

TEMPLE COURT CHAMBERS

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

(as amended on 1ST JULY 2022)

Introduction

1. At Temple Court Chambers we are committed to promote Equality & Diversity in all aspects of our work. We ensure that equal opportunities are provided to all individuals working within chambers. Our aim is to provide a working environment and culture which values and recognises difference to ensure that no individual or group is discriminated against.
2. Our policies are in compliance with the Equality & Diversity rules of the BSB handbook. This policy applies to, and will be implemented by all members, pupils and staff of Temple Court Chambers. This means that all individuals working in Temple Court Chambers will be given equal opportunities regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender reassignment, identity or expression, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and parental leave, religion and belief, sexual orientation and social background.
3. Individuals within Chambers are responsible to ensure that they do not personally or improperly discriminate or assist others in doing so. Claims for discrimination and harassment can be brought against individuals.
4. At Temple Court Chambers we encourage individuals to carry out Equality & Diversity training which will be offered from time to time. Such training will be conducted by an appointed member of the management committee.
5. This policy shall be made available to all members of Chambers and staff. This policy has regard to the recommendations in the Equality and Diversity Code for the Bar.
6. Temple Court Chambers is committed to the implementation and promotion of equal opportunities and to ensuring an absence of direct or indirect discrimination or associative discrimination on grounds of race, ethnic or national origin, nationality, citizenship, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy, disability, age, religion or political persuasion. Temple Court Chambers is committed to ensuring an absence of victimisation. This commitment applies in all aspects of Chambers work,

including the recruitment of pupils, tenants and staff and the treatment of lay and professional clients.

7. Underlying this policy is our intention that every individual should be accorded equal dignity and respect and be judged on merit and ability alone, free from judgments or treatment based on prejudice or assumptions of collective characteristics. To this end, this policy provides a framework for the promotion of equal opportunities and the internal resolution of complaints involving members of Chambers, be they pupils, squatters, tenants or members of staff.
8. The Equality Officer, MR CHARLES MANNAN, will be responsible for:
 - Monitoring changes in legislation and updating Chambers' policy and procedures accordingly
 - Promotion of this policy within Chambers and externally where appropriate
 - Analysis and review of Equal Opportunity monitoring data
 - Co-ordination of the annual equality review
9. Practice managers will be responsible for ensuring the fair distribution of unallocated work, monitoring work levels and patterns of work and production of reports for review by the Equality Officer and Management Committee.

Scope

10. This policy reflects our approach to:

Recruitment
Fair access to work
Service provision
Harassment
Maternity Paternity and Parental Leave
Flexible Working
Complaints & Grievances

11. RECRUITMENT

- Temple court Chambers does not discriminate in the recruitment, selection or retention process of tenants, pupils, clerks and other staff.
- Vacancies for any positions within chambers will be advertised on our website and selected job agencies.

- All candidates who apply will be assessed solely on their merits and suitability for the role they have applied for. Applicants for pupillage or tenancy will be selected using our selection criteria and no applicant will be discriminated against on grounds of their age, disability, gender identity, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy and parental leave, ethnicity, religious belief, sexual orientation and social background.
 - Temple Court Chambers is committed to ensuring the absence of direct or indirect discrimination or associative discrimination on grounds of race, ethnic or national origin, nationality, citizenship, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy, disability, age, religion or political persuasion.
 - Temple Court Chambers is committed to ensuring the absence of victimisation.
 - This policy however has to take into account the physical structure of the premises in relation to reasonable adjustments for disabled persons.
 - Chambers will ensure that there are equal opportunities in all stages of the recruitment process, including ensuring that reasonable adjustments are made for a disabled candidate.
 - Temple Court Chambers undertakes that the recruitment policy should:
 - Be transparent, set out in a document which is available to all on request
 - Not be subject to change during the selection process
 - Be based on objective and explicit criteria
 - Be free from assumptions based on stereotypical views of expectations of the behaviour and characteristics of any particular group
 - Not be subject to the will or unexplained veto of any one person alone, but instead reflects the views of a broad spectrum of people
12. Further guidance in relation to the recruitment of pupils and tenants is set out in the pupillage policy.
13. Chambers is committed to arranging mini-pupillages in such a way as to ensure equality of opportunity, so far as practicable, by applying objective criteria.
14. Chambers will monitor all recruitment exercises. Where there are significant discrepancies between proportions of applicants from a particular group and proportions of successful candidates from a particular group, the Management Committee will consider how recruitment practices may need to be reviewed with a view to redressing observed discrepancies.

