



Sam Hussaini

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“I didn’t go to university until I was 23, having previously done jobs including being a beach lifeguard, a call centre agent, and a bartender at a cinema. I decided to try doing an Access to Higher Education course at my local further education college, but I didn’t have particularly high expectations for where it would take me. Even once I had got on to a degree course and started getting good results, I didn’t feel like being a barrister at somewhere like Fountain Court was a realistic aim, and anyway a job involving lots of public speaking didn’t seem a great fit for an introvert like me. After graduating, I got a fixed-term role as a research assistant at the Law Commission. By that point, I had ruled out other career options like being an academic or a solicitor, so I thought I’d give applying for pupillage a go, and that there was no harm in trying for some top sets like Fountain Court.

I’m very glad I did, because now I’m here, I don’t think there could be a better job for me. Pupillage was a steep learning curve, but you’re never put under unnecessary pressure. I felt that Chambers genuinely wanted me and my co-pupils to succeed, and I was well supported when I became a father midway through the year. Now that I’m a tenant, I have a degree of flexibility and control that not many professions give you. The job can be hard work, but it’s intellectually rewarding, involving complex legal issues that really stretch me. I’m trusted by my colleagues and solicitors to advise on difficult questions that are central to the decisions my clients have to make. From the start, I’ve earned enough to have a comfortable standard of living. As for the public speaking, appearing in court is always a nerve-wracking experience at the beginning of your career, but I’ve found that you don’t have to be the sort of person who craves the limelight to be good at it.”