



ANNUAL
REPORT
2024
2025



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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at:

Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland
Thistle House
91 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh
EH12 5HD

E-mail:

mailbox@jabs.gov.scot

This publication is only available on our website at:

<https://www.judicialappointments.scot/>

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FOREWORD BY CHAIRING MEMBER



Foreword by the Chairing Member

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland (JABS) for the period April 2024 to March 2025.

2024/25 was an extremely busy year for JABS. The start of the year saw the conclusion of the 2023/4 Senator competition and a Sheriff competition. In the second half of the year, we were asked to urgently undertake a second – and larger - Sheriff competition, recruit for five different chambers in the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland as well as a competition for the Upper Tribunal. This was a considerable undertaking.

The Sheriff 2024 recruitment round for 3.5 Sheriff posts attracted 70 applications, with the Sheriff 2025 round receiving 104 applications for the 11 available posts.

We received 115 applications for the 69 posts for Legal Member of the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland. There were eight applications for two Legal Members of the Upper Tribunal for Scotland.

The overlapping Sheriff and Tribunal competitions, as well their size and nature, had a significant impact on our Board members, appointment advisers and staff. The First-tier Tribunal competition required two panels because of its size. The competition for the Upper Tribunal also took place during this period. Thus, all Board members, our four appointment advisers and all our Business Management Unit (BMU) staff were heavily involved in competition work during the second half of 2024-25 and into the current year. We continue to work with the Scottish Government and the Judicial Office for Scotland (JO) to develop better short- and medium-term planning for judicial appointments. This is important, not only for JABS board members, appointment advisers and staff to properly organise and carry out our important work, but also to provide potential applicants with earlier notice of future competitions. That this work was delivered within the expected timescales is a credit to all concerned.

This high workload impacted on our other development and corporate activities and slowed our progress in these.

In total we made 9 recommendations for appointment to Judicial Office during 2024/25 for the two competitions that concluded which were Office of Senator and Sheriff 2024. All these were accepted by the Scottish Ministers. Our recommendations for the Sheriff 25 competition were made to the Scottish Ministers in May and those for the First-tier Tribunal and Upper Tribunal competitions were made in June 2025. We will report on the outcome of these competitions in the 2025/6 annual report.

At the request of the First Minister, JABS Board members were also involved in the competitions for the recruitment to the Offices of Lord President and the Lord Justice Clerk. Each of these competitions was chaired by the Chairing member of JABS along with another JABS Board member, alongside two judicial office holders.

We made some progress on our major Programme for Change (PfC) project. This project involves a full review of our approach to judicial recruitment including our policies and practices. We continued to make improvements to how we conduct competitions for judicial appointments. We have continued our collaboration with our

counterparts in England and Wales (JAC) and in Northern Ireland (NIJAC) to compare how we approach judicial recruitment. This included attending a very useful tripartite event in London which involved Board members and senior staff from each of the three organisations discussing aspects of judicial recruitment.

In December 2024, in conjunction with the Faculty of Advocates, we took a Special Case to the Court of Session, to clarify an aspect of eligibility for judicial office. It is vitally important to our work that we have clear and comprehensible eligibility criteria which is transparent to all. The outcome of that case will enable us to move forward with greater certainty about the requirements of the governing legislation and allow us to provide greater clarity for applicants to whom the decision applies.

We piloted the introduction of applicant feedback surveys to provide us with direct feedback from those going through our recruitment processes. The response rates were good, and the feedback was generally positive with some respondents making suggestions for improvements to the process which we are considering. These surveys will be used after all competitions in future.

We continue to provide meaningful feedback to all applicants who request it. Although time consuming to prepare, it is clear that applicants value receiving feedback.

The work of the Judicial Appointments Diversity Reference Group (the group set up by JABS to support us in meeting our diversity obligations), continues with involvement from a wide range of organisations. I wish to express my thanks for their contributions to this important aspect of our role.

After more than four years on JABS, Sheriff David Young KC stood down in October 2024, having been appointed to the Sheriff Appeal Court. I want to thank him for his unwavering commitment to our work in that time, and in particular, the support he provided in the training and development of new Board members. The Lord President then appointed Sheriff Jane Farquharson KC to take on the role as a judicial member of JABS in November 2024.

As one of our legal members stood down at the end of the 2023/4 financial year, the Scottish Government Public Appointments Team undertook a recruitment exercise and Ms Denise Loney joined the Board in June as a legal member, taking us back to our full complement of 16 Board members.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to all our Board members, to our appointments advisers and to our staff for the work undertaken this year. In particular, the unremitting pace of work over the second half of the year has shown how truly dedicated they are.

In the final quarter of 2024/25 Paula Stevenson, the JABS Chief Executive announced her intention to retire. I want to express my, and my Board colleagues' thanks and appreciation for her contribution to JABS over the past three years.

Lindsay Montgomery CBE, FRSE
Chairing Member
August 2025

PART 1 PERFORMANCE



Part 1 Performance

Introduction

During 2024-2025, recruitment panels were involved in five appointment exercises, for Court and Tribunal judicial offices, attracting 319 applications.

Of these recruitment exercises, two concluded during the year and resulted in nine candidates being recommended for judicial office.

