

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

V1: 13.12.2022

Purpose

The Bar of Ireland recognises that its employees come from diverse backgrounds, with varying experiences and needs. We are committed to ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded into our day-to-day working practices.

Through our policies and in our day-to-day work and fulfilment of our legal responsibilities, the organisation is dedicated to promoting equality and fairness and combating discrimination. This applies to everyone, regardless of Gender, Civil status, Family status, Sexual orientation, Religion, Age, Disability, Race or Membership of the travelling community. The Bar of Ireland will take proactive steps to safeguard this ethos and is committed to continuous improvement.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion [EDI] Objectives

In order to achieve our commitment to being an equal and diverse organisation, The Bar of Ireland has identified the following overarching objectives:

- Provide the organisation's Leadership Team with the skills and knowledge to fully embed fairness, respect, equality, diversity, inclusion and engagement within the organisation's culture, strategy, and processes;
- Provide diversity and inclusion training to all colleagues, which will include content on their responsibilities, relevant legislation, and our policy;
- Ensure opportunities are accessible to all, introducing reasonable accommodations to facilitate this where required;
- Create an environment where colleagues and members are treated fairly and with dignity and respect;
- Enforce a zero-tolerance approach in relation to discrimination, bullying, harassment, and inappropriate behaviour, thoroughly investigating any reported incidents and taking appropriate actions;
- Ensure fair treatment for job applicants, which is free from bias;
- Make the best possible use of our existing and potential workforce through effective talent management;
- Provide a safe, supportive, and welcoming environment where everyone can contribute to their fullest potential;
- Provide training to colleagues on our commitment to zero tolerance in relation to discrimination, bullying, harassment and inappropriate behaviour;
- Act as role models to partner organisations and other external stakeholders, challenging discrimination and promoting diversity;
- Keep our policies, processes, and procedures under ongoing review in order to ensure that no direct or indirect discrimination exists;

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the organisation, no matter what contract type they are engaged upon.

Members of The Bar of Ireland are bound by the [Code of Conduct](#) and agree to treat all members of staff with civility and respect.

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion imposes rights and responsibilities on every member of staff. All colleagues will be informed that a Diversity and Inclusion Policy is in operation and that they are bound to comply with its requirements. The policy will also be drawn to the attention of external stakeholders and job applicants.

The policy ensures that our statutory duties outlined in the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 and the Equal Status Acts 2000-2018 are met.

For the avoidance of doubt, the nine grounds are defined as being:

- Gender
- Civil status
- Family status
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Age
- Disability
- Race (includes race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins)
- Membership of the travelling community.

Key Equality & Diversity Concepts

Diversity can be defined as the visible and non-visible differences between individuals. These differences can be related to race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, and gender, as well as the many differences in values, attitudes, beliefs, cultural views, skills, knowledge, education, background, employment, parenthood, marital status, and life experiences of every individual.

Equal Opportunities can be defined as ensuring all those involved with or wishing to be involved with the organisation, regardless of their diversity, are provided with opportunity based on their ability or potential to perform the required activity.

Discrimination is unequal treatment of an individual because of their membership of a particular class or group, such as sex, race, or trade union. It may be direct, for example, refusing to send someone on a training course because they are married or have children. It may be indirect, for example, declaring a post as being suitable only for a full-time member of staff without proper justification (i.e., establishing the need for a full-time member of staff rather than for part-timers or job sharing).

Discrimination may be subtle and unconscious and may not be easy to identify. For example, discrimination sometimes results from general assumptions about the capabilities, characteristics and interests of particular groups or individuals, which are allowed to influence the treatment of staff or job applicants or clients. This includes unconscious bias.

Harassment or bullying has the effect of causing undue stress on individuals and of de-motivating them. Harassment or bullying of any kind will not be tolerated and serves to undermine the safe, supportive, and welcoming environment which The Bar of Ireland wishes to encourage.

Management and Delivery of this Policy

Fairness, respect, equality, diversity, inclusion and engagement are the responsibility of everyone within The Bar of Ireland.

