

## **Attorney General's Civil and Criminal Panel Counsel**

### **Equality and Diversity Expectations Statement**

#### **Reporting format for first progress reports required by 1 October 2009**

##### **1. Introductory Paragraph**

39 Essex Street is a Chambers of 80 barristers and 31 staff. It is considered a large set. Its administrative functions are organised by the Chambers Director who reports to an elected Board. It has been in receipt of the Barmark quality mark for the past 6 years. There is an equal opportunities officer who is a member of chambers.

##### **2. The Quality and Diversity Policy**

As part of our Barmark procedures our Equal Opportunities are monitored regularly by outside consultants and are checked by Barmark inspectors. As a part of our preparations for diversity policy outside consultants took part and a policy was prepared. There is therefore now a full diversity policy notwithstanding we have already existing maternity, paternity, parental leave and flexible working for both barristers and staff. Copies are obtainable if required.

##### **3. Equality and Diversity Actions to Implement the Policy or Policies**

Over the next year we will be further auditing the diversity policy to ensure that it meets expectations and as such this stage of the process will finally be signed off in June 2010 as part of our Barmark inspection.

##### **4. Equalities Monitoring and Under Representation**

Attached herewith is a data collection form showing the breakdown of members, staff and pupils which shows ethnicity, gender and disability.

It is planned to raise this report at the next Board meeting in Chambers in order to address the question of under representation in the demographic breakdown. As far as can be ascertained there are no barriers or limitations on representation within Chambers in relation to ethnicity, gender or disability. However we are actively seeking outside assistance in order to address and improve our policies in this regard. Whilst we are prepared to supply all information on applicants, interviewees and appointees we would ask for further time in order to re evaluate our policies in this regard.

## **5. Training**

Annual training is conducted on equality issues by the Bar Council. This is available to members, pupils and staff. It is intended to provide diversity training by an outside consultant but none has taken place at this time.

## **6. Ensuring Equal Access to and Fair Allocation of Work**

A comprehensive database is maintained on how the clerking team allocate work. It is reviewed regularly by the Director of Clerking. Those records are available for outside review. Furthermore, extra reviews are carried out in relation to 2<sup>nd</sup> sixth pupillages to ensure a fair allocation of work at this stage of the pupillage. We are delighted to provide verification of this review at the appropriate time in the pupillage year.

## **7. Handling Complaints**

There is a full grievance procedure within Chambers to deal with all complaints by all members including staff. It is designed to deal with all matters including harassment and anything related. A copy is available upon request.