



## JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS BOARD FOR SCOTLAND

### DIVERSITY POLICY

The Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland (JABS) makes individual recommendations for judicial office solely on merit, in accordance with one of the Board's primary statutory obligations. The Board also has a statutory duty to have regard to the need to encourage diversity in the range of individuals available for selection to be recommended for appointment to judicial office. JABS keeps this duty in mind in all that it does and has a stated strategic aim to:

*Encourage diversity in the range of individuals available for selection.*

The Board acknowledges that there should be equality of opportunity for those eligible to apply. In a democratic society the judiciary should reflect the diversity of society and the legal profession as a whole. This diversity will help to maintain public trust and confidence. Our main priorities will be:

- To understand precisely how diverse Scotland's judiciary currently is.
- To develop and implement a communications plan that ensures we get the right messages to the right people at the right time.
- To provide the appropriate level of information and attract a broad range of applicants.
- To collaborate with others in order to encourage diversity in the range of applicants for judicial office.
- To ensure that our appointment processes are compatible with the pursuit of diversity.
- To explore the approach to promoting diversity in other legal systems.

The Board encourages and welcomes applications from the widest possible range of applicants regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

In addition to the statutorily protected characteristics, we encourage and welcome applications from candidates in a wide range of circumstances, including geography, social, cultural or economic disadvantage.

The Board monitors aspects of the diversity profile of all appointment rounds and tracks applicants' progress at each stage of the process: after applications are received, after sifting; after short-listing and after interview. The Board is developing data on the 'eligible pool' and plans to consider that data carefully following each appointment round. We will publish diversity statistics at least in relation to certain protected characteristics provided for in the Equality Act 2010 after each appointment round.

To ensure we deliver on our objectives, we will:

- Develop and implement an Engagement Strategy that includes diversity.
- Make sure Board Members and staff understand what diversity means for JABS.
- Work with external partners to attract diverse applicants.
- Ensure our online application process is accessible for all candidates with all reasonable adjustments provided on request.
- Evaluate how best to support underrepresented groups who want to apply to join the judiciary to remove any perceived barriers to entry.

The Board will work with the Law Society of Scotland and the Faculty of Advocates to gather further information from underrepresented diverse groups and individuals to learn more about their attitudes to judicial office and whether any barriers, real or perceived, need to be addressed or accelerators put in place to encourage diverse individuals to apply.

The Board will work with the legal profession and judiciary to help them to become more active in promoting applications for judicial office among those who are currently not coming forward, particularly individual candidates from under-represented groups.

JABS

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