Information Pack:

Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC): Fee-Paid Selection Exercise Panel Member
A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Thank you for your interest in working with the Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC). The JAC selects candidates for judicial office on merit, through fair and open competition, from the widest range of eligible candidates.

Since the JAC was created 10 years ago, the work of the people on our panels has been vital to the success of the organisation. Whether reviewing candidates’ applications or meeting candidates in person at a selection day, panel members are at the front line providing an assessment of candidates that helps Commissioners decide who to recommend for judicial appointment.

This is a challenging role. The JAC’s selection exercises attract many candidates of the highest intellectual calibre and ability, some of whom are at the top of their profession. It is essential to the Commission that panels assess all candidates fairly and consistently. Panels will challenge and probe the information before them in order to give the Commission well-informed advice.

If you are articulate, used to working with senior professionals, are an experienced assessor of diverse people and familiar with competency-based assessment, then I would be delighted to hear from you.

Nigel Reeder
Chief Executive
1. THE WORK OF THE JAC

The JAC is an independent non-departmental public body that selects candidates for judicial office in courts and tribunals in England and Wales, and for some tribunals whose jurisdiction extends to Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The JAC has three key statutory obligations:

- to select candidates solely on merit
- to select only people of good character
- to have regard to the need to encourage diversity in the range of persons available for selection for appointments

To find out more about the JAC’s work, please visit: http://jac.judiciary.gov.uk/about-jac

Context of the work of JAC panel members

Efficient and effective selection panels are pivotal in ensuring that the JAC makes the most meritorious recommendations to appoint new judges and non-legal members of tribunals.

Panels assess all the evidence of a candidate’s merits against a competency framework for the post. Although JAC Commissioners make the final decision about who to recommend for appointment, they rely heavily on the panel assessments in making that decision.

Panel members therefore have a key role in ensuring that the JAC conducts its business efficiently, fairly and with a focus on its statutory duty to select on merit.
2. INFORMATION ABOUT THE ROLE

Vacancies
Up to 20

Fees
£270 to £310 per day, plus reasonable travel and subsistence expenses

Location
Based mainly in Petty France, near St James's Park, London. Also at locations around the UK as needed

Time commitment
About 30 days a year, in blocks of 1 to 3 weeks, with about 3 months' notice. However, there is no guaranteed level of work.

Eligibility
To be eligible to apply for these posts, you:
- should not hold, or have ever held, judicial office (this does not include magistrates, who are eligible to apply)
- should not be, or have ever been, a lawyer in any jurisdiction.

Nationality requirements
Open to UK, Commonwealth and European Economic Area (EEA) and certain non-EEA nationals with the right to work in the UK.

Age
There are no age limits for candidates.

Diversity
The JAC is committed to diversity, and we welcome applications from all candidates who meet the eligibility criteria. We particularly encourage applications from individuals from ethnic minority groups, which are currently under-represented on our panels. All appointments will, however, be based solely on merit.
Job description

After induction training, panelists will initially perform the function of panel member, usually on a panel of 3, including a judicial member. When more experienced, they can act as panel chair when required.

Both panel members and panel chairs are required to:

- independently assess the candidates, at sift (when application forms and/or other material is reviewed) and selection day (when candidates are assessed using various tools but including a competency based interview) following JAC processes, and arrive at a unanimous decision
- use a laptop computer to swiftly and accurately write assessments that may be read by the 3 most senior members of the judiciary and the Lord Chancellor
- support the panel chair in all their activities, especially in the drafting of panel reports, to help ensure the smooth and effective running of the panel
- actively participate in all relevant selection events
- attend annual training events and other conferences as required
- work closely with JAC staff and other panel members
- participate in discussions at key stages in the process
- support other panel members in adhering to and actively promoting the JAC’s policies and processes
- consistently uphold the aims of the JAC, and represent the JAC’s values (fairness, professionalism, clarity and openness, learning, sensitivity)
- be willing to give and receive feedback, and use that for self-development and improvement
- help JAC staff in other selection-related tasks, such as advising on operational matters, policy-making, or conducting research, as needed

In addition, when acting as panel chair, panelists will:

- chair the sift and selection day assessments
- lead panel meetings, inviting comments and opinions from the other panel members
- initiate and lead panel discussions on fair selection techniques, including unconscious bias, before selection begins
- ensure that the panel works as a team, with all members contributing equally to the decision-making process, in order to arrive at a unanimous decision
- ensure that the JAC’s process is followed to the required standard
- lead on providing the panel reports
- lead the moderation of candidates, working with chairs of other panels
- raise any concerns with the exercise manager
Person specification

These are challenging and demanding posts, and it is not always a 9 to 5 role. You will work with intellectually able and articulate candidates and fellow panellists, under time pressure, while ensuring fairness and consistency in assessment. We are looking for experienced professionals who already possess the skills to perform successfully as a panel member.

Essential requirements

Applicants must already have:

- experience of sitting on selection or assessment panels for senior professionals from diverse backgrounds (that is, not exclusively internal promotions or drawing from limited pools)
- experience of using competency-based selection processes
- skill in conducting interviews, using a structured process and asking probing questions to test the suitability of candidates
- excellent written and oral communication skills
- the ability to quickly analyse a large quantity of information, and condense it into balanced, clear and concise evidence-based reports
- strong IT skills
- an understanding of and a commitment to diversity, including the implications of the Equality Act 2010
- an awareness and understanding of the diversity of the communities which the courts and tribunals serve
- the ability to work constructively with others

Training and appraisal

Successful candidates will be required to attend a 2-day training and induction course in London on the 2nd and 3rd March 2017.

