



BEDFORD ROW

Remote Training

Upon the outbreak of coronavirus and subsequent lock down following the first week of our second six, our court exposure reduced, just as we had expected it to take off. Members of the pupillage committee, as well as other members of chambers, reached out in support to ensure we knew that we could talk to them with any concerns we had and that we should at no point feel like our health or welfare should be put at risk. We were told they were already designing a bespoke intensive advocacy training programme for us, to ensure our pupillages could continue effectively and our professional development would continue to a high standard despite the unusual circumstances.

This new, intensified advocacy training programme was developed and initiated very quickly. Members of chambers are giving up their time to run one or two sessions a week via Microsoft Teams, providing us with opportunities to expand our experience and practice. The sessions have been designed to give us more rigorous training across criminal law and procedure, so that we have a greater insight into a wider range of applications, issues and arguments which we may encounter during the trial process. The sessions were also designed with the coronavirus challenges in mind, meaning we are learning about changes to the court procedure and how to conduct online and telephone hearings. Examples of the sessions have included conducting a multi-handed PTPH, making bad character applications and s.78 applications. This is helping us to develop both our oral and written advocacy skills.

Additionally, this extra training has given us the chance to experience some of chambers' other practice areas. We have had initial training in conducting extradition hearings. The training programme also includes sessions covering NMC and court martial hearings.

We have been greatly reassured by 9 Bedford Row's commitment to our training in our pupillage, even in such an unprecedented situation.

Lucia Brieskova, Jordan Santos-Sindes and Rebecca Steels – 9 Bedford Row pupils 2020