

## 7 King's Bench Walk Equality and Diversity Policy

### (1) Statement of Policy

1. The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of 7 King's Bench Walk ("**Chambers**") to the promotion of equality of opportunity and diversity.
2. It is the policy of Chambers to deal with its tenants, employees, pupils, lay and professional clients and all applicants for pupillage or tenancy or any other position (and all others who have dealings with Chambers, including judges, arbitrators, court staff and other barristers) without distinction by reference to race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sex, pregnancy and maternity, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief, age or gender reassignment ("**the protected characteristics**").
3. Chambers is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, including direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment.
4. The policy adopted by Chambers in relation to each of the legal and regulatory requirements set out in BSB Handbook Equality Rules and Supporting Information is set out below. In addition to this Equality and Diversity Policy, Chambers has adopted the following further policy documents:
  - (a) Pupillage Policy;
  - (b) Diversity Data Policy;
  - (c) Reasonable Adjustments Policy;
  - (d) Equal Access to and Fair Allocation of Work Policy (and accompanying guidance);
  - (e) Parental Leave, Special Leave, Career Break and Flexible Working Policy;
  - (f) Harassment Policy; and
  - (g) Grievance Procedure.

5. Chambers retains and will exercise the right to deal appropriately with any inappropriate or improper conduct by any member of Chambers, member of staff, pupil or mini-pupil, whether or not it is covered by one or more of Chambers' specific policies.

## **(2) Scope of Policy**

6. This policy applies to members of Chambers and members of staff, pupils and mini-pupils, as well as all applicants to Chambers' workforce. Chambers' clients (both lay and professional) are also protected from discrimination.

## **(3) Implementation and Review of Policy**

7. Chambers has appointed Equality and Diversity Officers ("EDOs") who undertake responsibility for:
  - (a) ensuring that Chambers' written Equality and Diversity Policy is implemented, reviewed regularly (i.e. every 2 years) and kept up-to-date;
  - (b) ensuring that all Chambers' policies and procedures are reviewed regularly (i.e. every 2 years) to ensure that they comply with this Equality and Diversity Policy, as well as the BSB Handbook Equality Rules and Supporting Information and that records are kept of the outcome of such reviews and of any action taken in response;
  - (c) preparing, reviewing and implementing an equality action plan, the purpose of which is to monitor and implement Chambers' equality and diversity policy. By its nature, this action plan will change and be updated as its specific aims and targets are met;
  - (d) liaising with the Bar Council / BSB Equality and Diversity Officers as appropriate on behalf of Chambers in relation to matters pertaining to equality and diversity;

- (e) assisting members of Chambers, pupils, mini-pupils and members of staff with any problems, issues or queries they may have on equality and diversity issues;
- (f) advising the Head of Chambers, senior clerks, the Pupillage Committee and the Management Committee on equality and diversity issues;
- (g) encouraging all members of chambers and staff including clerks to undertake equality and diversity training and ensuring that those who are involved in assessing candidates for recruitment of pupils, tenants and members of staff are trained in non-discriminatory selection techniques;
- (h) monitoring data from pupillage (as well as any member or staff recruitment exercises) and ensuring that any actions necessary to remedy or investigate unfair outcomes are developed and added to Chambers' equality action plan.

8. The current EDOs are John Bignall, Anna Gotts and Andrew Pearson.

**(4) Recruitment, Recruitment Monitoring and Diversity Data Collection**

- 9. Chambers is committed to ensuring that pupils, tenants and employees are selected without discrimination on grounds of the protected characteristics identified at paragraph 2 above and against objective and fair criteria.
- 10. Pursuant to Rule C110(3)(b) of the BSB Handbook Equality Rules, the person with lead responsibility for any selection panel and every member of all selection panels must have received recent (i.e. within the last 5 years) and appropriate training in fair recruitment and selection processes. Chambers is committed to ensuring that this requirement is fulfilled and that the guidance on fair recruitment and selection set out in the Bar Council's Fair Recruitment Guide for the Bar is adhered to.
- 11. Chambers has a written Pupillage Policy, including in relation to the procedure for application. This policy will be reviewed regularly by the Pupillage Committee, in consultation with the EDOs.

