

# Competency Framework

## Deputy High Court Judge

### **About the role**

Those seeking appointment as a Deputy High Court Judge should have exceptional intellectual ability, expertise and experience to deal with all but the very heaviest cases (normally reserved for the full time High Court judges). Deputy High Court Judges can be expected to deal, immediately upon appointment, with complex and high-profile cases, some of which will require careful management, and will involve matters of important legal principle or issues of wide significance at the very cutting edge of the law. High Court work can be regarded as fundamentally important not just to those parties immediately and directly affected but to society as whole.

### **About the competency framework**

The competency framework lists ways that a judge who is working effectively as a Deputy High Court Judge might demonstrate each of the five competency areas relevant to this post.

This framework is aligned to the Judicial Skills and Abilities framework used by Judicial Office and Judicial College to ensure that judges and judicial office holders are assessed by the same measures at every stage of their career.

When considering your application and taking part in the selection process please think how your experience is transferable to the competencies of a Deputy High Court Judge, listed below. Ensure you present examples in the specific competency area you are addressing. You do not need to address every bullet point in your example, but you should seek to demonstrate the competency area as a whole.

Although the same level of ability and professional expertise is expected across all divisions of the High Court, and the bullet points within the competency framework apply to all, there are certain aspects which require a particular focus across the three Divisions. For example:

- an ability to combine decisiveness and sensitivity as is frequently needed in the Family Division
- flexibility to adapt to the wide range of work in the Queen's Bench Division, additional to your specialist area
- use of particularly specialist language and law as is frequently employed in the Chancery Division

## Exercising Judgement

Demonstrates exceptional intellectual ability, integrity and independence of mind to make incisive, fair and legally sound decisions

- Demonstrates exceptional intellectual ability and professional expertise to deal with the most complex work
- Demonstrates willingness to challenge established norms and practices, and develop the law
- Reaches decision which are soundly reasoned and easy to follow, after full consideration of implications
- Demonstrates independence of mind
- Ensures fairness; demonstrates integrity and acts without bias and prejudice, especially in challenging, highly complex situations

## Possessing and Building Knowledge

Possesses a detailed knowledge of the relevant area of law and practice. Demonstrates an ability and willingness to learn and develop professionally

- Demonstrates extensive knowledge and profound understanding of one or more areas of law
- Demonstrates a high ability to acquire knowledge, especially of highly complex subject matter
- Keeps abreast of changes in law and embraces new court processes and procedures
- Actively pursues continuous learning and professional development

## Assimilating and Clarifying Information

Quickly assimilates information to identify essential issues, develops a clear understanding and clarifies uncertainty through eliciting and exploring information, managing multiple complex issues at once

- Effectively assimilates and processes large amounts of complex information from multiple sources
- Demonstrates an ability to manage different matters simultaneously, switching from one to another
- Identifies and focuses on the relevant issues and encourages others to do the same
- Demonstrates precision in analysis
- Weighs evidence fairly in order to reach a reasoned decision
- Identifies information gaps and appropriate means for obtaining further details

## Working and Communicating with Others

(‘Others’ includes judges and those involved in the administration of justice, as well as all court users)

Values diversity and shows an appreciation of the wider impact of communications. Demonstrates empathy and sensitivity in building relationships. Demonstrates good communication skills and authority

- Demonstrates courtesy and authority, gaining the confidence of others by using effective verbal and non-verbal communication
- Listens attentively throughout to ensure all parties have a fair opportunity to present relevant evidence and information while progressing the case efficiently
- Shows an awareness of the importance of diversity and demonstrates sensitivity to the particular needs of different communities and groups
- Communicates succinctly and in a well-reasoned manner, ensuring that complex information is understood
- Provides direction, using appropriate strategies to maintain control and defuse tension

## Managing Work Efficiently

Works effectively and plans to make the best use of resources available

- Manages time and deals with cases proportionately, ensuring efficient completion of the workload
- Demonstrates an ability to implement organisational change successfully
- Utilises available resources, including the latest technology, to carry out the role in the most efficient way
- Demonstrates resilience, responding calmly and flexibly to changing circumstances and high pressure situations
- Resolves problems independently but seeks advice and offers assistance to others when appropriate
- Carefully balances professional commitments with judicial duties and responsibilities