

DRAFT 3VB Pledge to Promote Gender Diversity - progress to March 2023

3VB currently (Mar 2023) has 28 female Members of Chambers. This is an increase of 5 since April 2022. There are 4 female Associate Members. 3VB has 3 pupils, two of whom are female.

Signing the Women in Law Pledge is a part of 3VB's rolling annual Equality & Diversity Action Plan. 3VB has appointed two Members of Chambers as Gender Diversity & Equality Representatives. The Gender Diversity and Equality Representatives are members of both the 3VB Management Board and the Equality & Diversity Committee.

The current Gender Diversity and Equality Representatives are Lisa Lacob and Liisa Lahti. The Chair of 3VB's Equality & Diversity Committee is Nicholas Craig QC.

GENDER DIVERSITY TARGETS

In parallel with signing the Women in Law Pledge, every April 3VB sets annual targets and reports on progress to meet those targets, which it will report to the Bar Council. The targets and progress against those targets to March 2023 are set out as follows:

	Category	Target	Target date	Progress against Targets
1		To continue to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of unassigned work between female and male Members of Chambers		The chair of the EDC together with the Senior Practice Managers (SPMs) and Chambers Director (CD), continue to review in detail the distribution of unassigned work on a quarterly basis to ensure that it is distributed fairly and equitably. Their observations are reported to the GD Reps, the E&D Committee and to the Mgmt. Board.
2	Practice development	To develop an appropriate method for measuring any gender earnings gap within Chambers, together with an action plan to monitor and manage any gender earnings gap on an ongoing basis*	31 March 2021	<p>This is considered by the chair of the EDC and the CD and SPMs, (helped by draft guidance provided by the Bar Council's EDSM Committee).</p> <p>Every year, earnings data is analysed to ascertain (a) whether there are any discrepancies between the average earnings of male and female MOCs in the last year and (b) whether there have been any changes over the past 3 years. The data to August 2022 appears to show that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. there is a difference in earnings between male and female MoCs; but b. over the past 3 years the gap has generally decreased but more recently the gap has not closed further. <p>In every one of these groups (except for the J16-20 group), one or more of the women MoCs have taken maternity leave in the past 3-4 years. The consequence of this is it takes some time to build up practice again. Also, several women members are primary carers who have indicated at various times, for example, that they do not wish to be considered for certain types of work or wish to work 'reduced' hours. These factors affect the average and median figures for female members in each group and go some way to providing an explanation for the difference in earnings. The Head of the EDC was able to further interrogate case-specific reasons for the discrepancies (which are confidential to members) and is satisfied that there are further reasons for the gap which are justifiable from an E&D perspective. The data continues to be reviewed quarterly and reported to Chambers' E&D Committee.</p>
3		To continue to ensure that female Members of Chambers are fairly represented on panels of speakers at Chambers' in-house or external Chambers' sponsored marketing events		For 22/23, there were over 120 virtual and in person events. Of these, 61 were attended by female members.
4	Retention	To ensure that the retention rate of female Members of Chambers remains consistent with the retention rate of male Members of Chambers**		Over the last 3 years no female members have resigned or retired from chambers.
5	Training and awareness	All Members of Chambers, staff and associate members shall be trained appropriately in: a) Gender equality, diversity and inclusion and awareness; and	31 March 2022	All members and staff are required to attend at least one E&D training course per calendar year. These will be provided by the BC. In 22/23 there were 8 E&D courses on, Unconscious bias, Fair Access to Work, Fair Recruitment, Bullying & inappropriate behaviour, and Introduction to/Advanced E&D.

		b) What constitutes sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, and bullying		Not all members and staff attended an E&D Course in 22/23. The target will remain for 23/24 and the EDC will consider how it can encourage/improve member attendance at E&D courses.
6	Silks	At least three female Silks		No female members were promoted to Silk in the 2022 or 2023 rounds.
7	Chambers management	30% of the voting members of the Management Board to be female	31 March 2023* **	Currently at 26.6% (18.75% in 2022). Requires one more female member on the MB to achieve this target. One (male) member is stepping down from the MB in December 2023.
8		At least one female representative for each of the Chamber's business practice groups		Out of 11 practice groups in Chambers, we have 21 heads and co-heads, of which 7 are female (there were 8 female heads/co-heads in 2022).
9		The gender split of representatives on all Chambers' committees shall reflect the gender split of Members of Chambers		Female members represent 29% of chambers membership. At committee level it is: MB: 26.6% EDC: 62.5% CSR: 50% BDC: 31% PC: 31% Tenancy Committee: 33.3%

Supplementary Outcome:

A revised Parental Leave policy was approved by the EDC in October 2022. The amends reflected most of the actions highlighted in a report by one of our previous GD Reps which considered whether the policy Chambers has in place is effective and discussed improvements that could be made to the policy and to its implementation. We got a positive mention on our parental leave policy in the 2022 Gender Project pilot study recently undertaken by the IBA.

* In addressing any gender earnings gap, Chambers recognises that in any given year, as self-employed barristers, Members of Chambers (of either gender) may choose to spend time away from their practice and/or work on less remunerative and/or pro bono work, which will negatively impact on their earnings (and therefore, any gender earnings gap) in that year.

** Measured by reference to Members of Chambers leaving 3VB over the previous 3-year period (not including retirement).

*** Already achieved for the Equality & Diversity Committee.

OTHER PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

3VB is committed to supporting all Members of Chambers with protected characteristics, and when carrying out any comparative reviews within Chambers, to compare the experience/outcomes of female Members of Chambers who are from an underrepresented group or have a disability against those of other female Members of Chambers.

Updated May 2023