

7 Harrington Street / Keyventure Limited

Equal Opportunities Policy

Policy

1. 7 Harrington Street is an equal opportunities Chambers. It complies with the mandatory requirements of the Bar Council Code (“the Code”) and seeks to follow the advice contained in the Code.

2. The purpose of this Equal Opportunities Policy (the “Policy”) is to enable Chambers to act upon its commitment to equal opportunities in all areas of its activities. It is recognised that areas where the Policy will particularly apply and where good practice in relation to equal opportunities is particularly important are those of:
 - a. employment of staff
 - b. selection of pupils and tenants
 - c. acceptance of instructions
 - d. distribution of work within Chambers
 - e. provision of goods and services from and to Chambers

3. No member of Chambers, whether individually or acting as part of any meeting or committee within Chambers, and no member of staff employed to work in Chambers, shall directly or indirectly discriminate against anyone or victimise anyone or harass anyone on the grounds of any of the following protected characteristics:

- a. race;
- b. colour;
- c. ethnic or national origin;
- d. nationality;
- e. citizenship;
- f. gender;
- g. martial or civil partnership status;
- h. sexual orientation;
- i. disability;
- j. religion or belief;
- k. political persuasion;
- l. age.

Implementation

- 4. It is the responsibility of the Head of Chambers to ensure the effective communication of the Equal Opportunities Policy to all members of Chambers and to all members of staff employed to work in Chambers.

- 5. The relevant requirements and recommendations of the Code are to be incorporated into:
 - a. contracts of employment;
 - b. Chambers recruitment and induction procedures;
 - c. Pupillage procedures;
 - d. Chambers constitution;

6. A copy of the Code is kept in Chambers and is accessible to members, employees and pupils. All existing and new members, employees and pupils are to have their attention drawn to the availability of a copy of the Code.

7. Written procedures have been set down dealing with:
 - a. the resolution in confidence of grievances on the part of members, pupils or employees arising out of alleged discrimination or harassment;
 - b. the treatment of other complaints of discrimination, whether originating within Chambers or outside.

Copies of these procedures are made available to all existing and new members, employees and pupils and are available on request from the Chambers' Administrator.

8. The Chambers Equality and Diversity Officer is responsible for monitoring all the activities of Chambers to ensure compliance with the Code and is required to report to the Management Committee and, where necessary, make recommendations as to action to be taken to avoid discrimination.

Organisation

9. To ensure full implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy and related procedures, responsibilities have been allocated as follows:

- a. **Equality and Diversity Officer** responsible for:
 - i. monitoring changes in legislation and updating Chambers policies and procedures accordingly;
 - ii. promoting the Policy within Chambers and externally where appropriate;
 - iii. analysing and reviewing equal opportunities monitoring data;
 - iv. ensuring the fair distribution of work to pupils and members;
 - v. ensuring adequate training of members of staff in matters of equality awareness and good practice, including matters concerning disability
 - vi. informally resolving, in the first instance, any grievances concerning or with implications for issues of equality
 - vii. compiling and implementing an Action Plan setting out the action Chambers should take to ensure proper compliance with the law and applicable guidance and good practice on matters of equality and diversity.

- b. **Practice Director** responsible for:
 - i. ensuring the fair distribution of work to pupils and members;
 - ii. managing members of staff so as to ensure their compliance with this Policy and equal opportunities good practice.

- c. **Head of Chambers** responsible for:
 - i. final resolution of grievances that are not initially resolved informally by the Equality and Diversity Officer

ii. referral of matters for outside resolution where appropriate.

d. **Diversity Data Officer** responsible for:

- i. collecting and anonymising diversity data;
- ii. ensuring, where allowed by the Code, that a summary of the diversity data is published on Chambers website.

Recruitment and Induction

10. Recruitment and employment decisions will be made on the basis of fair and objective criteria. Chambers selection procedures will be reviewed periodically to ensure that they are consistent with equal opportunities good practice, and appropriate for achieving the objectives of Chambers and avoiding unlawful discrimination. The terms and conditions of employment, including remuneration, are to be determined without reference to discriminatory criteria.

11. Any advertisements or publicity material for new members of staff or members of Chambers are to include a statement that Chambers is an equal opportunities employer or other such appropriate declaration of its commitment to equality.

12. All applicants responding to advertisements for pupillage, tenancies or employment positions are to be sent an equal opportunities monitoring form when their application is acknowledged. This is to enable Chambers to monitor the effectiveness of the Policy. Equal opportunities monitoring forms are not to be seen by anybody taking part in the selection process and are to be considered by the Equality and Diversity Officer and the Diversity Data Officer only.

13. New pupils, members of Chambers and members of staff are to be informed of Chambers commitment and approach to equal opportunities as part of the induction process and are to be provided with a copy of this Policy and associated policy documents.

Communicating and Promoting Chambers' Commitment to Equality

14. Any advertisements or publicity material, whether used on the Chambers website or elsewhere, will include a statement as to Chambers commitment to equal opportunities.

15. All members of staff and members of Chambers are to be made aware of:

- a. this Policy and related policies in respect of harassment, fair access to work, reasonable adjustments, parental leave, flexible working, equality monitoring and diversity data.
- b. their responsibilities for complying with and implementing the Policy, and
- c. the action to take if they become aware of any discriminatory practices or harassment

Reporting

16. Any individual who considers that he or she has been subjected to discrimination or harassment has recourse to the Chambers Grievance Procedure..

17. It is the obligation of all members of Chambers and members of staff to report any discriminatory practices or discriminatory treatment within or affecting Chambers or in the provision of Chambers services.. Any failure to report such practices or treatment may be treated as a potentially serious disciplinary matter.

Monitoring

18. The Chambers Equality and Diversity Officer will seek to identify and eliminate sources of discrimination in all areas of activity, but in particular in:

- a. recruitment of employees, pupils and tenants;
- b. allocation of work between pupils in Chambers;
- c. evaluation of staff performance and development potential
- d. operation of parental leave entitlement.

Records of these activities are to be periodically analysed as part of the information gathering process for updating the Chambers Action Plan. Any recommendations for improving systems or procedures to ensure even-handedness and/or adequate representation of a particular group are to be included in the revised Action Plan.

Reasonable Adjustments

19. Chambers will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate individuals with a disability or with special needs in accordance with Chambers Reasonable Adjustments Policy.

20. Chambers has washroom facilities on the ground floor. Where necessary, alternative arrangements will be made in respect of any facilities on any other floors.

21. Where necessary, arrangements will be made for the provision of a sign language interpreter through RNID Merseyside (0151 236 4497).

22. Chambers receptionists have instructions to keep a record of any visitors who will need assistance in the event of an evacuation.

Review

23. This policy was last reviewed in September 2013 and will be reviewed periodically.