The Leadership Team is committed to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion within the organisation, ensuring that everything we do and the way it is done, makes reference to and considers the impact upon our equality objectives.

It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive to oversee the implementation of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. The Chief Executive will ensure that the Council is kept updated in terms of the existence of the policy and ensure its implementation.

The Director of HR, supported by the Leadership Team, is responsible for the delivery of this policy in terms of key employment practices such as selection, recruitment, and retention.

Our Staff Equality, Diversity and Inclusion [EDI] Committee will be supported by the organisation and empowered to carry out their activities, which focus on heightening awareness of EDI matters within the workplace from a staff perspective. An annual action plan will be developed by the Committee.

Our commitment in support of diversity and inclusion will be communicated to all colleagues, members, visitors and other stakeholders using a variety of methods such as the staff portal, the website and where appropriate included in publications.

Our employees will receive appropriate training to ensure they understand their responsibility not to discriminate and to treat everyone with respect and dignity. Colleagues are expected to be aware of personal prejudices, unconscious bias and stereotypes and avoid labels at all times.

All employees will be made aware of and follow the requirements in the Dignity and Respect Policy which sets out our commitment against bullying and harassment behaviours.

The existing processes, which includes the [Dignity and Respect Policy](#), [Grievance Policy](#), and [Disciplinary Procedure*](#), will be used to review and investigate any complaints in relation to discrimination, harassment or bullying.

It is expected that when colleagues represent The Bar of Ireland at any time, including through attendance at committees, meetings with external stakeholders and in their contact with members, they will ensure that the EDI principles and practices outlined in this policy are adhered to.

The Bar of Ireland uses the procurement process to ensure that its partners and external stakeholders operate their businesses with similar equality objectives and delivers its services with the same ethos.

We regard discrimination, harassment, abuse, victimisation or bullying of staff, members or of others in the course of work as disciplinary offences that could be regarded as gross misconduct. Condoning such behaviour could also be treated as a disciplinary offence. As well as disciplining the perpetrator(s), we will give appropriate support to people who complain of harassment of themselves or others.

Selection and Recruitment

The Bar of Ireland aims to promote diversity and inclusion as an employer. It also aims to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable within the context of the policy.

Selection, recruitment, training, promotion, and employment practices generally will be subject to regular review to ensure they comply with this policy. In particular, selection and recruitment procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis in order to constantly improve diversity and inclusion practices and respond to changes in legislation.

Employees involved in the selection and recruitment process, and in the management of staff, will receive appropriate training to ensure they recognise when they are making stereotypical assumptions or judgements about people, and avoid any discriminatory practices in the way in which they shortlist, recruit or manage employees. This will include unconscious bias training.

Embedding Equality within our Workplace

The Bar of Ireland has considered the working practices it has in place to address inequality and discrimination and how it promotes fairness for all. Examples of these practices are given below but should not be regarded as a definitive list of all that the organisation does:

We recognise that employees have different needs at different stages during their career, for example to balance work and caring responsibilities or to manage menopausal symptoms. We will attempt to accommodate staff requests to work flexibly, whether part-time or some other working arrangement, for whatever reason, so long as agreement is consistent with the operational needs of the organisation. Further details can be found within our [Flexible Working Policy](#).

Our terms and conditions of employment allow for paternity leave in addition to standard maternity leave, in accordance with current legislation. Allowance is also made for compassionate leave to deal with domestic emergencies through our [Force Majeure](#) and [Other Leave](#) policy.

Support, information and guidance is also available for colleagues in our [Menopause Policy](#).

We recognise that organisations are obliged, under the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 to make reasonable accommodations to support disabled people and enable them to do their job without unnecessary difficulty. We will make accommodations which are reasonable, whether or not we are obliged to do so by law, and whether or not a disabled applicant or employee is covered by the definition of ‘disabled’ under the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015.

We are committed to ensuring employees do not experience discrimination (or less favourable opportunities/treatment) based on their race, religion or belief by: -

- Allowing time and, if possible, a place for prayers during the working day and at the workplace as appropriate.
- Considering employees' dietary requirements in catering for staff, and when providing facilities for staff to eat and store food.
- Allowing staff of particular faiths to take their holidays for religious festivals and other religious observance.
- Trying to arrange job interviews or other important work meetings at times when they do not clash with important religious festivals.

