

## **INTERNAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. Chambers is committed to providing a working environment in which everyone is treated fairly and properly. No one will suffer detriment if he or she raises a complaint or grievance in good faith under this procedure.
- 1.2. This procedure applies to Members of Chambers and to pupils. A separate grievance procedure exists for members of staff.
- 1.3. Most complaints can be resolved quickly and informally through discussion with one of Chambers' Equality and Diversity Officers, the Head of the Chambers or the Chambers Director. If this does not resolve the problem, you should initiate the formal procedure below reasonably promptly.
- 1.4. A pupil should in the first instance discuss any complaint informally with their pupil supervisor. If he or she is unable to help, or if a pupil would prefer to raise the issues with someone other than his or her pupil supervisor, then the pupil should discuss the matter confidentially with the chair of the pupillage committee or with the Chambers Director.

### **2. STEP 1: WRITTEN COMPLAINT**

- 2.1. You should put your complaint in writing and submit it to the Chair of the Chambers Equality & Diversity Committee (EDC), who will appoint a senior Member of Chambers as the Adjudicator to determine your complaint on behalf of Chambers. If your complaint concerns the chair of the EDC, you should submit it to the Chambers Director, who will appoint the Adjudicator.
- 2.2. The written complaint should set out the nature of the complaint, including any relevant facts, dates, and names of individuals involved so that Chambers can investigate it.

### **3. STEP 2: MEETING**

- 3.1. The Adjudicator will arrange a meeting with you. You should make every effort to attend.
- 3.2. You may bring a companion to the meeting if you make a reasonable request in advance and tell the Adjudicator the name of your chosen companion. The companion may be a colleague

or a Trade Union representative. If the companion is an employee of Chambers, they will be allowed reasonable paid time off to act as your companion.

- 3.3. If you or your companion cannot attend at the time specified you should let the Adjudicator know as soon as possible and they will try, within reason, to agree an alternative time.
- 3.4. The Adjudicator may adjourn the meeting if they need to carry out further investigations, which they will do in a manner appropriate to the circumstances, after which the meeting will usually be reconvened.
- 3.5. The Adjudicator will write to you, to confirm their decision and notify you of any further action that they intend to take to resolve the complaint. They will also advise you of your right of appeal.

#### **4. STEP 3: APPEALS**

- 4.1. If the complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction you may appeal in writing to the Head of Chambers, stating your full grounds of appeal, within one week of the date on which the decision was sent or given to you.
- 4.2. This will be dealt with impartially on behalf of Chambers by an individual who has not previously been involved in the case. This person will hold an appeal meeting. You will have a right to bring a companion (see paragraph 3.2 above).
- 4.3. The person hearing your appeal will confirm their final decision on behalf of Chambers in writing. There is no further right of appeal.

#### **5. Data retention**

- 5.1 Confidential report(s) on all formal complaints and on the outcome will be retained for one year after the conclusion of the case, or longer if deemed necessary by the Management Board.

**Approved by the MB September 2020**