

HARASSMENT POLICY

1. Equity Chambers is committed to providing a work environment in which all individuals, clients and the public are treated with dignity and respect. Equity Chambers is determined to promote a work environment in which everyone is treated equally and with dignity and can flourish.
2. Harassment in any form will not be tolerated at Equity Chambers. Harassment includes any unwanted conduct related to sex, race, disability, gender re-assignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age. Such behaviour may take many forms including:
 - conduct which is unwanted by the recipient and perceived as hostile or threatening;
 - conduct which gives rise to a hostile or threatening work environment;
 - conduct which creates an atmosphere in which it is feared that rejection or submission will be used as a basis for decisions which have an impact on the recipient at work such as an allocation of work or tenancy decision.
3. The following are examples of types of behaviour which may amount to harassment:
 - physical or sexual assault;
 - requests for sexual favours in return for career advancement;
 - unnecessary physical contact;
 - exclusion from social networks and activities or other forms of isolation;
 - bullying;
 - compromising suggestions or invitations;
 - suggestive remarks or looks;
 - display of offensive materials, including on a computer screen;
 - tasteless jokes or verbal abuse, including any sent by email;
 - offensive remarks or ridicule;
 - dealing inappropriately or inadequately with complaints of harassment.
4. Harassment is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010¹. 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).
5. Complaints of harassment may be raised informally in the first instance with the Equality and Diversity Officer, the Head of Chambers or another senior member of chambers who will agree an appropriate response. Formal complaints should be made under the Equity Chambers grievance procedure.

¹ S.26 Equality Act 2010

6. Harassment is misconduct for employees or a breach of the Bar Code of Conduct for barristers. Allegations of harassment will be dealt with under the Equity Chamber's disciplinary procedure.
7. 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.
8. A copy of this policy is provided to all those for whom chambers constitutes a working environment, including members of chambers, pupils, squatters, clerks and other employees, temporary workers, those who provide services to chambers such as contract cleaners, accountants and IT consultants.
9. This policy is kept under review annually.