The Office of Sheriff 2025, Legal Member of the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland and Legal Member of the Upper Tribunal for Scotland will conclude in the reporting year 2025/2026 and details of recommendations will be included in the next annual report.

The Scottish Ministers have accepted all recommendations for appointment made during 2024/2025.

There is a detailed summary of each concluded appointment round from page 12 onwards.

As part of our PfC, we are continuing to look at our policies and processes. One area where further progress had been made is in relation to feedback for candidates. For the Sheriff 2024 round, JABS provided bespoke feedback to the 44 candidates who made a request.

For the Office of Senator of the College of Justice we automatically issued feedback to the 13 unsuccessful candidates.

Although the process is resource-intensive and time-consuming to compile and issue, candidates consistently report that the feedback is valuable and beneficial. As a result, we remain committed to enhancing and evolving our processes to support this important work.

As part of our ongoing review processes, JABS is committed to learning more from candidates about their experience of the recruitment process. To support this, we have begun gathering feedback from candidates at various stages of their journey.

A pilot survey was introduced during the Sheriff 24 competition, targeting candidates who had been invited to interview. The survey was issued after interviews had taken place but before outcome letters were sent and included questions covering both the application and interview stages. This approach resulted in a strong response rate of 69%, with feedback being constructive and positive. Insights from this pilot have already helped shape subsequent competitions.

Building on this success, surveys were also issued during the Sheriff 25 and First-tier Tribunal competitions. Two separate surveys were used: one for all applicants and another for those invited to interview. The results from these surveys will be collated and reviewed by the Board to inform future improvements.

Part 1 Performance

Three Year Corporate Plan

The Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland is an advisory Non-Departmental Public Body ('NDPB'), operating under the Judiciary and Courts (Scotland) Act 2008 ("the 2008 Act").

This is supported by a Framework Agreement which outlines the respective responsibilities of the Scottish Ministers, to whom we make recommendations on judicial appointments. The work of the Board is fully funded by the Scottish Government.

In September 2023, we published a Three-Year Corporate Plan. This sets out how we will continue to contribute to justice in Scotland and provides objectives of how we aim to deliver our priorities. We also publish each year a Business Plan which sets out, in more detail, what we hope to achieve during the year. A summary of our progress against the plans is set out on page 14.

Our Corporate Plan sets out our Mission, Purpose, Core Values and Strategic Objectives:

Our Mission:

Attracting applicants with the skills, knowledge and ability for particular judicial roles, whilst encouraging diversity in the range of individuals available for selection and recommending applicants solely on merit, through processes that are, and are seen to be, independent, fair and transparent.

Our Purpose:

JABS was established following the implementation of the 2008 Act. The Board became an advisory NDPB on 1 June 2009. This means that we operate independently of the Scottish Ministers, and have our strategic direction set by the Board.

Section 9 of the 2008 Act lays out the statutory functions:

- To recommend to members of the Scottish Government individuals for appointment to judicial offices within the Board's remit, and
- To provide advice to members of the Scottish Government in connection with such appointments.

Our governing legislation states at section 9(3) that:

'In carrying out its functions, the Board is not to be subject to the direction or control of any member of the Scottish Executive or any other person.'

It is, however, the relevant Scottish Minister who decides whether to accept the Board's recommendations.

The 2008 Act also places the following responsibilities on the Board, in terms of sections 12 and 14:

Part 1 Performance

- Selection must be solely on merit.
- The Board may select an individual only if it is satisfied that the individual is of good character; and
- In carrying out its functions, the Board must have regard to the need to encourage diversity in the range of individuals available for selection to be recommended for appointment to a judicial office.

Our Core Values:

- Trust – our actions justify the faith others have put in us to make recommendations based on merit and to protect the confidentiality of candidates
- Fairness – our actions and processes are designed to be equitable, to encourage diversity and to minimise the risk of bias in our decision making
- Independence – our recommendations are independent
- Transparency – our processes are as accessible, open and transparent as our role allows
- Flexibility – we are flexible, adaptable and embrace change and develop where it helps us to streamline and enhance the quality of our processes
- Inclusion – we observe, listen, understand and support everyone we work with

Strategic Objectives:

1. We will make independent recommendations for judicial appointment to courts and tribunals based solely on merit and only if we are satisfied that the individual is of good character.
2. We will provide advice to members of the Scottish Government in connection with judicial appointments.
3. We will contribute to furthering justice in Scotland alongside Scottish Ministers, the judiciary and the legal profession.
4. We will undertake our work through processes that are, and are seen to be, independent, fair and transparent.
5. We will encourage diversity in the range of individuals available for selection.
6. We will work with key stakeholders, consulting and listening to their feedback, to assist us in our drive to modernise and develop our processes and approach.
7. We will create an environment in which applicants and candidates, Board members, appointment advisers and staff feel supported and inspired to do their best work.

The full plan is available here. <https://www.judicialappointments.scot/node/527>

The Plan sits at the heart of our operations, helping to focus our work and shape our priorities as we strive to ensure our processes remain fair, robust and fit for the future. We will begin work on a new plan for 2026-2028 later this year.

