

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Chambers is committed to promoting and advancing equality. All persons coming into contact with Chambers should be treated fairly and should not be discriminated against on the grounds of their:

- (a) age;
- (b) disability¹;
- (c) gender reassignment;
- (d) marriage and civil partnership;
- (e) pregnancy and maternity;
- (f) race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origins);
- (g) religion or belief
- (h) sex;
- (i) sexual orientation

All members of Chambers and employees of Chambers shall be aware of the Equality and Diversity Policy. New members of Chambers and new employees of Chambers shall be provided with a copy of the Equality and Diversity Policy upon joining Chambers. A copy of the Equality and Diversity Policy shall be provided to any person upon request and shall be available on Chambers' website. Chambers will provide annual training for staff and members of Chambers to promote awareness of and compliance with the Equality and Diversity Policy.

The Equality and Diversity Policy shall be reviewed every two years by one of the Equality and Diversity Officers (currently James Copley, Catherine Wood QC and Ceri White).

Recruitment and selection

Chambers is committed to selecting tenants, pupils and staff on an equal and non-discriminatory footing. The Pupillage Administration and Tenancy Selection Policy sets out the procedures for the selection of pupils and tenants which are designed to achieve this end. The Selection and Recruitment Procedure details the procedure to be followed in the recruitment of members of staff.

There shall be open and objective recruitment for all Chambers' staff vacancies. Recruitment and selection procedures for clerks and other staff employed by Chambers will follow the approach set out in the Recruitment and Selection Procedure.

¹ S.6 (1) (a) & (b) Equality Act 2010: a person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities

The person with lead responsibility for any committee or panel responsible for the selection of members of Chambers, pupils or members of staff, and all members of the selection panel will have received recent and appropriate training in fair recruitment and selection processes,. The training will include:

- Fair and effective selection and unconscious bias
- Selection criteria and assessment methods
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- Shortlisting skills
- Interviewing skills
- Assessment and making a selection decision
- Monitoring and evaluation

Fair Access to Work

The distribution of work to all members of Chambers, working pupils and squatters shall be carried out in a manner that is fair to all and without discrimination.

Chambers' clerks will not accede to discriminatory instructions from professional clients, whether solicitors or other instructing agents. Counsel may be selected only on the basis of the skills and experience required for a particular case.

If a solicitor or instructing agent refuses to withdraw a discriminatory instruction it must be reported at once to the Head of Chambers who must report it forthwith to the relevant Bar Council committee chairman.

Equality and Diversity Monitoring

The selection of pupils and tenants shall be monitored by reference to race, disability and gender in accordance with the procedures set out in the Pupillage Administration and Tenancy Selection Policy which sets out the procedures for the selection of pupils and tenants.

The distribution of work between second six pupils and junior tenants is monitored by the Senior Clerk in consultation with the pupillage administrator who will ensure that the distribution is carried out in a manner that is fair to all and without discrimination.

Chambers will regularly review the allocation of unassigned work to ensure that such work is distributed to members of Chambers in a fairly and without discrimination.

Where Chambers seek to recruit clerks and other staff employed by Chambers, monitoring data by race, disability and gender shall be collected on the Equality and Diversity Monitoring Forms set out in the Appendix. Copies of application forms/letter of application and Equality and Diversity Monitoring Forms shall be retained for a period of at least 2 years from the date of receipt.

Complaints and grievances

Informal grievance procedure

1. Where a pupil, tenant or employee of Chambers (“the complainant”) thinks that they may have been discriminated against on any of the above grounds by a pupil, tenant or employee of Chambers, the complainant may make use of the informal grievance procedure.
2. The complainant should approach the member/s of Chambers nominated for the purpose of assisting in the informal resolution of complaints. The member of Chambers currently nominated is James Copley. The same members of Chambers are nominated as informal advisors and will endeavor to assist complainants should a complaint be made under the formal grievance procedure.
3. When a complaint is made confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible. The name of the complainant will not be released (except to the person/s complained against) without their consent.
4. A complainant will not be victimised nor suffer a detriment because of a complaint made in good faith.

Formal grievance procedure

1. Where a pupil, tenant or employee of Chambers or a person who has made an application to be a pupil, tenant or employee of Chambers (“the complainant”) thinks that they may have been discriminated against on any of the above grounds by a pupil, tenant or employee of Chambers, the complainant may make use of the formal grievance procedure.
2. A complaint must be made in writing. A complaint must be addressed to the Head of Chambers. A complaint must be received within 4 weeks of the act or omission complained of. Exceptionally a written complaint may be considered at the discretion of the Head of Chambers if it is received later than 4 weeks from the act or omission complained of.
3. When a complaint is made confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible. The name of the complainant will not be released (except to those conducting the investigation and to the person/s complained against) without their consent.
4. A complainant will not be victimised nor suffer a detriment because of a complaint made in good faith.
5. A complaint will be investigated by one of the members of Chambers nominated for the purpose of investigating formal complaints. Those members are currently Kate Branigan QC and David Williams QC. If for any reason the Head of Chambers considers that it is inappropriate or impracticable for the members of Chambers nominated for the

- purpose of investigating formal complaints to conduct and investigation he shall nominate another member of Chambers to conduct the investigation.
6. The investigation shall involve taking such steps as appear to be proportionate to the nature of the complaint. Upon the conclusion of the investigation a written response shall be sent to the complainant. Where practicable the written response should be sent to the complainant within 4 weeks from receipt of the written complaint, otherwise the written response should be sent to the complainant as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter.
 7. The written response must be brought to the attention of the Head of Chambers. Where actual or potential discrimination has been identified Chambers will take appropriate remedial action.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years, unless the legal or regulatory requirements change. The policy will be reviewed by one of the chambers Equality and Diversity Officers. The date of the next policy review will be October 2018.