

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Candidate Brief

**New Independent Complaints
Board**

4 x HR/regulatory experts

Y1104

4 x Labour Party lay members

Y1105

November 2021

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INTRODUCTION

Dear Candidate,

We are delighted you have expressed an interest in being part of the new independent complaints process that is being established by the [Labour Party](#).

I want to outline why we are taking these important steps now to ensure independence is built into how we manage complaints.

In October 2020, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) reported into [Antisemitism in the Labour Party](#). The findings shocked us all. As a result, the Party was required, amongst other things, to set up an independent complaints process to oversee complaints of antisemitism and restore trust and confidence in the way the Labour Party handles complaints. We have decided to go further and introduce independent complaints bodies to deal with *all* complaints involving protected characteristics.

The new bodies will be established in December 2021 and will be fully operational early in 2022.

So today, we are delighted to have this exciting opportunity to recruit for HR/regulatory or similar experts as well as Labour Party lay members for the Independent Complaints Board.

If these opportunities appeal, you have the required skills and would like to be part of creating the most independent complaints process of any UK political party, we would like to hear from you.

For a confidential conversation with Thewlis Graham Associates who are managing the process, please contact Sarah Thewlis, Managing Director on 0207 850 4781 or email applications@thewlisgraham.com. Sarah will be happy to discuss this opportunity with you and answer any questions you may have.

Yours faithfully,

David Evans
General Secretary of the Labour Party

SECTION 2

The Independent Complaints Board and the complaints process

The new process for handling complaints against members of the Labour Party will include the establishment of an **Independent Review Board (IRB)** and an **Independent Complaints Board (ICB)**.

Today we are recruiting for roles in the Independent Complaints Board.

By introducing the two new Boards, our aim is to integrate key principles of independence and transparency that will enhance our existing system.

Complaints will be investigated and initially heard by the Labour Party and following that, the decision will be reviewed by an independent lawyer who sits on the **IRB**. If the respondent wishes to appeal (and meets the criteria) that appeal will also be heard independently from the Party. The majority of Labour Party complaint cases are heard on paper however if there is an in-person case, from now on, this will also be heard independently.

The Independent Review Board

The role of the **IRB** will be to either veto or verify all disciplinary decisions (which involve protected characteristics) made by the Labour Party's Disputes Panel. The **IRB** will be made up of a pool of lawyers (either solicitors or barristers) with experience in regulatory or disciplinary processes and ideally, an interest in equalities.

We are expecting the **IRB** lawyers to review approximately 40-45 cases a month and are therefore looking for a pool of 6 lawyers.

No appointees to the **IRB** may be an active member of any political party (or have been) for at least 5 years prior to appointment. By introducing the **IRB**, we are ensuring that independence is built into the complaints process from the start.

The Independent Complaints Board

The **ICB** is the second element of independence in the process. Their role will be to either hear **appeals** against complaint decisions or to hear complaints **in person**.

The **ICB** will consist of twelve members: four independent complaint lawyers, four HR/regulatory or similar experts and four Labour Party lay members. They will sit as a Panel of three (one from each category) to hear cases. The lawyer member will act as the chair of the Panel.

Please note, apart from the Labour Party lay members, these roles are only open to those who have not held membership of a UK political party either now or within the last five years. The Labour Party lay members will need to have been a party member for at least five years with an unblemished membership record.

All appointments to the **IRB** and the **ICB** are expected to be for a fixed term of 3 years

SECTION 3

Role description: HR/regulatory or similar expert, the Independent Complaints Board

Position: **HR/regulatory or similar expert, Independent Complaints Board**

Term of office: **3 years**

Days per annum: **This is a new body and is expected to hear cases approximately 30-36 days a year, but this will be kept under review. Each person can expect to work approximately 10 days a year including 2 days training.**

Location: **Remote working - the majority of work will be done online**

For more background on the new **Independent Complaints Board** please refer to Section 2 of this site.

Overall purpose of the role:

The **new Independent Complaints Board (ICB)** is responsible for hearing and determining appeals for disciplinary cases heard within the Labour Party's independent complaint process. In addition, every year it is also expected to hear a number of in-person cases as determined by the NEC Disputes Panel. For more details about the ICB please refer to section 2 of this site.