Part 1 Performance

The judicial offices within the Board's remit are set out in section 10 of the 2008 Act and include:

- The office of judge of the Court of Session
- The office of Chairman of the Scottish Land Court
- The office of temporary Judge (with a number of statutory exemptions)
- The office of sheriff principal
- The office of sheriff
- The office of part-time sheriff
- The office of summary sheriff
- The office of part-time summary sheriff
- The office of member of the Parole Board for Scotland (including the Chairperson of the Parole Board)
- The Vice-President of the Upper Tribunal, if to be appointed under section 26(1) of the Tribunals (Scotland) Act 2014 (the 2014 Act)
- Chamber President in the First-tier Tribunal, if to be appointed under section 22(1) of the 2014 Act
- Deputy Chamber President in the First-tier Tribunal, if to be appointed under the relevant provisions of schedule 4 to the 2014 Act
- Ordinary member or legal member of the First-tier Tribunal or the Upper Tribunal, if to be appointed under the relevant provisions of Schedule 3 (or as the case may be) Schedule 5 to the 2014 Act.

Part 1 Performance

Legal, Judicial and Personal Skills and Qualities

The Board is committed to the principle of appointment solely on merit. As part of our PfC, we have been working with our partners in the justice family to make sure the skills and qualities, on which we assess applicants, reflect what makes a good judge. We anticipate this work will continue through 2025/26.

These six skills and qualities relate to court and tribunal offices, where the latter require legal competencies. Non-legal members of tribunals including specialist members, are considered against the personal and judicial qualities, supplemented by specific requirements for tribunal roles.



The skills and qualities required for individual judicial offices are determined before each competition is launched and take into account the requirement of the role as set out in the role profile which is approved by the Lord President.

More detail on each of these skills and qualities is published on our website, at: <https://www.judicialappointments.scot/resources/what-were-looking-for> or when vacancies are advertised.

Part 1 Performance

Recommendations for Judicial Appointment

During the year 2024-2025, the Board made recommendations for the following offices:

Judicial Office	Number of vacancies	Number of applications	Number recommended for appointment
The Office of Senator of the College of Justice	5	22	5
The Office of Sheriff 2024	3.5	70	4
The Office of Sheriff 2025	11	104	*
Legal Member of the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland	69	115	*
Legal Member of the Upper Tribunal for Scotland	2	8	*
Total	91	319	9

*Although these competitions largely took place in the 2024/5 reporting year, they did not conclude until 2025/26 and will be reported on in our next annual report.

Part 1 Performance

Diversity

To support JABS in meeting its statutory obligation to have regard to the need to encourage diversity in the range of individuals available for selection, all applicants are invited to complete a Diversity Monitoring questionnaire.

Completion of the questionnaire is entirely voluntary, and applicants may choose to answer all, some, or none of the questions. As a result, the data collected may not fully reflect the diversity of the applicant pool.

The information gathered through these questionnaires forms the basis of the diversity data presented for the 2024-2025 reporting year, as shown in Appendix A.

Recommendations for the Office of Senator of the College of Justice

JABS received an official request on 7 September 2023 to recruit for Senators of the College of Justice.

The advert launched in November 2023 and 18 eligible applications were received.

Shortlisting took place between December 2023 and January 2024 with interviews held between February and March 2024. Of the 18 eligible applicants, 14 applicants were invited to interview.

On 5 April 2024, the Board made five recommendations to Scottish Ministers.

Recommendations for the Office of Sheriff

JABS received an official request on 7 February 2024 for three full time and one 0.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) vacancies for the Office of Sheriff.

The advert launched in March 2024 and 70 applications were received.

The shortlisting process took place between April and May 2024 and 16 applicants were invited to interviews held between June and July.

On 2 September 2024, the Board made four recommendations to Scottish Ministers.

Progress Against Business Plans: JABS Priorities 2024-2025

Throughout 2024–2025, JABS has continued to deliver against the priorities set out in our business plan. These priorities reflect our commitment to continuous improvement, transparency and inclusivity in the judicial appointments process.

The following update outlines progress made across these areas:

Appointments

Actions Planned:

Take forward priority recruitment for 2024/25 including further sheriff recruitment and recruitment for the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland.

Agree a protocol with the Lord President, the President of the Scottish Tribunals, and Scottish Government for a planned programme of recruitment.

Progress:

The priority recruitment outlined in the initial plan was successfully completed.

Engagement with key stakeholders is ongoing to shape a forward-looking recruitment programme into 2026–2027. Collaborative work with the Scottish Government and the JO continues to strengthen short - and medium - term planning for judicial appointments.

Additionally, JABS Chairing Member and Board members played an active role in Scottish Government-led competitions for the appointments of the Lord President and Lord Justice Clerk.

Programme for Change (PfC)

Actions:

Progress elements of the JABS PfC, including a research strategy to support continuous improvement.

Explore new methods for gathering applicant feedback throughout the recruitment process.

Review and revise the operating model to reflect increased Board capacity and enhanced staffing.

Update:

Workstreams under the PfC are progressing, with initial scoping of a research strategy and feedback mechanisms underway.

An operating model review has been initiated to ensure alignment with available resources.

As part of the research phase, approaches used by the Judicial Appointments Commission for England and Wales (JAC) and the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission (NIJAC) are being explored to inform future developments. Recent improvements include the introduction of applicant feedback surveys, revisions to the application form to capture more detailed legal experience and knowledge, and the adoption of a more holistic approach to candidate assessment.

