



1 YEAR ON

This year the Bar welcomed its first pupils under the Inns of Court's Pupillage Matched Funding Scheme. Nathalie Lieven QC reports

The Pupillage Matched Funding Scheme was set up in 2013 and has been very successful in helping numbers of students to qualify as barristers. The Scheme encourages the provision of additional pupillages in those chambers (and other approved training organisations) where work is predominantly publicly funded.

Under the Scheme the Inns will match the first six funding already provided by chambers with a matched funding grant of £6,000 to fund the first six months of a second pupillage. If a chambers would, but for this scheme, have offered two pupillages then it can apply for up to two grants of £6,000 to fund two additional pupillages (i.e. four pupillages in total), and so on, hence matched funding. Applications for a grant of £3,000 will also be considered from those chambers which have not recently provided a pupillage and would like to do so; chambers would provide £3,000 towards the first six months of pupillage.

In 2014, the first year of operation, an additional 14 pupillages were funded. 41 grants have been agreed for pupillages commencing in 2015 and, so far, 30 grants agreed for pupillages commencing in 2016. The Inns will continue to fund the Scheme into 2017 and 2018. The Scheme is advertised on the Inns' websites and in-house newsletters and in *Counsel* magazine.

Application details:

Applications for grants are invited between 1 September and 1 December by way of an application online on the COIC Matched Funding website www.innsofcourt.org.uk. A Grants Committee considers the applications on behalf of the Inns and decides which applicants are to benefit from a grant.

Because of the way the Scheme was set up it is not possible to say precisely how many tenancies have arisen out of the funded pupillages. However, the Scheme has successfully ensured that many students who have passed the BPTC have a means of qualifying, which is what it set out to do. ●

 **Contributor Nathalie Lieven QC**
Chair, Pupillage Matched Funding Grants Committee

BARRISTERS FROM TWO SETS OF CHAMBERS WHICH HAVE RECEIVED GRANTS TELL COUNSEL ABOUT THE DIFFERENCE THE PUPILLAGE MATCHED FUNDING SCHEME HAS MADE:



Daniel Benjamin
of 2 Dr Johnson's Buildings, Temple

Two years ago now the outlook for the publicly funded criminal and family bar, in terms of cuts to fees received, planned and threatened, was such that 2 Dr Johnson's Buildings was looking at whether we could continue to offer pupillages. We are a set that has always supported the future of our profession. In 2007-08 I was one of four pupils. That was reduced to three, and then two, as the cuts began. Two years ago we were considering whether we could afford to offer one pupillage, or whether to stop taking on pupils at all. Then along came the Pupillage Matched Funding Scheme. This made the decision much easier: for the investment in one pupil's first six grant we could have two pupils for the entire twelve months. We applied, were successful, and set about completing the recruitment of those pupils. Our pupils are coming to the end of their twelve months as I write, and both have proven to be excellent. Without the Pupillage Matched Funding Scheme we would not have had the benefit of them over the last year. With the help of the Scheme, we look forward to welcoming two new pupils at the start of October, and to beginning the process of recruiting our 2016 pupils.

Simao Paxi-Cato
of Invictus Chambers



The Bar has always been faced by challenges, but the last two years have been particularly daunting for a great many chambers because of the legal aid cuts, rising administration costs and the reduction of litigation generally. As a result, we have seen the number of pupillages offered by sets fall as the first step towards saving money. However, without a junior Bar and new entrants into the profession, the Bar would have no long-term future. For this reason, Invictus Chambers wanted to go against that trend and continue to provide opportunities for talented graduates. By receiving a grant from the Inns, Chambers was able to take on two additional pupils than it might otherwise have done due to the extra financial support for the non-practising six months of pupillage and as per our expectations, our three pupils have more than paid for themselves during their practising period.

The Inns' Scheme is a massive step towards retaining a representative Bar.