



# 2019 Probate diversity survey

## WEBINAR Q&A

**Q. I have set up a subsidiary company to be regulated for probate. This company has no employees and one director. Employees of the holding company sometimes carry out work for the probate regulated company. Who should be included in the diversity report? If this is only the one director, surely this is a breach of personal data.**

A. The regulations require firms to monitor the diversity of the people carrying out the probate work. We would therefore recommend that the diversity of the whole group is monitored as a best practice approach. Clients that come through your door are likely to see a number of members of your staff and not just a single practitioner.

It is important not to see the survey as simply something that must be done to comply with regulations but rather as a marketing tool whereby you can demonstrate empathy with people from all backgrounds and walks of life. Death and therefore probate is highly inclusive and gives a wide market base. Widening the survey to as many members of staff as possible is advantageous to your firm.

We do not expect you to include any data that compromises a member of staff's anonymity.

**Q. Your questionnaire covers an enormously wide scope (child caring responsibilities social mobility etc. Why so wide a net?**

A. There are several drivers that have influenced the survey questions.

- 1) The Legal Services Board have set ten key questions which should be reported on to comply with the probate regulations
- 2) ICAEW's own commitment to supporting the diversity agenda, ensuring that the profession is a truly inclusive one.
- 3) ICAEW's vision of practices of the future envisages a lot more home working which would enable members restricted by caring responsibilities or disability to move back into the profession. These statistics help us monitor that development.
- 4) The Cabinet Office's drive to improve social mobility and greater inclusion in the accountancy profession.
- 5) The data helps ICAEW fulfil its regulatory responsibility to regulate and monitor firms in the future according to the way the profession is evolving.

**Q. Is there a format for submission to ICAEW?**

A. Yes. Please use this [aggregated response template](#)

**Q. Where would I find my firm's Company number that we need to submit with the aggregated results?**

A. Your C00XXXXXX ICAEW firm reference number can be found on most correspondence from ICAEW. If you are unsure, give our Technical Advisory team a call +44 (0)1908 248 250 and they will be happy to confirm the correct reference number.

**Q. Where should we comment about diversity on the firm's website - the recruitment page, the probate services page, the general "about the firm" front page etc?**

A. We would suggest the general 'about the firm' page would be a sensible place to include the data.

**Q. I am a sole practitioner with no staff and plan for this always to be the case. What information should I publish please?**

A. We would recommend you publish a sentence or two confirming that your firm is an inclusive organisation and that you welcome everyone through your door. Perhaps include a commitment to collect diversity data if your firm were to expand in the future.

Another way to approach this might be to include some information in your biography that highlights your particular area of expertise including working with diverse cultures. We do not expect you to publish any data that you do not wish to be made public.

**Q. Is there anything to mandate employees to respond in regulations? In that case, is "prefer not to say" the appropriate response when reporting to ICAEW?**

A. No. The mandate is for firms to collect the data and not for employees to complete the survey. The 'prefer not to say' option is available for all questions although you may want to ask yourselves as an organisation why an employee might not be willing to respond to any of the questions. Does this reflect any underlying cultural issues you may need to address?

**Q. We are a small firm of 9 people of which 3 deal with probate. Do we still have to publish the diversity information on our website?**

A. Yes. We do not expect you to include any data that compromises a member of staff's anonymity. Therefore a high level statement can be published explaining that some questions have been omitted from the results for data protection reasons but it should be possible to include some basic information about your staff.

**Q. As a firm of 40 staff do we need to disclose a statement as well as results when we send results in to ICAEW?**

A. Yes. We require just a few sentences that state the messages the data has sent to you as an organisation. For example any future plans to promote female engagement, or engagement with a particular ethnic community or faith. This is an indication that your firm has received and considered the information as part of management of the practice.

**Q. We completed the diversity survey as part of our application to undertake probate work in 2016. ICAEW contacted our staff, collected the data and forwarded the results to us - will ICAEW be providing this service again?**

A. No, due to the introduction of the GDPR earlier this year, we have ceased collecting data on behalf of our firms, this is why we are suggesting the use of third party suppliers.

**Q. Any further questions?**

A. If you have any additional questions that have not been covered in the above, please contact our technical advisory team via [contactus@icaew.com](mailto:contactus@icaew.com) or by calling +44 (0)1908 248 250.