



*Equality Code -  
Quick Start Guide*

## Outcomes - focused

All members of the CLC-regulated community must deliver the following Outcomes:

- The service is accessible and responsive to the need of individual Clients, including those who are vulnerable (Code of Conduct Outcome 6.1);
- No-one – Client, employee, colleague, job applicant, employee or other party – you deal with feels discriminated against (whether directly or indirectly), victimised or harassed (Code of Conduct Outcome 6.2).

This means that bodies must comply with Equalities legislation, providing equal opportunities for access, service, employment and training; making reasonable adjustments to prevent disabled persons from being placed at a substantial disadvantage; making all reasonable efforts to ensure the service is accessible and responsive to all clients; and investigating thoroughly - and disciplining as appropriate - any allegation of discrimination, victimisation or harassment.

## What is meant by a 'vulnerable' client?

Members of the public seeking provision of legal services are often vulnerable and/or distressed due to the very circumstances which have caused them to seek the service. They can also be vulnerable due to a range of characteristics such as low-literacy levels; limited knowledge of, or limited skills in, use of English; lack of knowledge of legal entitlements; and disability. Vulnerability can only be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

## Equality Act 2010 - an overview

A service provider must not discriminate, harass or victimise any member of the public requiring the service. Employers, (proposed and actual) firms and Limited Liability Partnerships, must not discriminate, harass or victimise any person in their employment/partner arrangements, offers, terms, and opportunities for promotion, transfer, training or other benefit, facility or service. Employers are responsible for the actions of their employees; managers are responsible for the actions of agents.

Discrimination is when a person is treated less favourably, or an unjustifiable requirement/condition has a disproportionately adverse effect on a group, because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or faith, sex or sexual orientation; these are known as the 'protected characteristics'. A person perceived to have a protected characteristic or who is associated with someone who has a protected characteristic is also protected from discrimination e.g. carers.

A reasonable adjustment means the removal of barriers which would place a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage, or would cause an unreasonably adverse experience, to a person without a disability. An adjustment can be a one-off - e.g. adjusting a physical feature so the premises are more accessible or providing special computer software for a disabled employee - or an adjustment made on numerous occasions - such as making information available in an accessible format such as large print, or visiting a client at home if they are unable to access your premises.

Terms in contracts, collective agreements or rule of undertakings are unenforceable/void if they result in unlawful discrimination or victimisation. There is limited enforceability of pay secrecy clauses.

The end of a service or employment relationship must not give rise to discrimination or harassment. In some circumstances, employers are explicitly liable for harassment by third parties in the workplace. A body covered under the Act should not instruct, cause, induce, or aid, another party to contravene their own responsibilities under the Act.

Unless made for prescribed relevant reasons job applicants cannot be asked questions related to health or disability prior to being offered a position.

Tribunals can make recommendations affecting all of an employer's staff, not just the claimant.

This section provides only an overview of the Act's provisions. You should make yourself familiar with the Act itself. [http://www.equalities.gov.uk/equality\\_bill.aspx](http://www.equalities.gov.uk/equality_bill.aspx)