You will be one of dozen Board members selected by a Standing Recruitment Committee, who will make up the Independent Complaints Board. The Board will consist of four Complaints Board Lawyers, four HR/regulatory or similar experts and four Labour Party lay members. For each case that is heard, a Panel of three will be drawn from the Board – one lawyer who will chair the Panel, one HR/regulatory or similar expert and one Labour Party lay member.

Your Panel will either hear appeals against sanctions that have been issued or hear an in-person complaint.

The vast majority of complaints against Labour Party members are third party complaints – often triggered by social media activity. From time to time an incident occurs possibly at a constituency meeting or local event and this case will need to be heard in person.

There are likely to be approximately ten appeal cases and twenty in person hearings a year.

Independent Complaint Panel hearings are expected to last 1 day but occasionally it could be two.

Working relationships

You will work closely with a Board Secretary who will work with you to organise your availability and ensure you have the documentation and anything else you need to complete your role.

**Person specification:
HR/regulatory or similar expert, the Independent Complaints Board**

Qualifications and experience:

You will have a minimum of five years' experience in HR/regulatory or similar roles and ideally, an interest in equalities.

Political affiliation

This role is only open to those who are not currently a member of a UK political party (or for the last 5 years).

Personal skills:

- Ability to make logical, fair and balanced decisions
- Ability to assimilate large amounts of information, remain impartial and work to deadlines
- Be able to establish and maintain excellent working relationships with a changing group of colleagues from a range of backgrounds and experiences
- Good oral and written communication skills
- Comply with requirements set out in the conflicts of interest statement

If you are successful, you will be expected to be familiar with relevant Labour Party rules, policies and codes of conduct which you will find on the Labour Party website.

Remuneration

£350 per day

Availability

You will need to be available at least 10 days a year including 2 for training.

SECTION 4

Role description: Labour Party lay member, Independent Complaints Board

Position: **Labour Party lay member, Independent Complaints Board**

Term of office: **3 years**

No of days per annum: **This is a new body and is expected to hear cases approximately 30-36 days a year, but this will be kept under review. Each person can expect to work approximately 10 days a year including 2 days training.**

Location: **Remote working - the majority of work will be done online.**

The new Independent Complaints Board (ICB) is responsible for hearing and determining appeals for disciplinary cases heard within the Labour Party's independent complaint process. In addition, every year it is also expected to hear a number of in-person cases as determined by the NEC Disputes Panel. For more details about the ICB please refer to section 2 of this site.

You will be one of dozen Board members selected by a Standing Recruitment Committee, who will make up the Independent Complaints Board. The Board will consist of four Complaints Board Lawyers, four HR/regulatory or similar experts and four Labour Party lay members. For each case that is heard, a Panel of three will be drawn from the Board – one lawyer who will chair the Panel, one HR/regulatory or similar expert and one Labour Party lay member.

You will either hear appeals against sanctions that have been issued or you will be asked to be part of an in-person complaint hearing.

The vast majority of complaints against Labour Party members are third party complaints – often triggered by social media activity. From time to time an incident occurs possibly at a constituency meeting or local event and this case will need to be heard in person.

There are likely to be approximately ten appeal cases and twenty in person hearings a year.

Independent Complaint Panel hearings are expected to last 1 day but occasionally it could be two.

Working relationships

You will work closely with a Board Secretary who will work with you to organise your availability and ensure you have the documentation and anything else you need to complete your role.

Person specification – Labour Party lay member, Independent Complaints Board

Qualifications and experience

You will have a minimum of five years' experience in HR/regulatory or similar roles gained in a trade union, an employment tribunal or from involvement in a professional body.

Ideally, you'll have an interest in equalities.

Political affiliation

The Labour Party lay members will need to have been a party member for five preceding years with an unblemished membership record.

Personal skills:

- Track record in roles that involve weighing evidence
- Sufficient experience and wisdom to deal with sensitive cases
- Willingness to take part in open discussion
- Ability to assimilate large amounts of information and remain impartial and work to deadlines
- Ability to make logical, fair and balanced decisions
- Comply with requirements set out in the conflicts of interest statement

Remuneration

£350 per day

Availability

You will need to be available at least 10 days a year including 2 for training.

