to be turning up.



	It is similar to the Target events. The calibre of people who would have a chance are not there.
Cheryl Jones, 3PB:	You can tell that from a first or second year?
HM:	I mean people who are not able to speak about it or able to put together a CV that indicates they are going to get through the process.
JW:	They are exactly the sort of people we want to reach out to.
HM:	Are we talking about getting to the Bar generally or about applying to Chancery sets? How do we get people who aren't in the know?
AdM:	Have to expect that people who come to a Chancery fair will be interested in Chancery.
SM:	Can we do both? Get people who want to do it and those who aren't at that stage yet?
HM:	What are we doing that is different from Target? We have to be giving people information.
FC:	At our fair, we had twenty talks, covering each area of Chancery, explaining what it was.
SM:	As far as I am concerned, the programme of activities is absolutely open.
FC:	We want it to work for the students.
OCL:	A general overview and then sub-categories: is that what's being offered?
AT:	SM has given us a lot of information and recognition about can be improved to meet ChBA's concerns. Perhaps we should work with the Bar Council for another year?
Katherine McQuail, Radcliffe Chambers:	There are two strands: people in first or second years need to get a flavour, and then more information for those who are more advanced in their knowledge of the Chancery Bar. Need to ensure people who don't know anything about the Chancery Bar get some information about what it is, and what it involves.
SM:	Are there a couple of people who will work with BB and me to configure?
AT:	There are a lot of people who already volunteer for the ChBA. Please can I ask if there is anyone here who is particularly



	<p>passionate and who would be willing to work with the Bar Council and provide experience and insight on behalf of the ChBA?</p> <p>[William Mackinlay of South Square and Olivia Chaffin-Laird of No5 volunteered; JC to co-ordinate with SM and BB; FC has also agreed to meeting with SM]</p>
Joe Ollech, Falcon Chambers:	It may be ambitious to fit it into one day. Perhaps a general overview in the morning, funnelling into more detailed sessions in the afternoon.
James Abrahams, 8 New Square:	Is it just a space issue?
AT:	No, it is much more complex than that.
AdM:	The big commercial sets go themselves to university law fairs and run a lot of programmes.
AT:	I am going to say the mood of the meeting is to work with the Bar Council this year but to keep it under review.
DECISION AND ACTION POINTS:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ChBA to participate in BC Careers Fair in Autumn 2018. 2. ChBA volunteers for BC organising committee: Olivia Chaffin Laird (No 5 Chambers), Will Mackinlay (Chambers Director, South Square) and Jo Curl. 3. FC to have coffee with SM in order to share knowledge/experience, in order to make this event work for the ChBA, and other SBAs, as per last night's discussion. 4. SM & BB to set up meeting to involve all those who have volunteered.
	2. Pupillage Gateway
AT:	<p>I know that many of the chambers represented here tonight are not in the Pupillage Gateway. The Chancery Bar is somewhat unique in this regard because we are the one area of the Bar where not many sets participate in the Pupillage Gateway. One wonders why that is. This is particularly so given that many Commercial sets do participate in the Pupillage Gateway.</p> <p>Last November JW and GF on behalf of the Bar Council's Education and Training Committee hosted a very helpful (and well attended) event in relation to the Pupillage Gateway. Over 20 sets of Chambers were represented. It was clear at that time that there was not enough time for chambers to change their recruitment process for 2017/8. However, the feedback received was positive, particularly in respect of E&D monitoring.</p>



	<p>The main concern identified was that the traditional questions on the form could not be tailored to Chancery practice. GF and JW immediately took that point up and within 48 hours the forms had been amended to remove 5 compulsory questions with 2 optional questions. Chambers can adapt the 2 questions, and add 5 of their own. Alternatively Chambers can tailor all the questions to whatever questions they want to ask. Therefore, in the light of the feedback received, the form was adjusted to meet the concerns identified.</p> <p>There are at the moment 98 Chambers in the Pupillage Gateway. Very recently Wilberforce Chambers has taken the decision to participate in the Pupillage Gateway.</p> <p>I would like to know what further steps can be taken to encourage more Chancery sets to join the Gateway. Andrew Walker QC, Chair of the Bar, has now arrived. JW, GF and AW are all Chancery practitioners, yet we are not participating. As the Chairman of ChBA I have been put on the spot by the Bar Council’s General Management Committee about this.</p> <p>The Bar Council has listened to your feedback, I would like to build on that. So what can be done to encourage more Chancery sets to participate?</p>
JW:	<p>I’m not going to repeat myself from the November meeting. This is another example of what I call Chancery exceptionalism; that we are special, elite. It reinforces the view that Chancery is “not for the likes of us”. The advantages of the Pupillage Gateway are that it eases the administrative burden, it is all online, it enables an audit trail. Everything is in one place. Equalities monitoring is very easy. Data is secure. The General Data Protection Regulation will be introduced in May. Are your systems compliant? The Pupillage Gateway will be.</p> <p>Most importantly, we believe the Pupillage Gateway is the fairest way. There is a single deadline, it doesn’t involve special knowledge. It enables you to see all offers in one place at one time.</p> <p>Many Chancery sets stayed out because their competitors are not in it. Now that’s a commercial thing, but would it be so bad to get some different people? Chancery sets do compete with Commercial sets, and the Commercial sets are in the Gateway.</p> <p>This is effectively about leadership and we could go round and round in circles. Join us, let’s be fair, it works for students and chambers, it is the right thing to do.</p>
AT:	Agree with JW about this. This is another very important issue.
WM:	You sent out an email after the November meeting asking chambers would you join if everyone else joined? What was the result of that?