Governance and Assurance

Actions:

Continue policy review and enhancement.

Finalise revisions to the Framework Agreement with Scottish Government by end 2024.

Conduct governance review by end 2024.

Publish the 2023/24 Annual Report by September 2024.

Progress:

Discussions with Scottish Government on the Framework Agreement are ongoing.

A governance review has been concluded, and the Annual Report was published. A range of policies have been reviewed or newly introduced, alongside significant work to clarify eligibility requirements for the various judicial offices overseen by JABS.

This included a Special Case taken to the Court of Session with the Faculty of Advocates to resolve specific eligibility queries.

Diversity

Actions:

Advance the Diversity Action Plan, including the work of the Judicial Appointments Diversity Reference Group.

Publish a new diversity report in 2024 and annually thereafter.

Progress:

The Diversity Action Plan is being implemented, with the Reference Group convening to support progress. Drafting of the Diversity Report is underway, incorporating data from the past seven years, and is scheduled for publication alongside the 2024–25 Annual Report.

Information Systems and Digital Resources

Actions:

Complete review and implementation of the Records Management Plan.

Prepare design and delivery brief for website procurement, subject to budget approval.

Progress:

Work on the Records Management Plan has progressed well, with positive engagement from the Keeper of the Records of Scotland. The plan reflects a strong commitment to good governance, with clear arrangements for record creation, secure storage, and timely disposal.

Meanwhile, design work is now underway for the redevelopment of the JABS website, with completion targeted for late 2025. The new website will enhance accessibility and user experience, supporting the Board's wider programme of modernisation.

Board, Advisers and BMU

Actions:

Collaborate with Scottish Government to recruit a new legal member.
Review staffing needs and recruit to agreed complement.
Evaluate induction and training programmes, incorporating feedback from recent appointees.

Progress:

Recruitment for the Legal Member was successfully completed. A staffing review is underway, aligned with resource requirements and future planning. Induction has been completed for nine new Board members, and feedback from induction and training sessions is being collated to support ongoing refinement of the programme.

Engagement

Actions:

Review current engagement processes and develop a revised communication strategy covering stakeholder engagement, outreach, website, and social media.

Progress:

An engagement review has been initiated, with stakeholder mapping and a communications audit. The Board has agreed a new communications strategy, and implementation is in progress.

A programme of outreach visits and activities has also been undertaken, strengthening external engagement and visibility.

PART 2 ENGAGEMENT



Part 4 Governance

Key Partner and Stakeholder Engagement

Over the past year, JABS held meetings with a wide range of individuals and organisations to promote the work of the Board and explore matters of common interest, including with the Lord President of the Court of Session, the President of the Scottish Tribunals, the Sheriffs Principal, Chamber Presidents of the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland, the Judicial Institute, the Faculty of Advocates, the Law Society of Scotland and the Society of Solicitor Advocates.

Regular meetings have also taken place with the Scottish Government and JO as well as with colleagues from JAC and NIJAC.

The Chairing member also attended Scottish Government 'Future of the Legal Profession in Scotland' working group events and the Chief Executive attended and presented at the Fair Justice System for Scotland Justice Sector Equalities Conference.

Outreach and Events

JABS hosted or participated in the following events as a part of the 2024/5 recruitment/engagement process:

- 28 February 2024, The role of a Sheriff Virtual Event
- 23 March 2024, the Sheriff and Summary Sheriff Association Conference
- 4 April 2024, a factfinding visit to the JAC to support the PfC agenda
- 23 April 2024, the Strathclyde University, Centre for Professional Legal Studies, Thinktank session on Diversity and Recruitment
- 21 May 2024, a factfinding visit to the NIJAC to support the PfC agenda
- 29 August 2024 Representing the Board at the Fair Justice System for Scotland Justice Sector Equalities Conference
- 22 October 2024 Meeting with Scottish Ethnic Minorities Lawyers Association
- 7 November 2024, Women's Network event in Aberdeen on diversity
- On 25 November 2024, The Role of a Legal Member in the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland, virtual event
- 9 January 2025, JABS focus group with members of the Faculty of Advocates
- 4 February 2025, tripartite meeting with JAC and NIJAC
- 20 March 2025, Meeting with the First Civil Service Commission Chief Executive
- 26 March 2025, Attending the Fair Justice for System for Scotland, Justice Sector interface meeting

To note, an outreach video was posted on 23 January 2025 for Legal Member of the Upper Tribunal for Scotland.

PART 3 DIVERSITY



Part 4 Governance

Diversity

During this reporting year, the Board has continued with its focus on diversity.

- As part of our PfC JABS considers diversity in the context of our future outreach and advertising programmes and this work will continue.
- We are looking at all of our documentation to ensure it is framed in a way that is inclusive and accessible to all potential candidates.
- We have considered new approaches to assessment which will provide candidates with the best opportunity to succeed, irrespective of their background.
- We undertook focussed consultation exercises with our key stakeholders to ensure we understand the issues and concerns of candidates.
- We have issued feedback surveys to garner information from all applicants on our recruitment processes and will use this information to better inform our approaches.