SECTION 5

How to apply

To apply for any of these roles, please email in word format to:
applications@thewlisgraham.com the following documents quoting the correct reference number.

YI104 - Independent Complaints Board HR/Regulatory or similar expert

YI105 - Independent Complaints Board Labour Party lay member

- CV (no more than two sides of A4) setting out career history with relevant responsibilities and achievements. Please ensure any gaps over the last two years are accounted for.
- A completed declaration of conflicts of interest statement. You can see the example here in this pack, the word document to complete is on our microsite under '**How to Apply**'.
- A supporting statement of suitability of no more than 1000 words outlining:
 - Which role you are applying for.
 - How your personal skills, qualities and experience are suited to the role with particular reference to person specification criteria.
 - Confirmation of the completion of the diversity and monitoring form (details in the next section).
- Please answer these following two questions; the word document containing these questions and the space to reply is on our microsite under '**How to Apply**'.
 1. **Please give examples of your ability to work on your own or in a committee to oversee or assist with investigations, manage large volumes of materials, and make decisions either to close down investigations or to take action. Up to 300 words.**
 2. **Please give examples of where you have worked with others to make logical, fair and balanced decisions and inspired the confidence of an external group. Up to 300 words.**

Please also provide the following information:

- Details of your social media accounts
- Your political affiliation (or none)
- Any potential conflicts of interest
- Details of two professional referees with a brief statement of capacity and over which period of time they have known you.

Please submit and complete all documents listed as failure to do so will unfortunately result in your application not being considered. Please ensure that you include your mobile phone number and email address in your application. Do not hesitate to contact Claire Drummond on 020 7850 4781 if you have any queries

If you require this document in an alternative format, such as large print or a coloured background, please contact: applications@thewlisgraham.com.

SECTION 6

Indicative timetable and arrangements

Closing date for receipt of applications for all posts to the Independent Complaints Board:
6 December 2021 at 5pm

Short-list discussions for Independent Complaints Board: between 7 - December 2021 and 10 January 2022.

If you are short-listed, you will be interviewed by a Standing Recruitment Committee.
Interviews for Independent Complaints Board: w/c 17 & 24 January 2022.

Regardless of the outcome, we will notify all candidates as soon as possible after the final interview.

Throughout the process, we will advise you about the outcome of your application at the earliest opportunity.

Questions?

If you have any questions or encounter any issues with your application, please contact Sarah Thewlis, Managing Director of Thewlis Graham Associates, Recruitment Agency on 0207 850 4781 or email: applications@thewlisgraham.com.

SECTION 7

Conflicts of interest statement and declaration – there is a word version of this declaration on the bespoke microsite for completion.

Members of the Independent Complaints Board and Independent Review Board have a duty to ensure that they are not placed in a position where their personal interests are in conflict with their duty to act in the interests of either Board.

Factors which may affect an applicant's suitability include, but are not limited to:

- criminal convictions or outstanding criminal charges;
- disqualification from a profession or as a company director; or bankruptcy
- having an unspent conviction for a money laundering, bribery or terrorism or related offence;
- having ever been found to be in contempt of court;
- having ever been removed as an officer or employee of a charity for misconduct or mismanagement;
- being subject to notification requirements under sexual offences legislation (i.e., they are on the sex offenders register); or being a “designated person” under anti-terrorism legislation.

Any role holders must avoid placing themselves under obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence their decision making when dealing with Labour Party complaints.

You should not act or take decisions in an attempt to influence your work or for financial or other material gain for yourself, your family or friends.

You must declare membership of any UK political party. Apart from the Labour Party lay members, **anyone holding such a membership in the previous 5 years will not be eligible to apply.**

You must declare any other interest which may be relevant and not covered by the above including any association through close family members or associates which might lead a fair-minded observer, having considered the facts, to conclude that such an interest might influence an individual's judgement in matters relevant to the Independent Complaints Board or the Independent Review Board.

You must declare any close personal relationships with any serving member of the Labour Party NEC.

Social and other media

Role holders must comply with the Labour Party's requirement to treat all people with dignity and respect. This is particularly relevant to any online presence and we would expect individuals to follow the Labour Party's [social media policy](#) at all times. This applies to both current and past posts as well as content you may like or share.

