

THE HONOURABLE SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE

Reader

Role: Lent/Autumn Reader
Reports to: Parliament

Role Description

The governance framework of the Middle Temple provides for two Readers to hold office in each year, a Lent Reader and an Autumn Reader.

The Reader is an important and ancient office of the Inn, providing support and guidance for the educational work of the Inn and in particular to its student membership. The Reader's role is to work in partnership with the Treasurer, the Deputy Treasurer, the Under Treasurer, members of the Executive, Standing and relevant Sub-committee of the Inn, and members of the senior management of the Inn, so that, together, they can make progress in promoting the educational objectives of the Inn.

Appointment and Eligibility

The provisions relating to the appointment of the Reader are set out in the Statutes and by-laws of the Inn. Only Masters of the Bench may be appointed Readers. Unless Parliament otherwise determines, a Master of the Bench shall not be eligible to be Reader unless he/she has attended not less than three meetings of Parliament in the year preceding his/her election. Furthermore, a past Treasurer of the Inn is not eligible for election as Master Reader, and any Master of the Bench who has served as Reader will not be eligible for election as Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer or Deputy Treasurer Elect.

Term of Office

In each year, there shall be two Readers, a Lent Reader and an Autumn Reader. The Lent Reader shall assume office on 1 January in the relevant year, and his/her office shall end on 30 June in that year. The Autumn Reader shall assume office on 1 July in the relevant year, and his/her office shall end on 31 December in that year.

At the request of Master Treasurer, the Reader who is not in office in any year shall be eligible to deputise for the one who is, should the need arise.

Responsibilities of the Reader

As stated above, the role of the Reader is to provide support and guidance for the educational work of the Inn and in particular to its student membership. At all events which the Reader attends, he/she should play an active role. The Reader has a number of specific responsibilities and duties, including the following:



- Arrange and hold a Feast and Reading during his/her term of office, and at this, to preside and say Grace and deliver his Reading in Hall. On this occasion, the Reader shall take precedence over Master Treasurer, Master Deputy Treasurer and all other Masters of the Bench. The subject of the Reading shall be at the discretion of the Reader.
- Be present at every Call to the Bar, and present the successful candidates to Master Treasurer to be Called.
- Be present at every Call, and Honorary Call, to the Bench, and present to Master Treasurer those individuals who have been elected to the Bench.
- Both Readers in any year, and the two Readers for the following year, serve as *ex officio* members of the Education and Training Committee.
- Assist as and when called upon by Master Treasurer in duties and events involving students and recruiting activities, including All Inn Dining evenings, advocacy training sessions (including those held at Cumberland Lodge and in York), introductory sessions for students, visits to the Bar Professional Training Course providers and other educational visits; provided that the Reader shall only be involved in teaching activities where he/she has received the appropriate training.
- Offer encouragement and advice to any student member or recently called barrister who seeks it.
- Be entitled to have put up in the Inn a panel bearing his/her duly authenticated coat of arms with an appropriate inscription.
- Be entitled to be made aware of all events in his term of office which might be of interest to the Reader, or at which the Reader's attendance is desirable.
- Support, on completion of the term of office, the incoming Reader through (inter alia) the provision of advice and de-briefing.
- Safeguard the good name and values of the Inn.
- Declare any conflict of interest while carrying out his/her duties as Reader.

Person Specification

Any candidate for the role of Reader should possess the following qualities:

- Commitment to the work of the Reader;
- Knowledge of the educational activities of the Inn (although this does not mean detailed knowledge of every aspect of these activities);
- The interpersonal skills needed to develop a positive and professional relationship with students, and also with members of the Executive Committee, other Standing Committees, the Inn's officers and staff;
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort;
- A readiness to focus on the Reader's area of responsibility, and to promote this in the wider governance of the Inn's affairs, but combined with the ability to take decisions in the best interests of the members of the Inn as a whole;
- Good communication and interpersonal skills; and
- Impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences.

Time Considerations

Although the role is voluntary, the Reader will be required to devote the time to the role necessary to fulfil the responsibilities set out above. It is also important that the Reader is



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able to be available to the Under Treasurer and Directors of the Inn on a regular basis. In addition to attending relevant meetings, other contact – usually electronic or by telephone – may therefore be necessary.

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