DIPLOMA IN JUDICIAL SKILLS AND DECISION MAKING

Start date: Wednesday 17 October 2018
Delivery method: Onsite Wednesdays and Saturdays, with lectures webcast online
Assessment: One 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 forums, to include 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 to include 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 will affect 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
- 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 interactive sessions that focus on group problem-solving and are designed to revise all modules covered to date and to consolidate the participant’s knowledge:

• Workshop 1 Saturday 20 October 2018
• Workshop 2 Saturday 10 November 2018
• Workshop 3 Wednesday 14 November 2018
• Workshop 4 Saturday 24 November 2018
• Workshop 5 Saturday 1 December 2018
• Workshop 6 Saturday 8 December 2018

Workshop 1: Avoidance of bias and stereotyping workshop – a study in how to avoid irrational decision-making and unconscious bias encroaching when in high-pressured decision-making roles.

Workshop 2: Mediation and family mediation role-play – development of such skills, tools, and strategies used by mediators; facilitating negotiation and agreement; managing intense emotions; identifying power imbalances; encouraging communication; and fostering healthy co-parenting relationships.

Workshop 3: Participatory workshop involving a mock WRC hearing (or another relevant forum) – role-play interactions with respect to a mock WRC hearing from the perspective of the relevant decision-maker. Participants will gain an insight into how to maintain order, manage proceedings, and administer justice effectively.

Workshop 4: Participatory workshop involving a mock boardroom meeting – an interactive boardroom simulation which will highlight the need for effective boardroom management. Participants will gain an insight into cognitive bias and a deeper understanding of the importance of good boardroom behaviours.

Workshop 5: Drafting written judgments workshop – interactive first-hand experience in drafting judgments, determinations, and decisions which will focus on summarising the facts and issues, discussing legal opinions, and concluding the judgment.

Workshop 6: Skillset needed to properly carry out judicial and quasi-judicial roles – designed to develop in participants an awareness of issues relevant to procedural justice and competent judicial communication skills.

Who should attend?
This course is suitable for:
• Solicitors, barristers, and other relevant professionals who wish to develop the skillset 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 managing proceedings in a corporate environment.

If you are not a qualified solicitor, a barrister, or a trainee, please apply with a cover letter and CV for approval to attend the course. Such applications are subject to a supplemental fee, which amounts to €200 in respect of a diploma application.

**Faculty**

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

• The Hon. Mr. Justice Michael Peart, Court of Appeal Judge, Ireland;
• Tina Bond, Deputy District Judge on the North East Circuit England and Wales;
• Judge Colin Daly, District Court Judge, Ireland;
• Judge John, O'Connor, District Court Judge, 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, Transgender Equality Network Ireland