



Associate Membership of the New Zealand Law Society

About the New Zealand Law Society

In New Zealand anybody may provide legal services, but only lawyers may provide legal services in certain reserved areas of work.

Under the Lawyers and Conveyancers Act 2006 the NZLS regulates all lawyers in New Zealand and all lawyers must hold practising certificates issued by the NZLS. Although regulation is compulsory, membership of the NZLS is voluntary.

Only practising lawyers may be full members. Associate membership is designed for people who have close links to the legal profession.

Associate membership does not carry any entitlement to practise and does not confer any benefit in terms of an immigration application.

Who may be an associate member?

The NZLS Rules for Associate Membership say:

Subject to the provisions of the Lawyers and Conveyancers Act (Lawyers) Constitution 2008 any person, whether or not resident in New Zealand, claiming a significant association with the legal profession in New Zealand through:

- (a) being or having been a member of the judiciary; or
- (b) responsible employment or engagement (including as a legal executive):
 - (i) in the practice of a barrister or a solicitor or of both;
 - (ii) in commerce;
 - (iii) in Government or public service;
 - (iv) by the New Zealand Council of Legal Education;
 - (v) as a lecturer in law at a recognised tertiary institute;
 - (vi) by any legal professional association or body,

shall be eligible to become an associate member of the New Zealand Law Society.

This means that if you are:

- a retired lawyer
 - an experienced legal executive, legal office manager or the like employed in any field of law
 - legally qualified but not currently in practice
 - a New Zealand lawyer practising overseas not holding a New Zealand practising certificate
 - an overseas lawyer with significant association with the New Zealand profession
 - a present or former member of the judiciary in New Zealand or elsewhere
 - a lecturer in law
 - anybody else claiming a significant association with the legal profession
- you may be eligible for appointment as an associate member.

Note: Lawyers who have been suspended or struck off the roll are ineligible.

How do you apply?

There are three routes to associate membership.

- Full members of the New Zealand Institute of Legal Executives can use a fast track route through the Institute. (Contact NZILE, PO Box 64 232, Botany, Auckland, email enquiries@nzile.org.nz)

- Full members of the Law Council of Australia Family Law Section can use a fast track route through the NZLS Family Law Section. (Contact details, Kathryn Akanoa, Section Administrator, NZLS Family Law Section, P O Box 5041, Wellington, Tel 0064 4 463 2966, email kathryn.akanoa@lawsociety.co.nz)
- For others, applications for appointment as an associate member are made on the prescribed form.

The NZLS Board must be satisfied that the applicant is eligible according to the Rules and has a significant association with the legal profession.

The Board will retain an absolute discretion over appointments and need not give reasons for failing to appoint any nominee.

What is the cost?

The NZLS Board has set a fee of \$50.00 (excl GST) for the period to 1 July 2010 to June 2011. There is an optional certificate of membership, issued annually, at a cost of \$15.00 (excl GST).

Full members of NZILE who are seeking associate membership through the Institute should obtain fee details from that organisation.

Full members of the LCA FLS should obtain fee details through the NZLS FLS. (See contact details at “How do you apply?” above).

The benefits

Participation

Associate membership allows people who have given service to, or been closely connected with, the legal profession to participate in its work.

While they will not be eligible for appointment or election as NZLS officers or Council or Board members, associate members are eligible for appointment to special committees as the Board may decide.

Communication and information

Associate members may purchase a subscription to *LawTalk*, the NZLS fortnightly publication. *LawTalk* contains news of Law Society regulatory activities and information of direct and immediate benefit to members and associate members. It is the principal advertising vehicle for the profession and is sent to all lawyers who hold practising certificates. The cost for New Zealand residents is set out in the documentation you receive with an application form.

Continuing education

NZLS CLE Limited runs an extensive continuing education programme. Each year seminars on a wide range of topics are presented at various venues throughout the country. These seminars, together with specialist workshops, are often of particular interest to people who may not be practising lawyers. If you are a NZ resident, for a small fee you can be kept informed of the programmes being presented by NZLS CLE Limited.

Library Services

Library services are available at a cost of \$281.50 (GST incl) - Associate members, like lawyers, are charged for any research, photocopying and delivery costs.

Membership of NZLS Sections

Associate members of the NZLS may join one or both of the Property Law Section www.propertylawyers.org.nz and the Family Law Section. www.familylaw.org.nz To find out more about their services please check their websites.

The Corporate Lawyers Association (CLANZ) is also a NZLS section. For information about its current membership structure, see www.clanzonline.org.