



The Inns of
Court College
of Advocacy

ICCA Bursary Scheme Handbook

Version 1 – April 2026

This document is the central place for information about the ICCA’s bursary schemes and the procedures behind them. Applicants and potential applicants to the schemes, as well as awardees and reserves, are able to use it to find out about the schemes’ sources of funding, the application process and timelines, and what to expect as an awardee or reserve.

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The ICCA's bursary schemes

The ICCA runs two bursary schemes thanks to the generous funding from the [Chancery Bar Association](#) and the [Commercial Bar Association](#) (COMBAR) to support students on its Bar Course. As well as financially providing the two schemes, the Chancery Bar Association and COMBAR assist the ICCA in the shortlisting of bursary applications.

The aim of the schemes is to financially support students who would otherwise not be able to study the ICCA Bar Course. It feeds into the ICCA's wider aim of making the Bar more accessible to those from underrepresented backgrounds. The bursary scheme is aimed at those who have:

- A demonstrable commitment to the work of either The Chancery Bar OR the Commercial Bar
- Significant financial difficulty taking up a place on the ICCA Bar Course without a bursary
- A background that is under-represented at the Bar generally, or at The Chancery Bar or the Commercial Bar particularly; and
- Potential to pursue a career at The Chancery Bar OR the Commercial Bar.

The application process

Eligibility

Applications to the bursary schemes can only be made by ICCA Bar Course applicants during the application window. Applications from those who already hold a deferred ICCA Bar Course offer or who are enrolled ICCA students will not be considered.

Applicants are permitted to apply to only one bursary scheme. If an applicant applies for the Chancery Bar Association and the COMBAR scheme, both applications will be rejected, and neither will be reviewed by the decision panels.

Applications

Applications are made via the forms on the ICCA's website: [ICCA Bursaries](#). The forms are only accessible during the bursary application window which runs from October – January each year.

The forms ask applicants to submit four written answers which relate to the aims of the bursary schemes (above). The written answers must not contain any personal details or names of

academic institutions. Applicants are also required to provide a breakdown of their monthly expenditure, income and assets, and to attach evidence to support their application. Applicants are advised not to submit more than 5 supporting documents.

Some examples of acceptable supporting documents are:

- Recent bank statements (not older than four months)
- Proof of renting/mortgage payments
- Proof of regular bills
- Proof of Universal Credit/ benefits

Unacceptable documents are:

- Forms of ID (passports, ID cards, birth certificates etc)
- Academic documentation (diplomas, transcripts)
- Proof of enrolment(s)

All personal information will be redacted by the ICCA before applications are assessed.

Applicants are also asked to provide equality, diversity and inclusion information at the end of the application form.

Review of applications

Applications are shortlisted by a panel made up of three reviewers: the ICCA's Vice-Dean, an ICCA Governor and a representative from the Chancery Bar Association/ COMBAR.

The panel conducts a blind review of the applications.

Applicants' written answers are scored on a scale of 1 – 6 (6 being the highest possible score) by the panels. Marks awarded to the answers regarding demonstrable commitment to the work of the Chancery Bar OR the Commercial Bar are weighted by an additional 25% to reflect its importance.

The applicant(s) with the highest overall score will be awarded a bursary.

If an applicant does not receive a provisional offer, accept a provisional offer or withdraws their application for the ICCA Bar Course, their bursary application will be withdrawn from consideration.

Awards

Each year, the panel can make up to two bursary awards for each scheme. A full award comes in the form of a £10,000 reduction of ICCA Bar Course fees.

The reduction of fees is split as below:

- 25% of the award is taken off Part One fees
- 75% of the award is taken off Part Two fees

The distribution of bursary awards is non-negotiable.

Those selected for a bursary award will be notified after the release of ICCA Bar Course provisional offers. There is no cash alternative for bursary awardees who do not accept their ICCA Bar Course offer by the offer deadline. Rather, their application and awardee status will be withdrawn.

