



YOUR PATH TO THE BAR

YOUR CALL



THE BAR
OF IRELAND

The Law Library

BARRA NA HÉIREANN

An Leabharlann Dlí



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A CAREER AS A BARRISTER

Barristers are specialist legal advisers and advocates who present before all Irish courts, including the Criminal Courts of Justice, High Court, and also in international courts, such as the European Court of Justice.

Barristers also provide advice and legal opinions on client issues, as well as acting as arbitrators and mediators, resolving disputes outside of the litigation process.

Barristers play a key role in the administration of justice, helping individuals, businesses and institutions to understand, pursue, and defend their legal rights. A career as a barrister offers a

rewarding and stimulating opportunity to have a real impact, both for clients and for the wider society.

Many barristers, after some years, choose to specialise in a smaller number of areas of law. Others have more general practices, providing advice and advocacy across a wide range of areas of law, both civil and criminal.

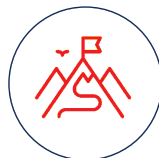
A career as a barrister offers a rewarding and stimulating opportunity to have a real impact, both for clients and for the wider society.

A CAREER LIKE NO OTHER



VARIETY

No two days are the same. A career as a barrister is one of the most stimulating, varied, challenging and exciting careers you can choose. Whether presenting before a court, negotiating terms of a sale, drafting an opinion on a critical issue for a State agency, or mediating between a divorcing couple, the skills of a barrister can be applied in a wide range of scenarios.



INDEPENDENCE

Each self-employed barrister is their own boss, and part of the independent referral Bar – meaning that they answer to their clients and the court. Barristers can work flexibly and choose their own work-life balance. Many barristers take on a range of different clients and responsibilities, and bring their own flare and style to the table.



PROBLEM SOLVING

Do you relish researching and presenting an argument, crystallising issues and anticipating the counter-argument? A barrister's work involves reaching logical and reasoned conclusions, producing solutions and strategies in their client's interest.



KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Due in part to its size, the Bar provides a very sociable and supportive working environment. Many value the camaraderie, collegiality and friendships that are formed through shared learning, collaboration and continued professional development.



Each barrister brings their unique life experience and perspective to resolving client disputes.



TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

The skills learnt as a barrister equip them to not only advocate for a client in court or research cases, but to transfer those skills to boardrooms and beyond. In addition, barristers often act for international clients before overseas courts and tribunals.



INNOVATION

Technology plays a key role in the profession. Remote courts allow barristers to work across a wide area and to develop new skills. Artificial intelligence and machine learning increasingly play a role in research and our Law Library is best in class in its use of emerging technology.



SOCIAL IMPACT

Many cases before the courts represent an opportunity for change in policy and citizens' welfare, such as environmental law, employment rights, social welfare entitlements and more. Each of these cases involve the diligent research and advocacy skills of trained barristers.



INDIVIDUALITY

The profession thrives on individuality – each barrister brings their unique life experience and perspective to resolving client disputes. No matter your identity or your background, the Bar is a welcoming profession that can accommodate your unique contribution.

「PATHS TO THE BAR



Emily Gibson BL


I enjoy public speaking and reading, so I was inclined towards practice at the Bar. With no family contacts in law, lots of people tried to dissuade me, but I was keen to give it a go. After passing the Irish Bar (and the New York Bar), I decided to work abroad – to get experience and to save money. I worked as a lawyer with a large law firm in Brussels for a few years before returning home to practise as a barrister.

I trained with two great Masters who recommended me to their solicitors for work and gave me experience on my feet and drafting documents for court. This gave me an excellent start. At the Bar you need to work very hard to establish your practice but it is a very rewarding career. I love being my own boss, but really value the support of my colleagues in the Law Library.



Patrick Barrett BL

I knew I wanted to study law but I missed out in the CAO process so I ended up studying IT. Then in my late twenties I went back to UCC and did the BCL. I always wanted to be a barrister, but many people advised against it saying ‘ah, the Bar is tough going’. So as I prepped for the FE1 exams to become a solicitor, I decided to do a Master of Laws at UCC. I passed the FE1s and secured a traineeship, but at the last moment (literally) I threw caution to the wind and followed the path I really wanted! Living in Munster, I had to attend Dublin to study in King’s Inns (albeit Covid softened this requisite), and then I moved to Dublin for my pupillage year. I have since returned to my own circuit to practise. I would say that the road for me was long, but I believe it has been worth it.



*From a very young age,
I have always had a
keen sense of justice,
and so the law was a
natural calling to me.*



Femi Daniyan BL

As far back as I can remember, I wanted to be a barrister but missed out on the points I needed to study law in university. I then embarked on a first degree in international studies and then went on to obtain a master's degree in international relations. Having worked for a few years, I still wanted to be a barrister, so I enrolled in the Diploma in Legal Studies at the King's Inns and went on to complete the degree course.

