

# The Northern Circuit Pupil Advocacy Training Framework

## Contents

1. <i>Governance</i> .....	2
2. <i>Trainers</i> .....	3
3. <i>Materials</i> .....	4
4. <i>The Course</i> .....	5
5. <i>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</i> .....	7
6. <i>Competency</i> .....	9
7. <i>Grievances</i> .....	10
8. <i>Appeal</i> .....	10

# 1. Governance

- 1.1 Pupil Advocacy Training is regulated by the Bar Standards Board and provided to members of the Northern Circuit by the Northern Circuit under the auspices of the Northern Circuit’s Education Committee.
- 1.2 Pupil Advocacy Training is provided by practitioners, former practitioners, members of the judiciary and former members of the Judiciary who are volunteers and are organised by the Head of Pupil Advocacy Training and assisted by the Northern Circuit Administrator.
- 1.3 The Head of Pupil Advocacy Training is a member of the Education Committee reporting to the Head of Advocacy and the Head of Education.
- 1.4 The Northern Circuit Administrator is an employee of the Northern Circuit.
- 1.5 The above-mentioned roles are currently fulfilled as follows:

Leader of the Circuit	Jaime Hamilton KC	<a href="mailto:leader@notherncircuit.co.uk">leader@notherncircuit.co.uk</a>
Head of Education	David Temkin KC	<a href="mailto:temkinkc@exchangechambers.co.uk">temkinkc@exchangechambers.co.uk</a>
Head of Advocacy Training	Michael Lemmy	<a href="mailto:michael.lemmy@byromstreet.com">michael.lemmy@byromstreet.com</a>
Head of Pupil Advocacy Training	Michael Lemmy	<a href="mailto:michael.lemmy@byromstreet.com">michael.lemmy@byromstreet.com</a>
Northern Circuit Administrator	Clare Calder	<a href="mailto:clare@notherncircuit.co.uk">clare@notherncircuit.co.uk</a>

- 1.6 The Northern Circuit is firmly committed to encouraging equality, diversity, inclusion and eliminating unlawful discrimination. We promote an environment where diversity is appreciated. The aim is for our organisation to be truly representative of all sections of

society and for everyone involved in circuit activities to feel respected.

- 1.7 The Northern Circuit's policies on Equality & Diversity, Harassment and Privacy apply and are available on the Northern Circuit's website [www.northerncircuit.org.uk/policies/](http://www.northerncircuit.org.uk/policies/)
- 1.8 Pupils will be provided with a copy of this Framework document when they are admitted to the Pupil Advocacy Training Course.
- 1.9 We are required to provide the BSB on an annual basis with census data for pupils who attend our course. We are also required to retain certain information including pupil assessment documents. Where we handle your personal data, we will do so in accordance with the Northern Circuit's policy on Privacy and in accordance with the law. The Circuit Administrator will store electronic documents on an encrypted database.

## 2. Trainers

- 2.1 Pupil Advocacy Training is provided by practitioners, former practitioners, members of the judiciary and former members of the judiciary. All trainers are experienced barristers who have been in practice for at least 10 years.
- 2.2 Advocacy Trainers will usually deliver advocacy training in accordance with the Hempel method and must have been taught to provide advocacy training in accordance with the Hempel method by a suitable provider such as the Circuits or the Inns of Court.
- 2.3 The Head of Pupil Advocacy Training will continually observe the Trainers to ensure the quality and consistency of training and assessment, that Trainers are, when appropriate, providing training in accordance with the Hempel method and that the Trainers are assessing Pupils in accordance with the required assessment criteria.
- 2.4 Pupils are encouraged to provide written feedback at the conclusion of the course including feedback on the Trainers, the quality of the training and whether it was provided in accordance with the Hempel method.

- 2.5 The Northern Circuit encourages practitioners, former practitioners, members of the judiciary and former members of the judiciary to become involved in advocacy training. They are invited to attend advocacy training courses as observers before being trained themselves to teach advocacy.
- 2.6 We hold an online Advocacy Trainers' Session each year before the Pupil Advocacy Training Course to ensure consistency of delivery of training and assessment, to remind trainers of good practice and to advise them of any changes in the curriculum and any other matters they should be aware of.
- 2.7 The Northern Circuit provides a range of advocacy training courses including a New Practitioners' Advocacy Course, an Expert Advocacy Course and Train the Trainers. There are numerous opportunities to observe, to be trained and for training to be refreshed.
- 2.8 The Circuit Administrator keeps a record of those practitioners, former practitioners, members of the judiciary and former members of the judiciary who have expressed an interest in providing advocacy training, those who have observed advocacy training sessions, and those who are qualified to provide advocacy training. We currently have a pool of 33 persons who are qualified to provide training and are active.

### 3. Materials

- 3.1 The Northern Circuit has produced its own advocacy training materials which are intended to provide pupil advocates with realistic scenarios in which to practice and develop their advocacy skills and to allow for an assessment of their competency in advocacy against the Curriculum and Assessment Strategy.
- 3.2 Pupils are requested to provide written feedback on the materials at the end of the Pupil Advocacy Training Course. Trainers are asked to provide their informal feedback at the end of the Pupil Advocacy Training Course.

