



# The Aqeel H Noorali Essay Competition £1000 Prize

*The Aqeel H Noorali Essay Competition is hosted by 9 Gough Chambers in memory of our friend and colleague, Aqeel Noorali, who sadly passed away on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020.*

*Aqeel was a talented and dedicated barrister who particularly enjoyed arguing novel points of law. We want to honour Aqeel's memory by encouraging the next generation of lawyers to prepare thoughtful, cogent and persuasive written arguments, a talent Aqeel possessed in abundance.*

## **PROMPT:**

**"Considering the backlog of criminal cases is causing lengthy delays in criminal proceedings, the Government should pass legislation to reduce the size of juries to expedite the process."**

It is estimated that there is a current backlog of 58,000 cases waiting to be heard in the Crown Court. The growing backlog has many causes but has been exacerbated by the pandemic that caused a suspension of jury trials. The amount of cases waiting to be heard is causing lengthy delays, meaning complainants, defendants and the public are often waiting years for justice to take its course.

Candidates should argue for or against the proposition, with a minimum word count of **800** and a maximum of **1,200**. Candidates should assume that a reduction in the size of juries would, to some extent at least, ease the backlog.

## Eligibility

All participants must be full-time students aged 16 – 19 years at non-fee paying schools at the time of entry to the competition.

## Marking Criteria

The candidates will be marked on consideration of legal principles, structure, originality and persuasiveness.

## Prizes

The winner shall receive a prize of **£1,000** and a **mini-pupillage<sup>1</sup>** at 9 Gough Chambers. The Second placed winner will receive £500. The third placed winner will receive £250. Runners-up may also receive a cash prize at the judges' discretion.

The winners and runners-up will receive an invitation to a **reception** at 9 Gough Chambers in November 2021. This will be an opportunity to receive their prize and meet members of chambers, clerks and staff.

## How to Enter

The competition **opens** at 9am on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021. The **deadline** is 4pm on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Prize winners will be notified in the week commencing the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

To enter the competition, candidates should upload their submissions as a pdf or Word document to the TypeForm available [here](#) and via the Big Voice London website.

Candidates will be required to provide the following information when submitting their entry on the Typeform:

- Full name
- School/College
- Date of Birth
- The stage in education (i.e. first or second year of sixth form)
- Email address

Terms and Conditions can be found on the 9 Gough Chambers website.

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<sup>1</sup> Once the winner has obtained the age of 18 years