

FREEBAR CHARTER 2020-21

This Charter has been designed by FreeBar to guide organisations at the Bar in implementing best practice with regards to LGBT+ inclusion and to allow organisations to demonstrate to potential applicants and clients that they are (or are working towards becoming) an LGBT+ inclusive organisation.

FreeBar, and signatories to this Charter, recognise the importance of creating a welcoming atmosphere for people of all backgrounds, including by being inclusive of those with multiple or intersecting identities. As such, signatories are encouraged to consider how their actions in relation to this Charter reflect and respect diversity within the LGBT+ community and beyond.

As a signatory to this Charter, **Fountain Chambers** has made the following 11 commitments:

1. We are an LGBT+ inclusive and welcoming organisation. We welcome all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.
2. We always challenge LGBT+ phobic language or behaviour, whether from anyone in our organisation, or directed at anyone in our organisation from anyone dealing with our organisation.
3. We will ensure that by 1 June 2022 our recruitment materials, website and other marketing materials are LGBT+ inclusive including allowing everyone individually identified in those materials to choose their own pronouns, while using only gender-neutral language to refer to people generally.
4. We will ensure that by 1 June 2022 our internal policies and governing rules and procedures use only gender-neutral language, do not discriminate on LGBT+ grounds and are explicitly inclusive of those who identify as LGBT+.
5. We have a policy on transitioning at work applicable and available to everyone in the organisation.
6. There is a gender-neutral option for all toilet and other facilities we offer (including for people with impaired mobility), for which all the signage is gender-neutral.
7. We respect everyone's choice of their own pronouns. Our externally-provided IT system does not specify pronouns and currently does not give options for gender-neutral titles; we will contact the provider asking for this to be implemented. In the meantime, both titles and pronouns will be recorded elsewhere on the digital case.
8. Our recruitment and selection processes are designed to encourage LGBT+ applicants and to reduce the risk of bias and discrimination against LGBT+ candidates. When placing and drafting recruitment adverts, we take particular care that they will come to the attention of talented LGBT+ applicants and we encourage LGBT+ applicants. We will not use recruitment agencies who do not share our values.
9. We will ensure that by 1 March 2022 (prior to consideration of the next round of pupillage applications) everyone involved in managing or overseeing our selection processes has had recruitment equality training which included LGBT+ issues.
10. We have in our organisation people who publicly identify as LGBT+ and/or LGBT+ allies. We encourage LGBT+ people in our organisation to apply for judicial and similar career-advancing appointments. We have designated members of staff and/or barristers for LGBT+ people to go to with any concerns. We bring to the attention of everyone in our organisation and joining our organisation the LGBT+ networks that exist more widely for barristers and all who work with them. We do not currently have any networks within our organisation given the size, but would welcome the establishment of an LGBT+ network should there be demand.
11. We welcome scrutiny of our compliance with this FreeBar Charter. We check, report publicly on, and monitor that at least annually. We are proud of and promote our compliance including on our website, including by displaying this charter and the FreeBar Charter logo.