Information Pack

Fee-Paid Selection Exercise Panel Member

Thank you for your interest in working with the Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC). The Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) select judges for courts and tribunals, and non-legal tribunal members. The JAC selects candidates for judicial office through fair and open competition, encouraging a wide range of quality candidates to apply for the posts that it advertises.

Since the JAC was created in 2006, 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 forefront 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 used to working with senior professionals, are an experienced assessor of diverse people, have excellent writing skills and are familiar with competency-based assessment, we would be delighted to hear from you.

The work of the JAC

The JAC is an independent non-departmental public body that selects candidates for judicial office in the courts and tribunals in England and Wales, and for some tribunals with a UK-wide jurisdiction.

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, 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.

**Information about the role**

Currently we are looking to increase our cadre of panel members who we can call upon to act as panel members and, in certain circumstances, to act as panel secretaries to our panels.

During 2018 we are expected to make more recommendations than ever before, which will place pressure on existing panel members. As a panel secretary you would be responsible for producing final panel reports on each candidate, working alongside the other panel members. The reports would need to be completed to a tight deadline, ensure they address the relevant competencies and accurately reflect the panel discussion. High quality reports are essential to enable JAC Commissioners to make efficient and appropriate decisions.

**Fees**

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

**Location**

Based mainly in Clive House, 70 Petty France, London SW1. Also at locations around the UK as required.

**Time commitment**

Normally about 30 days a year, in blocks of 1 to 3 weeks, with about 3 months’ notice. This may increase as we are required to make more recommendations this year.

There is no guaranteed level of work. If panel members do not put themselves forward for work in a 12-month period, consideration will be given to removing them from the list.
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 is no age limit 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 minority ethnic backgrounds as they are currently under-represented on our panels. All appointments will, however, be based solely on merit.

Job description

Following induction, panel members will initially sit as a lay member of the selection panel, including a lay panel chair and 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 efficiently 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, panel members 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

Panel secretary

If you are asked to undertake the role of panel secretary to support the panel member, your main function will be to:

- Be responsible for producing final panel reports on each candidate, working alongside the panel, to a tight deadline and ensuring that they address the relevant competencies required for the role. They also need to accurately reflect the panel discussion, to a standard that enables JAC Commissioners to make efficient and appropriate decisions
- Work with the panel to produce accurate, fair and actionable feedback for unsuccessful candidates at selection day to enable them to develop themselves for future judicial roles

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 panel members, 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 1-day induction meeting in London.

We also aim to arrange shadowing opportunities to give new panel members 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.

We are particularly looking for panel members who may be available to assist our panels during July and August 2018.

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.

If you are asked to act as panel secretary, your fee will be £270 per day.

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.
Selection process

The selection process will consist of 2 stages:

1. Submission of a CV and a suitability statement against the essential criteria for the role.

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 and the competency framework showing why your skills and experience enable you to perform effectively in the role.

You will also need to provide details of 2 referees who will only be contacted if we are going to invite you for interview. 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. As referees will be contacted by email please ensure the email details are correct. Please include this on your CV.

2. If you are successful you will be invited for an interview with 2 members of JAC staff.

You may be asked to undertake a work exercise which will include observing an interview on line, taking notes and drafting a written report.

We are not able to refund travel and subsistence to attend the interview.

Feedback will be provided to all candidates who are not successful following the interview day.

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.

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.

Timescales
There is no closing date for this exercise. We will accept any application while this exercise is live. We will only close the exercise once we have sufficient panel members.

To apply and any questions

Applications (CV and statement of suitability) can be sent by email to:

Ian Thomson
Head of HR, Finance and Complaints

Email: Ian.Thomson@judicialappointments.gov.uk
Telephone: 020 3334 5899