

## 9 BEDFORD ROW EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY (December 2020)

This is a general statement of 9 Bedford Row's policy regarding Equality and Diversity and should be read and interpreted in conjunction with the Bar Standard Board's Code of Conduct and the Equality and Diversity Code for the Bar, accessible at [www.barstandardsboard.org.uk](http://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk). The 'BSB Handbook: Supporting Information' can be accessed at [www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/media/1596730/bsb\\_equality\\_rules\\_handbook\\_june\\_2014pdf](http://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/media/1596730/bsb_equality_rules_handbook_june_2014pdf).

This general statement is supplemented by specific policies concerning fair access to work, harassment, parental leave, flexible working, reasonable adjustments and equality monitoring.

All tenants, employees and pupils should be aware of the provisions of this Policy and the Code. Chambers is committed to the promotion of a culture of equality and diversity; all members and staff should be aware of the terms and effect of this policy.

### **1. Statement of Policy**

1.1 Chambers is committed to eliminating discrimination and to the promotion of equality and diversity and the establishment of an environment of fairness across the workplace. This statement sets out Chambers' policy and provides guidance to all those in Chambers.

1.2 It is the policy of Chambers:

To ensure that no tenant, employee, pupil, applicant for tenancy, pupillage or employment, professional or lay client receives less favourable treatment (directly or indirectly) on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, citizenship, gender, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, marital status or civil partnership status, religion or belief, age or disability or pregnancy or maternity or paternity, whether in practice, employment, recruitment or training or in the provision of services.

1.3 Chambers will:

- Select its pupils, tenants and employees;
- Treat its tenants, employees, pupils, mini-pupils, lay and professional clients, applicants for pupillage, tenancy or employment and anyone else who has occasion to have dealings with Chambers;
- Allocate work within Chambers;
- Accept instructions from and proffer advice to lay and professional clients;
- Plan and provide services to lay and professional clients;

without distinction by reference to race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, citizenship, gender, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, marital status or civil partnership status, religion or belief, age or disability or pregnancy or maternity or paternity.

- 1.4 Moreover Chambers will avoid any unjustifiable requirements or practices that have a disproportionately adverse effect on any tenant, employee, pupil or pupillage applicant by reason of any of the aforesaid.
- 1.5 All tenants, pupils and employees whether permanent, full or part-time or temporary are required to work in conformity with this Policy. No person has authority to contravene this policy.
- 1.6 In the event of any decision or action contrary to the terms or spirit of this Policy or any complaint of discriminatory practices, these shall be dealt with in accordance with Chambers' Grievance and Complaints Policy and Procedure. (link)
- 1.7 Chambers does not permit any victimisation, discrimination and harassment. Any allegations of such will be investigated and appropriate action taken. It should be noted that any such infractions will be deemed as clear disciplinary offences.
- 1.8 Any person who believes or suspects that he or she has been discriminated against, victimised or harassed on grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, citizenship, gender, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, marital status or civil partnership status, religion or

belief, age or disability or pregnancy or maternity or paternity in contravention of the law or the Code of Conduct of the Bar of England and Wales, should raise the matter through the appropriate complaints procedure, in the first instance with the Senior Clerk or Chambers Director or with an Equality and Diversity Officer.

A copy of the Chambers' complaints procedures is available from the Senior Clerk, the Chambers Director or an Equality and Diversity Officer.

## **2. Implementation**

2.1 The Head of Chambers is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy. The Equality and Diversity Officers are tasked to oversee the implementation, monitoring and review of this policy.

## **3. Other Policies**

3.1 In addition to this general statement of policy, the principles stated herein will govern all other policies and procedures including Internal Grievance, External Grievance and Complaints, Harassment, Pupillage, Diversity Data, Recruitment and Selection Criteria, and Maternity, Paternity, Fair Access to Work, Reasonable Adjustments and Flexible Working.

## **4. Recruitment**

4.1 Senior Management are required to ensure all recruitment is conducted by assessing candidates' suitability for identified positions or vacancies, irrespective of age, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality, citizenship, gender, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, religion or political persuasion.

4.2 Those responsible for, and engaged in, the process of recruitment throughout Chambers are required to be trained in the prescribed manner

as set down by the Bar Standards Board and within the ethos of this policy.

4.3 The member with lead responsibility for any committee or interviewing panel responsible for the selection of members of Chambers, pupils and clerks and all members of the final selection panel must have received recent and appropriate training in Equality and Diversity and in fair recruitment and selection processes, except in unforeseen and exceptional circumstances.

## **5. Specific Considerations for Disabled Applicants and Visitors to Chambers**

5.1 Where a tenant, employee, pupil or potential recruit suffers from a disability which impacts on their ability to perform duties, Chambers will consider what reasonable adjustments could be made to the terms of employment or duties carried out. Any adjustments will be considered in light of their effectiveness, cost and disruption to others.

5.2 Where a tenant, employee, pupil or potential recruit suffers from a disability such that the physical features of the premises make it difficult to perform assigned duties, Chambers will consider what adjustments could reasonably be made to alleviate or remove the disadvantage. Any adjustments will be considered in light of their effectiveness, cost and disruption to others.

5.3 Chambers will consider what adjustments could reasonably be made to support disabled clients and visitors to the premises.

## **6. Monitoring and Review**

6.1 Chambers will keep such records as are necessary to ensure that this Policy is effectively monitored and maintained. This policy and all monitoring of Equality and Diversity data will be reviewed annually by the Equality and Diversity Officers.

6.2 Chambers' Equality and Diversity Officers will ensure publication in an anonymised form a summary of Chambers' diversity data at least every three years.

6.3 The Equality and Diversity Officers will review:

- The number and percentages of staff, barristers and clerks from different groups
- Applications for pupillage, staff and membership of Chambers
- The allocation of unassigned work.

6.4 Chambers will use the results of such reviews to:

- Collect and analyse data broken down by race, disability and gender
- Investigate the reasons for any disparities in that area
- Take appropriate remedial action.

## **7. Promotion**

7.1 Further, Chambers commits to the promotion of Equal Opportunities in respect of:

- Staff training in general, and at induction in particular
- All published materials, advertising, and website
- All aspects of recruitment including tenancy, pupillage and staff disability access and facilities.