We also aim to arrange shadowing opportunities to give new panellists a taste of a selection day.

Initially you will sit as a panel member, supporting the panel chair. Your ongoing performance will be appraised by the JAC and will include feedback from your fellow panel members. The appraisal process is open, so you will have the opportunity to see your report and reflect your views. Work is offered subject to a consistently satisfactory level of performance.

Remuneration

For each full day of sitting, panel chairs are paid £310 and panel members £270 (incorporating holiday pay of £34.99 and £28.69 respectively). Half day fees for up to 4 hours work also apply, paid at 50% of the rates above. The JAC does not pay sick leave, nor is the role pensionable.

Income Tax and National Insurance will be deducted at source by the JAC. Your fees will be paid by BACS, one week in arrears. There is no need for you to invoice the JAC.

All reasonable receipted (standard class) travel and subsistence costs will be reimbursed in full through the payroll.

Conflict of Interest

You should notify the JAC in your application of any potential conflicts of interest, and these should cease before the date of your appointment. A clear example of a conflict would be offering advice or coaching services to candidates for judicial appointment.
3. THE SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process will consist of 3 stages:

- an online application: including personal details, career history and a suitability statement against the essential criteria for the role
- an online work simulation exercise: candidates will watch an interview and prepare a written report on the competencies discussed
- selection day: including a competency-based interview and scenario questions

Throughout the exercise you will be assessed against the essential requirements above and a competency framework (LINK). Please read both thoroughly before making your application.

Completing your application

You will need to create an account on the JAC website to apply for the role between 11 October and 25 October 2016.

To avoid problems with emails from the JAC being blocked by firewalls, we recommend that you use a personal email address for your account.

Your online application plays an important part in the selection process. You must complete all required sections, ensuring the information you provide is clear and accurate. This includes your personal details, career history and suitability statement. You will also be asked for 2 references but these will not be requested unless you are invited to the selection day.

Suitability statement

The suitability statement is your opportunity to tell us about the experience and knowledge you have for the post. You must provide examples and evidence linked to the essential criteria for the post showing why your skills and experience enable you to perform effectively in the role.

This should not simply be a reiteration of your career history and should be limited to 1,000 words. Any information above this word count will not be used to support your application.

Online test

If you are successful at stage 1 of the selection process you will be invited to take part in the online work simulation exercise. You will need to be available for this between 10am and 9pm on Wednesday 23 November 2016.

Unfortunately, due to the expected number of applications, individual feedback will not be provided to those who are not successful in the first 2 stages.

Selection day

Candidates who are successful in the work simulation exercise will then be invited to a selection day. It will consist of scenario questions and a competency-based interview, where the panel will ask you to provide and discuss specific examples of how you demonstrate the competency framework for the post.
Read our advice on demonstrating competencies: https://jac.judiciary.gov.uk/completing-your-self-assessment

Interviews will take place between 9 January 2017 and 17 January 2017 at the JAC office at 102 Petty France, London, SW1A 9AJ. We are not able to offer alternative dates. We also cannot refund travel and subsistence to attend the interview.

Individual feedback will be provided to all candidates who are not successful following the selection day. We aim to provide this no later than 6 weeks after the outcome email.

References

Referees should be people who know you in a professional context and can comment on how you meet the essential criteria and competencies for the role, rather than personal referees.

Referees will only be approached if you are invited to a selection day. References will be requested by email on 7 December 2016 and must be returned by 21 December 2016. Late references may not be considered so you are advised to notify your referees when you apply.

You must ensure the correct details (title and email addresses) are provided as all correspondence with your referees will be by email.

Reasonable adjustments

The JAC is committed to considering any reasonable adjustments needed to ensure that you can participate in the selection process fairly. The application form asks you to identify any arrangements and adjustments you may require. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and the information given will not be used in selection decisions.

If you are recommended for appointment, reasonable adjustments will be considered if you have a disability under the meaning of the Equality Act 2010. Any reasonable adjustments to enable you to take up appointment will be discussed separately with you by the JAC.

Tie-break provision

All recommendations for appointment will be made on merit.

If the selection panel considers two or more candidates to be of equal merit, a candidate may be selected for the purpose of increasing diversity within the cadre of panelists. This is in line with the provisions of section 159 of the Equality Act 2010.

The tie-break provision will be used at the final decision-making stage and apply only to the protected characteristics of ethnicity, as individuals from black and minority ethnic groups are currently under-represented among JAC panelists.

The JAC will rely on the diversity monitoring data provided by candidates in their application form when applying the tie-break provision.

If a candidate does not provide their diversity data, it will not be possible for the Commission to apply the tie-break provision in their case.
Baseline personal security checks
All successful applications will be subject to checks covering aspects such as nationality, right to work and criminal records checks (covering ‘unspent’ convictions) before commencing work as a JAC panel member.

Failure to pass these security checks will mean that the offer will be withdrawn.

Timeline

Applications open: 13:00 on 11 October 2016
Applications close: 13.00 on 25 October 2016
Outcome of stage 1 and invitation to sit the work simulation exercise: 16 November 2016
Online work simulation exercise; 23 November 2016
References requested: 7 December 2016
Selection day invitation issued: 7 December 2016
Selection days: 9 January – 17 January 2017
Outcome of selection days expected: Around 21st January 2017

Correspondence

If you have questions about this role or your application, contact:

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