



Niamh Cleary

Call Date: 2012



“I made the decision to come to the Bar somewhat later than many (I was about 26 at the time). I was in the middle of doing a PhD and I had training contract lined up with a Magic Circle firm. It hadn’t even occurred to me to apply for pupillage, as I didn’t see myself as a natural “fit” for the Bar. Having studied mostly in Ireland, I didn’t think that my academic background would be attractive to a London chambers. Also, having spent almost 10 years as an impoverished student, I was very put off by what I perceived to be an unstable career that offered little in the way of financial security.

Thankfully, my concerns have proved to be wholly unfounded. I don’t think that there is any other job that would provide such a good balance between flexibility, intellectual engagement, and financial security. The commercial Bar is a profession where one is continuously learning and developing. I have learned so much from working alongside my senior colleagues, and I think that their influence has made, and continues to make, me a much better lawyer than I would otherwise be.

I do not think that any other career could offer me all of the benefits that I value in my career as the commercial Bar does, and I am so grateful that this is the path that I have chosen.”