



IMMIGRATION LAW PRACTITIONERS' ASSOCIATION

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Approved by the Executive Committee 13 September 2011

Equal Opportunities and Diversity Statement of Policy

ILPA exists to:

- Promote and improve the advising and representation of immigrants;
- Provide information to members on domestic and European immigration, refugee and nationality law; and
- Secure a non-racist, non-sexist, just and equitable system of immigration, refugee and nationality law practice.

These aims are themselves directed toward promoting equality of opportunity. ILPA is also committed to ensuring that, in the process of realising these aims, it respects equal opportunities, hence this policy.

The Immigration Law Practitioners' Association is committed to equality of opportunity. Our policy is to ensure that everyone who comes into contact with ILPA is treated with respect and that no one is subject to prohibited conduct within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 (such conduct including discrimination, victimisation and harassment), taking account of the duty in the Act to make reasonable adjustments for disabled persons, on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, gender, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage, civil partnership or any other characteristic protected by the Act.

ILPA recognises that diversity among its officers, members and staff and all those with whom we work is an asset to the organisation and its work. ILPA is committed to promoting diversity and equality of opportunity.

This policy shall govern all ILPA's activities, including:

- acceptance of applications for membership or appointment to posts within ILPA;
- recruitment and employment of staff;
- the provision of services to members and others; and
- the use of consultants and contractors and the services of third parties.

Positive action

Although it is unlawful positively to discriminate in favour of certain groups, positive action to enable greater representation of under-represented groups is permitted by law and encouraged by ILPA.

In particular, we shall take such steps and make such adjustments as are reasonable to prevent staff or members who have a disability from being placed at a disadvantage in comparison with those who do not have a disability and give effect to the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled persons, aware that discrimination as regards disability may arise as direct discrimination, indirect discrimination and discrimination arising from a disability.

ILPA works to challenge discrimination and reflect diversity by

- advocating for those who experience discrimination through our work toward a just and equitable immigration, asylum and nationality law practice that does not discriminate on the grounds of race, gender or otherwise.
- ensuring that officers, staff and members are aware that the policy is in use and that it is an expectation that all individuals will be respected equally.
- ensuring that all staff and officers are aware of the importance of equality in practice and feel able to challenge and report discrimination.
- ensuring that those with whom we work are aware of the need to consider equal opportunities when planning joint work.
- ensuring that our training programme is planned and that practical arrangements are made in ways that provide all with the opportunity to participate, regardless of disabilities and that account is taken of religious festivals in setting the training timetable and making catering arrangements.
- ensuring that our meetings are planned and practical arrangements made in ways that provide all with the opportunity to participate, regardless of disabilities, and that account is taken of religious festivals in timetabling meetings.

THE STATEMENT OF POLICY IN PRACTICE

Appointment of officers and those in positions of responsibility and acceptance of applications for membership

The appointment of officers and other members to fulfil tasks such as the representation of ILPA at meetings, leading on consultations or convening subcommittees is based solely on merit and is made without regard to race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, gender, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or any other material protected characteristic, save insofar as this is the source of specialist relevant expertise that will enable the officer or member to perform the task.

No refusal of an application for membership will be based upon the race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, gender, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or any other material protected characteristic.

Recruitment

ILPA will consider applications equally regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, gender, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, or any other material protected

characteristic and will ensure that there are equal opportunities in all stages of the recruitment process.

Codes of Practice in force under the Equality Act 2006 and the Equality Act 2010 at the material time are applicable.

Employment

ILPA is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment. This means that all job applicants and employees will receive equal treatment regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, gender, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, or any other material protected characteristic.

Members' conduct

ILPA will treat seriously and take action when a complaint is made against an ILPA member about discrimination, harassment or victimisation on grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, gender, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or any other material protected characteristic. Where such complaints are upheld they will be dealt with in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Staff disciplinary and grievance procedures

ILPA will treat seriously and take action when any member of staff has a grievance as a result of discrimination, harassment or victimisation on grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, gender, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage, civil partnership or any other material protected characteristic. Acts of discrimination, harassment or victimisation on grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, gender, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage, civil partnership or any other material protected characteristic by staff will be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedure set out in the staff handbook.

