



DIPLOMA IN JUDICIAL SKILLS AND DECISION-MAKING

Start date: Wednesday 16 October 2019

Delivery method: On-site Wednesdays and Saturdays, with lectures webcast online

Assessment: Final written assignment (60%) and continuous assessment (40%) based on participation and completion of workshop assignments*

Fee: €2,800

Programme objectives

On completion of this training programme, participants will have:

- Strengthened their case-management and leadership skills,
- Attained an understanding of the skills needed to preside over various fora, including adjudicatory, tribunal, and board roles,
- Developed their awareness of the complexities of the decision-making process,
- Practiced and honed their skills with respect to drafting written judgments, and
- Increased their knowledge regarding an array of issues that have a daily impact on adjudicatory forums in Ireland, including social diversity, equality, and vulnerable witnesses.

Programme structure and approach to learning

This diploma will provide participants with case-management leadership skills and practical training on how to run a case in any forum. It will also prepare participants for adjudicatory, tribunal, and board roles, and will explore the skills needed to preside over various forums. Practical workshops on arriving at a determination and drafting judgments will be facilitated by means of case studies and role-play sessions. A module on mediation will discuss how the *Mediation Act 2017* affects traditional court-based proceedings, with a particular focus on mediation in the commercial context and in family law. The diploma also features a distinct module on awareness and sensitivity training and dealing with vulnerable witnesses and clients.

The programme is based on the following module scheme and covers key themes as listed below:

Module 1: The exercise of judicial skills and decision-making

- Ethical considerations; types of judicial roles/quasi-judicial bodies,
- The application and recruitment process,
- Understanding and managing the trial process,
- Rules of evidence from the decision-maker's perspective.

Module 2: Mediation, managing proceedings, and administering justice

- Mediation overview from a judicial perspective,
- The effect of the *Mediation Act 2017*,
- Functions and duties of chairpersons of a board.

Module 3: Written judgments and decision-making skills

- Drafting written judgments,
- Proceedings involving litigants-in-person,
- Assessing credibility; assessing expert evidence.

Module 4: The social context of law

- Examination of cultural diversity in Ireland,
- Independence and accountability,
- Equality legislation and inclusion,
- Consistency in sentencing,
- Dealing with vulnerable clients or witnesses.

Workshops

Workshops are a key feature of this course. These are designed to be interactive and involve working in groups on selected case-study problems and analysis, with an emphasis on the application of the law to common scenarios encountered in practice.

*Selected workshops will form part of the continuous assessment for the course, and students are asked to make sure that they are available to attend on-site on these dates. Workshop dates for this course are available on our website, www.lawsociety.ie/diplomacentre.

Who should attend?

This course is suitable for:

- Solicitors, barristers, and other relevant professionals who wish to develop the skill-set necessary for adjudicatory, tribunal, and board roles, or the skills necessary to preside over various forums,
- Directors or other relevant professionals seeking to gain necessary training with regard to overseeing decision making processes in a corporate environment.

We welcome applications from others who are suitably qualified. Please explain your interest and set out any relevant experience in a cover letter and a brief CV. Such applications are subject to a supplemental fee of €200.

How to apply

An application form can be downloaded from our website. For any queries, contact diplomateam@lawsociety.ie.

Faculty

Lecturers are drawn from members of the judiciary in Ireland both past and present, leading barristers and solicitors, and members of independent public bodies. Tutors are drawn from experienced trainers in the relevant area, both from this jurisdiction and internationally, and from other legal practitioner experts. Past speakers have included:

- Justice Michael Peart, Court of Appeal, Ireland,
- Tina Bond, deputy district judge on the North East Circuit England and Wales,
- Judge Colin Daly, District Court, Ireland,
- Judge John O'Connor, District Court, Ireland,
- Geraldine Clark, partner, Gleeson McGrath Baldwin Solicitors,
- Paul Egan, chairman of corporate, Mason Hayes and Curran,
- Bob Semple, consultant,
- Dr Jennifer Carroll MacNeill BL,
- Paul Anthony McDermott SC,
- John Kennedy BL, and
- Stephen O'Hare, CEO, Transgender Equality Network Ire