



In Person Interview for Major Scholarships: Notes for Candidates

1. The purpose of these notes is to give you some idea of what to expect when you interview in person with Middle Temple for a scholarship.
2. All applicants who have applied for a place on the Bar course or a GDL/equivalent course will be interviewed. The only way we can accommodate this is by limiting the time for each interview to 15 minutes.
3. At least 1 week before your interview you will be asked to submit proof online that you have applied for the Bar Course or GDL commencing the next academic year. You must submit this in order for your interview to go ahead.
4. Before your interview you should obtain four passport style photos which you should bring with you on the interview day. Each panel interviews a number of candidates, so the photos are handed out by the clerk to the panel after your interview to help them remember you as accurately as possible when they deliberate.
5. The dress code for interviews is business attire. Applicants should ideally wear a dark suit, with shirt and tie or blouse, or a dark dress which should cover the shoulders and be of appropriate length for the occasion.
6. The interview will take place at Ashley Building, Middle Temple Lane, EC4Y 9BT. You should arrive there 15 minutes before your interview. The closest tube station is Temple on the District and Circle Line and the closest train station is Blackfriars. If you are running late, please call 020 7427 4800, option 1, and inform the Education Department of this. We cannot guarantee that we can offer you an alternative interview time or date.
7. You will be collected from the interview waiting area by the clerk of your panel to whom you should give your four passport photos. When you enter the interview room, do not shake hands with the interviewers.
8. The Inn processes and stores personal information in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Inn's Data Protection Policy. For more information on the Inn's Data Protection policy please visit our website here: <https://www.middletemple.org.uk/about-us/data-protection>. If you have any Data Protection queries, please contact data.protection@middletemple.org.uk.
9. The panel will typically consist of three senior members of the Inn; usually barristers, though some panels may also include a judge. At the start of your interview, they will introduce themselves.
10. The interview itself will be geared towards helping the panel to see you at your best and assess your potential for the Bar according to the published criteria. It is not intended to be an examination but an opportunity for you to demonstrate how you approach questions. That said, you will of course be expected to be aware of current legal issues or cases and have a well-founded view on them.
11. You will probably be asked about mini-pupillages, work experience, court visits, academic research, or other relevant legal experience which you might have mentioned in your application; if there have been additional experiences in those areas since you completed

the form, do mention these at an appropriate time during the interview.

12. You can take a copy of your application form and any notes into your interview if you wish, but do bear in mind that there is limited time for the interview. If you spend a minute looking for a particular piece of information, that's a minute out of your allocated time. The panel want to get to know you and to assess your skills and ability under our criteria.
13. If the panel has any questions about the information in your Finance Form, they will ask at the end of your interview.
14. The Inn will be able to make a contribution of up to £75 towards your reasonable travel expenses if you are travelling from outside the M25. Claim forms can be downloaded from our website: <https://www.middletemple.org.uk/education-training/scholarships-prizes/travel-expenses>. Completed forms should be sent to scholarshipapplications@middletemple.org.uk. Receipts for all claims must be provided.
15. It will take up to four weeks for the office to deal with the administration and confirm the results. Regardless of whether you have been successful or unsuccessful in your application, you will be informed of the result by email. Middle Temple does not reject by silence.
16. Unfortunately, we will not be able to provide feedback on your interview.

Some FAQs for Interviewees

What will happen in the interview? A panellist perspective.

The Panel will all have read your application in advance. When you enter the room they may appear to be reading it but this will be them reminding themselves about you specifically, and of any questions they noted they want to ask you about.

Generally there will be a question designed to put you at ease. Thereafter every interview is different. Questions may be based primarily on the content of your application form, or you may be asked little to nothing about it.

Some panels have a question they ask every applicant. It could be on any topic but is usually based on current affairs or legal issues which are well publicised. This can be a useful way of providing an even starting point for candidates, because none of the candidates know what question they will be asked and so they cannot prepare for it. It enables panel to assess many of the criteria listed in the marking rubric, including a candidate's ability to think on their feet.

Most panels will include a question designed to engage you in a debate and give you an opportunity to show your natural advocacy abilities. Panellists may take different positions and want you to argue for or against them. Don't worry if you disagree with a panellist, or you think their position is challenging – this is all designed to enable you to show what you are capable of!

Some panels may ask if you have any questions – don't worry if you don't. Similarly, don't worry if you are not asked this. If you have questions about the process they can be sent to the Scholarships officer.

Lastly, I can almost guarantee you that the time will fly by, and the interview will be over before you know it. Hopefully you will have enjoyed it. Even if it was uncomfortable or confronting, by the time you leave the interview you will have experience of being interviewed by seniors in the profession who are assessing you. That means when you come to make your applications for pupillage or jobs post Bar Course, those interviews will not be the "first" time you have been in that position. Good luck!

How are the members of each panel chosen?

We take very great care to try and ensure that panels are varied in terms of seniority, practice areas, and background (including but not limited to sex, gender, race and ethnicity). The Scholarship Officer, Director of Education, and Chair of the S&P Committee spend literally hours trying to get this mix right so that the panels reflect, so far as we are able, the wide diversity reflected in the profession and in wider society. However...all of our interviewers are busy professionals and they are all volunteers. They are drawn from practitioners, judiciary, academics, and those recently retired from the profession. They don't get paid, so they give up their time, and therefore their work and earnings, their holiday days, or other opportunities, to help us with this process. All are juggling busy lives which includes unexpected professional demands which means interviewers drop out and we may have to move the panels around.