12. Chambers recognises the need to collate, monitor and review diversity data in order to ensure that Chambers may best fulfil its commitment to equality and diversity. To this end:
- (a) The Pupillage Committee will collect and provide to the EDOs annually within 3 months of the end of the recruitment process (which occurs on the last acceptance of an offer of pupillage by a candidate) an analysis of the determination of applications broken down by the relevant protected characteristics (including race, disability and gender). The EDOs will review the information within 2 months of receipt and will discuss any issues arising (including the reasons for any disparity in that data and any appropriate remedial action) with the Secretary to the Pupillage Committee. The EDOs will report to the Management Committee on the outcome of this process by 31 January of the following year.
  - (b) The EDOs will regularly (i.e. every 3 years) request and review available data broken down by the relevant protected characteristics (including race, disability and gender) in respect of all applications to become established practitioners and members of Chambers' staff. The EDOs will discuss any issues arising (including the reasons for any disparity in that data and any appropriate remedial action) with the Management Committee.
  - (c) Chambers has adopted a written Diversity Data Policy and appointed a Diversity Data Officer ("DDO") who (every 3 years) will collect, process and publish on Chambers' website diversity data in accordance with that policy, the BSB Handbook Equality Rules and Supporting Information. The current DDO is Chantal Perdreau.

##### **(5) Providing Services to Disabled People**

13. Chambers is committed to providing equality of opportunity to all those to whom this policy applies who have a disability.

14. A disability within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 is “any physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out their normal day-to-day activities”.
15. Such persons will not be treated unfavourably because of something arising in consequence of their disability where it cannot be shown that such treatment is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
16. Chambers will also make all reasonable adjustments required by law. To this end, Chambers has adopted a written Reasonable Adjustments Policy aimed at supporting disabled clients, Chambers’ workforce and others including temporary visitors to Chambers. This policy will be reviewed regularly by the EDOs.

**(6) Fair Access to Work**

17. It is the policy of Chambers that its affairs should be conducted in a manner which is fair and equitable for all members and this extends to the fair distribution of work amongst pupils and members of Chambers.
18. To this end, Chambers has adopted a written Equal Access to and Fair Allocation of Work Policy, together with guidance on its implementation from the Management Committee.
19. Chambers has also appointed an Equal Access to and Fair Allocation of Work Monitor, the responsibilities of whom are set out in the Equal Access to and Fair Allocation of Work Policy. The current Equal Access to and Fair Allocation of Work Monitor is Clara Benn.
20. The Equal Access to and Fair Allocation of Work Policy will be reviewed regularly by the Equal Access to and Fair Allocation of Work Monitor, in consultation with the EDOs, the Senior Clerks and the Management Committee (as appropriate).
21. Chambers is committed to ensuring that (in accordance with the BSB’s recommendation) its clerks are provided with diversity training, briefed on the

importance of the fair allocation of work, made aware of their legal obligation not to discriminate and their duty to act equitably when distributing work.

22. Any member of Chambers who feels that they have been the subject of unequal or unfair treatment in the allocation of work is encouraged to discuss the situation with a Senior Clerk, and if necessary or appropriate, to utilise Chambers' Grievance Procedure.
23. Any unequal or unfair treatment of members of Chambers or pupils in the allocation of work will be treated as a serious matter.
24. Chambers will also seek to ensure that marketing opportunities, including promotion to relevant directories, seminars and lectures and social events are carried out without discrimination on the basis of the protected characteristics identified at paragraph 2 above and with equality of opportunity to all members to participate (including members on parental leave or career breaks or working flexibly).

**(7) Maternity, Paternity and Parental Leave, Flexible and part-time working and career breaks**

25. Chambers has a written Policy on Maternity, Paternity, Parental Leave, Flexible Working and Career Breaks. This policy applies to members of Chambers and will be monitored and reviewed regularly by the EDOs.
26. Any individuals who have concerns about this policy and/or its application should raise them in the first instance with the EDOs.
27. As regards members of Chambers' staff, it is the policy of Chambers to comply with statutory requirements in relation to maternity, paternity, parental leave, flexible working and career breaks.

**(8) Harassment**

28. Chambers is committed to providing a working environment in which all individuals, clients and the public are treated with dignity and respect. Chambers will not tolerate harassment or victimisation of, or by, any member of its workforce.
29. To this end, Chambers has adopted a written Harassment Policy. This policy applies to all members of Chambers, employees, pupils and mini-pupils and all those for whom Chambers constitutes a working environment. It will be reviewed regularly by the EDOs who will also take steps to ensure that Chambers' employees are aware of the existence of the policy and its applicability to them.

**(9) Complaints and Grievances**

30. Chambers has adopted a written Grievance Procedure which covers any complaint, grievance or dispute including but not limited to complaints of unfair discrimination or harassment and complaints about the distribution of work. This procedure applies to all members of chambers, pupils, mini-pupils, employees and applicants for positions in Chambers. The Grievance Procedure will be reviewed regularly by the EDOs.

**(10) Distribution**

31. A copy of this Equality and Diversity Policy, together with all policies and procedures identified at paragraph 4 above will be:
  - (a) distributed by email to every current member of Chambers, employee and pupil of Chambers;
  - (b) made available to all new members of Chambers, pupils or mini-pupils;
  - (c) available at all times on Chambers' website.