- Not imposing a dress code with which people of a particular religion cannot comply.

We will not discriminate on grounds of age in recruitment, promotion, training, or the availability of benefits.

We will not discriminate on the grounds of gender, where an individual is in the process of gender reassignment or where an individual has completed this reassignment.

We will not discriminate on the grounds of marriage or civil partnership and will support individual need as required.

We will not discriminate on the grounds of an individual's sex or on the grounds of their sexual orientation.

We undertake a review of pay and continually work to ensure no unfair pay gaps exist within the organisation. We will keep our gender pay gap under review and adhere to requirements set out in legislation on this matter.

All group CPD opportunities will be published widely to all appropriate employees, and not in such a way as to exclude or disproportionately reduce the numbers of applicants from a particular group.

Procurement

The Bar of Ireland is committed to working with a wide range of suppliers and contractors, from local businesses through to large multi-nationals across a wide range of different types of contracts and purchases.

Equality, diversity and inclusion will be considered during the procurement process and on the award of contracts there will be an expectation that contractors comply with the relevant legislation and ethical practices.

Policy Appendix

A number of important statements related to EDI matters have been agreed by the EDI Committee and received approval from the Chief Executive. They will be used in a range of operational matters such as appearing on job boards advertisements, on our website and in part to event invitations. Some statements include operational notes for consideration of required edits before use. The appendix also includes a glossary of terms.

Policy Update and Review Cycle

The Bar of Ireland reserve the right to vary the details of this policy in accordance with any organisational and statutory requirement changes as and when they occur. Employees will be notified in good time of any such variation through the employee portal.

Due to the important influence this policy has upon our organisation culture, a review led by the Staff EDI Committee will be completed on a two-yearly basis, with interim updates occurring as and when required.

APPENDIX

Contents

a. Gender Identity & Trans Inclusion Statement	6
b. Equal Opportunity Employer Statement.....	7
c. Equal Opportunity Employer Statement [short version]	7
d. Disability Accommodation Statement	7
e. Dietary Requirements Statement	8
f. Glossary.....	9-11

a. Gender Identity & Trans Inclusion Statement

The Bar of Ireland is dedicated to promoting and building an inclusive workplace in which all feel welcomed, respected and valued, and in which prejudice is not tolerated. We understand that not every individual’s gender falls within the traditional binary construct, and that some individuals are transgender, non-binary, or gender-fluid. We believe an inclusive environment enables all of our colleagues to be their authentic selves in the workplace and perform to the best of their ability. We seek to foster a culture that ensures the full, equal and effective participation of every employee in their service to the Bar and its members, irrespective of their gender identity or gender expression.

Every colleague will be addressed by the name and pronoun that they designate in correspondence to their gender identity. We recognise that proper pronoun and name usage are key elements in creating a welcoming workplace in which all employees feel included, and we will respect and support each colleague’s choice and preference.

Employees have complete and total discretion over information regarding their gender identity and expression. Any staff requests to personal details (including name, title, and gender) will be collected, stored and handled promptly, confidentially and lawfully, in accordance with GDPR. When and if an employee decides to transition, The Bar of Ireland is committed to affirming the employee’s gender and providing them with the support and professional guidance needed to make the transitioning process as smooth as possible.

The Bar of Ireland will not tolerate discrimination, bullying, harassment or sexual harassment on any grounds, including the basis of gender identity or gender expression. Confidential and supportive methods, through which employees can report any experiences or witnessing of discrimination, victimisation or harassment, are available.

We welcome feedback on how we can strengthen our efforts in providing a gender identity inclusive environment. Comments and suggestions can be addressed to HR at paula.corrigan@lawlibrary.ie or the Staff Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee.

b. Equal Opportunity Employer Statement

The Bar of Ireland is proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer that is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace. We do not discriminate based upon gender, civil status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, membership of the Traveller community or any other protected characteristic as outlined under the Equal Status Acts 2000-2018.

