

FOREWORD

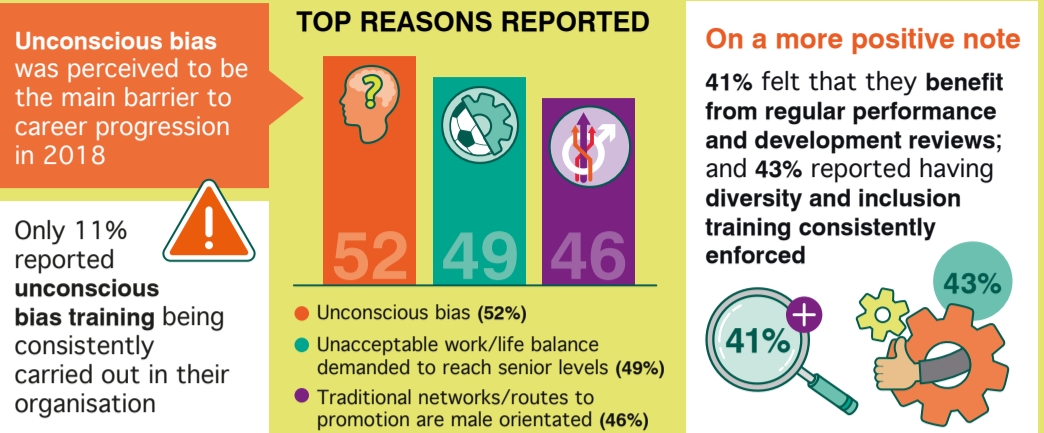
This blueprint distils the main recommendations of the Law Society's Women in Leadership in Law project, collated from almost 250 roundtables in 20 jurisdictions, conducted nationally and internationally with women and men working in the legal profession.

It sets out the practical steps to develop your strategy for gender balance in your organisation and should be read in conjunction with the Women in Law Pledge. The blueprint includes particular actions for private practice and in-house practitioners, and for organisations of different sizes.

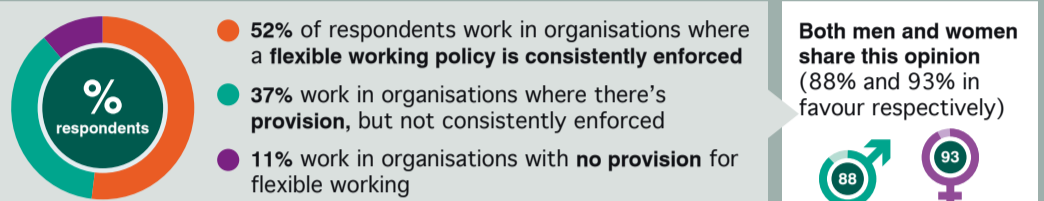
I want to thank you for your ongoing support for this project. I very much hope you will continue being a leader, advocate and, most importantly, a campaigner working together with us to help us achieve equal representation of women in senior positions in the legal services sector.

Christina Blacklaws
President

The Law Society conducted a survey between November 2017 and January 2018 to understand better the key issues that affect women working in law. Of 7,781 respondents, almost 5% identified as LGBT+, 13% identified as BAME and 4% identified as disabled.



More people than ever think **flexible working really works for everyone** → **91%** of respondents felt that a **flexible working culture is critical to improving diversity** in the legal profession (86% in 2012)



