

# advocate



## Pro Bono: Guide to Organising an Internal Seminar in Chambers

1. **Objective:** Chambers are encouraged to hold an internal seminar in 2023 as part of their commitment to The Chambers Pro Bono Framework. The aim is to encourage and support pro bono at the Bar.
2. **Format:** Best in person or hybrid, but could be online. Two internal seminar options:
  - a. A seminar focussing on pro bono, including its business benefits;
  - b. Or, include pro bono within a practice development seminar (e.g. “top tips for your practice”) or a case update/educational seminar;
3. **Invitees:** all members of chambers; clerking/practice management team; marketing staff.
4. **Suggested topics** (see speaking notes below):
  - a. The business and personal benefits of pro bono;
  - b. The difference it makes to the lives of those who are helped;
  - c. The schemes for volunteering;
  - d. How chambers can support pro bono.
5. **Suggested speakers:**
  - a. Head of chambers, or another silk with experience of doing pro bono;
  - b. Your chambers’ Advocate Pro Bono Champion(s)
  - c. Junior barrister with pro bono experience;
  - d. A clerk, practice manager, marketing manager, or chamber’s director/CEO who supports pro bono in chambers.

# advocate



## 6. Practical planning tips and timeline:

- a. *Now:* To the extent appropriate, speak with/email your chamber's director/CEO, senior clerk and/or head of chambers to get approval or buy-in. (Template email below)
- b. *Immediate practicalities:*
  - i. Decide on event format (see above).
  - ii. Pick a date and time for when members are most likely to be in chambers, or free from work commitments and competing events.
  - iii. Line up speakers.
  - iv. Book a meeting room, and/or arrange Zoom or Teams link.
  - v. Please let Bryony know at [bwells@weareadvocate.org.uk](mailto:bwells@weareadvocate.org.uk) so we can chart which seminars are taking place.
- c. *Next:* email all members and staff inviting them. Ask a clerk/marketing manager to add the event to everyone's diaries.
- d. *A few days before:* arrange refreshments if relevant.
- e. *On the day:* email event reminder.

## 7. External comms: although an internal event, the seminar is a chance for chambers PR:

- a. On the day, post on Twitter and/or Linked In from chamber's account, perhaps with a photo from the seminar. For example (do tweak the text):

*Chambers is today hosting a seminar about how our barristers volunteer #probono. Providing free legal help is one way we give back to our community. It also benefits our barristers with additional experience. #WeDoProBono @WeAreAdvocate*

- b. Include a message/photo on chamber's website, or your client newsletter/magazine. For example:

*Chambers was proud to host a seminar setting out how our barristers can volunteer pro bono, showcasing the benefits of doing pro bono work for members. Chambers has a strong commitment to social responsibility and many of our barristers regularly volunteer with Advocate and schemes such as CLIPs and Pro Bono Connect. We welcome speaking to our clients about pro*

# advocate



*bono, including collaborating with law firms on appropriate pro bono cases - please do contact your usual clerk.*

8. **Further resources** for your seminar:

- a. Template internals email (see below).
- b. Notes for presentation (see below).
- c. [Guide for Pro Bono in Chambers](#)
- d. Handout about pro bono schemes (please ask Bryony for this)

**Need access to these resources or have questions, including about volunteering?**

Please contact Bryony Wells, Engagement Manager at Advocate,  
[bwells@weareadvocate.org.uk](mailto:bwells@weareadvocate.org.uk)

9. **Want to chat about plans or pro bono with a fellow barrister / clerk / chamber's CEO?**

- a. Barristers: [tobybrown@southsquare.com](mailto:tobybrown@southsquare.com) 020 7696 9900
- b. Clerks/practice managers: Leigh Royall [LRoyall@spirebarristers.co.uk](mailto:LRoyall@spirebarristers.co.uk)
- c. Chambers CEOs/directors: [ClareKelly@5pumpcourt.com](mailto:ClareKelly@5pumpcourt.com)  
[Peter.Blair@quadrantchambers.com](mailto:Peter.Blair@quadrantchambers.com)  
[WilliamMackinlay@southsquare.com](mailto:WilliamMackinlay@southsquare.com)

# advocate



## Template Emails

### TO CHAMBER'S LEADERSHIP (IF NEEDED FOR BUY-IN OR APPROVAL)

Dear [ ]

*As you know I am chambers' Pro Bono Champion for Advocate, the Bar's pro bono charity. We have been invited by Advocate to arrange an internal seminar about pro bono in 2023 as part of our commitment to The Chambers Pro Bono Framework.*

*The aim is to explain to members and our clerking team the benefits of pro bono, the ways that barristers can volunteer, and how chambers can support. Holding the event also provides us an opportunity to promote chambers on social media etc, which would be worth doing given the amount of pro bono conducted by our instructing law firms.*

*I propose this take place [in conference room X] on [ ] 2023 at [ ]pm [with refreshments].*

*In terms of speakers, I envisage the following:*

- *[head of chambers / silk]*
- *[junior member]*
- *[senior clerk]*

*Can I check you are [happy for us to proceed]/[ have any comments]?*

*I am planning on [date] emailing all members and clerks with an invite. I will also ask [staff member] to add the event to everyone's diaries.*

*Many thanks,*

....