If the awardee does accept their ICCA Bar Course offer, they will be contacted by the ICCA during Part One enrolment to confirm that their financial circumstances have not changed significantly since the time of their application. Awardees will be asked to disclose any changes in their financial circumstances, including the receipt of any scholarships or alternative funding, in a short paragraph addressed to the review panel. The review panel will then decide if the full bursary award should be awarded.

It is possible for awardees to receive the full reduction in course fees whilst obtaining a scholarship or alternative funding if financial hardship would still be felt without reduced course fees. In circumstances where a student has (for example) a scholarship for their fees, but is still in evidenced financial difficulty, the ICCA would make a cash award from the bursary fund to support that student with their living expenses.

Awardees who receive their bursary in the form of a reduction in fees will receive invoices for both their Part One and Part Two course fees. The invoices are payable by bank transfer or cheque. It is not possible to make a credit card payment for either set of fees.

Deferrals

It is not possible for awardees to defer their bursary awards alongside their ICCA Bar Course offer without exceptional circumstances (such as illness or similar grounds).

If an awardee believes exceptional circumstances apply and would like to defer their ICCA Bar Course offer and their bursary award, they should contact the Registry Team via admissions@icca.ac.uk for guidance.

If a deferral of a bursary award is not granted, the awardee will need to decide if they would like to continue with their ICCA Bar Course offer deferral. If they choose to continue, their bursary award will be redistributed to a reserve.

If an awardee wishes to move their Part One pathway from September to January within the same academic year, they will keep their bursary award and will not need to request a bursary deferral from the Vice-Dean.

Reserves

As well as awardees, each year the panels select up to two reserves for both schemes. If an ICCA offer holder is selected as a reserve, their application may be reconsidered if a bursary award for the scheme they applied to is not taken up.

Reserves are advised to proceed on the basis that they will not receive an ICCA bursary and should take this into consideration when planning their finances for the Bar Course.

A reserve's application may be reconsidered if an awardee does not take up their place on the ICCA Bar Course, defers their offer without a bursary award or withdraws from the ICCA Bar Course.

If a reserve is upgraded to an awardee and has already paid their Part One fees, their bursary award will be applied to their Part Two fees.

Information sharing

After the awardees and reserves are initially confirmed, the following equality, diversity and inclusivity information for each awardee and reserve is shared with the panels:

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Religion
- Sexual Orientation

This information is provided by all bursary applicants when they complete the application form.

The names of the awardees and reserves are not shared with the panels at this stage.

Once the awardees have been finalised after they disclose any changes in their financial circumstances, the names of the awardees are shared with the panels, the Chancery Bar Association administrator and the COMBAR administrator. The administrators may request to get in touch with the awardees via email. In this case, the ICCA will ask the awardees if they are happy for the ICCA to share their emails with the SBAs.

Timeline summary

Month	Activity
October	<p>ICCA Bar Course applications open on ICCA website.</p> <p>Bursary scheme applications open on ICCA website.</p>
January	<p>ICCA Bar Course applications close in early January.</p> <p>Bursary scheme applications close on the last weekday of the month.</p>
February	ICCA organizes and redacts bursary applications ahead of the shortlisting stage
March	<p>Panels score and shortlist bursary application in early March.</p> <p>ICCA Bar Course provisional offers are released in mid-March.</p> <p>Bursary outcomes are confirmed and released to offer holders in late March/early April.</p>
May	<p>ICCA Bar Course provisional offer acceptance deadline is in mid-May.</p> <p>ICCA Bar Course final offers are released in late May</p>
June	<p>ICCA Bar Course final offer acceptance deadline is in early June.</p> <p>September Part One enrolment takes place across June and July. Awardees starting Part One in September are contacted about their financial circumstances.</p>
July	<p>Awardees for September are confirmed by the panels.</p> <p>Confirmed awardees will receive their Part One fee invoice during enrolment.</p>

	SBA admins are contacted about awardees confirmed for September.
October	January Part One enrolment takes place across October and November. Awardees starting Part One in January are contacted about their financial circumstances.
November	Awardees for September are confirmed by the panels. Confirmed awardees will receive their Part One fee invoice during enrolment. SBA admins are contacted about awardees confirmed for January.