

THE ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH INVESTIGATORS

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION NOTES



Dear Applicant,

POINTS OF INTEREST

THE ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH INVESTIGATORS, originated in 1913 when the forerunner to the ABI was founded under the title of the British Detectives Association (BDA). Much was achieved in establishing standards of competence and integrity and the quest to regulate the profession, beginning its long (unfinished) journey. In 1950, BDA merged with the Federation of British Detectives, adopting the style of The Association of British Detectives. In 1970 the Association became a corporate body, limited by guarantee under its present title.

The Association is governed by an annually elected Council of volunteers and has the following permanent Committees: Finance: Legislation: Education and Training: IT: Membership Selection: and a Disciplinary Committee. Decisions by the Membership Selection Committee must be accepted as final subject to certain provisions contained in Byelaws. The Association also appoints through the Council other Committees or groups for the study of conditions or events concerning the profession or where collective representation of members is desirable or expedient.

It is important for applicants to understand that The Association is a non-profit making professional body and not a trading or trade protection organisation. It is equally important that applicants are motivated to seek membership primarily to support the aims of The Association to secure recognition of professional status.

Membership is vested in the individual. It is not awarded to any agency, company, limited or otherwise, or organisation as such, although several persons of any single firm or agency may apply for membership and may be admitted as members individually. This secures the highest level of responsibility and accountability, qualities not offered elsewhere, yet so important to clients.

All applications for Full Membership in the United Kingdom should be accompanied by the Application Fee and all such applicants may be required to attend before The Association's Interview Panel. All applications for Provisional, Associate, Affiliate and Overseas Membership should also be accompanied by the Application Fee. Subscription rates for the appropriate category of membership will be payable within fourteen days of being advised of your acceptance to The Association as a member.

NOTE: MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FEE IS NON-REFUNDABLE.

Attention: Applicants for Provisional and Full membership will be required to take an on-line examination, based on ***The Best Practice Guide****, prior to attending a selection interview.

*Applicants can purchase ***The Best Practice Guide*** for **£40 (including P & P)** reduced from £55.

Selection interviews, following the on-line examination, are held throughout the year. All sessions are attended by 3-5 members of the Selection Committee. Sessions are held in a private room, normally on a Sunday and coinciding with a regional branch meeting.

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FULL MEMBERS

Applicants must be resident in the United Kingdom and have been engaged as full time investigators in the UK for a **minimum of two years**, either as principals or employees of a reputable investigation agency, They must be 21 years or over, and satisfy a Selection Panel by interview as to their ability, character and integrity.

All UK based members (other than Associate and non-practising Provisional) joining The Association will be required to hold Professional Indemnity Insurance. The Association has a members' only arrangement with a preferred broker which provides comprehensive cover at discounted premiums. Details are made available once accepted as a member.

All UK based applicants must provide a clear Criminal Conviction Certificate (Basic Disclosure) which is less than 12 months old.

All candidates will be expected to be sufficiently knowledgeable in the areas of Common Law which are relative to the activities of a private investigator as well as on issues of Privacy, Human Rights and Data Protection. Should the candidates work include specific services such as surveillance, statement taking, process serving, tracing etc. then they will be asked to answer questions on those subjects.

The candidate is assessed at the interview, and in most cases informed of the result on the day. The candidate will then be notified formally in writing by the General Secretary. The committee is not obliged to give a reason why a candidate has not been accepted as a member. Unsuccessful candidates can re-apply for membership after one year has elapsed.

Fast Track Application for Full Membership

For UK applicants who have been practising as investigators in the private sector for at least 5 years (or at least 2 full years providing they have 3 years or more prior investigative experience in the public sector, such as Police or military). If they can also provide 2 references from existing long standing ABI members (of at least 5 or more years standing) who are prepared to vouch for the competence, experience and honesty of the applicant, and can also supply 2 further professional references, then providing that the applicant satisfies the normal strict due diligence vetting, they will be admitted to Full Membership without the need to attend a selection interview.

PROVISIONAL MEMBERS

Provisional Membership is open to persons who are over the age of 18 and UK based, but at the time of applying are either yet to become practising investigators or have been practising for less than 2 years. Ideally they should have undergone or be registered on and adhering to a training course approved by the Governing Council. They must be able to satisfy a Selection Committee, by interview, as to their ability, character and integrity. This category of membership will expire at the end of two years except in those cases where the applicant has not attained the age of 21 when it will be extended. This category of Membership should be regarded as a probationary period before Full Membership is granted.

