

Changes to the pupillage funding rate from 1 September 2019

Our new Bar Qualification Rules came into effect on the first of April 2019. You can find them in Part 4 of the [BSB Handbook](#). They should be read in conjunction with the [Bar Qualification Manual](#), which can be found on the BSB website. This sets out how the rules are applied and it replaces the Pupillage Handbook.

The minimum pupillage funding award for chambers and BSB entities will be set in line with the wages recommended by the Living Wage Foundation.

This will apply to all pupillages starting from 1 September 2019 onwards.

The change will mean a rise to:

- £18,436 for 12-month pupillages in London
- £15,728 for 12-month pupillages outside London

We have contacted chambers that pay below those amounts. If you are in that position and we have not spoken to you, you can contact us on authorisations@barstandardsboard.org.uk

Minimum monthly payments to pupils continue to be mandatory (ie. the total divided by 12) but flexibility is permitted to allow upfront payments. This is covered in rules C113 to 118 of the [BSB Handbook](#). You should ensure that you are familiar with the full rules, which also cover payment of expenses. In the practising period, Authorised Education and Training Organisations (or “AETOs”) must continue to cover the difference between a pupil’s earnings and the minimum monthly amount. The purpose of these rules is to ensure that pupils receive a regular, minimum income throughout pupillage.

The rules allow AETOs to recoup some or all of the payments made to pupils in their practising period of pupillage, from earnings the pupil receives over that minimum amount, up to the amount that they have funded. For example, if an AETO had to top-up the pupil’s earnings by an amount of £500 to reach the monthly minimum, the AETO could recover that in a subsequent month, provided the pupil earns at least the monthly minimum amount.

AETOs may, of course, choose not to recoup such payments or guarantee a higher level of income than the minimum that we specify. AETOs should not, however, profit from any pupillage. In other words, they should not recoup more than they have paid to top up to the minimum funding level.

AETOs must make clear, in writing, the funding arrangements at the time an offer for pupillage is made so that there are no surprises. This is an area where lack of clarity leads to complaints by pupils to the BSB.

The minimum funding award will increase annually in January each year, in line with the wages recommended by the Living Wage Foundation. The first increase will be effective in January 2020.

Transferring lawyers

Transferring lawyers no longer have an automatic exemption from the pupillage funding rules. AETOs would have to apply for a waiver in individual cases.