The Judicial Appointments Diversity Reference Group (DRG)

The DRG comprises key stakeholders who can support the Board in achieving its diversity duty under our governing legislation, including the identification, mitigation or removal of obstacles to diversity.

At the group's meeting in February 2025, it looked in detail at the definition of diversity, in the context of judicial appointments generally and specifically as set out in the Judiciary and Courts (Scotland) Act 2008, our governing legislation. After taking legal advice, whilst "the Board must have regard to the need to encourage diversity in the range of individuals available for selection to be recommended for appointment to a judicial office", it cannot take diversity into consideration when deciding which candidates are to be recommended for appointment. To do so would infringe the requirement imposed by section 12 of the 2008 Act that selection is to be solely on merit.

The group also looked at the approaches used by other judicial recruitment organisations to increase diversity in judicial appointments.

1. For the first time, in 2025, JABS will be publishing its diversity statistics over the previous seven years, along with the diversity data we have, thus far, been able to collect from the JO of Scotland, the Law Society of Scotland and the Faculty of Advocates.

PART 4 GOVERNANCE



Part 4 Governance

Corporate Governance

One of the recommendations of the independent corporate governance audit carried out in 2023 was that there should be a regular review of corporate governance to ensure that standards are being maintained and that JABS is compliant with new legislation. It is on this basis that the Board authorised a corporate governance review in the 2024/5 financial year.

The methodology for the audit involved desk-based research covering the full range of JABS governance and operational documents, review of current legislation in relation to JABS, Advisory NDPBs and Scottish Government requirements. The final report reflects that with the work undertaken for the 2023 audit, a good standard of governance was reached, and that this has now been further developed and taken to a higher level. JABS is in full compliance with current legislation and Scottish Government governance expectations. The audit opinion is above satisfactory.

Strategy Day and Business Plan for 2025/6

In January 2025 the Board held a strategy day, when we considered the strategic context in which we work. We discussed forthcoming legislation which may make additional demands on the capacity of the judiciary and the potential impact on JABS planning. We looked at the anticipated workload for the year ahead and subsequent years. We reflected on how the PfC has and will continue to influence our policies and procedures. All these matters were considered and reflected in our Business Plan for 2025/6 which has now been published. Finally the Board considered the number of positive outcomes achieved over the previous year in an effectiveness review.

Board Membership

Lay and legal members of the Board are appointed by the Scottish Ministers and judicial members by the Lord President.

At the start of 2024/25, JABS had eight lay, two legal and five judicial members of the Board. The Scottish Government Public Appointments Team began an exercise to recruit one new legal member and Denise Loney filled the vacant position in February 2025 filling the vacant role, to bring the Board to its full complement of 16 members.

During the year Sheriff David Young KC stepped down from office and Sheriff Jane Farquharson KC was appointed by the Lord President as a judicial member of the board.

Part 4 Governance

The Board membership during the period covered by this report was as follows:

Lay Board Members (During 2024/2025)



Charing Member
Lindsay Montgomery
CBE, FRSE



Mrs Elizabeth Burnley
CBE



Ms Emma Marriott



Mr Paul Gray



Dr Fiona McLean



Mr Peter Murray



Mr Gareth Morgan
QPM



Mrs Wilma Canning

Legal Board Members (During 2024/2025)



Mr Paul Cackette
CBE



Mr Jonathan Bame
KC



Ms Denise Loney
Assumed office 1 Feb 2025

Part 4 Governance

Judicial Board Members (During 2024/2025)



The Hon. Lady Haldane KC



The Hon. Lord Weir KC



President
May Dunsmuir



Sheriff Principal
Kate Dowdalls KC



Sheriff David Young KC
Demitted office 31 Oct 2024



Sheriff
Jane Farquharson KC
Assumed office 1 Nov 2024

Part 4 Governance

Board Meetings

The Board normally meets on the third Monday of every second month.

Board attendance was as follows:

Current Board Members (to 31st March 2025)	Total
Lindsay Montgomery	6/6
Ms Elizabeth Burnley	6/6
Ms Emma Marriott	6/6
Mr Paul Gray	6/6
Ms Fiona McLean	6/6
Mr Peter Murray	6/6
Mr Gareth Morgan	6/6
Ms Wilma Canning	6/6
Mr Jonathan Barne	4/6
Mr Paul Cackette	5/6
Ms Denise Loney	0/1
Lady Haldane	6/6
Lord Weir	6/6
President May Dunsmuir	5/6
Sheriff Principal Kate Dowdalls	5/6
Sheriff Jane Farquharson	2/2
Previous Board Members	Total
Sheriff David Young	4/4

Information on Board appointment and standing down dates and the register of interests are included on the JABS website.

Part 4 Governance

Lay/Legal Assistants (also known as Lay Appointment Advisers and Legal Appointment Advisers)

Statutory provisions within the 2008 Act (Schedule 1 paragraph 13A (1)) allow the Board to appoint Lay and Legal Assistants to help the Board to deliver its increased workload. A person appointed under paragraph 13A (1) as a Lay or Legal Assistant may, so far as authorised by the Board, do anything that a lay member of the Board may do, other than take part in a decision of the Board to recommend an individual for appointment.

