



Government Legal Department

Operations
102 Petty France
Westminster
London
SW1H 9GL

+44 (0)20 7210 3000
FOI@governmentlegal.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/gld

Ref No: FOI 26_047

23 April 2026

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 2nd April 2026 containing your request for information. The Government Legal Department ("GLD") have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the Act", "FOIA")

Request

Please provide the following information regarding the recruitment process up to and including the video interview stage and invitations to any subsequent stages in the 2026 application window for pupillages in the government legal profession (GLD & HMRC pupillages):

1. Number of total applicants

861 applications:

- 139 candidates regretted due to not meeting initial screening questions
- 722 candidates invited to complete Situational Judgement Test (SJT).

2. Number of applicants who passed through each stage up to and including the video interview and invitations to any subsequent stages

Number of applicants who passed through the SJT to the VRT: 331

Number of applicants who passed through the Verbal Reasoning Test (VRT) to the Critical Reasoning Test (CRT): 227

Number of applicants who passed through the CRT to Video Interview (VIV): 163

Number of applicants who were invited to the Assessment Centre (following the Video Interview): 29

3. Of the applicants who failed to pass at each stage, the number of did not pass as a result of low scoring, the number that did not pass as a result of either

withdrawing from the process or failing to complete the stage on time, and the number that did not pass for all other reasons

Number of applicants who failed to pass (i.e. who fell below the cut-off score at SJT): 321

Number of applicants who withdrew at SJT or failed to complete SJT on time: 70

Number of applicants that did not pass SJT stage for other reasons: 0

Number of applicants who failed to pass (i.e. who fell below the cut-off score at VRT): 81

Number of applicants who withdrew at VRT or failed to complete VRT on time: 12

Number of applicants that did not pass VRT stage for other reasons: 11

Number of applicants who failed to pass (i.e. who fell below the cut-off score at CRT): 48

Number of applicants who withdrew at CRT or failed to complete CRT on time: 18

Number of applicants that did not pass CRT stage for other reasons: 0

Number of applicants who failed to pass (i.e. who fell below the cut-off score at Video Interview): 119

Number of applicants who withdrew at Video Interview or failed to complete VRT on time: 14

Number of applicants that did not pass VRT stage for other reasons: 0

4. *For each stage where a 'minimum pass score' was utilised (i.e. where all applicants who achieved a set mark or higher were progressed, and all applicants who did not achieve that mark were not), those minimum pass scores, and the score percentile of that pass score (e.g. if the minimum pass score for a stage was 10, and 60% of candidates scored 10 or higher, the percentile of the pass score would be the 40th).*

All candidates	Pass mark	% Pass	% Fail
SJT	13 (12 for DCS)	51%	49%
VRT	53 (45 for DCS)	74%	26%
CRT	54 (52 for DCS)	76%	24%
VIV	23	20%	80%

Note: Each campaign is different and therefore the data that has been provided is only relevant to this specific pupil barrister recruitment process (2026).

5. *For each stage where passing to the subsequent stage was governed by a rubric other than or in addition to a minimum pass score, that rubric*

A pass mark is set at every stage, so no additional information provided.

6. *The maximum and minimum possibly achievable scores at each application stage*

SJT maximum score:22
SJT minimum score: 0

VRT maximum score: 72
VRT minimum score: 28

CRT maximum score: 80
CRT minimum score: 20

Video Interview maximum score: 28
Video Interview minimum score: 4

7. The lowest, highest, lower quartile (25th percentile), median, and upper quartile (75th percentile) scores achieved by candidates at each stage

	Lower quartile	Median	Upper quartile
SJT	10	12	14
VRT	50	59	68
CRT	53	60	65
VIV	17	20	22

8. Copies of the marking rubric for the video interview stage

GLD considers this information is commercially sensitive and exempt under section 43(2) of the FOI Act 2000, Prejudice of Commercial Interests exemption. This exemption states information is exempt if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person. GLD considers that providing this information could prejudice the recruitment process for future interviews, making the recruitment process less competitive.

Section 43(2) is a prejudice-based exemption and GLD recognises the need for transparency. However, this must be balanced against the public interest in allowing the organisation to protect its commercial information and not place itself at a disadvantage in the recruitment market.

GLD considers the prejudice would be likely to occur and would involve an adverse effect on the ability to obtain the best applicants in respect to any future recruitment campaigns.

9. Number of total applicants applying under the disability confident scheme

193

10. Number of total applicants applying under the disability confident scheme who passed through each stage up to and including the video interview and invitations to any subsequent stages

Number of total applicants applying under the disability confident scheme who passed through the SJT to the VRT: 98

Number of total applicants applying under the disability confident scheme who passed through the VRT to CRT: 81

Number of total applicants applying under the disability confident scheme who passed through the CRT to Video Interview: 64

Number of total applicants applying under the disability confident scheme who were invited to the Assessment Centre (following the Video Interview): 12

Additional clarification

I would like to provide an additional piece of clarification with regard to point 8 of my request. I mean to ask for any instructions, directions, or marking criteria given to markers not already found in publicly available materials that applicants were directed to.

Response

Pursuant to Section 1(1)(a) of the Act, GLD confirms that it holds the information you have requested. We responded below each of the questions above.

Your Rights

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask GLD for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted to GLD within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original correspondence. Please use the contact details provided at the top of this letter in order to request an internal review relating to your original request.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
www.ICO.org.uk

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Team

Operations, Government Legal Department

102 Petty France, Westminster

London, SW1H 9GL

FOI@governmentlegal.gov.uk