



## **Judicial Diversity Strategy**

Joint paper from the Lord Chancellor,  
the Lord Chief Justice and the JAC Chairman

*17 May 2006*

## Contents

Introduction	3
Overall Policy aim	3
Key strands	3
Key benefits	4
Measures of progress	4
Respective responsibilities	5
Liaison arrangements	7
Scope	7

## **Introduction**

1. The Lord Chancellor, Lord Chief Justice and Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission are committed to ensuring a judiciary of the highest calibre, with candidates drawn from the widest possible range of available talent.
2. This document sets out the integrated strategy by which the Lord Chancellor's policy aim of increasing the diversity of the judiciary will be achieved, recognising the respective responsibilities of the Department for Constitutional Affairs, the judiciary - supported by the Directorate of Judicial Offices - and the Judicial Appointments Commission.
3. This overall strategy has been agreed between the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Chief Justice and the Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission.

## **Overall Policy aim**

4. The Lord Chancellor's overall policy aim is to bring about a more diverse judiciary with increased understanding of the communities it serves, in order to ensure a judiciary of the highest quality which contributes to increased public confidence in the justice system.

## **Key strands**

5. The key planks of the strategy, which will require a co-ordinated approach amongst those with an interest, to give effect to that aim are (lead responsibilities for which are in brackets):

- to promote judicial service and widen the range of people eligible to apply for judicial office (DCA);
- to encourage a wider range of applicants, so as to ensure the widest possible choice of candidates for selection (JAC);
- to promote diversity through fair and open processes for selection to judicial office solely on merit (JAC); and,
- to ensure that the culture and working environment for judicial office-holders encourages and supports a diverse judiciary and increases understanding of the communities served (DCA).

## **Key benefits**

6. The overall strategy seeks to bring about the following key benefits:
  - recruitment of judicial office-holders of the highest possible quality, as a result of recruiting from the widest possible range of talent; and,
  - greater confidence amongst the general public and users in the courts and tribunals, as a result of a judiciary more reflective of and with enhanced understanding of the society it serves.

## **Measures of progress**

7. The DCA, JAC and DJO will work together to agree key measures by July 2006 against which progress in delivering the overall policy aim will be assessed . Further work will then be necessary to agree baseline figures in respect of such measures and the methods of measurement going forward.

8. The DCA, JAC and DJO will, within this overall framework, have their own objectives and plans. It will also be necessary to agree performance measures in the context of the DCA's sponsorship of the JAC.

## **Respective responsibilities**

9. The respective roles of the key parties involved include:
  - the **Department for Constitutional Affairs**, with overall responsibility for delivering the Lord Chancellor's strategy, providing the overall policy and statutory framework and for judicial terms and conditions of service;
  - the **Judicial Appointments Commission**, with statutory responsibility for encouraging diversity in the range of persons available for selection and also for ensuring fair and open selection processes;
  - the **Directorate of Judicial Offices**, who support the Lord Chief Justice in his responsibilities for judicial training, deployment, welfare, and judicial HR ;
  - **Her Majesty's Court Service** and the **Tribunals Service**, with responsibilities for providing the physical and communications environment and day-to-day administrative support for judicial office-holders; and,
  - the **Law Society** and **Bar Council**, responsible for efforts to encourage greater diversity in the recruitment and retention of members of the legal professions.

10. The table below sets out the key responsibilities to be taken forward by the DCA, JAC and DJO.

<b>DCA</b>	<b>JAC</b>	<b>DJO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide the overall policy and statutory framework, supported by research where appropriate</li> <li>• Encourage diversity in legal professions</li> <li>• Statutory eligibility requirements</li> <li>• General information on judiciary (with JOEW) and promoting judicial service (e.g. general literature, eligibility letters)</li> <li>• Terms and Conditions (e.g. flexible working initiatives)</li> <li>• Disability Equality Policy</li> <li>• Solicitors initiative (i.e. promoting judicial service)</li> <li>• Statistical information on judges in post</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications and events to encourage applications (for example, e-newsletter)</li> <li>• Activity to understand the reasons why applications are and are not made, including research related to JAC's role</li> <li>• Appointments processes</li> <li>• Providing feedback to DCA and JOEW on issues that impact upon efforts to meet its statutory diversity duty</li> <li>• Statistical information on the appointments process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administration of work-shadowing scheme</li> <li>• Administration of judicial role-models directory</li> <li>• Promoting diversity in nominations and leadership positions, for which JAC not responsible</li> <li>• Judicial training</li> <li>• Ensuring HR and deployment responsibilities support a diverse judiciary</li> <li>• Development and administration of career development initiatives (e.g. mentoring)</li> </ul>

## **Liaison arrangements**

11. To ensure a comprehensive, co-ordinated and mutually-supportive approach is taken there shall be regular trilateral meetings between the Lord Chancellor, Lord Chief Justice and Chair of the Judicial Appointments Commission, as well as regular meetings between their respective officials. As part of such liaison arrangements, the three organisations will in particular:

- share at the beginning of each planning year those actions expected to be undertaken in order to take forward the areas for which each is responsible;
- provide updates of progress; and,
- agree and share research and management information.

## **Scope**

12. The scope of this strategy covers:

- all judicial office-holders in courts and tribunals appointed by the Lord Chancellor;
- the legal professions from which legal judicial appointments are made, DCA being the government department responsible for the legal professions; and,
- the main professions from which non-legal appointments are made, working with other relevant government departments.