Lay and Legal Appointments Advisers (During 2024/2025)



Dr Geoff Garner



Ms Marieke Dwarshuis



Mr Peter McGrath



Mrs Deirdre Fulton



Mrs Gillian Mawdsley
(Legal Appointments Adviser)

Part 4 Governance

The Business Management Unit

The BMU comprises 10 permanent members of staff, including its Chief Executive. All permanent staff are Scottish Government civil servants. They are required to comply with the Civil Service Code and Scottish Government HR policies, but their sole responsibility for all operational matters is to the Board.

None of the BMU staff are members of the Senior Civil Service. In line with the Scottish Government policies salaries below this level are not published. All Scottish Government staff also receive pension contributions in line with the Civil Service Pension Scheme, information on this can be found at [Civil Service Pension - Contribution Rates](#)



Ms Paula Stevenson
Chief Executive

The Chief Executive is the principal adviser to the Board on the discharge of its functions and is accountable to it. The Chief Executive role is to provide operational leadership to staff working for JABS and to ensure that its aims and objectives are met, and its functions are delivered through effective and properly controlled executive action.

The role of the BMU is to support the Board by carrying out the administration required to support judicial recruitment competitions and to support the Board in relation to finance, health and safety, training, analysis and other corporate functions.

Part 4 Governance

Financial Outturn

The Board is fully funded by the Scottish Government. As an advisory NDPB, JABS is not required to publish separate accounts and its expenditure is accounted for by the Scottish Government Justice Directorate. The Board's expenditure during the financial year 2024–2025, as recorded in the Scottish Executive Accounting System to 31 March 2025 is set out below.

Expenditure	Year to 31 March 2025 (£)
Staff Salaries including ERNIC and Superannuation	£588,348.19
Members Fees and ERNIC	£396,981.35
Travel and Subsistence for Board Members, Lay Appointment Advisers and Interview Panels (No Overseas Travel)	£14,247.38
Travel and Subsistence for Staff (No Overseas Travel)	£1,420.79
Training	£226.80
Accommodation including rent, maintenance and utilities	£89,954.66
Catering for Board Meetings and Interview Panels	£2,465.87
Hospitality Costs*	£0
Office Running Costs	£2,829.33
Appointment Advertising Costs	£3,099.60
IT Professional Services for Websites and vacancy System and Development, Staff Equipment (Computer Other)	£41,271.27
Professional Services	£58,510.25
External Consultancy**	£4,666.43
Total	£1,204,021.92

To note, under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 JABS is required to publish information on the amount spent in connection with public relations, overseas travel, hospitality* and entertainment, and external consultancy**. Where there has been such expenditure in the 2024/5 financial year, these are shown with an Asterix above.

Freedom of Information

During the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, the Board received six requests for information under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. All requests received were responded to within the statutory timeframe.

Risk Management

As part of JABS compliance and assurance process, the Board monitors and

Part 4 Governance

reviews its approach to risk at its quarterly Governance Review Board meeting. A comprehensive Risk Register has been compiled and is regularly reviewed and updated in the interim, as required.

The Board recognises the need for a comprehensive approach to monitoring, reviewing and acting on risks and opportunities that may have an impact on the successful outcome of the Board's objectives.

Complaints

The Board did not receive any complaints during this reporting year.

Website and Contact Details

Our website is the primary source of information about JABS, judicial vacancies, news items, and recent appointments.

The Board aims for continuous improvement in all that we do, and this includes our website. Feedback is always welcome, and those who access the website are encouraged to provide their thoughts or suggested improvements.

To offer this feedback, we invite the use of our website "Contact Us" form.

Online Application Platform

Applications for appointment are made online. The Board will make any reasonable adjustments where these are required.

Our address for correspondence is:

Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland
Thistle House
91 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh
EH12 5HD



0131 244 3131



mailbox@jabs.gov.scot



<https://www.judicialappointments.scot>

APPENDIX A

DIVERSITY STATISTICS



Diversity Statistics 2024-2025

Introduction

In order to ensure that we meet our statutory obligation to have regard to the need to encourage diversity in the range of individuals available for selection, we ask all applicants to complete a Diversity Monitoring questionnaire. This is voluntary and applicants can complete all, some or none of it. In practice, a proportion of candidates for each competition choose not to provide this information. This means that our diversity data may not reflect the complete position. The terminology in the Diversity Monitoring questionnaire has been refreshed this year with a view to encouraging more applicants to respond.

This questionnaire is separate from the application form and Board/Panel Members do not see it. The BMU collates the statistical information and presents anonymised reports to the Board to allow the consideration and identification of the demography of the pool of applicants.

The Diversity information below shows the basic data for the key recruitment stages, capturing the diversity evolution from applications received to recommendations for appointment in 2024/5. An analysis of these and previous years statistics will be provided in JABS standalone Diversity Report.

We do not publish diversity monitoring information that could identify an individual. This means that not all statistics are reported for every role, because if the number of applicants answering a question was very low the responses could lead to the identification of an individual.

Percentages given in these tables are rounded to the nearest whole number. As a result, they may not always total 100%.

