

Harassment Policy

1. This policy covers all those working in Chambers, visiting Chambers and providing services to Chambers.
2. Chambers is committed to providing a work environment in which all individuals, clients and the public are treated with dignity and respect. Chambers is determined to promote a work environment in which everyone is treated equally and with dignity and can flourish. Harassment in any form will not be tolerated.
3. Harassment includes any unwanted conduct related to sex, race, disability, gender re-assignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age. Such behaviour might take many forms including conduct which:
 - a. is unwanted by the recipient and perceived as hostile or threatening;
 - b. gives rise to a hostile or threatening work environment;
 - c. creates an atmosphere in which it is feared that rejection or submission will be used as a basis for decisions which have a detrimental effect on the recipient at work such as an allocation of work or tenancy decision.
4. The following are examples of types of behaviour which might amount to harassment:
 - a. physical or sexual assault;
 - b. requests for sexual favours in return for career advancement;
 - c. unnecessary physical contact;
 - d. exclusion from social networks and activities or other forms of isolation;
 - e. bullying;
 - f. compromising suggestions or invitations;

- g. suggestive remarks or looks;
 - h. display of offensive materials, including on a computer screen;
 - i. tasteless jokes or verbal abuse, including any sent by email;
 - j. offensive remarks or ridicule including statements made indirectly;
 - k. dealing inappropriately or inadequately with complaints of harassment
- 5. Harassment is unlawful under s.26 of the Equality Act 2010. In addition to the above unwanted conduct, it can arise where a person engages in any kind of unwanted sexual behaviour (or gender reassignment or sex related behaviour). Harassment is misconduct for employees or a breach of the Bar Code of Conduct for barristers.
- 6. Complaints of harassment may be raised informally in the first instance with the Equality and Diversity Officer(s), the Head of Chambers or another senior member of chambers who will agree an appropriate response.
- 7. Formal complaints should be made to Chambers' Equality and Diversity Officer(s) and Head of Chambers. All complaints must be recorded in writing and the record signed by an EDO and the complainant.
- 8. The following procedure will apply to all formal complaints of harassment. Each step will be taken impartially, as soon as reasonably practical and with the complainant and the person or persons against whom the complaint is made kept reasonably informed of progress.
 - a. The EDO(s), in consultation with the Head of Chambers, will appoint an appropriate member of Chambers to investigate the complaint;
 - b. The investigation will include all steps reasonably necessary to identify the facts alleged by the complainant and the response to those facts of the person or persons against whom the complaint is made;
 - c. The person carrying out the investigation will provide the Governance Board and EDO(s) with a report in writing. The report will be confidential to the Governance Board, EDO(s), the complainant and the person or persons against whom the complaint is made;

- d. The Governance Board in consultation with the EDO(s) will determine any appropriate disciplinary measures arising out of the complaint and investigation;
 - e. If a complaint of harassment is made against the Head of Chambers or the/an EDO(s), the Governance Board will have discretion to take any steps reasonably necessary to adapt and implement this procedure.
9. Chambers is committed to ensuring that no one who makes an allegation of harassment in good faith should be subjected to any detriment as a result. Any victimisation of a complainant, witness or anyone else involved in the investigation of a complaint will be viewed as a disciplinary matter.
10. A copy of this policy is provided to all those for whom chambers constitutes a working environment, including members of chambers, pupils, practice managers and other employees, temporary workers, those who provide services to chambers such as contract cleaners, accountants and IT consultants, and mini-pupils and work experience students.

This policy was adopted by the Governance Board on 28 September 2023 and will be reviewed every two years.