JW:	I will need to check back but we did have some positive responses.
Attendee:	How many sets are outside the Gateway?
SM:	Can't tell you exact figures but there are a record number that are using the Pupillage Gateway. Maybe about 60 outside. That is guesswork.
JO:	How many applications can be made in the Gateway?
SM:	Twelve each.
JO:	From the students' perspective, it is better to be able to make more applications. It is advantageous to them when sets are not in the Gateway. Perhaps we should expand the number of applications you can make.
SM:	If we need to look at that then we would do so.
JW:	There is no evidence that chambers can't get the people they want.
JO:	What is the purpose of limiting applications to twelve? Why have that bottleneck?
BB:	When we got the message in November about tailoring the questions, changes were made quickly. Nothing is set in stone. There is no policy objection.
JA:	If it is unlimited, then people will tick all 100, which would be unmanageable. But now you have to answer bespoke questions for individual applications, I am less worried about people just ticking all the boxes.
JW:	There's a balance to be struck. I was speaking to CJ about being outside the Gateway and having unmanageable numbers of applicants. Outside the Gateway there is a completely scattergun approach.
CJ:	Being in the Gateway, and knowing we are in direct competition with other people for students' applications means that we are very much more careful about the process, in increasing our attractiveness to pupils. We know we are in competition. We need to box clever. It means we target who we want and what we want to offer. We think we have been very successful at this.
JA:	Because our set is an Intellectual Property set, such an obscure niche, no one would find us if we weren't in the Gateway. We've just



	talked about people not understanding Chancery, well the Gateway puts Chancery in their face and look how much money is on offer.
AdM:	Even when we were outside the Gateway, we had the same timetable. It's not going to happen until you make people adhere to a common timetable.
SM:	As Bar Council, we can't enforce the timetable, that's for the BSB. We don't know where their position is about this. They are concerned about who is getting pupillage. The mood music we are getting is that they may be more favourable to imposing a common timetable, but the last few years they haven't wanted to do so.
NW:	Not sure of what the competitive advantage is of staying out of the Pupillage Gateway and being early. You get people who know what Chancery is. You don't get people who might come round to it.
KM:	Should we tell the BSB that we want a compulsory timetable?
JW:	I would love you to.
David Grant, Outer Temple Chambers:	We went back into the Pupillage Gateway and the number of applicants went down but the quality went up.
Miriam Seitler, Landmark Chambers:	In our set, we have one area of practice in the Pupillage Gateway and one out. We are slightly behind the curve in that we persuaded one area to come out. We have found that being outside the Gateway has led to a more diverse range of candidates. Many fewer male, Oxbridge, white.
AT:	Overall tonight we have heard some very positive experiences of the Pupillage Gateway. Maybe we should reconvene in May and see what we can do together.
WM:	We already did that in November, the Bar Council sent out the email, the message that came back is that everyone would join if everyone else does.
Olivia Chaffin-Laird, No5:	We offer pupillage "with a view", with four different practice groups, so there are four different application forms.
AT:	We can build on this. We should have a session later in the year to build on what has already happened, and the very useful and constructive discussion which has taken place tonight.
ACTION POINTS IDENTIFIED	1. All ChBA members should be circulated with the BC's Hand out: "Pupillage Gateway – why bother?" and informed of the changes