- 3.3 The materials are reviewed each year to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and relevant to the Curriculum and Assessment Strategy.
- 3.4 The Northern Circuit shares materials and ideas with the Inns, Circuits and ICCA. Our Administrator and Leader have regular formal meetings with their counter parts and our advocacy leads will discuss informally as and when the need or opportunity arise.

## 4. The Course

- 4.1 The Northern Circuit provides one Pupil Advocacy Training Course each year. The course is usually conducted in December or January and in advance of the date that most pupils commence their second six.
- 4.2 The course is free of charge to pupils in independent practice on the Northern Circuit. Subject to capacity, the Northern Circuit may, in its own discretion, provide advocacy training to members of other circuits and pupils in employed practice.
- 4.3 Pupils will be provided with 12 hours of advocacy training.
- 4.4 Pupils are required to undertake a number of tasks themselves prior to receiving face-to-face training including, for example, reading / watching the following documents / films.

Principles for Remote Advocacy	<a href="https://www.icca.ac.uk/principles-for-remote-advocacy-2/">https://www.icca.ac.uk/principles-for-remote-advocacy-2/</a>
Interpreters	<a href="https://www.icca.ac.uk/post-qualification-training/cpd/advocacy-training/interpreters/">https://www.icca.ac.uk/post-qualification-training/cpd/advocacy-training/interpreters/</a>
The 20 Principles of Questioning for vulnerable witnesses	<a href="https://www.icca.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/20-Principles-of-Questioning.pdf">https://www.icca.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/20-Principles-of-Questioning.pdf</a>
'Children and the Court', Professor Michael Lamb	<a href="https://www.icca.ac.uk/post-qualification-training/cpd/advocacy-training/advocacy-the-vulnerable-crime/av-elements/">https://www.icca.ac.uk/post-qualification-training/cpd/advocacy-training/advocacy-the-vulnerable-crime/av-elements/</a>

- 4.5 Pupils are also required to produce a written skeleton argument and to submit it in advance of the Pupil Advocacy Training Course. Skeleton arguments will be assessed by reference to the Curriculum and Assessment Strategy. Trainers assessing skeleton arguments will be provided with a Pupil Advocacy Skeleton Argument Competency Checklist to assist them. They are required to indicate whether the pupil has met the required standard or not. Pupils will be provided with written feedback on their skeleton argument after the conclusion of the face-to-face training.
- 4.6 Face-to-face training will include case-analysis, speeches/submissions, and witness handling, in particular examination-in-chief and cross-examination, by reference to the Curriculum and Assessment Strategy.
- 4.7 Face-to-face training is provided over 2 days in a suitable, multi-room venue, such as Manchester Metropolitan University or Liverpool John Moore's University, which allows for all pupils to be together or to break out into smaller groups as the need arises. There will be appropriate breaks for comfort and refreshments provided gratuitously by the Northern Circuit.
- 4.8 Pupils will be divided into groups of ideally 6 – 8 pupils, and in any event no more than 10. Each group will ideally have 2 trainers. Groups will remain the same on each day, but the trainers will change so that each group will benefit from being trained by at least 4 different trainers over the course of 2 days. Where possible Pupils will not be trained or assessed by a member of their own Chambers, particularly their pupil supervisor, or their line manager.
- 4.9 In December 2023 we trained 53 Pupils in 6 groups of 8 and 1 group of 5. 20 Trainers assisted over the two days allowing 2 trainers per group and for the Head of Pupil Advocacy Training to monitor consistency in the delivery of training and the assessment of competency.
- 4.10 In December 2024 we anticipate training 62 pupils. 21 trainers have agreed to provide their time, so we anticipate 7 groups of 8 and 1 group of 6 and for the Head of Pupil Advocacy Training to

monitor consistency in the delivery of training and the assessment of competency.

- 4.11 The Trainers will usually follow the Hempel method and will continually assess pupils by reference to the Curriculum and Assessment Strategy. Trainers will have had the opportunity to attend an online Advocacy Trainers' Session in advance to ensure consistency of delivery of training and assessment, to remind trainers of good practice and to advise them of any changes in the curriculum and any other matters they should be aware of, and are provided with a Pupil Advocacy Competency Checklist to assist them. Trainers are required to indicate whether each pupil has met the required competency or not.
- 4.12 The Head of Pupil Advocacy Training will move from group to group throughout the delivery of the course to ensure that the Trainers are providing training in accordance with the Hempel method and to ensure consistency of competency assessment.

