

Blackstone Chambers December 2022

Bar Council Race at the Bar Report Blackstone Targets for 2023

Preamble: *Following the Race at the Bar report published by the Bar Council in November 2021, with its focus on the particular inequalities faced by Black barristers and students, our targets include some (targets 5 and 6 below) which focus specifically on applications from students of Black and Mixed Black ethnicity. This focus is intended to ensure our analysis is targeted and effective.*

Pupillage

1. All Pupillage Committee members, Pupil Supervisors, and mini-pupil supervisors are to attend Hemisphere anti-bias training before they first perform a task in that capacity. A record of attendance is to be kept for the purposes of the end of year review.
2. All Pupillage Committee members, Pupil Supervisors and mini-pupil supervisors are to confirm in writing to the Graduate Recruitment and Pupillage Administrator that they have read the Fair Recruitment Guide before they first perform a task in that capacity. A record of such written confirmation is to be kept for the purposes of the end of year review.
3. The heads of the Pupillage Committee and the Equality and Diversity Officers are to identify (for provision to all Pupillage Committee members, Pupil Supervisors and mini-pupil supervisors) suitable anti-racism training by March 2023.
4. The Pupillage Committee (subject to Chambers Committee approval of costs) is to commission a statistician to review the performance of 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 applicants for pupillage against Blackstone pupillage recruitment criteria. This review to be carried out during the course of the 2022/2023 recruitment round as and when the most recent data becomes available and should report in early Summer 2023.
5. The Equality and Diversity Officers are to identify a suitable diversity expert with a view to such person being instructed to advise in early Summer 2023 whether changes to the pupillage recruitment criteria should be considered to address any disproportionate adverse impact of Blackstone pupillage recruitment criteria (as currently used) on Black/Mixed Black candidates in time for such advice to be considered and put into action before the start of the 2023/2024 process.
6. The reviews at (4) and (5) are to consider amongst other relevant issues:

- a. Whether the proportion of applicants who are Black or of Mixed Black ethnicity matches what one would expect, given the available pool of potential candidates?
- b. Whether candidates with Black or Mixed Black ethnicity disproportionately fail in the recruitment process, and if so at what stage?
- c. If Black or Mixed Black ethnicity candidates disproportionately fail at any stage, why that is, and whether Chambers' process unfairly disadvantages those candidates at that stage?
- d. If so, what steps should be taken, in particular with regard to the recruitment process and selection criteria used.

Recruitment of Staff and Barristers

7. Having focussed on data gathering for pupillage recruitment, the Equality and Diversity Officers are now taking steps to investigate what data is available in respect staff and lateral hire recruitment, and once that process is complete, will review the question of what targets, if any, should be set in these areas.

Culture and Retention

8. The Equality and Diversity Officers noted that a number of substantive steps have been and are being taken in respect of inclusivity, wellbeing and culture generally in Chambers, for staff and members. Work is also being done to arrange and provide anti-bullying and anti-harassment training for Chambers. Specific targets in these areas are not thought to be appropriate at the present time.