

HLRA Bursary Award Policy 2024 /5

Summary

1. The HRLA has offered bursaries since 2006. The HRLA bursary scheme enables individuals to undertake work placements (in the field of human rights law) that they would otherwise be unable to undertake due to their financial circumstances.
2. The HRLA is pleased to offer fully funded placements with two leading human rights organisations this year - [JUSTICE](#) and [5 Essex Chambers](#). All applications will be marked in accordance with this policy.
3. The applicant who receives the highest overall score for their application will also receive the honour of the Peter Duffy Memorial Award (commemorating the innovative and groundbreaking work of the human rights lawyer, Peter Duffy).

What is the Purpose of the bursary?

4. The scheme is designed to assist people who would otherwise be unable to undertake unpaid or low paid work experience in the field of human rights because they lack the financial means.

What Placements & Funding is Available?

5. This year the HRLA will be providing:
 - a. One grant of £4,208 for an 8-week internships with JUSTICE, commencing on 6th January 2025.
 - b. One grant of £4,208 for an 8-week internships with JUSTICE, commencing in March 2025 (precise date tbc).
 - c. Multiple grants of £526 for 5-day mini-pupillages with 5 Essex Chambers (on relatively flexible dates to be agreed between Chambers and the applicant). The precise number of placements is dependent on funds, but will be around 5.
6. All placements are paid at London living wage (assuming a 9am – 5pm day).

What Will I Be Doing on the Placements?

7. JUSTICE have kindly provided us with the following description of the kinds of work participants will be carrying out:

“The intern will work with our legal team on a range of matters, including criminal justice. As an intern you will be an invaluable member of our team, assisting in the development of our policy lines and providing research and analysis to support arguments for or against law reform.

If we are involved in a third-party intervention during your internship, you will be undertaking comparative research and possibly drafting submissions. You will accompany us to meetings with lawmakers and NGOs, speaking engagements and events as well as court hearings. You will attend internal meetings and are expected to engage with colleagues as a member of the JUSTICE staff”.

8. Information about 5 Essex Chambers is available on its website [here](#) and via Chambers Student [here](#). Interns will be involved in the normal activities of a mini-pupil such as shadowing barristers at court, undertaking research tasks and discussing cases with barristers.

How Many Internships Can I Apply For?

9. Applicants may apply for more than one internship - though if successful will only be awarded one placement. Applicants are asked not to apply for an internship if it is unlikely to be relevant to their future career. For example, individuals who do not want to become a barrister should not apply to the 5 Essex Chambers internship (as this is a barristers’ Chambers).
10. The application form asks applicants to rank their preferred placements. The individual who secures the highest mark overall will be awarded their first choice. The individual who achieves the second highest score award will be awarded their highest available choice of placement (etc).

Who is Eligible to Apply?

11. Individuals are eligible to apply if they are studying for, or have recently undertaken, a law undergraduate degree, or postgraduate studies in law, or the GDL, BPTC, SQE or LPC.
12. “Recently” will be determined on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the HRLA. Ordinarily, applicants will have undertaken their relevant degree in the last five years.
13. All applicants must demonstrate that they are committed to working in the field of human rights law in the UK in the future.
14. Those who have already secured a pupillage or training contract will ordinarily be ineligible, save in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the HRLA who will be guided by the purpose of the bursary, as set out above.

What is the Application Process?

15. Applicants must:
 - a. Complete the application form accessible on the HRLA website;
 - b. Read the instructions at the top of the application form carefully and answer all of the questions, including the financial information section;

- c. Send the application form to administrator@hrla.org.uk by **midnight on 3rd October 2024**.
16. The HRLA will conduct a paper sift and select individuals for a short online interview.
17. Applicants who have been shortlisted for interview will be notified by email by 3rd November 2024. Applicants who have not been successful this year will also be informed on this date.
18. Interviews will be held on the afternoon of 16th November 2024 – though if this date is unavoidably inconvenient then please inform the bursary officer so that alternative arrangements can be considered.
19. If any application requires reasonable adjustments (e.g. a paper copy of the application form or access to the application form in an alternative format), then please email administrator@hrla.org.uk

What are the Assessment Criteria?

20. Applications will be assessed in accordance with the following selection criteria:
- a. Commitment to and interest in human rights law in the UK (5 points);
 - b. Relevant skills, abilities and knowledge of the field of human rights law in the UK (5 points);
 - c. Benefit to applicant's development as a lawyer and their future career in human rights law by undertaking internship/placement (5 points);
 - d. Financial need (10 points).
21. Financial need is an important selection criteria. One of the core aims of the bursary is to assist those who would be otherwise unable to undertake an unpaid / low paid internship/placement in human rights law due to their current financial circumstances. It is therefore important that full and accurate information in this respect is provided on the application form.

What are your Diversity Initiatives?

22. HRLA is committed to helping students from the widest possible range of backgrounds access careers in human rights law.
23. **Diversity monitoring form.** We are currently working on creating a diversity monitoring form. In future all applicants will be encouraged to complete this in order that the HRLA can properly gather data on the groups who are applying for, and receive, bursaries. This data will be collected for monitoring purposes only and will not form part of the assessment process.

24. **Name blind sifting.** A candidate's name can often indicate their race and/or their gender. To minimise the effects of potential unconscious bias, all applications will be anonymised.
25. **University blind sifting.** The HRLA is aware of the overrepresentation of students from Oxbridge and Russell Group universities working in human rights. We therefore ask that applicants do not refer to their university on their application and any such references will be redacted (the institution at which the student is studying does not form any part of the selection criteria).
26. All HRLA bursary assessors are reminded of fair selection processes and instructed to follow and apply the assessment criteria. Every application form will be reviewed by at least two members of the HRLA committee.

What Else Do I need to Know?

27. HRLA, with the consent of the applicants, will seek to publish the names and internship details of successful applicants in promotional materials for future bursary schemes and on the HRLA website.
28. Successful applicants are required to write a short report of 1,000-2,000 words summarising the work done on their internship or placement. This report will be published on the HRLA website and must be provided within six weeks of completion of the placement. It must be signed off by the internship manager/supervisor.

How will my Data be Handled?

29. Data provided will be handled in accordance with the HRLA's privacy policy, available on our website. Please note that the contents of your application will be shared with the HRLA's partner organisations ([JUSTICE](#) and [5 Essex Chambers](#)) to facilitate the selection process and the running of the scheme.
30. The HRLA is aware that assessors will be handling financial information on applicants. All financial data provided in the application form will be destroyed by 6th January 2026 and will not be kept on HRLA records.