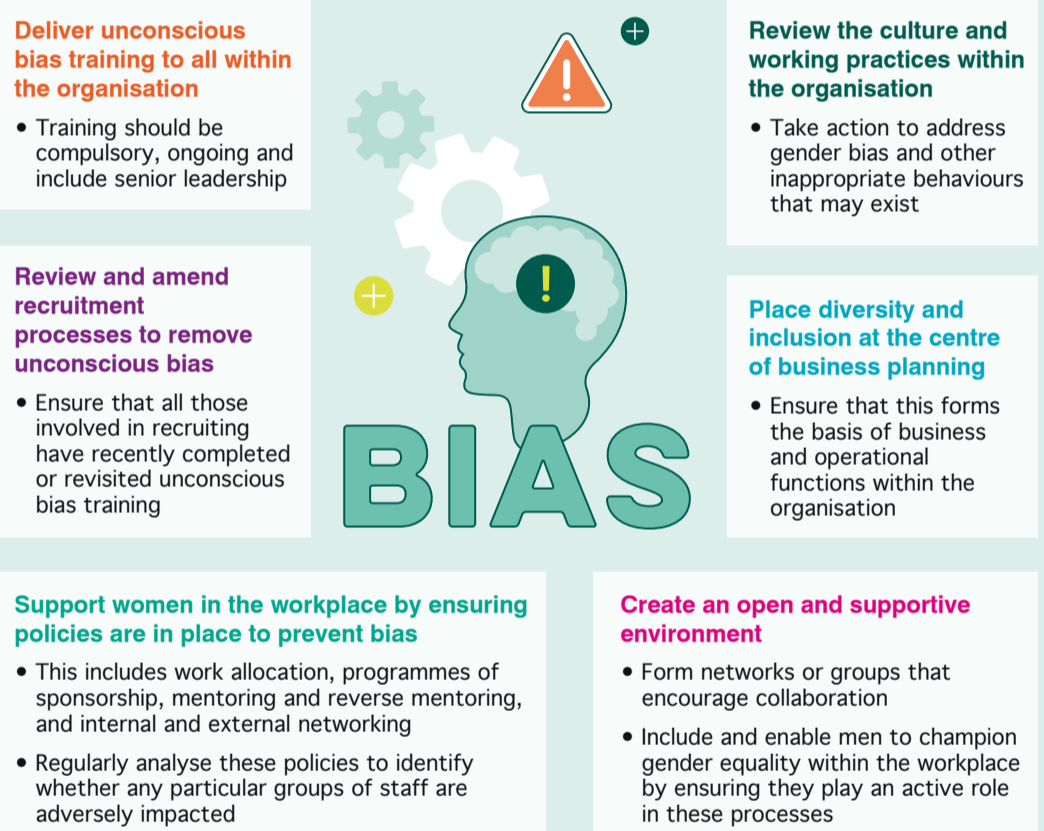
A BLUEPRINT FOR GENDER BALANCE:

1. An overarching guide

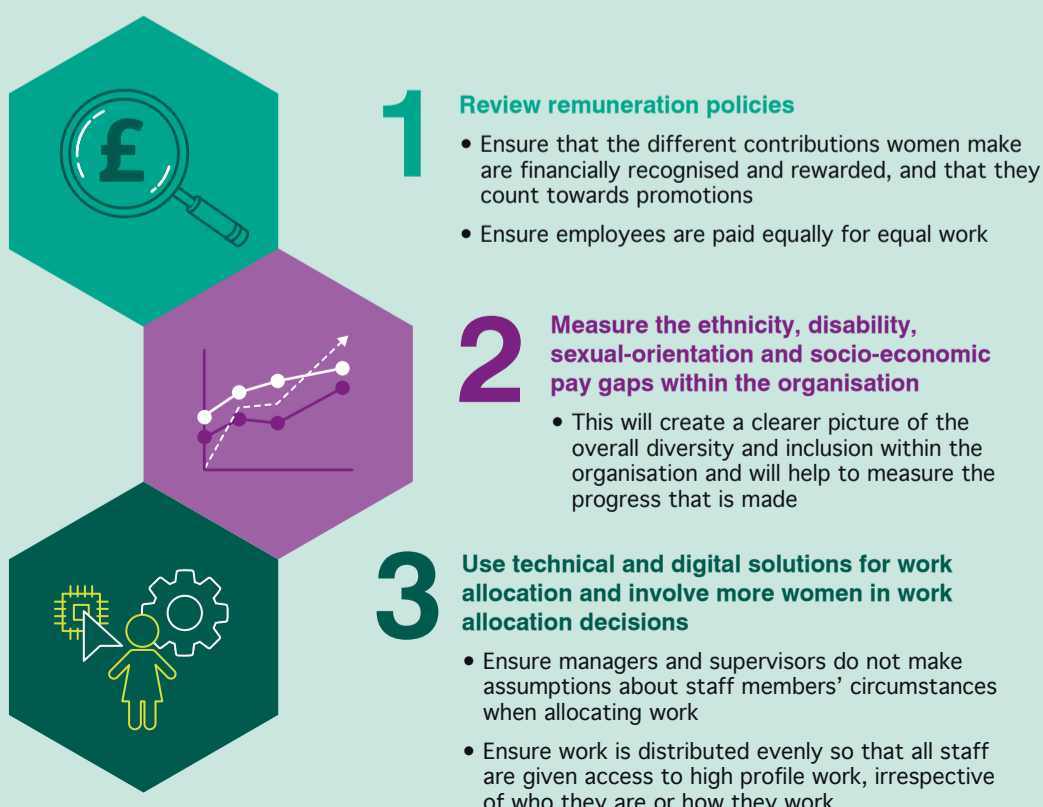
Sign up to the Women in Law Pledge and implement it:



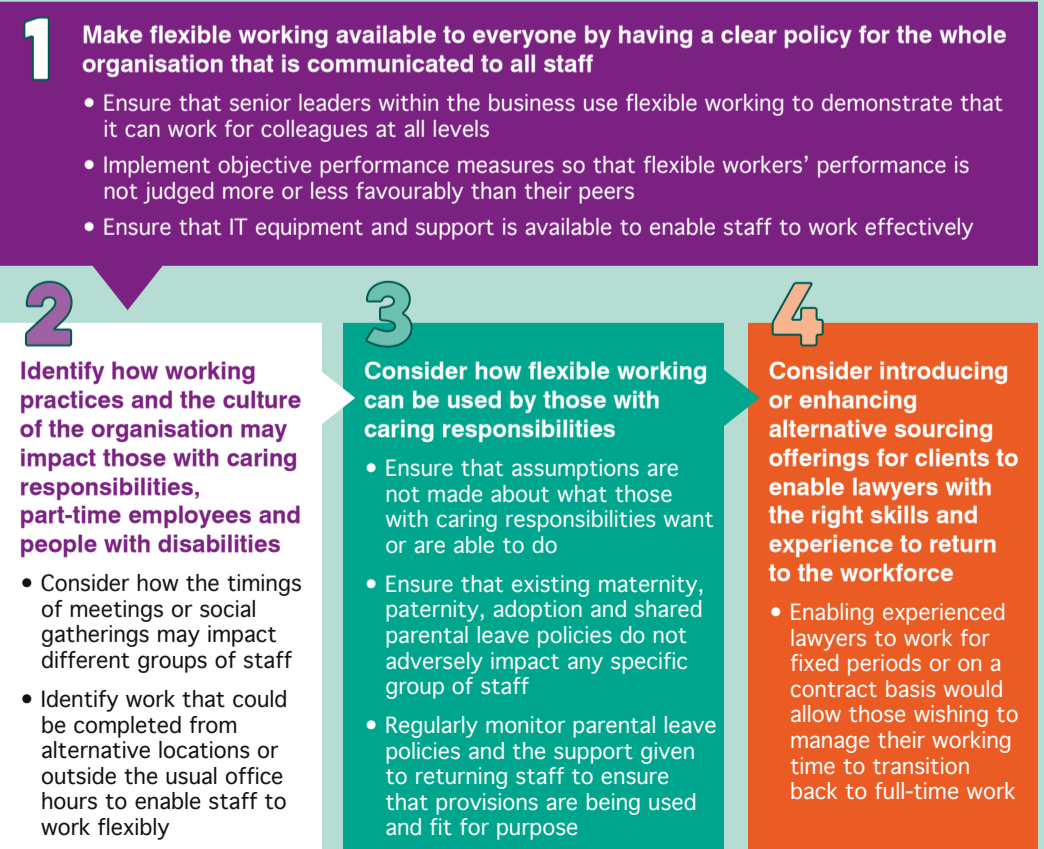
2. Steps to tackle bias



3. Steps to promote fair remuneration, equal pay and closing the gender pay gap



4. Steps to make flexible working mainstream



SECTORAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. In-house

1 Identify measures designed to improve gender diversity across the organisation

- Set up an internal group, made up of staff at all levels, to share experiences and ways to deal with day-to-day issues, support each other and increase diversity within the organisation

2 Promote policies on flexible working across the whole organisation

- Encourage staff at all levels to use flexible working

3 Encourage external firms bidding for in-house work to be open about fee earners on the team who work part-time

- Use individuals who work part-time and encourage transparency about how assignments are being covered



2. Smaller firms



1 Team up with other firms to improve gender balance

- Share practical insights and best practice between firms to develop ideas and use each other's day-to-day experiences



2 Celebrate what senior men are doing on diversity and mentoring

- Use men as champions of change to normalise and encourage the uptake of policies like flexible working by everyone within the firm



3 Join local law society initiatives

- Use the experiences of others and understand how different practices and initiatives could work within your own firm

3. Larger firms

1

Develop 'Returner Programmes' for all staff

- Target both male and female staff who have been out of the profession for three years or more to increase the willingness of women to return to frontline work after career breaks

2