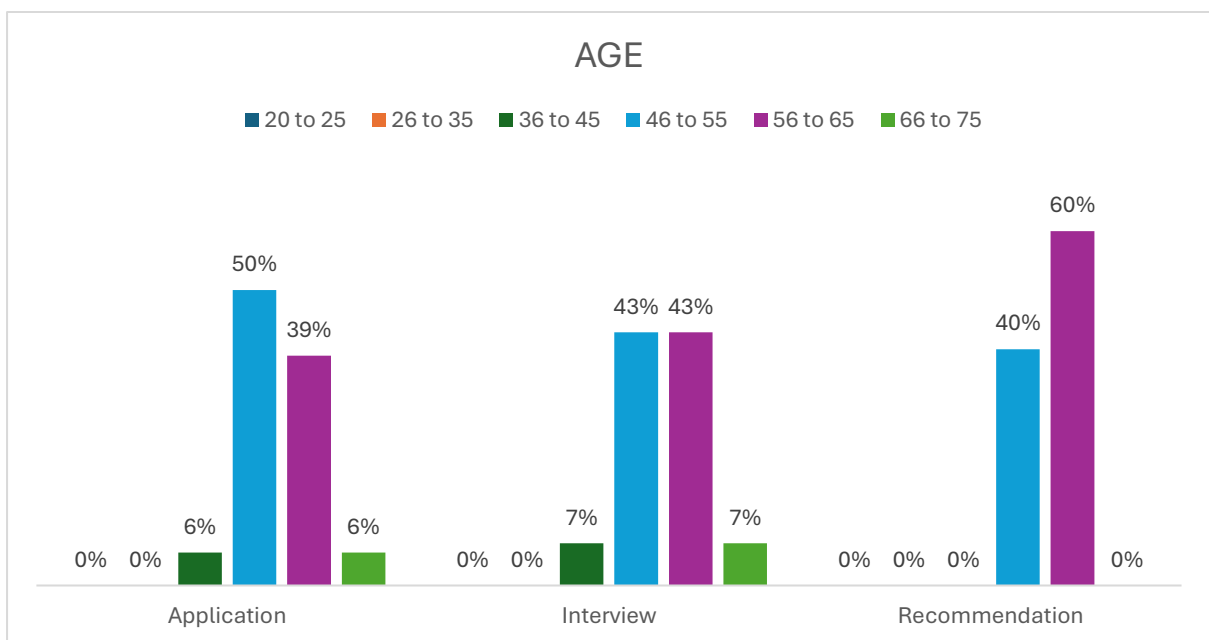
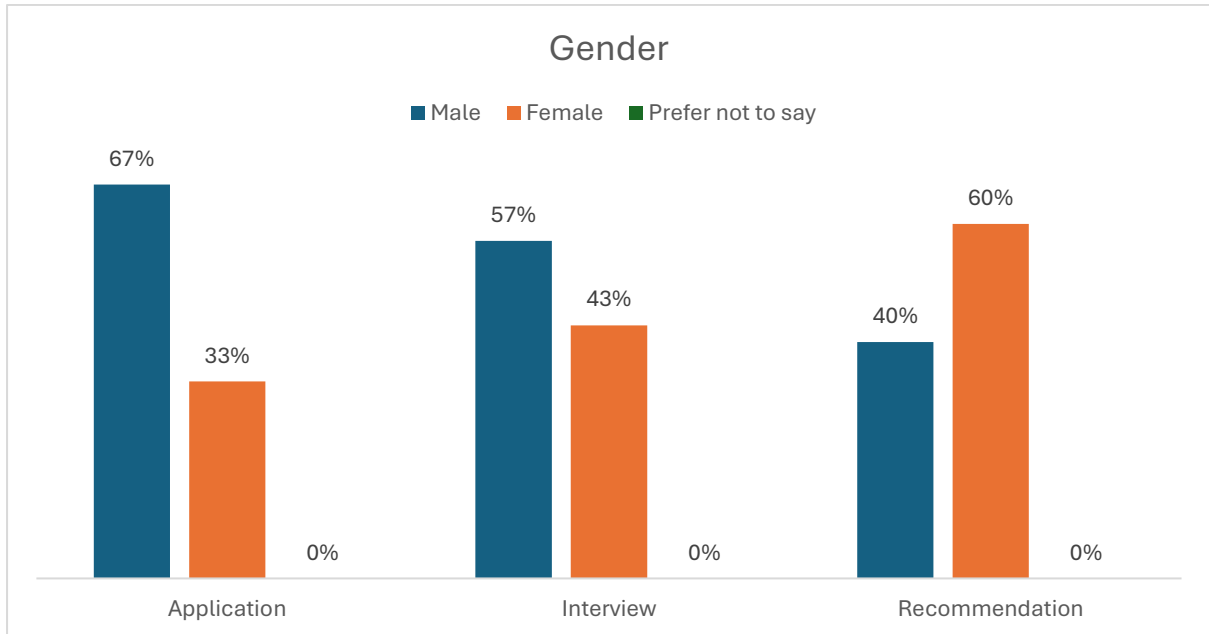
Diversity Statistics for 2024-2025

