

12 Old Square Chambers

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12 OLD SQUARE CHAMBERS

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICIES

12 Old Square Chambers is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities & diversity in all aspects of our work. Our policies reflect the Equality & Diversity rules of the BSB Handbook. This policy applies to, and will be implemented by, all members, pupils & staff of 12 Old Chambers.

12 Old Square Chambers believes in:

- Equality of access to all applicants for tenancy, pupillage or employment;
- Equality of treatment to all members, pupils & staff;
- Equality of service to our professional & lay clients.

All members & staff of 12 Old Square Chambers are committed to ensuring that individuals and/or groups are not treated more or less favourably by reason of their age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy and/or maternity, race, religious belief or sexual orientation, whether actual or perceived.

This policy is reflected in our approach to:

- Recruitment.
- Fair access to work.
- Maternity, paternity, and parental leave.
- Flexible & part-time working and career breaks.
- Harassment.
- Complaints & grievances.
- Service provision.

Enquiries, comments or concerns about equality & diversity at 12 Old Chambers should be addressed to our Equal Opportunities Officer, John Waithe

Recruitment

12 Old Square Chambers does not discriminate, directly or indirectly, in the selection, recruitment or retention of tenants, pupils, practice managers, clerks & other staff.

Vacancies for tenants, pupils, practice managers, clerks & other staff will be advertised on our website

All applicants will be assessed solely on their merits & suitability for the role they have applied for. Candidates for pupillage or tenancy will be selected using selection criteria which are objective and relate to the work to be done. Applicants/candidates will not be discriminated against on grounds of their actual or perceived age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy and/or maternity, race, religious belief or sexual orientation.

Fair Access to Work

We recognise that the opportunities for barristers to develop a successful practice are frequently affected by the range & quality of work on which they are instructed in the early stages of their career. 12 Old Square Chambers takes all reasonable steps to ensure that the affairs of Chambers are conducted in a manner which is fair & equitable for all members of chambers, pupils & staff.

Our experienced Practice Managers will monitor the distribution of work and will compare & review the work distribution data to ensure the fair distribution of work.

Chambers will ensure that marketing & networking activities are organised so that all pupils & tenants can, so far as is reasonably practicable, be equally involved.

Maternity, Paternity & Adoption Leave

12 Old Square Chambers offers members taking maternity or paternity leave, or leave following adoption (parental leave), six months free of Chambers rent.

Members have a right to return to Chambers without the need to re-apply for admission after taking maternity, paternity or adoption leave. This right to return shall continue for a guaranteed period of 12 months, and may be extended for up to 15 months if requested in writing and approved by two-thirds of the Management Committee. If a member ceases to practice as a barrister for 15 months his/her membership of Chambers shall be converted to a door tenancy unless a Chambers meeting called in accordance with the Constitution resolves otherwise.

Members on maternity, paternity or parental leave will continue to be involved in Chambers business, events, developments & decisions.

Flexible & Part-Time Working and Career Breaks

12 Old Square Chambers recognises the advantages of career breaks, flexible working hours, part-time working, and working from home. Chambers will work with individual members to reach fair & equitable flexible working arrangements which balance the needs of the individual and of Chambers as a whole.

Members on flexible working arrangements will be included in Chambers business, events, developments & decisions in the same way as full-time working members of Chambers.

Harassment

Harassment by or of any tenant, pupil, practice manager, clerk or employee of 12 Old Square Chambers will not be tolerated. Examples of behaviour which may amount to harassment include:

- Bullying
- Physical or sexual assault
- Verbal abuse or offensive remarks
- Compromising suggestions, invitations, or demands
- Isolation & exclusion from social networks, events & activities
- Display of offensive materials

Any member who suffers harassment is advised to raise the issue with the Equal Opportunities Officer in the first instance. If it is the Equal Opportunities Officer whose conduct is complained of the member should raise the issue with one of the Practice Managers. The Equal Opportunities Officer / Practice Manager will attempt to resolve the issue through informal methods. Where informal methods fail to resolve the issue or where the harassment complained of is of a more serious nature, the Chambers formal complaints procedure will be initiated.

Complaints & Grievances

Formal complaints should be pursued in accordance with Chambers' complaints procedure.

When a complaint is made confidentiality will be maintained throughout any investigatory process as far as possible and as appropriate in the circumstances. Complaints will be dealt with, and any remedial action necessary will be taken, immediately.

Service provision

12 Old Square Chambers currently practices from a listed building located in Lincoln's Inn. We will make all reasonable adjustments to assist disabled members, pupils, staff and clients. We will not discriminate against any disabled persons by treating them less favourably for a reason arising from disability, or by failing to make a reasonable adjustment causing them to find it impossible or unreasonably difficult to use our services. Chambers will work with the individual and/or group

affected to provide our services without unreasonable difficulty and will make reasonable adjustments or arrange alternative accommodation if reasonably practicable.

Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed regularly.

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