15. FAIR ACCESS TO WORK

- Temple Court Chambers takes the appropriate and reasonable steps to ensure that the affairs of Chambers are conducted in a fair and equitable manner for all members of chambers, pupils and staff.
- Our experienced clerk will ensure that work is fairly distributed amongst counsels and that marketing and networking activities are organised so that pupils and tenants can so far as reasonably practicable , be equally involved.
- Chambers is committed to the fair distribution, without discrimination, of work amongst pupils and members of chambers. To support this commitment, monitoring of work allocation will be conducted.
- Selection of counsel shall be on the basis of the skills and experience required for the particular case, and subject to availability. In particular, no pupil or tenant shall suffer discrimination:
- In respect of any terms applicable to him or her as a pupil or tenant
- In the opportunities for training, or gaining experience, which are afforded or denied to him or her
- In the benefits, facilities or services which are afforded or denied to him or her
- By termination of his or her pupillage or by subjecting him or her to any pressure to leave chambers or other detriment

16. SERVICE PROVISION

- Temple Court Chambers will not discriminate against any individual with a disability by treating them as being less favourable. We will ensure that reasonable adjustments and measures to assist disabled members, pupils, staff and clients are put in place.
- Chambers will make arrangements for alternative accommodation if reasonably practicable to make it possible for the individual and/or group to use and/or provide our services without unreasonable difficulty.

17. HARASSMENT

- Temple Court Chambers does not tolerate harassment by or of any tenants, pupil, clerk and other staff. Examples of behaviour which may amount to harassment are:

Bullying

Compromising suggestions, invitations or demands

Display of offensive materials

Isolation and exclusion from social networks, events and activities

Physical or sexual assault

Verbal abuse or offensive remarks

- Any member within Chambers who suffers harassment is advised to address the issue with Chamber' Equal Opportunities Officer in the first instance. If the complaint is of the Equal Opportunities Officer, the member has to raise the issue with the Head of Chambers. The Equal Opportunities Officer/ Head of Chambers will try to resolve the matter in an informal way and if the issue cannot be resolved informally, Chambers formal complaint procedure will be initiated.

18. MATERNITY, PATERNITY AND PARENTAL LEAVE

Chambers is committed to allowing members of staff, tenants and pupils, suitable maternity/paternity leave of at least the statutory minimum without prejudice to their career development.

Full details are set out in Chambers' policy on maternity leave, paternity leave and parental leave.

19. FLEXIBLE AND PART-TIME WORKING AND CAREER BREAKS

Full details are set out in Chambers' policy on flexible and part-time working and career breaks and are applicable to all members, pupils and staff.

20. COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

- When a complaint is raised, confidentiality is maintained throughout any investigation period as far as possible and appropriate. Complaints will be dealt with fairly and any necessary remedial action will be taken accordingly.
- All Complaints and Complainants must approach the Equality Officer, who shall at all times ensure that the complainants concerns are taken seriously. All complaints will be recorded and investigated by the EO.
- If the EO deems that the matter requires an informal meeting in consultation with the complainant, then that shall be the next step. If it is determined that such an approach is not required and a more formal step is necessary, the EO must set out the nature of that formality, whether further investigations are necessary and what discussions should be had with the person complained of. The EO may determine that the nature of the offence is such that a formal referral is made to the MC.

- If the MC accepts the invitation then a formal meeting will be convened where the EO will set out the case for the complainant and the member or staff will be permitted a representative to address the MC.
- The MC must communicate the decision within 14 days.
- An Appeal will lie to the HOC, whose decision will be final.
- **Formal Complaints will be dealt with in accordance with Chambers complaints procedure.**

21. EQUALITY OFFICER

Enquiries and concerns about equality and diversity at Temple Court Chambers should be addressed to our Equal Opportunities Officer, CHARLES MANNAN.

Every individual within Temple Court Chambers is required to comply with this policy and failure to do so will result in disciplinary actions being taken.

If an individual within Chambers believes that any of Chambers' policies have been breached, that individual is advised to:

Speak to the person involved directly and ask him to stop;
Raise it with Chambers' Equality and Diversity Officer or the Head of chambers who will investigate and take necessary action in accordance with Chambers' constitution.

22. REVIEWING THIS POLICY

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed by Chambers' Equality and Diversity Officer annually and/or the Head of Chambers.

1st July 2022