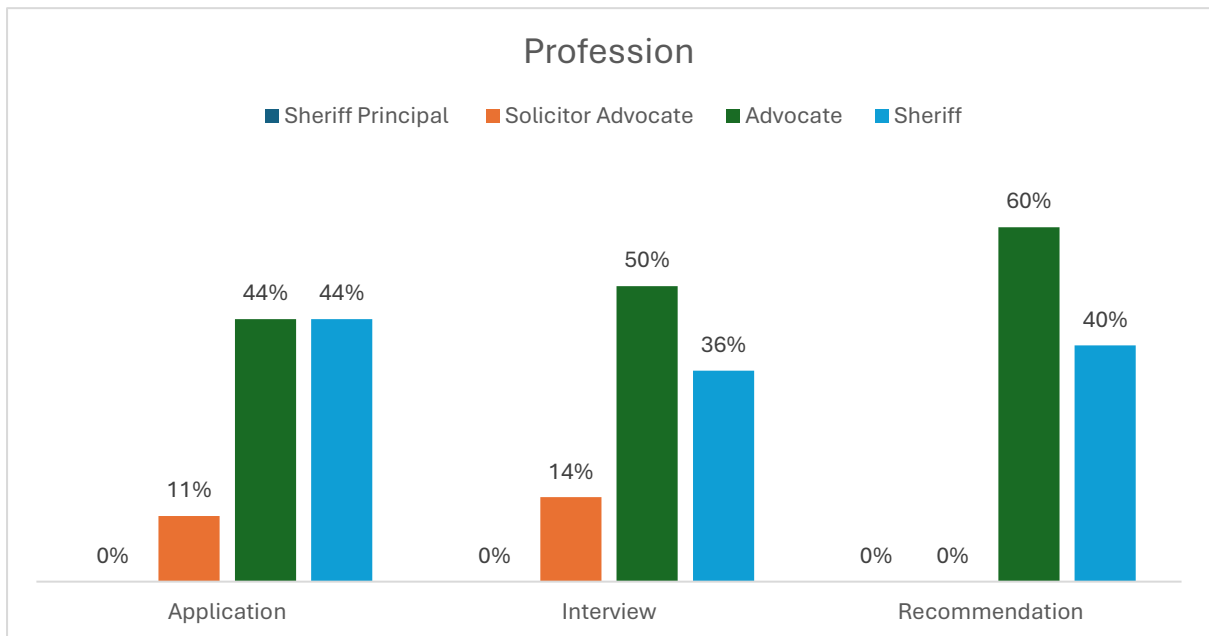
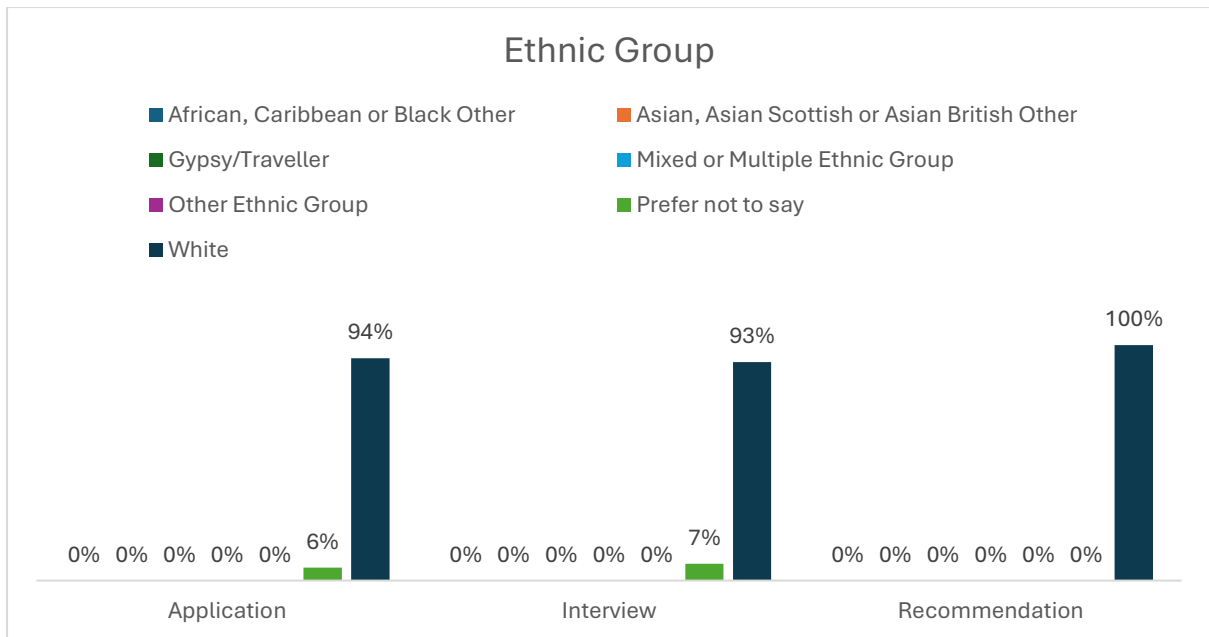
This report details the diversity findings for gender, age, ethnic group and profession for each of the following appointment rounds:

1. The Office of Senator of the College of Justice
2. The Office of Sheriff 2024

1. Diversity Stats for the Office of Senator of the College of Justice

The following tables provide statistical information relating to the diversity of the application pool, those invited to interview and those who were recommended for appointment.





2. Diversity Stats for the Office of Sheriff 2024

The following tables provide statistical information relating to the diversity of the application pool, those invited to interview and those who were recommended for appointment.

