

5RB

Media and communications law

PUPILLAGE
5RB

Pupillage Booklet
2025-2026



PUPILLAGE 5RB

Why 5RB?

5RB is the leading set specialising in all areas of media and communications law, including defamation, privacy, breach of confidence, data protection and information law, harassment, contempt of court and reporting restrictions. We are the only chambers to specialise exclusively in this fascinating field.

Our 37 full-time members act for both claimants and defendants and provide advice and representation to the press, television, radio, book and online publishers, as well as to individuals including celebrities and other high-profile people, businesses and not-for-profit organisations.

Our members are regularly instructed in the most prominent and groundbreaking cases, recent examples of which include Sir James Dyson's libel claim against Mirror Group over allegations of behaving hypocritically in the context of Brexit, the Laurence Fox Twitter trial, the Duke of Sussex's privacy claims relating to the alleged hacking of his phone, Arron Banks's libel claim against Carole Cadwaladr over his alleged financial ties to Russia, the 'Wagatha Christie' libel case, the Duchess of Sussex's privacy and copyright claim against Associated, the litigation concerning the 'Putin's People' book, the Johnny Depp libel trial and the Cliff Richard privacy case against the BBC. In the last few years, members have represented parties on appeals to the Supreme Court relating to abuse of process in the context of libel (*Mueen-Uddin v Secretary*

of State for the Home Dept), the correct interpretation of s.3 of the Defamation Act 1952 in malicious falsehood cases (*George v Canel*), the privacy of residents of apartments in the vicinity of the Tate Modern art gallery (*Fearn v Board of Trustees of the Tate Gallery*), serious harm to reputation (*Lachaux v Independent Print Ltd*), the public interest defence in defamation (*Serafin v Malkiewicz*), the reasonable expectation of privacy in information about criminal investigations (*ZXC v Bloomberg LP*) and vicarious liability in data protection law (*WM Morrison Supermarkets plc v Various Claimants*), as well as in many cases in the Court of Appeal. Several former members of 5RB have gone on to have successful judicial careers.

Applying to us

We are seeking to recruit up to two pupils to start in October 2026, each with a view to tenancy. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate very high intellectual ability, usually via academic achievement, and excellent interpersonal and advocacy skills (written and oral). We look for applicants with an aptitude for, and an interest in, practice as a barrister in our specialist areas; however prior knowledge of the law in these areas is not a requirement.

Pupillage Award

Pupils at 5RB benefit from spending periods with four different pupil supervisors, seeing a variety of styles and perspectives and receiving expert tuition in practice in media and communications law, including advocacy. We are proud of maintaining a very friendly and collegiate atmosphere, and that extends to how we interact with our pupils: we see pupillage very much as a learning experience rather than a gruelling examination, although pupils will

need to demonstrate the high level of skills and conduct necessary for a successful practice if they are to be taken on as a tenant. The vast majority of our pupils in the past decade have been recruited as tenants, and we very much hope and expect that this will continue.

The pupillages will carry an award of £50,000. A new tenant can expect their first year earnings to significantly exceed this level.

5RB is a modern and inclusive chambers, committed to promoting equality and diversity at the bar. In particular we have a good gender balance at all levels of seniority and we subscribe to a number of schemes that are aimed at increasing access to the profession for candidates from under-privileged and under-represented backgrounds. We will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of pupils with a disability. Anyone considering applying for pupillage is welcome to contact our Equality and Diversity Officer, Aidan Eardley KC, in confidence, to discuss any issues they may have in accessing chambers.

Aspiring barristers are invited to apply to chambers between using the Pupillage Gateway application system to search for the relevant Pupillage Vacancy and selecting 'Apply for this pupillage'.

Prospective pupils are also encouraged to familiarise themselves with 5rb's Pupillage Policy which may be found on chambers website at www.5rb.com

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5RB cases

5RB recent case highlights include:

- Mueen-Uddin v Secretary of State for the Home Dept (SC)
- George v Cannell (SC)
- ZXC v Bloomberg LP (SC)
- Fearn v Board of Trustees of the Tate Gallery (SC)
- Serafin v Malkiewicz (SC)
- Lachaux v Independent Print Ltd (SC)
- Various Claimants v WM Morrison Supermarkets plc (SC)
- Banks v Cadwalladr (CA)
- Riley v Murray (CA)
- Riley v Sivier (CA)
- Soriano v Forensic News LLC (CA)
- Wright v McCormack (CA)
- Blake v Fox (CA & trial)
- Duchess of Sussex v Associated Newspapers Ltd (CA)
- HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum v HRH Princess Haya bint Al Hussein (CA)
- Dyson v MGN Ltd
- Harcombe v Associated Newspapers Ltd
- Baroness Lawrence v Associated Newspapers Ltd
- Duke of Sussex v MGN Ltd, News Group Newspapers Ltd & Associated Newspapers Ltd
- WFZ v BBC
- HM Attorney General for England & Wales v BBC
- Sayn-Wittgenstein-Sayn v HM Juan Carlos Alfonso Victor Maria De Borbon Y Borbon
- Vardy v Rooney
- Abramovich v HarperCollins publishers Ltd

Everyone Has a Story

“**5RB** are the best of the best
in media and
communications law.”

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