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ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

This category is open to UK based persons engaged in the public sector of the investigative profession. Providing they can provide a clear Criminal Conviction Certificate (Basic Disclosure) or equivalent and satisfy the usual due diligence vetting, then applicants will not be required to attend before a Selection Panel.

OVERSEAS MEMBERS

Open to full-time investigators resident and operating outside the United Kingdom. They must satisfy the Selection Committee as to their ability, character and integrity, or be sponsored by 2 existing members in good standing, and be aged 21 years or over.

AFFILIATE MEMBERS

Open to persons, engaged in an occupation which is ancillary or complements the investigation industry and who are persons who do not otherwise practise as fee earning private investigators. Minimum age limit - 25 years.

Note: Applicants for this membership category who cannot claim practising fee earning experience as Investigators are expected to attach written evidence of their professional occupation or vocation in support of their application.

ATTENTION!

Persons who would make excellent members are often daunted by the prospect of being tested as to their knowledge, and unfortunately (for them and The Association), they decide not to apply. It has never been our policy to humble any candidate. The world of investigative activity is so wide-ranging that nobody can be expected to know it all! There is no shame in admitting that you are unfamiliar with a particular type of enquiry, law or procedure, so long as you know where to find the answer. Above all else we are seeking people of good character, who are honest and generally competent.

Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Eric Shelmerdine
Company Secretary

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THE ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH INVESTIGATORS
(Limited by Guarantee)

Code of Ethics and Professional Standards

Policy Statement:

This code, comprising of Ten Principles, is sponsored by the Governing Council of the Association of British Investigators (ABI). It is a reflection of the way in which all members of The Association should conduct their business according to rigorous ethical, fair, professional and legal standards.

It flows from our determination to:

Be fair
Be transparent
Be accountable
Be honest
Be cautious
Be thorough
Be law abiding
Be mindful of the confidentiality of that with which we are entrusted
Protect and enhance the reputation of this Association and its members.

Principle 1- Responsibility and Accountability

All members of The Association of British Investigators are personally responsible and accountable for their actions or omissions, as are their employees and other persons paid to assist an investigation. It must be ensured that the latter adhere to this Code of Ethics and Professional Standards.

Principle 2 - Honesty and Integrity

All members of The Association of British Investigators are to act with honesty, integrity and must not compromise their position, that of this Association or any of their clients.

Principle 3 – Caution and Thoroughness

All members of The Association of British Investigators are to verify the credentials of clients to ensure that they have lawful and moral reasons to request an investigation.

Principle 4 – Conflict of Interest

All members of The Association of British Investigators having a personal or conflicting interest in any matter in which they are involved shall disclose that interest, if it is in conflict with the interests of their clients.

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Principle 5 - Acting within the Law

All members of The Association of British Investigators are to obey the law and refrain from carrying out any act that they know, or ought to know, is unlawful, or contrary to The Associations policy.

Principle 6 - Authority, Respect and Courtesy

No member of The Association of British Investigators is to abuse their position and must respect the rights of all individuals.

All members of The Association of British Investigators are to act with self-control and tolerance, treating everyone with whom they come into contact, during the course of their activities, with respect, fairness and courtesy.

Principle 7 - Equality

All members of The Association of British Investigators are to act with fairness and impartiality. They will not discriminate unlawfully on the grounds of sex, race, colour, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, disability, age, sexual orientation, property, birth or other status.

Principle 8 - Confidentiality

All members of The Association of British Investigators are to treat information with which they are entrusted during the course of business with respect and access or disclose it only for the purposes for which it is intended; attending to all instructions within the principles of the prevailing privacy legislation and in particular if controlling personal data to be so notified with the Information Commissioner.

Principle 9 - General Conduct

All members of The Association of British Investigators are to act in a professional manner. They must not behave in a manner which brings, or is likely to bring, discredit upon The Association or any of their clients, or act in a way that undermines or is likely to undermine confidence in the Association or that of any of their clients.

Principle 10 – Challenging and Reporting Improper Conduct

All members of the Association of British Investigators are expected to challenge and when appropriate take action or report breaches of this code and the improper conduct of colleagues.

The General Secretary

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