We also have a system for training interviewers about EDI and unconscious bias. Remember there is one thing you will have in common with everyone on the panel interviewing you – you will have a

shared interest in, and commitment to, law and the principles of equality and justice. And everyone in the room wants you to do well!

Length of interviews:

Middle Temple has received an unprecedented number of scholarship applications this year (2026). To facilitate our commitment to interviewing every eligible candidate we will be rigid with timings. This means that interviews are now expected to be about 10-12 mins long and the Clerk will stop the interview at 15 mins. They will do so even if you are in the middle of an answer.

You are unlikely to be asked if you have any questions for us as we would prefer to spend the time helping you demonstrate your ability. Any questions you have about the process can be directed to the Scholarships Officer by email. He will be part of the interviewing team so please do not expect an answer during the two days of interviews. You may not be asked about the finance form, so it is important you have completed this accurately before you attend for interview.

How can you possibly assess my suitability for a scholarship in as little as 10-15 minutes?

Firstly, the interview is only PART of your application. We also have the application forms themselves which although not formally marked provide very useful evidence of a candidate's ability.

Second, we try to give all interviewers interview training in advance. Where it has not been possible to ensure every panellist has had this training, the majority of the panel will have. They will have considered what questions to ask you in advance and how to bring the best out of your application. Panels might only need a short answer from you to address or demonstrate the point the question was designed to address.

Third, all of our panels have a wide variety of experience, including interview experience. The Chairs will all be seasoned interviewers who are capable of making assessments of candidates relatively speedily. They are also assisted by their colleagues each of whom bring their own perspectives and experience to how they assess people. That means you are actually getting 30 mins (3 x 10-12 mins, or more) "assessment" in every 10-12 minute interview.

Lastly, we are committed to interviewing EVERY eligible candidate who applies. We can only do that by structuring and managing the time very rigidly. The alternative to a short but intense interview for everyone is a paper sift in which worthy candidates may be excluded from full consideration because they didn't do well completing the form, or they struggled to do so. At Middle Temple we still believe that interviewing everyone is the fairest and most positive process but it necessarily comes with some compromises. The inability to give candidates a lengthy discursive interview is one such compromise.

I was giving a great answer...why did they interrupt me?

The purpose of the interview is to try and get evidence of the varying factors addressed by the application process: intellectual ability, motivation to succeed at the Bar, potential as an advocate, and potential to succeed as a Barrister. If you are giving an answer which has already provided evidence of one or more of these but there are other areas where more evidence would be helpful, then the panel might move you on. Conversely, if a candidate obviously gets caught up in an answer which is having the effect of undermining their application, the Panel might move them on from that topic so a new one can be started. The final obvious point is that the interviews are

extremely short, and panels do not want too great a proportion of the limited time available to be spent on a single question.

The finance form:

There will be very limited time, if any, to discuss finances in the interview. The panel will have reviewed your form and may not need to ask any questions about it. The panels are provided with guideline rental expenses for cities in which the GDL / Bar Course providers are based, and in the event you are considered for an award, this is the figure they will apply when assessing need. It may not reflect the amount you want or intend to spend on accommodation, but it represents an imperfect average of typical student accommodation of the type we would expect a postgraduate to live in for the period in which they are completing their studies.

I got an award but it's not enough money – what do I do now?

Much as we would love to be able to fully fund successful applicants we simply cannot do so. The published criteria make clear that we will not award 100% of a candidates need, and we expect you to have considered this in advance. We also rely on candidates giving accurate and considered information on their finance form. If a successful candidate does not receive an award as high as they were expecting or hoping for, it may be down to the information they provided. The scholarship budget is set each year and trying to increase one scholars award could only be achieved by reducing another's/ There simply is no scope for increasing scholarship amounts after the awards have been determined.

I hope you find some of this information useful... and good luck!

Teresa Hay

Chair- Scholarship and Prizes Sub-Committee

March 2026

Guidance on average living costs for different GDL provider locations

Items/Cities (Monthly figures quoted in sterling)	Birmingham	Bristol	Cardiff	Leeds	Liverpool	London	Manchester	Newcastle	Nottingham
<i>Rent¹</i>	553	613	582	576	560	783	576	576	553
<i>Bills</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Groceries</i>	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210
<i>Leisure and Entertainment</i>	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140
<i>Personal Items</i>	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
<i>Transport</i>	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80
<i>Total</i>	1,153	1,213	1,182	1,176	1,160	1,383	1,176	1,176	1,153

¹ This information is up to date as of May 2026. Sources:

Student Living Costs in the UK 2026 & National Student Money Survey: <https://www.savesthestudent.org/money/student-budgeting/what-do-students-spend-their-money-on.html#region> Natwest Student Living Index 2025: <https://www.natwest.com/life-moments/students-and-graduates/student-living-index.html> British Council - Cost of Studying in the UK: <https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/moving-uk/cost-studying>