## 5. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 5.1 The Northern Circuit is committed to ensuring fair access to opportunities for training, development and progress to all members of the Circuit and readers are directed to the Northern Circuit Equality & Diversity Policy, the Northern Circuit Harassment Policy and this Framework document.
- 5.2 We have decided that the delivery of the Advocacy Training should be in person and not on-line. During Covid we provided on-line training. The feedback was negative compared to the feedback we received on in person training. Whilst we understand that in person attendance may cause difficulties for some, but this will be the last opportunity for most pupils to develop and practice their advocacy skills before commencing their Second Six and it is considered that in person delivery of training is more effective and realistic than on-line training. It is also considered that any assessment of competency should be as realistic as possible.
- 5.3 We seek to mitigate any difficulties caused by using premises in either Liverpool or Manchester, the two main legal hubs in the North-West, which are served by good public and private transport

links. Our training is always provided in premises which are easy to get to. Importantly, our programme is conducted during normal working hours when pupils would be expected to attend Chambers or Court rather than during the evenings or at weekends when some pupils have other commitments or responsibilities. We seek to avoid religious or other holidays. Our course is provided free of charge to pupils.

- 5.4 Our training is always conducted in accessible venues and our timetable allows for multiple breaks throughout the day.
- 5.5 We aim to ensure that the materials are realistic whilst ensuring that we comply with our policies on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and do not, for example, reinforce stereotypes. We work hard to ensure that our materials are easy to understand and follow so that all pupils know what is required of them. We provide our materials well in advance of the course so that there is more than sufficient time for them to prepare. We advise Pupil Supervisors to allow pupils time within their normal working day to prepare so that undue pressure is not brought to bear on pupils. We anticipate that by providing accessible materials that are easy to understand and follow, and by ensuring a fair opportunity to prepare properly, we will promote the development of good advocacy skills for all.
- 5.6 When you are accepted on to the course you will be asked whether you have a request for a reasonable adjustment. You should direct any response to the Northern Circuit Administrator. Your request will be dealt with confidentially, but it may be necessary to discuss your particular requirements with the Head of Pupil Advocacy and the Trainers who are allocated to your group to ensure that your request can be met. We will discuss your requirements with you and we will always do our best to provide any reasonable adjustment. If we are unable to meet your request, you will be informed of that decision before the Pupil Advocacy Course commences.
- 5.7 Pupils are requested to provide feedback at the conclusion of the course including feedback on the content of the court, venue, facilities, materials and the timing and location of the course. If



reasonable adjustments have been made for a pupil, we would expect them to provide feedback at this stage.

- 5.8 If reasonable adjustments are made for a Trainer, we would expect feedback to be provided informally to the Northern Circuit Administrator or the Head of the Pupil Advocacy Course.

## 6. Competency

- 6.1 It is incumbent on the Northern Circuit to assess the competency of each pupil by reference to the Curriculum and Assessment Strategy.
- 6.2 Trainers are provided with a Pupil Advocacy Competency Checklist to assist them. They are required to indicate whether each pupil has met the required competency or not.
- 6.3 If a pupil meets the competency required for advocacy they will be provided with a certificate to that effect after the conclusion of the course.
- 6.4 The Northern Circuit Administrator keeps a record of those pupils who have attended the course and have met the required competency or not.
- 6.5 If a Trainer is concerned that a pupil is not meeting the required competency, they should work with the pupil to enable them to develop the skills necessary to meet the required competency.
- 6.6 Trainers may seek the informal assistance of another Trainer or may seek the assistance of the Head of Advocacy Training to assist the pupil in reaching the required competency.
- 6.7 The Head of Advocacy Training may speak with the pupil or the pupil's supervisor if there are concerns regarding a pupil's competency.
- 6.8 The pupil may be asked to undertake additional training to allow them to meet the required competency.

- 6.9 In the event that a pupil does not reach the required competency they will not be provided with a certificate of competency but will be provided with a copy of their Pupil Advocacy Competency Checklist and advised which competency they failed to meet.
- 6.10 In the event that a pupil does not meet the required competency the pupil may undertake the Northern Circuit's Pupil Advocacy Training Course the following year or may attend another pupil advocacy course to achieve the required competency before then.

## 7. Grievances

- 7.1 If you have a grievance or complaint about the Northern Circuit's Pupil Advocacy Training Course you should start by speaking with one of your advocacy Trainers wherever possible. You may be able to agree a solution informally between you. If the grievance or complaint is about them, then you should speak to the Northern Circuit Administrator.
- 7.2 If the matter is serious or you wish to raise it formally you should put the grievance in writing to the Northern Circuit Administrator. You should keep to the facts and avoid language that is insulting or abusive.
- 7.3 The Head of the Pupil Advocacy Training will call you to a meeting, usually within 5 working days, to discuss your grievance. You have the right to be accompanied by a fellow pupil or a member of the Northern Circuit.
- 7.4 After the meeting you will be given a decision in writing, usually within 24 hours.
- 7.5 If more information is needed before making a decision, they will inform you of this and the timescale.

## 8. Appeal

- 8.1 If you are unhappy with a decision regarding your competency or a grievance you can raise an appeal. You should tell the Head of Pupil Advocacy Training.
- 8.2 You will be invited to an appeal meeting, normally within 10 working days, with the Northern Circuit's Head of Advocacy

Training or Head of Education. You have the right to be accompanied by a fellow pupil or member of the Northern Circuit.

- 8.3 After the meeting, the Northern Circuit's Head of Advocacy Training or Head of Education will give you a decision, usually within 24 hours. Their decision is final.