

EQUALITY POLICY

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Purpose

To ensure compliance with the Firm's obligations under equality legislation in Ireland, the Solicitors Acts and Regulations, the Law Society of Ireland's Guide to Professional Conduct and Practice Notes, and all applicable court rules.

Introduction and Scope

Diversity and Equal Opportunity

An important factor in the Firm's success is the people who are employed and the creative energy, innovation and quality of services they deliver to the Firm's clients. We are committed to fostering a working environment in which outstanding people are attracted to and retained by the Firm regardless of religion, race or national origin, gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, disability, age or membership of the Traveller community. We seek to establish an environment that values diversity of background and experience in the workforce at all levels of the organisation. In valuing diversity and in standing strong for the principles of fairness that make managing diversity easier, we enhance our profile as a firm that genuinely values its employees and its clients. This obligation includes ensuring the promotion of a harmonious working environment where all persons are treated with respect and dignity and in which no form of intimidation will be tolerated.

The Firm is committed to equality of opportunity in all its employment practices, policies and procedures. No employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, age, race, religion, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, disability or membership of the Traveller community in terms of recruitment, pay and conditions of employment, training and opportunities for career progression.

Policy Statement

The Firm is committed to avoiding discrimination in its dealings with clients, partners, employees and all other parties that have dealings with the Firm. It is committed to promoting diversity in all its professional activities.

- (a) All Staff (i.e. employees, consultants and Partners) must be aware of the Firm's policy in relation to discrimination, equality and diversity, and are expected and required to treat all others fairly and in accordance with this policy. This involves treating, partners, employees, clients, contractors and all third parties with attention, courtesy and respect regardless of any of the above grounds, and so covers:
 - (i) managing and dealing with Staff;
 - (ii) accepting instructions from clients;
 - (iii) using barristers, experts and counsel
 - (iv) the provision of services to clients
 - (v) dealings with those representing others; and
 - (vi) interaction with everyone involved in or incidental to the provision of services or the carrying on of business by the Firm.
- (b) The policy also extends to the recruitment, training and promotion of people within the Firm.

Partnerships - In relation to the selection of Partners, the Firm will not discriminate directly or indirectly on grounds of

gender, age, race, religion, civil status, disability or membership of the Traveller community in relation to selection for, or terms and conditions of the Partnership.

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- (c) All Staff must comply with the obligations set out in this policy, the obligations set out in the Employment Equality Acts and Equal Status Acts, ("equality legislation"), all other relevant legislation and with any relevant professional requirements set down by the Law Society of Ireland or any other relevant body.
- (d) In addition, the Firm will do all that is reasonably possible to ensure that nobody with whom it has dealings will suffer any substantial disadvantage through any disability that they might have. The Firm is committed to making reasonable accommodation for those with a disability in relation to job opportunities, promotion and training within the Firm and the provision of services to clients.
- (e) The Compliance Partner is the partner who has primary responsibility for the operation of the Firm's policy for avoiding discrimination and achieving diversity.

Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure

Staff or prospective Staff who believe they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation is entitled to raise the matter with the HR Manager and the Compliance Partner to address such complaints. In the absence of such designation or where raising the matter with that Manager or Partner would be inappropriate, the complaint may be raised with any Partner of the firm.

The Partners will ensure that all complaints of discrimination are dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. All efforts will be made to ensure that Staff or prospective Staff making complaints will not be victimised.

The internal procedures for addressing complaints of discrimination will not detract from the rights of Staff to pursue complaints under relevant anti-discrimination legislation to an Equality Tribunal or other forum as appropriate.

The Firm will ensure that the disciplinary procedure addresses any breaches of this Policy.

Monitoring diversity

All Fee Earners will endeavour to comply voluntarily, with requests for information sought by the Law Society, the Equality Authority or any statutory authority aimed at pursuing the objective of diversity and equality of opportunity. The Firm will monitor diversity annually and seek to address any identified shortfalls.

Staff Training

All Staff will be trained to comply with equality and diversity requirements.

Staff responsible for the policy

The **HR Manager** and the **Compliance Partner** will be responsible for the amendment and review of this Policy. The **Lexcel Partner** will approve such amendments to the Policy.

Annual Review

The **Lexcel Manager** and **Lexcel Partner** will carry out an annual review of the policy to verify it is in effective operation across the firm.