Since becoming a member of The Bar of Ireland, I have learned to build a practice with the support of an excellent Master and subsequently with the support of colleagues. One of the most impressive aspects of working as a barrister is the extraordinary level of collegiate support that barristers give each other and from which I have benefited in building a practice.



Rebecca Hanratty BL

From a very young age, I have always had a keen sense of justice, and so the law was a natural calling to me. I was gifted Mary Robinson's autobiography, and I decided that that was the route I wanted to follow too. I entered TCD through the Trinity Access Programme and studied Law with French Law. I knew I wanted a career at the Bar, but I also knew that the cost of qualifying would be an insurmountable barrier. I applied for and was lucky enough to be awarded the Denham Fellowship, which has not only allowed me entry to the profession, but has also introduced me to so many wonderful people who have enormously helped my career. I love practising as a barrister for many reasons, but the most fulfilling aspect of this career is the ability to use my skills to help the vulnerable. It is truly a privilege to represent these people, to hear their stories and to fight for justice on their behalf.

FINANCIAL SUPPORTS

DENHAM FELLOWSHIP



The Denham Fellowship, named after The Hon. Mrs Justice Susan Denham, former Chief Justice, assists two aspiring barristers annually who come from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds to gain access to professional legal education at the King's Inns and professional practice at the Law Library.

Mentorship: Each Denham Fellow is provided with three mentors for the duration of the Fellowship, beginning on commencement of the Barrister-at-Law degree programme at the King's Inns. Where necessary, assistance is provided in locating a Master for their pupillage year.

Fee waivers: The Fellowship offers remission of fees to the Barrister-at-Law degree programme of the King's Inns, including the entrance examination fee. Law Library fees for the first four years of practice at The Bar of Ireland are also waived, including the entrance fee.

Stipend: An annual stipend of €7,000* is awarded for a period of five years beginning on commencement of the Barrister-at-Law degree programme at the King's Inns.

*(Pro rata for those studying on a modular basis.)

Who can apply?

Candidates must meet the following three eligibility criteria to apply:

- 1. Socio-economic factors:** Candidates must meet one of the following criteria:
 - candidates who accessed a higher education institution for the first time through the HEAR access programme (or equivalent means-tested access route);
 - candidates who received a SUSI special rate maintenance grant during their third-level education; or,
 - candidates who received a SUSI band one full maintenance grant during their third-level education and reside in a disadvantaged area (as classified by the Social Deprivation Index).
- 2. Personal income threshold:** Candidates must have a personal income of less than €35,000 per annum.
- 3. Eligibility to sit the Barrister-at-Law entrance examination in the summer of that year.**

Candidates must have completed, or be on track to complete, a law programme from the schedule of approved qualifications set out by The Honorable Society of King's Inns in time to sit the exams in the summer of that year.

Learn more about the Denham Fellowship at
lawlibrary.ie/Denham



SUSI

SUSI is Ireland's single national awarding authority for all higher and further education grants. Our degree of Barrister-at-Law professional course is eligible for postgraduate funding. Only students sitting the full-time course can receive SUSI support.

The online application system for new and renewal grant applications for the academic year usually opens around April every year.

Keep an eye on the SUSI website:
[susi.ie](https://www.susi.ie)





MAURICE GAFFNEY SCHOLARSHIP

Diploma in Legal Studies course

Funded by the King's Inns, the Maurice Gaffney Scholarship assists students who have experienced some kind of challenge or disadvantage in their life and who wish to do the Diploma in Legal Studies course.

NIALL AND BARBARA McCARTHY BURSARY

Degree of Barrister-at-Law professional course

The McCarthy Bursary aims to financially support one student who might not otherwise be able to take the degree course of Barrister-at-Law. The McCarthy Scholar is chosen from candidates who come from a background of difference and who are likely to have met and overcome some kind of physical, social or financial challenge.

SUPPLEMENTING YOUR INCOME

In your early years at the Bar there are many ways to supplement your income while establishing your practice, including:

- media and journalism work;
- tutoring and lecturing;
- paid research for senior barristers;
- paid research for central Government/other public bodies;
- discovery work;
- writing case summaries;
- consulting; and,
- other legal training.



ABOUT THE BAR OF IRELAND

The Bar of Ireland is the representative body for the barristers' profession in Ireland and is often referred to as the Law Library. It is the term used to describe the independent referral bar that has a current membership of approximately 2,150 practising barristers.

Membership of the collective structure of The Bar of Ireland offers numerous advantages to sole practitioners. Members of the Law Library are provided with a wide range of services aimed at enabling them to provide an efficient and effective service to their clients. The services and supports are included in the annual membership subscription and recurring service charges paid by members.

Our independence is paramount, and our expertise is sought in the oral presentation of cases and in the provision of legal advice and drafting.

Barristers are bound by the 'cab-rank rule' under which they are precluded from refusing instructions on the grounds that the nature of the case, or the conduct, opinions or beliefs of a client, are controversial or unacceptable to the advocate.