This policy applies to all employment practices within our organization. All employment decisions in The Bar of Ireland are based on merit, abilities, suitability and qualifications. For more information, read through our Equal Opportunities Policy here.

The Bar of Ireland is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities and neurodiverse conditions in our job application procedures. If you require assistance or an accommodation, you may contact HR at paula.corrigan@lawlibrary.ie

c. Equal Opportunity Employer Statement [short version]

The Bar of Ireland is proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer that is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Click here for the full statement [*Add link to full EDI Policy before using the short version*].

The Bar of Ireland is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities and neurodiverse conditions in our job application procedures. If you require assistance or an accommodation, you may contact HR at paula.corrigan@lawlibrary.ie.

d. Disability Accommodation Statement

*Relevant text to be used as appropriate. Include in all publicity and pre-registration materials. Deadline included as often ISL interpreting requires 2 weeks' notice to arrange etc.

ONLINE EVENTS

This event is taking place online only.

The Bar of Ireland strives to host accessible and inclusive events that enable all individuals, including those with disabilities and/or those who are neurodivergent, to participate fully. Your experience in this event is important to us.

Please contact events@lawlibrary.ie if you have any access requirements at least 48 working hours before the event is due to take place, so that we can facilitate you in attending this event. Advance notice is necessary where arranging particular accessibility needs.

HYBRID EVENTS

This event can be attended either online or in-person.

The Bar of Ireland strives to host accessible and inclusive events that enable all individuals, including those with disabilities and/or neurodiverse conditions, to participate fully. Your experience in this event is important to us.

We note that The Gaffney Room is on the second floor and access requires attendees to take 16 number of steps upstairs with a handrail on the left side only. There is no elevator access to this room. *[where applicable, amend facts to reflect venue - what is inaccessible to some, may not be inaccessible to others.]*

Please contact events@lawlibrary.ie if you have any access requirements at least 48 working hours before the event is due to take place, so that we can facilitate your participation in this event. Advance notice is necessary where arranging particular accessibility needs.

IN-PERSON EVENTS

This event can only be attended in person.

The Bar of Ireland strives to host accessible and inclusive events that enable all individuals, including those with disabilities and/or neurodiverse conditions, to participate fully. Your experience in this event is important to us.

We note that The Gaffney Room is on the second floor and access requires attendees to take 16 number of steps upstairs with a handrail on the left side only. There is no elevator access to this room. *[where applicable, amend facts to reflect venue? What is inaccessible to some, may not be inaccessible to others.]*

Please contact events@lawlibrary.ie if you have any access requirements at least 48 working hours before the event is due to take place, so that we can facilitate your participation in this event. Advance notice is necessary where arranging particular accessibility needs.

e. Dietary Requirements Statement

*To include on Tito pages for catered in-person events.

Please email events@lawlibrary.ie if you have any dietary requirements or special considerations, and we will do our best to accommodate you.

GLOSSARY

Appropriate actions are suitable, acceptable or correct for the particular circumstances.

Bullying: Workplace bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work but as a once off incident is not considered to be bullying.

Civil Status: Civil status is defined as being single, married, separated or divorced, widowed, in a civil partnership, or being a former civil partner in a civil partnership that has ended by death, or has been dissolved.

Disability: Different definitions of disability are used in different contexts, for example to set eligibility for particular services, or to outlaw discrimination on grounds of disability. The Disability Act 2005, for example, sets out disability as 'a substantial restriction in the capacity of the person to carry on a profession, business or occupation in the State or to participate in social or cultural life in the State, by reason of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment'. There is no definitive list of what is considered to be a disability.

Discrimination is the unequal treatment of a person/s on the grounds of race, skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin, gender, civil status, family status, religion, age, disability, or membership of the Traveller community. Discrimination can be direct or indirect. Direct discrimination is when a worker is treated less favourably than another worker in the same situation or circumstances. Indirect discrimination occurs as a result of institutional processes and practices that appear neutral but which negatively and disproportionately impact minoritised groups.