If you are unsure whether something you post online could compromise your role on the Independent Complaints Board or the Independent Review Board, you should consider how the information affects your responsibilities in connection with your role and if you are unsure, you can ask for advice.

Who is covered?

Any member of the Independent Complaints Board the Independent Review Board.

Gifts / hospitality

Members of the Independent Complaints Board and Independent Review Board and must not accept gifts, hospitality or benefits, offered in relation to this work.

Cases of non-compliance

There will be a Code of Conduct for members of the Independent Complaints Board. Any breach of this Code of Conduct may result in your removal from that role.

Members of the Independent Complaints Board and the Independent Review Board will not be employees of the Labour Party.

DECLARATION

I confirm that I do not fit within any of the factors listed above and that there are no other grounds under which I would be ineligible for appointment. If successful in this process, I undertake to notify the Labour Party immediately about anything that may affect my eligibility to remain a member of the Independent Complaints Board or the Independent Review Board.

I wish to declare the following information which may be relevant to my eligibility for this role:

Signature name and date:

SECTION 8

Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring

Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring is independent of the recruitment process but please do complete the form. Thewlis Graham Associates is committed to monitoring and analysing diversity and inclusion information so that we can ensure that our processes are fair, transparent, promote equality of opportunity for all, and do not have an adverse impact on any particular group.

The link to this form is below:

YI104 – HR/regulatory experts for the ICB – [click here](#)

YI105 – Party Members for the ICB – [click here](#)

If you have any problems with this, please contact Tracey on: tct@thewlisgraham.com.

Any information provided on this form will be treated as strictly confidential and will be used for statistical purposes only. It will not be seen by anybody directly involved in the selection process. No information will be published or used in any way which allows any individual to be identified.

Thank you

SECTION 9

Advert

HR/Regulatory and Labour Party Lay Members – Y1104 and Y1105

The Independent Complaints Board

Following the Equality and Human Rights Commission report in October 2020 into [Antisemitism in the Labour Party](#) the Labour Party is setting up an independent complaints process to ensure we maintain the highest levels of trust and confidence in the way we handle complaints regarding protected characteristics.

This means setting up two new bodies which will be an integral part of the complaints process. These are an **Independent Review Board (IRB)** that will verify each complaint decision involving protected characteristics and an **Independent Complaints Board (ICB)** to hear appeals and, if required hold in-person hearings.

We are delighted to have this exciting opportunity to advertise for HR/regulatory or similar experts, and Labour Party lay members for the Independent Complaints Board.

Independent Complaints Board (ICB)

The ICB will be one of a dozen Board members including four HR/regulatory or similar experts, four Labour Party lay members and four Complaints Board lawyers (being advertised separately).

When an appeal case is heard or an in-person hearing required, a Panel of three will be convened with either an HR/regulatory expert, a Labour Party lay person and a Complaints Board Lawyer who will chair the Panel.

We are now looking for four HR/regulatory or similar experts (**Y1104**) and four Labour Party lay members (**Y1105**) to be appointed for a period of three years.

The ICB is expected to sit approximately 30-36 days a year but as this is a new body this will be kept under review. You can expect to work around 10 days a year including two training days. The majority of your work will be done online.

The remuneration for this role will be a day rate of £350. You will be paid by but not employed by the Labour Party.

Due to the sensitive nature of these roles and as part of our commitment to equality and diversity we welcome applications from candidates regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital status, or pregnancy and maternity. We actively encourage applications from people from a variety of backgrounds, and a range of skills and experiences including those with a protected characteristic.

Please note, apart from the Labour Party lay members, these roles are only open to those who have not held membership of a UK political party either now or within the last five years. The Labour Party lay members will need to have been a party member for at least five years with an unblemished membership record.

Full details of requirements and competencies required are in the link below.

Please apply by visiting www.thewlisgraham.com/assignment-briefings and following the instructions in the candidate brief quoting the relevant reference number – Y1104 and Y1105.
The closing date for both roles is 6 December at 5pm. For a confidential conversation with Sarah Thewlis or for any other information please email applications@