INITIATIVES AT THE BAR

Year round, The Bar of Ireland and our members engage in a wide number of activities that reflect the wider society in which barristers provide their services and some of the recent initiatives are listed below:

ACCESSIBLE TO ALL – OUR EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY SUPPORTS

Barristers come from a broad range of social, academic and professional backgrounds. They all share common skills and abilities – academic excellence, strong communication skills and a commitment to justice for their clients.

PRIDE AT THE BAR

Through our partnership with OUTLaw – a collective of professionals across the legal services sector – we support and host a number of events that drive awareness and visibility of our LGBTQ+ colleagues.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Conversations around race, ethnicity and participation in the profession continue to be supported and encouraged at the Bar. It is vital that the profession reflects the community it serves and provides a welcoming career option for all citizens.

WOMEN IN LAW

2021 marked a century of female participation in the barrister profession in Ireland. Since that time, our female colleagues have gone on to become Presidents, judges and jurists of international renown. Dedicated initiatives – from our Law & Women Mentoring Programme to our programme of professional development – continue to support that fine legacy.

EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

In an effort to address the challenges faced by underrepresented, disadvantaged and minority groups in pursuing a career at the Bar, we've launched our first Equality Action Plan. Areas of focus include, among others, gender, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, and socioeconomic background.

DISABILITY AT THE BAR

As a signatory to the DisAbility Network, we aim to ensure that our services and working environment are accessible to all. With continued improvements in our physical infrastructure, use of technology and cultural change, we are anxious that all abilities be accommodated.

OUR ALUMNI NETWORK: BEYOND THE BAR

Membership of The Bar of Ireland offers a passport to a multitude of career and professional development opportunities. The nature of the working world today – the legal sector and the profession – means that opportunities arise outside the Law Library. These opportunities are realised in large part due to the value and the advantage of experience gained at The Bar of Ireland.

CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

From art and astronomy to rugby and running, there is a broad range of groups that you can get involved in as a member.

NEXT STEP IN YOUR JOURNEY

1. MAKE CONTACT

Would you like to speak to a barrister? Speak to lecturers who are barristers or make contact through LinkedIn if you see an article of interest. Through your university law society representative, ask a barrister to come and speak to a group of students.

2. GET INVOLVED

Join your University Law Society, Debating Society, or Literary & Debating Society, and get involved in moot court competitions, essay competitions, student government and other societies – gain experience in advancing issues, negotiating and communicating.

3. STAY CONNECTED

The Bar of Ireland is active on a number of channels that provide an insight into the work of barristers. Check us out on LinkedIn and Twitter to keep up to date with latest developments.

4. OBSERVE

Unless the court is 'in camera', visit the courts, including the Four Courts, Criminal Courts of Justice or Circuit Courts around the country, to observe the administration of justice and the role of barristers within it.



KEEP IN TOUCH

Sign up to our free *Legal Edge* newsletter:
lawlibrary.ie/legaledge



Have a question?

Email thebarofireland@lawlibrary.ie

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MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP OF THE BAR OF IRELAND SUPPORTS YOU AS AN INDEPENDENT BARRISTER,
PROVIDING ACCESS TO:

17 COMMUNITIES DEDICATED TO SPECIFIC AREAS OF LAW (SPECIALIST BAR ASSOCIATIONS)



Tort & Insurance
Bar Association



Tax Bar
Association



Corporate & Insolvency
Bar Association



MIDBA
MEDIA, INTERNET & DATA
PROTECTION BAR ASSOCIATION



IACBA
Immigration, Asylum
& Citizenship
Bar Association



EBA
Employment Bar Association



**FAMILY
LAWYERS**
ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND



FSBA
Financial Services
Bar Association



The Probate
Bar Association
of Ireland



**Planning, Environmental &
Local Government Bar Association**



SPORTS LAW BAR
ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND



eu
Bar Association
Ireland



Cumann Barra na Gaeilge
An Leabharlann Dlí



CBA
CONSTRUCTION BAR
ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND



CLIMATE BAR
COMHSHAOL



Irish Criminal
Bar Association
ICBA



P R D B A
Professional Regulation
and Disciplinary
Bar Association of Ireland

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LEGAL DATABASES
AND EXPERT LEGAL
RESEARCH LIBRARIANS
ACROSS FOUR LIBRARY
BUILDINGS



15

CLUBS AND
SOCIETIES TO
JOIN



OVER 100

HOURS OF NEW SEMINAR
CONTENT PER ANNUM, AND
THE IT AND PRACTICE
SUPPORTS YOU NEED TO
ESTABLISH A PRACTICE

*“Every counsel has a duty to his client fearlessly to raise every issue,
advance every argument, and ask every question....”*

(Lord Reid in [1969] 1 AC 191)

INDEPENDENCE INTEGRITY EXPERTISE



THE BAR
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