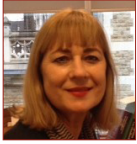


# Equal Treatment Bench Book: a one-year round-up

FIRST ANNIVERSARY

By Paula Gray



As trailed in an earlier edition of this Journal (see [Edition 1 of 2018](#)), in February 2018 the latest version of the Equal Treatment Bench Book (ETBB) was launched, following a complete rewrite and technical update which has made it, for those able to access it through the Judicial Intranet, wholly interactive. The same publication has been placed on the Internet so that it is available to those with wider interests in the legal process but (as yet) without the ‘clickability’ through which, using its chapter and topic headings, it is easily navigable, and as such an invaluable tool in a busy court or tribunal.

## Happy Birthday!

If you missed the launch this is your opportunity to discover the ETBB, and even wish it a Happy First Birthday, as the Committee did at a recent meeting. Along with eating the birthday cake that one of the contributing authors provided we discussed a few amendments and revisions, some in response to comments made by readers, and it is this approach of regular appraisal and update that we hope will continue to keep the publication current, relevant, and responsive. In the second ETBB Corner in this Journal I refer to some of those revisions. Here I want to explain where we have taken the new ETBB in its first year, and give you an idea of what a useful resource it is and will continue to be.



## Publicity

Following its launch on 28 February 2018 there were introductory articles in Benchmark; Tribunals Journal; Magistrates Association eLetter; Association of Women Judges’ E-letter; Family eLetter and the Magistrates Association Magazine. The ETBB has been referenced in the Judicial Equality and Diversity Statement September 2018. (The Statement includes a direct link to the Equal Treatment Bench Book.) and has been commended as a ‘fantastic source’ in the most recent JUSTICE Report [Understanding Courts](#). References to guidance in the ETBB were incorporated in feature articles on disability in the respected IDS Brief which is read by all employment lawyers.

## Continuous Appraisal

Part of the original review group has continued as an ‘Equal Treatment Bench Book Editorial Panel’ chaired by Tamara Lewis and comprising myself (Paula Gray), Tan Ikram, Hugh Howard and Helen Pustam. We meet about three times a year and liaise by email. We are responsive to constructive comments which are sent in, and broadly every six months a number of amendments and improvements are made to the text. For example, we recently discussed the use of the phrase “committing suicide”, after a correspondent had indicated that those with close experience of this might find the phrase “taking one’s own life” more acceptable. We have made great efforts to incorporate awareness and usage of the ETBB including one click access from the home page of the Judicial Intranet. Our six-weekly eAlerts have been a fundamental part of the strategy to keep the ETBB alive in judges’ minds.

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## Training initiatives and Presentations

We have written a Guide for Trainers, giving ideas on how to incorporate the ETBB into mainstream training. A draft of the Guide has already been circulated to training leads, and the final version will be on the Judicial College LMS, together with the eDiversity modules (and a set of practical intercultural eLearning modules that is to follow) which link to the ETBB as part of ‘essential’ training. Several training leads have already designed exercises based on the draft Guide, particularly the Immigration Appeal Tribunal, which incorporated a presentation and exercises on their national training.

Presentations and training have been delivered by the Panel members (or enabled by bespoke supply of materials) to Employment Judges in four regions, and to non-legal members of the Employment Tribunal; the Association of Women Judges; the Upper Tribunal (Administrative Appeals Chamber); the Asylum Support Tribunal; the War Pensions Tribunal; at two Civil Justice conferences for Circuit Judges, District Judges and Deputy District Judges; to all District Judges and Deputy District Judges (Magistrates Courts); to bench chairs and lay magistrates; in a joint training project on litigants in person in the Family Court together with ‘cascade’ training materials for magistrates and legal advisers.

An ETBB exercise is now incorporated into the cross-jurisdictional 'Judge as Communicator' course, and reading the ETBB has been embedded into past and planned First-tier Tribunal Cross Jurisdictional Induction Training and the large-scale salaried Employment Judges' Induction training in 2019.

### Internationally

A presentation on the ETBB was made to the United Kingdom and Ireland Judicial Studies Council annual meeting for 2018. This is a high-level gathering of those responsible for organising judicial training in England & Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland and the Republic of Ireland, and, on this occasion, was also attended by representatives from Australia and Canada.

A presentation was given to the Commonwealth Judicial Education Institute and the Judicial Education Institute of Trinidad and Tobago in November 2018.

In a speech to the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN) Human and Fundamental Human Rights Project and Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, (Wiesbaden, 12 November 2018) on 'Diversity and Judgecraft', Sir Ernest Ryder referred to the ETBB as '*our primary source of guidance in England and Wales*'.

A chapter was contributed to an international book for judges and judicial trainers to share experiences of social context training around the world, compiled by Leonel González, training director for the (JSCA) Justice Studies Centre of the Americas, based in Chile. A meeting has been arranged in May 2019 with a visiting judge from Japan who asked to be briefed on the ETBB in relation to reasonable adjustments for disability, and other such requests will be looked upon with interest.

### Thank you...

The ETBB project continues to receive outstanding support from: the Directors of Training for Tribunals and Courts, Christa Christensen and Andrew Hatton respectively; Dame Anne Rafferty; Sir Ernest Ryder, the Senior President of Tribunals; and other senior judges.

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