Ensure work allocation is fair and non-billable work is financially recognised and rewarded

- Ensure women and men are consistently given the opportunity to secure high impact assignments over a long period of time, irrespective of their working pattern

3

Ensure all work is taken into account when considering promotions and rewards

- Conduct appropriate and well-rounded assessments encompassing all the contributions made towards the business. This includes non-chargeable but important work, client and practice development, corporate and social responsibility and knowledge management

4

Encourage staff at all levels to use policies aimed at helping to achieve gender equality

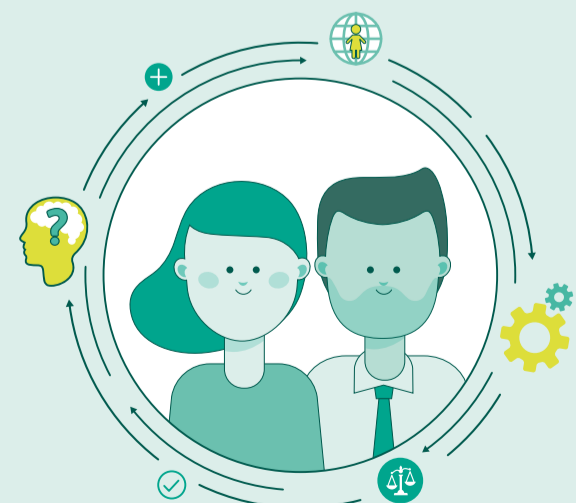
- Encourage men to use parental leave
- Encourage all staff to work flexibly and adapt the working culture to ensure those who do work flexibly are included and supported



We hope this blueprint gives you insights, ideas and practical steps to start taking action for gender equality today!

As we have seen throughout the Women in Leadership in Law project, change often starts with a conversation. So please do talk to your senior leaders, managers and colleagues about this and discuss what actions you can implement together.

The Law Society remains committed to carry on with this important work, so keep in touch and let us know about your progress: www.lawsociety.org.uk/get-in-touch



Women in Leadership in Law: Blueprint for Gender Balance

The Law Society

113 Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1PL
Tel: 020 7242 1222
Fax: 020 7831 0344
DX: DX 56 London/Chancery Lane

www.lawsociety.org.uk

[@TheLawSociety](https://twitter.com/TheLawSociety)
[@LawSocDI](https://twitter.com/LawSocDI)