<p>FOLLOWING MEETING:</p>	<p>made by the BC to the application form in response to feedback received in November 2017 from the ChBA.</p> <p>2. Note of the discussion at this event, should be circulated to all members in the Newsletter.</p> <p>3. Chancery Chambers not in Pupillage Gateway should be invited to re-consider. There is, at the moment, ample time for Chambers to decide to participate in the Gateway prior to the next round which will open in Autumn 2018.</p> <p>4. Possibly hold a further discussion event later in the year in May or June 2018.</p>
	<p>3. Diversity generally</p>
<p>AT:</p>	<p>In advance of tonight’s meeting FC circulated the BSB document in relation to how to improve race equality at the Bar. The document is entitled: “Heads above the parapet”. At the ChBA we have our own initiatives to improve diversity. Last November we held a “Women at the Chancery Bar” Event. We know that improving diversity and social mobility are key issues. We also know that lots of sets are working hard on this, and are implementing their own initiatives – such as initiatives through the Social Mobility Foundation, the Sutton Trust and so on. This is an opportunity to share thoughts and ideas. What more can we do show and achieve visible signs of success?</p> <p>Maybe the ChBA should set up its own social mobility initiative and encourage schools to participate. This is because maybe talking to students is too late, and we need to focus on school children.</p> <p>Please share with us your own thoughts and experiences about this topic.</p>
<p>SM:</p>	<p>Garden Court Chambers have a scheme, a bells and whistles mentoring scheme, a huge investment, long term mentoring. Identify talented kids and offer work experience over a number of years.</p>
<p>AT:</p>	<p>Dr Leslie Thomas QC is the head of Garden Court Chambers. He spoke at the recent BSB event, and has agreed to come and speak to the ChBA and share his thoughts and ideas with us. He has also agreed to have lunch with Marcia Shekerdemian QC, Chair of the ChBA’s E&D Committee, in order to share ideas.</p>
<p>Ed Cumming QC, XXIV Old Buildings:</p>	<p>There are lots of small grassroots charities, who identify bright students, Making the Leap, Sutton Trust. There are a number of charities we can reach out to.</p>
<p>NW</p>	<p>Black History Project has a website with lots of information about the professions, nothing about the Bar on there.</p>



SM:	If you come across these sorts of things, let me know.
CJ:	Legal Launch Pad is a scheme I am involved with. It is very competitive, gives participants a year where they do seminars and mentoring. You are expected to do quite a lot as a mentor, you help out, meet them, help with questions in scholarship interviews. It is run by a former solicitor. I have been a member for five years. About three of my mentees got very good scholarships. They have to be good before they get involved. Get in touch with me if you want to join in. I bumped into someone who was on it about five years ago, he has got pupillage. It is working. Someone wants to do Chancery.
HM:	As someone who has pointed people towards things, it would be good to have everything on one page on a website.
SM:	Good news, the Bar Council is working on a new website. We are working with the Inns. We want a one-stop-shop for scholarships and everything else. Any other ideas are welcome.
HM:	We should be connecting with schools and offering work experience for people that just don't have those sorts of contacts. I have got a partnership with a school in Peterborough.
SM:	Ask applicants if they are participating in outreach schemes.
AT:	We can hear that it is 7pm, so we shall conclude there. Thank you all.
ACTION POINTS:	Please share your ideas on this topic with FC (ChBA) and SM (Bar Council). Thank you.



Attendees

First name	Last name	Organisation
Cheryl	Jones	3PB Barristers
Helen	Evans	4 New Square
Andrew	de Mestre	4 Stone Buildings
Christopher	Harrison	4 Stone Buildings
Eleanor	Holland	4 Stone Buildings
Anna	Markham	4 Stone Buildings
Tiran	Nersessian	4 Stone Buildings
Sarah	Haren	5 Stone Buildings
James	Abrahams	8 New Square
Joe	Curl	9 Stone Buildings
Stephen	Connolly	Exchange Chambers
Joe	Ollech	Falcon Chambers
Adam	Rosenthal	Falcon Chambers
Staphanie	Tozer	Falcon Chambers
Charles	Raffin	Hardwicke Building
Miriam	Seitler	Landmark Chambers
Amanda	Tipples	Maitland Chambers
Narinder	Jhittay	Maitland Chambers
Olivia	Chaffin-Laird	No5 Chambers
Joyce	Arnold	One Essex Court
David	Grant	Outer Temple Chambers
Katherine	McQuail	Radcliffe Chambers
Rosamund	Baker	Selborne Chambers
Leon	Gangadeen	South Square
Will	Mackinlay	South Square
Tom	Smith	South Square
Timothy	Hammond	Tanfield Chambers
Naomi	Winston	Ten Old Square
Marcia	Shekerdemian	Wilberforce Chambers
Danny	Smillie	Wilberforce Chambers
Heather	Murphy	XXIV Old Buildings
Edward	Cumming QC	XXIV Old Buildings

