

March 2026

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2026

■ Chloe Rixon

Moments like International Women's Day offer a chance to recognise the contributions women make across the profession and to encourage those considering a future at the Bar. Chloe Rixon, our newest female tenant, has shared some reflections on the importance of IWD and women at the bar.

WHY SHOULD YOUNG WOMEN CONSIDER COMING TO THE BAR?

Young women should come to the Bar because we truly are suited to the profession, and do not need to change our personas or demeanours to match the more bullish or aggressive approach that some men in the industry have been known for using, because this is not necessarily the best approach the advocating. Yes, of course, there is a time and place for a certain level of umph in submissions, but I often find that a calmer and well-composed approach has better prospects of achieving the best result for your client. This is because being a barrister is not just about how you perform in a heated trial, but is about achieving the best outcome for your client in the run up to a trial, which includes various other hearings and potentially advising on settling.

Having a bullish approach to litigation can cause some individuals to become narrow-minded and fail to understand potential flaws in their case, and ultimately result in throwing the trial in any event. In my experience, many of the women I have encountered at the Bar are well adept at considering their cases with a reasoned and grounded approach, and have not needed to imitate perceived characteristics of men at the Bar, and have accordingly thus far had very successful careers. As such, the Bar needs more women and do not let statistics of male vs female barristers put you off.

WHAT DOES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MEAN TO YOU?

IWD is very important to me, and Chambers as a whole, because it gives us the opportunity to reflect and acknowledge how far we have come as women at the Bar. As a Chambers, each year we make sure to put in the extra effort and organise a IWD networking event, to

be able to say thank you to some of the fantastic women who work with us all year round, and take a rare moment to celebrate the things we have achieved.

Without IWD, it would be easy to look over our achievements in a male dominated industry, and I am glad that we do not allow this happen. I also think that IWD is important because it also gives us the opportunity to focus our minds and consider how the future of the profession is looking, and how we can improve it for the future by encouraging more women to join the Bra and by taking the time to engage in such outreach programmes to help in this goal.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR PROUDEST MOMENT SO FAR IN PRACTICE?

It is hard to say it is my proudest moment, because it has happened more than once, and I hope it continues to happen, but a very satisfying moment as a young female barrister is achieving the best outcome for your client in a case when your opponent is (politely put) a more elderly male barrister.

It is unfortunately still common enough to be the recipient of degrading comments, even if they are subtle. For instance, only a few weeks ago, before a hearing I had to tolerate my male opponent making comments about being "surprised" about having to deal with so many "girls" in our profession lately. I like to use these conversations as motivation for "surprising" male barristers at just how fantastic us "girls" can be in Court. I appreciate it can feel intimidating sometimes in this industry, but I think with the right mindset we can make sure these experiences actually encourage us to thrive as women, rather than letting them make us feel inferior.



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