# advocate



## **REQUEST TO SPEAKERS**

Dear [ ]

*As you know I am chambers' Pro Bono Champion for Advocate, the Bar's pro bono charity. We have been invited by Advocate to arrange an internal seminar about pro bono in 2023, and I very much hope you would be one of the speakers?*

*I am looking at arranging it for [date/time] to take place in [conference room X]. Would that work for you?*

*The aim is to have a [30]-[60] minutes seminar in which we explain to members and our clerking team the benefits of pro bono, the ways that barristers can volunteer and how chambers can support. Holding the event also provides us an opportunity for marketing on social media etc.*

*You could spend 5 or 10 minutes talking about your experience of pro bono, giving examples of the type of work you have done, and what you got out of it. Hopefully you could cover 2 or 3 of the following benefits:*

- *Making a difference by helping people or charities*
- *Interesting and professionally fulfilling work*
- *Broadening your practice areas*
- *Additional advocacy experience*
- *Experience in higher courts or new tribunals*
- *Additional cases or references for applications for panels, KC, the judiciary, or legal directories*
- *Exposure to meet solicitors or in-house clients*
- *Additional or reported cases for your online biography*

*I do hope you can support this event, let me know if you have any questions or comments, or if it would be useful to discuss further.*

*Many thanks,*

....

# advocate



## **TEMPLATE INVITE**

*Dear All*

*As you know I am chambers' Pro Bono Champion for Advocate, the Bar's pro bono charity. As part of our commitment to The Chambers Pro Bono Framework Advocate have invited us to hold an internal seminar in chambers about pro bono.*

*Pro bono work is undertaken by many members of chambers, and given the cost of living crisis it is needed more than ever. Pro bono has many business benefits too and aligns well with the pro bono commitment of many leading law firms - see the level of hours carried out by firms listed [here](#).*

*The seminar will take place [in conference room X/hybrid on Zoom] at [ ] pm on [ ] \_\_\_ 2023. [Refreshments / wine / nibbles will be served.]*

*Presentations will last [ ] minutes, and will cover:*

- The business benefits of doing pro bono;*
- The difference it can make to pro bono clients;*
- What schemes you can volunteer with; and,*
- How chambers staff can assist.*

*Speakers will be [ ].*

*Do hope you can join us. I have asked [ ] to add the event to everyone's diaries.*

*Many thanks,*

# advocate



## **NOTES FOR PRESENTATIONS**

Below is a suggested format for a 30-60 minute seminar focussing on pro bono.

### **1) Overview**

- a. Welcome from head of chambers or whoever is MC'ing.
- b. Overview of the speakers and topics.

### **2) Benefits of pro bono (*barrister speakers*)**

- a. Barrister speakers talk about their experience of pro bono, and using real life examples to identify 2 or 3 benefits they experienced from volunteering.
- b. Together they will hopefully cover the key benefits of pro bono, which are a mixture of (i) professional and wellbeing advantages for the barrister; (ii) benefits to the clerk/practice manager in their roles; and (iii) overall benefits for chambers for marketing and business development.
- c. The key benefits are as follows (see also the [Guide to Pro Bono in Chambers](#)):
  - Making a difference by helping people or charities
  - Interesting and professionally fulfilling work
  - Broadening your practice areas
  - Additional advocacy experience
  - Experience in higher courts or new tribunals
  - Additional cases or references for applications for panels, KC, the judiciary, or legal directories
  - Exposure to meet solicitors or in-house clients
  - Additional or reported cases for your online biography

### **3) How to volunteer (*Advocate Pro Bono Champion*)**

- a. The Advocate Pro Bono Champion can then explain the main ways of doing pro bono and their advantages, aided by a handout (*which Bryony can send to you*) to provide to attendees in hard copy or electronically.

# advocate



b. The key schemes are in summary:

- Advocate
  - **Sign up to Advocate's panel** - become a panel member to receive a weekly pro bono case list and access to the online portal where you can browse cases as they come available.
  - **Pro Bono Pledge** or **Pupil Pledge** – Pledge to complete 25 hours of pro bono work in 2023, or if you are a Pupil, just one piece of pro bono work in your second six.
  - **Case-based Mentoring via Collaborate** – Volunteer to mentor or receive mentoring whilst taking on cases with Advocate.
  - **Reviewing** – If you are over 7 years call, become a reviewer for Advocate and review cases, as they come in to Advocate, on their legal merit so that the panel only receive cases that have already been deemed eligible for pro bono.
- Pro Bono Connect
  - A scheme that aims to connect barristers with firms of solicitors offering assistance in pro bono cases where such support is needed.
  - When a barrister takes on a case through Advocate and they think solicitor assistance would be useful, Advocate can complete a Pro Bono Connect form and see whether any member firms are willing to assist. Help is available in limited areas of law.
- Specialist pro bono schemes e.g. CLIPS, ELIPS (More information on Advocate website).
- Other charities which use pro bono barristers (opportunity to highlight any existing Chambers' relationships with pro bono organisations).

#### 4) How chambers can support pro bono (*chamber's staff member*)

- a. A clerk, practice manager, marketing manager or chamber's director/CEO can then speak about how chambers can support pro bono.
- b. For suggestions see the [Guide to Pro Bono in Chambers](#), key points include:
  - Clerks can receive Advocate and Pro Bono Connect emails, and actively offer cases to members e.g. where it offers desired experience, or fills a diary slot.



# advocate



- In practice development meetings with barristers, discuss whether longer term goals can be supported by pro bono e.g. advocacy; areas of law; profile raising.
- Provide experience of pro bono to pupils during pupillage.
- Include on website or email footers your commitment to pro bono or awards.
- Showcase chamber's pro bono in legal directory submissions.
- Internally keep track of what pro bono is undertaken in chambers.
- Nominate members for the Bar Pro Bono Awards.
- Tweet from chamber's account about members' pro bono efforts or awards etc.