



**GRAY'S
INN**

GDL and Bar Course Scholarships: A guide to application assessment, selection for interview and scoring

The Gray's Inn Scholarships Committee is committed to providing a programme which adheres to principles of fairness, reliability, validity, objectivity and transparency.

This guidance is intended to provide GDL and Bar Course Scholarship candidates with a detailed understanding of the awarding process.

We strongly recommend all candidates read this information thoroughly and refer to this guidance during each stage of the application process.

How we assess candidates

To receive a scholarship, a candidate must pass two assessments – written and oral.

To apply for a scholarship, a written application must be submitted, along with supporting references. Evidence within this application informs the written assessment.

Candidates who pass the written assessment will be invited to interview for the oral assessment. They will be required to undertake an advocacy exercise and answer several competency-based questions.

The Scholarships Committee convene separate panels to undertake these assessments. Each panel consists exclusively of Members of the Inn. Members only sit on one panel in an application round and are required to undertake training in fair recruitment and selection.

We recommend that candidates familiarise themselves with techniques to respond to competency-based questioning, such as the [STAR method](#).

Scoring

For each assessment, an application is considered against five, equally weighted criteria. It is the expectation that candidates are competent in all criteria.

The interview panel are not made aware of the scores for the written assessment, and the score for the written assessment does not inform the outcome of the oral assessment.

A score out of 5 is given in each criterion, providing a maximum score of 25 at written and oral assessment.

Assessment criteria	Written Assessment Score (maximum score of 25)	Oral Assessment Score (maximum score of 25)
1. Academic ability	1 to 5	1 to 5
2. Advocacy	1 to 5	1 to 5
3. Drive & determination	1 to 5	1 to 5
4. Problem solving	1 to 5	1 to 5
5. Motivation to succeed	1 to 5	1 to 5

A score of 3 in a criterion is an acknowledgement that a candidate has demonstrated they are competent.

Score	Description
1	Not met standard
2	Partially met standard
3	Meets standard (competent)
4	Exceeds standard
5	Significantly exceeds standard

We do not set a threshold score in advance because this will vary each year according to the number and quality of applications we receive.

There is scope within each criterion to adjust the score based on relevant evidence of mitigating circumstances provided within the application form.

Academic assessment

Assessment criteria	Written Assessment Score	Oral Assessment Score
1. Academic ability	1 to 5	1 to 5

The Panel

The academic panel will determine a score for academic ability. This is the only panel who will have sight of the evidence within the 'Education' section of the application form.

Scoring

The score for this criterion is included in the overall score of 25 at both assessments. It is not made available to panels undertaking the written and oral assessments.

The score is established by first applying performance in school leaving and undergraduate qualifications to a scoring matrix. Performance in an undergraduate qualification is given more weight in this assessment.

Once an initial score has been determined, the panel has scope to consider mitigating circumstances, academic references, additional qualifications and/or academic achievements, which can increase the overall score.

Written assessment

Assessment criteria	Written Assessment Score (maximum score of 25)
1. Academic ability	Assessed by Academic Panel
2. Advocacy	1 to 5
3. Drive & determination	1 to 5
4. Problem solving	1 to 5
5. Motivation to succeed	1 to 5

The Panel

The shortlisting panel will determine scores for criteria 2-5.

The panel are provided with the answers to the questions in the 'Experience' section and supporting references only.

Scoring

Evidence will be considered against the following criteria descriptors:

Criteria	Descriptors
<p>2 Advocacy</p> <p>Can develop a well-structured, succinct, grammatically correct, and persuasively written argument. As a public speaker can communicate clearly, concisely and persuasively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • logical, well structured, succinct, grammatically correct answer • persuasively written application • example shows how logical, well-structured argument was designed and used to persuade the intended audience
<p>3 Drive & determination</p> <p>Possesses drive, determination and a strong work ethic to overcome adversity or achieve goals, whilst remaining calm when under pressure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates drive and determination in the face of adversity and/or challenge to achieve goals • remains calm and control when under pressure • ensures that outcomes are achieved, timelines met and promises kept
<p>4 Problem solving</p> <p>The ability to apply lateral and original thinking to solve problems and work with complex information to extract key information and facts to develop an argument.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • breaks problem down into manageable parts • demonstrates lateral and original thinking • relates key facts and key pieces of information to the task • able to unpick complex arguments or information • demonstrates good judgment evidenced by logical evidence-based decisions • does not make unwarranted assumptions

<p>5 Motivation to succeed</p> <p>Demonstrates a clear interest in the Bar and has ambition to become a barrister. Has taken steps to gain an understanding of the profession.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear as to what excited interest in Bar and is motivated by the ambition to be a barrister • career choice is considered and well thought through • has a good understanding of both positive and negative realities • has taken steps to gain an understanding of the profession
---	---

Oral assessment

Assessment criteria	Oral Assessment Score (maximum score of 25)
1. Academic ability	Assessed by Academic Panel
2. Advocacy	1 to 5
3. Drive & determination	1 to 5
4. Problem solving	1 to 5
5. Motivation to succeed	1 to 5

The panel

The interview panel will determine scores for criteria 2-5.

The panel are provided with the answers to the questions in the 'Experience' section and supporting references only.

Panels may use written evidence in their assessment, but it is the expectation that candidates have demonstrated they are competent based on their interview performance alone.

Interview structure

Each interview will be 15 minutes.

15 minutes before the interview, candidates will be provided with two topical questions. This is the advocacy exercise. Candidates will be given the following instructions:

- prepare a 3-minute oral answer to either question.
- be prepared to answer 2 minutes of questions at the end of your answer, from the panel

During the remaining interview time, the panel will ask at least one competency question relating to each of criteria 3-5.

Scoring

Evidence for criteria 3-5 will be considered against the same descriptors that are applied to the written assessment. However, evidence for the advocacy criterion is considered against different descriptors, as below:

Criteria	Descriptors
<p>2. Advocacy</p> <p>Can develop a well-structured, succinct, grammatically correct, and persuasively written argument. As a public speaker can communicate clearly, concisely and persuasively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• evidence to demonstrate experience of public speaking in any setting• communicates clearly and concisely without going off point• adapts style and language to meet needs of audience• speech follows a clear and logical structure• persuasive