

STEELE RAYMOND LLP

Discrimination and Diversity Policy (“the Firm”)

Introduction and scope

1. All personnel must be aware of the firm’s policy in relation to discrimination, equality and diversity. The policy deals with all professional dealings by personnel with clients, other solicitors, barristers and third parties, and so covers:

- accepting instructions from clients;
- using experts and counsel;
- the provision of services to clients;
- dealings with those representing others;
- interaction with everyone involved in or incidental to the provision of services by the firm.

The policy also extends to the recruitment, training and promotion of people within the practice. In connection with all such aspects, it is the case that all personnel must comply not only with the professional requirements of the Solicitors Regulation Authority, but also with the law of the land.

Forms of discrimination

2. The firm’s policy covers discrimination on the grounds of:

- race or racial group (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins);
- sex (including marital status, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity and paternity);
- sexual orientation (including civil partnership status);
- religion or belief;
- age;
- disability.

The types of action that are against the firm’s policy are:

- Direct discrimination, where a person is, without lawful cause, less favourably treated on any of the above grounds.

- Indirect discrimination, where a requirement or condition that cannot be justified is applied equally to all groups but has a disproportionately adverse effect on members of one particular group by reason of any of the above grounds.
- Victimisation, where someone is treated less favourably than others because he or she has taken action against the firm for unlawful discrimination on one or more of the above grounds.
- Harassment, which occurs when unwanted conduct on one of the above grounds has the effect of violating another person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

Disability provisions

3. In addition to the firm's obligations not to discriminate against, harass or victimise those with a disability the firm is also subject to a duty to make reasonable adjustments to prevent those employees, members/partners, and clients who are disabled from being at a disadvantage in comparison with those who are not disabled.

Policy statement

4. Steele Raymond LLP is therefore committed to avoiding discrimination in its dealings with clients, members/partners, employees and all other third parties that have dealings with the firm. It is committed to promoting diversity in its professional activities.

Everyone at the firm is expected and required to treat all others equally and with the same attention, courtesy and respect regardless of their:

- race or racial group (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins);
- sex (including marital status, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity and paternity);
- sexual orientation (including civil partnership status);
- religion or belief;
- age;
- disability.

In addition, the firm will 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 adjustments for those with a disability in relation to job opportunities, promotion and training within the firm and the provision of services to clients.

All the areas of discrimination set out in sections 1. and 2. are collectively referred to as 'the above grounds' in the rest of this section.

Enforcement

5. All personnel should be aware that any breach of the policy is a potential major risk to the firm. The firm does not carry insurance against the consequences of any illegal breach, and any claims in this regard are also likely to involve the firm in significant commitments of managerial time and money. Further, a breach may be a serious professional offence, and liability may attach not only to the individual(s) concerned, but also to the owners of the firm. For that reason any breach is likely to be regarded as a serious disciplinary offence. If anyone is concerned that a breach of this policy may be occurring, or has a complaint that they have been the victim of a breach, they should immediately report this to any member/partner.

Training

6. The firm may arrange training sessions from time to time for personnel on this topic. This policy will also form part of the firm's induction training programme.