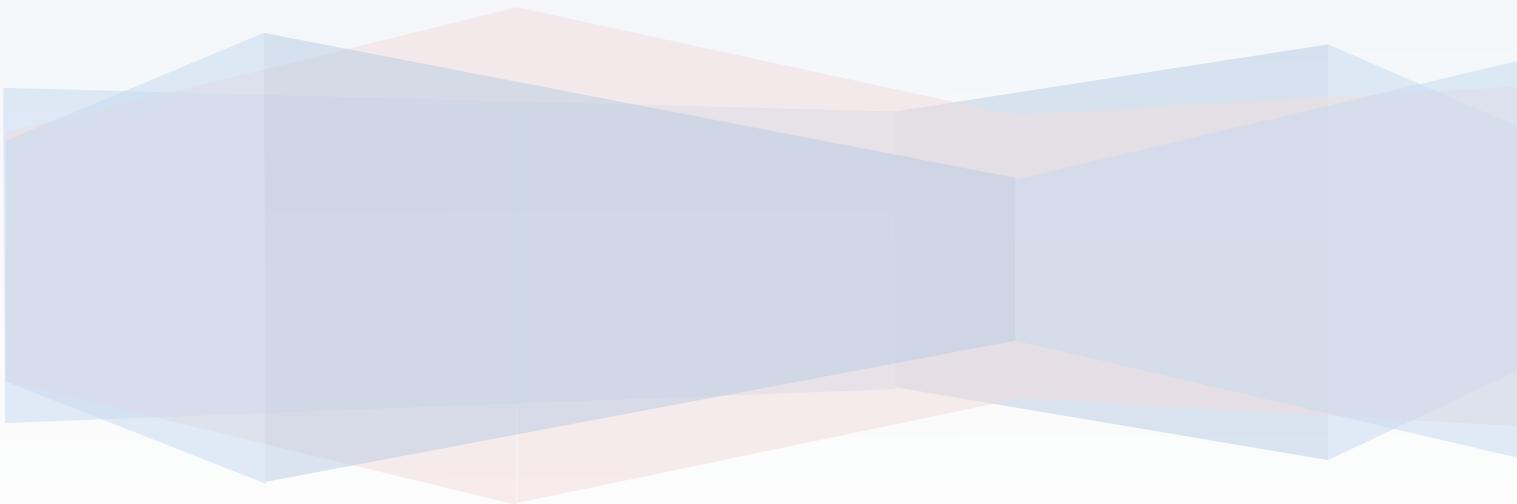


Malins Chambers' Policies

Equality and Diversity Policy Statement
Complaints Procedure



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENT

Malins Chambers is firmly committed to the principles of Equal Opportunities and Diversity and makes every effort to reflect the relevant legislative framework provided by Parliament and comply with the Equality and Diversity Code for the Bar. We do this by the promotion of policies, processes and procedures that endeavour to achieve a complete absence of discrimination in chambers' internal policies and practices, its recruitment and casework and in the provision of all services. The aim is to ensure a complete absence of direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality, citizenship, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, religion or political belief.

We thereby ensure:

- Equality of access to all applicants

All recruitment is conducted by assessing candidates' suitability for identified vacancies by applying objective criteria against job and person specifications.

- Equality of treatment to all barristers and members of staff

We have implemented, will maintain and monitor procedures for:

- (a) ensuring that work is allocated fairly and that everyone is given a fair opportunity for marketing, practice development, training and promotion and
- (b) leave of absence, the facilitation of return to work after leave of absence and where possible facilitate flexible working practices.

- Equality of service to all professional and lay clients

Chambers is concerned to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities and makes every effort to ensure this.

We continue to assess the steps we have taken and to monitor and undertake any need to update or amend any aspect of our practice and policy. The complete Equality and Diversity policy document is available on request.

Responsibility for ensuring the implementation of the detail of the policy is placed with Chamber's Equality Officer, who is a member of the Management Committee. The Equality Officer ensures that consideration is given by the Management Committee and Chambers to the need for any amendment to the policy and the practices of Chambers at least once a year.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Our aim is to give you a good service at all times. However if you have a complaint, you are invited to let us know as soon as possible.

2. Please note that Chambers will only consider complaints that are raised within six months of the act or omission complained of.

Complaints made by Telephone

3. You may wish to make a complaint in writing and, if so, please follow the procedure in paragraph 4 and 5 below. However, if you would rather speak on the telephone about your complaint then in the first instance please contact our Complaints Officer, Linda Hudson. If your complaint is about the Complaints Officer, then please telephone the Head of Chambers. The person you contact will make a note of the details of your complaint and what you would like done about it. He will discuss your concerns with you and aim to resolve them. If the matter is resolved he will record the outcome, check that you are satisfied with the outcome and record that you are satisfied. You may also wish to record the outcome of the telephone discussion in writing.

4. If your complaint is not resolved on the telephone you will be invited to write to us about it within the next 14 days so it can be investigated formally.

Complaints made in Writing

5. Please give the following details:

- Your name and address;
- Which member(s) of Chambers you are complaining about;
- The detail of the complaint; and
- What you would like done about it.

Please address your letter to Linda Hudson, Complaints Officer at Malins Chambers, 115 Temple Chambers, Temple Avenue, London EC4Y 0DA. We will, where possible, acknowledge receipt of your complaint within two days and provide you with details of how your complaint will be dealt with.

6. Within 14 days of your letter being received by the Complaints Officer, your complaint will be investigated. If your complaint is against the Complaints Officer, the Head of Chambers will investigate the complaint. In any case, the person appointed will be someone other than the person you are complaining about.

7. The person investigating the complaint will write to you as soon as possible to let you know he/she has been appointed and that he/she will reply to your complaint within 14 days. The reply will set out:

- The nature and scope of his investigation;
- His conclusion on each complaint and the basis for his conclusion; and
- If he finds that you are justified in your complaint, his proposals for resolving the complaint.

Confidentiality

8. All conversations and documents relating to the complaint will be treated as confidential and will be disclosed only to the extent that is necessary. Disclosure will be to the head of chambers, Complaints Officer and to anyone involved in the complaint and its investigation. The Bar Standards Board is entitled to inspect the documents and seek information about the complaint when discharging its auditing and monitoring functions.

Our Policy

9. As part of our commitment to client care we make a written record of any complaint and retain all documents and correspondence generated by the complaint for a period of six years.

Complaints to the Legal Ombudsman (new organisation set up under Legal Services Act 2007 by the Office for Legal Complaints)

10. We hope that you will use our procedure. However, if you would rather not do so or are unhappy with the outcome you may take up your complaint with the Legal Ombudsman at any time. Please note that the Legal Ombudsman has a six-month time limit from the date of the act or omission about which you are complaining within which to make your complaint. You can write to them at:

Legal Ombudsman

PO Box 15870

Birmingham Tel: 0300 555 0333

See also: www.legalombudsman.org.uk