Ethnicity/Ethnic Origin: Ethnicity is a social construct that differentiates people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioural patterns, language, political and economic interests, history, and ancestral geographical base. People can share the same nationality but be of different ethnic groups and people who share an ethnic identity can be of different nationalities. Examples of different ethnic groups are: Irish Travellers, Irish, Polish, Swedish (White), Cape Verdean, Haitian, African American (Black), Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese (Asian), Cherokee, Mohawk, Navaho (Native American), Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican (Latino).

Family Status is one of the protected grounds covered by equality and anti-discrimination law in Ireland. 'Family status' means being pregnant or having responsibility as a parent or person in loco parentis for a person under the age of 18 years or, responsibility as a parent or resident primary carer of a person of 18 years or over with a disability requiring care or support.

Gender refers to a spectrum of masculine and feminine characteristics that are socially constructed. This includes norms, behaviours and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl, boy, or non-binary person, as well as relationships with each other. As a social construct, gender varies from society to society and can change over time.

Gender identity is each person's internal and individual experience of gender. It is a person's sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum. A person's gender identity may be the same as or different from their birth-assigned sex. Gender expression is how a person publicly expresses or presents their gender. This can include behaviour and outward appearance.

Gender Fluid refers to having or showing a gender identity that is not fixed and changes over time.

Harassment on the grounds of **gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race, or membership of the traveller community** is defined as any unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity at work and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. The unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures, or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material.

Inappropriate behaviour is behaviour or language not suitable in a particular situation.

Nationality is the legal bond between an individual and their country, which may be acquired by birth or naturalisation. A person may have a different country of nationality from their country of origin and/or country of birth owing, for example, to the acquisition of citizenship in a country different from their country of birth.

Neurodiversity refers to the range of differences in individual brain function and behavioural traits, regarded as part of normal variation in the human population. ADHD, Autism, Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia, and Tourette's syndrome are all examples of neurodiverse conditions.

Non-binary is an umbrella term for gender identities that fall outside of the binary of man or woman and thus do not conform to traditional gender roles. This includes a wide variety of gender identities, including genderfluid, bigender, pangender, agender, non-gendered, genderqueer.

Prejudice is a pre-judgment and usually negative attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported

generalisations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognised equally as individuals with individual characteristics.

Race: The term race has its roots in racial categorisation schemes that were promoted by scientists to support worldviews that understood some groups of people as superior and some as inferior. As such, race is a made-up social construct, and not an actual biological fact.

Reasonable accommodation refers to an employer's obligation, under the Employment Equality Acts, to take 'appropriate measures' to meet the needs of people with disabilities in the workforce. This means an employer must make arrangements that will enable a person who has a disability to have equal opportunities when applying for work, when working, and when seeking promotion. 'Appropriate measures' refers to the effective and practical changes that the employer puts in place to enable employees with a disability to carry out their work on an equal footing with others.

Religion is one of the protected grounds covered by equality and anti-discrimination law in Ireland. Discrimination on the 'religion ground' happens where there is less favourable treatment of one person compared with another person because one has a different religious belief, background, or outlook from the other, or one has a religious belief, background or outlook and the other has not.

Sex refers to the designation of a person at birth as male or female based on their anatomy (genitalia and/or reproductive organs) or biology (chromosomes and/or hormones). Assigned sex may differ from gender identity. The Trans Equality Network Ireland (TENI) advise that the phrase 'sex assigned at birth' is more accurate and respectful than the phrase 'biological sex', as it acknowledges the reliance on external anatomy. Additionally, in the case of intersex individuals it is not always possible to assign sex at birth.

Sexual orientation refers to a person's physical, emotional and/or romantic attraction to another person. Sexual orientation is distinct from sex, gender identity, and gender expression.

Traditional binary construct in the context of gender is a classification system, consisting of two genders, male and female. It is a concept or belief that there are only two genders and that one's sex or gender assigned at birth will align with traditional social constructs of masculine and feminine identity, expression, and sexuality.

Transgender/Trans are umbrella terms for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex assigned to them at birth. The term may include, but is not limited to, trans men and women, non-binary people and dual role people. Not all people that can be included in the term will associate with it.