



## My Year in Pupillage

Callum Monro Morrison,  
Tenant (Pupillage 2018/19)

### Why did you become a barrister?

I knew from my time at university that I wanted an analytical, research-heavy career. Whilst I did not initially have a strong predilection for law, I saw during a mini-pupillage that a career as a barrister could be stimulating and rewarding. Through various work experience positions and internships, I was able to narrow my career decision to either academia or the Bar. I decided that I preferred the legal profession because the work is more practical and has real-world consequences. As time has gone on, this decision has proven to be the right one.

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### How did you choose your area of law?

I knew early on that I wished to practise in an area concerning specialist, technical subject matter. I have always been interested in science and engineering and wanted a job that would bring me closer to these fields. During my legal studies, meanwhile, I found contract law to be the most satisfying discipline. Specialisation in construction and engineering disputes was therefore a natural choice because it frequently requires detailed technical understanding paired with close contractual analysis.

### What sort of work did you do during pupillage?

Pupillage at Keating is divided into four ‘seats’, with pupils transitioning to a new supervisor roughly every three months. The focus for the first three seats is on both the assessment and development of pupils’ written work ahead of the

tenancy decision. In the fourth seat, the focus shifts to helping pupils develop their own practice.

During my first seat, I was allowed plenty of time to read around each new area of law. For example, my first supervisor required me to produce a research note on the JCT standard form of building contract, which is very commonly encountered by junior lawyers in the field.

During my second seat, the complexity of the work increased. My second supervisor concentrated on honing my drafting skills by tasking me with a succession of factually complex pleadings. Not only did this work provide a vital introduction to expert evidence, but it also allowed me to refine my writing style. My third and fourth supervisors continued to provide invaluable advice on drafting, advocacy and general practice management, whilst encouraging me to begin taking on my own work. Initially this work involved discrete pieces of telephone or written advice and County Court hearings. I was also able to attend a High Court (TCC) trial and a number of client conferences with my supervisors.

### **What role did the tenancy committee play?**

The tenancy committee is extremely influential, since its recommendation to the rest of Chambers almost invariably determines the outcome of the tenancy decision in June each year. I was therefore encouraged to try to complete work for as many members of the committee as possible, with assistance from my supervisors in managing my workload. The emphasis was very much on quality over quantity.

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In addition, I attended a review meeting with two senior members of the tenancy committee roughly halfway through pupillage. This meeting provided a useful opportunity to gauge my performance and identify areas for improvement before the all-important third quarter of pupillage, which precedes the tenancy decision.

### **What is Chambers like in terms of atmosphere, people etc.?**

Keating Chambers is an extremely friendly place. Almost every barrister I have met here has encouraged me to knock on their door with any questions or problems I may have. These invitations were genuine and I have taken them up on many occasions. All of my supervisors continued to take an interest in my progress and to offer advice even after I had moved on to the next. I now consider them friends.

The clerks, administrative and IT staff are also incredibly helpful and were supportive throughout pupillage, which can at times feel as if one is permanently under the microscope. Conversations 'off the record' with persons extrinsic to the assessment process were always welcome.

### **What sort of work do you do now?**

Since the tenancy decision, I have been fortunate in being very busy. Solicitors for whom I completed smaller pieces of work or low-value hearings earlier in my second six have returned with further instructions, for example to draft adjudication documents or to appear in County Courts. What is more, I have been brought on to a number of much larger matters by more senior members of Chambers. As a result, I have gained exposure to high-profile disputes and the workings of expert counsel whilst maintaining a diet of smaller cases in my own right. I hope to retain this balance.

*Callum Monro Morrison was called to the Bar in 2018 and became a tenant at Keating Chambers in 2019 following the successful completion of his pupillage.*

*Callum is developing a broad and busy practice across Chambers' specialisms, including international and domestic cases, both as sole counsel and as junior counsel in larger teams. During pupillage, Callum's work encompassed a wide range of practice areas, including construction and engineering, professional negligence, energy and natural resources, marine and off-shore, utilities, procurement and insurance. He has worked on cases involving a variety of standard form contracts, including the JCT, NEC, FIDIC and RIBA forms of appointment, as well as bespoke construction contracts, PFI/PPP and turnkey agreements.*