Consultants, contractors and services provided by third parties

Consultants and contractors are hired on the basis of their skills, experience and ability. ILPA will not contract or avoid contracting with any person on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, gender, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or any other material protected characteristic.

All dealings

ILPA will deal with all persons with the same courtesy, attention and consideration, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, gender, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage, civil partnership or any other material protected characteristic.

Management and implementation

Ultimate responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the Executive Committee of ILPA but all officers, staff and members must work to ensure that they act in accordance with this policy.

Communication and implementation of this policy

Reference to this policy will be incorporated into in-house training and specialist training will be arranged where reviews or staff appraisals indicate that this is necessary or where the law changes.

All staff and members of the Executive Committee will receive training on this policy and copies of this policy. Staff will be reminded of this policy following all reviews.

The statement at the beginning of this policy shall be communicated to those who act on ILPA's behalf and the full policy shall be given to them on request.

The statement at the beginning of this policy shall be communicated to any marketing, recruitment and other agencies engaged by ILPA and the full policy shall be given to them on request. In all its dealings, including with suppliers, contractors and other agencies, ILPA will seek to promote the principles of equality and diversity.

ILPA will reflect its commitment to equality and diversity in its communications.

The full text of this policy shall be available to members, contractors and third parties upon request.

Updating and evaluation of the policy

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or more frequently where there are changes in the relevant legislation. This review will assess:

- i) The need to make changes to the policy to reflect changes in law or best practice.
- ii) Staff and officers' awareness of the policy and the identification of training needs.
- iii) Compliance with the requirements to disseminate the policy and the identification of training needs to implement this.
- iv) Communications and marketing to ensure that they reflect this policy.
- v) The number and outcome of any complaints of discrimination made by staff.

Any disciplinary action taken against staff broken down by race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, gender, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage, civil partnership or any other material protected characteristic.

vi)

At the time of the review, staff and officers will be invited to contribute to an equal opportunities monitoring exercise.

ILPA will, as appropriate and as required by law, monitor and record the ethnicity, gender, any disability and any other material protected characteristic of all applicants,

short-listed and successful applicants for jobs and training contracts. The results of such monitoring will be analysed and the results of the analysis communicated to the Personnel sub-committee of the Executive Committee.

Action points, with a timescale for implementation and those tasked to take the necessary steps, will be drawn up following the review.

ILPA Disability Policy

Policy Statement

As part of our overall commitment to equality of opportunity for all, ILPA is committed to equality of opportunity for persons with disabilities and to an environment free of discrimination. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Equality Act 2010 provide the legal framework for our work in this regard.

Aims

ILPA aims to

- Remove barriers to access to employment for disabled people
- Ensure there is no discrimination against, and there is equal access to training and development for, disabled staff
- Enable equal access to ILPA's services for members and those who participate in ILPA training courses and events.

As a training provider and provider of services to members

ILPA works to ensure that our training sessions and meetings are accessible to people with disabilities of whatever kind. Where we cannot provide services ourselves because of the limitations of our premises, our expertise or our finances, we will ensure that the disabled person is signposted towards the right help and given all reasonable support to access it. Where we have not been able to help a person with disabilities, we shall consult and review how we can do better in the future.

As an employer

As an employer we strive to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Equality Act 2010. Our sole concern in terms of staff with disabilities is whether this disability will jeopardise the staff member's health and safety or the health and safety of others and we shall make every reasonable effort to provide support and assistance to enable people with disabilities to work.

Consultation and Complaints procedure

We are eliciting and reflecting upon feedback on how we are doing in keeping our environment free of discrimination against people with disabilities. All training courses include a feedback form and we welcome informal feedback at all times. If a member or participant at ILPA training courses has cause to complain that we have not implemented our policy against discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of disability, we operate a complaints procedure. Similarly, we operate a grievance procedure for staff.