



**JUDICIAL  
APPOINTMENTS  
BOARD FOR  
SCOTLAND**

**Legal Appointment Advisor**

**Fee paid**

**GUIDANCE NOTE FOR APPLICANTS**

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRING MEMBER

Thank you for your interest in working with the Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland (JABS). Our role is to recommend to the Scottish Ministers individuals for appointment to judicial office. This is done based on merit and through fair and open competition.

The Board's workload has increased substantially over recent years for court and tribunal appointments. We are looking to recruit Legal Appointment Advisors (in the Judiciary and Courts (Scotland) Act 2008, this role is referred to as a 'legal assistant') to help us undertake our important and demanding work. It should be noted that "A person appointed ..... as a legal assistant may, so far as authorised by the Board, do anything that a legal member of the Board may do, other than take part in a decision of the Board to recommend an individual for appointment".

The legislation has included provision for this role for some time. However, the Board has now decided that current circumstances and workload justify recruiting up to three Legal Appointment Advisors. JABS is also looking at its operating model and resourcing and it is expected that the Legal Appointment Advisor roles will develop over the next year or so as JABS makes changes to its operation. The role is part-time and fee paid for around 20-30 days per year.

This is a challenging and interesting role. Court and tribunal appointment rounds attract a good number of applicants, many of whom are at the top of their profession. It is vital that we assess all applicants fairly and consistently, to enable us to recommend the appropriate candidates for appointment.

We are looking for Legal Appointment Advisors who are first rate lawyers, whether as a solicitor, including solicitor advocate, or an advocate, have standing and credibility within the profession and the ability to assess applicants for a range of judicial positions.

We are interested in seeing candidates from a range of legal backgrounds and experience who will be able to help us carry out our functions with enthusiasm and commitment, including to public service. So, for example, we would welcome candidates with criminal as well as civil experience; or those with a background in employment law or recruitment of solicitors, as well as those who have appeared before tribunals or courts.

The attached application pack provides more detailed information about the role and our application and assessment process, including the skills and competencies we are seeking in applicants.

If, after considering the pack, the role seems to be a good fit for you, we would be delighted to receive a completed application form. Should you have any questions about the role which are not covered in the pack we will be happy to answer these, including, through a one to one conversation with me - arrangements can be made through the Board's Business Management Unit - Email: [mailbox@jabs.gov.scot](mailto:mailbox@jabs.gov.scot)

Thanks again for your interest.



Chairing member

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This note provides you with information about the role, eligibility requirements, guidance on how to apply and how we plan to assess candidates.

## 2. ABOUT US

We are an advisory Non-Departmental Public Body that selects applicants for recommendation to the Scottish Ministers for judicial appointments. The primary legislation requires the selection criteria for selecting an individual for judicial appointment to be solely on merit and only if the Board is satisfied that they are of good character. The legislation also requires the Board to 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.

For more information on our work and how we recommend individuals for appointment, please visit our website: <https://www.judicialappointments.scot/>

## 3. THE ROLE

The role of Legal Appointment Advisor is an interesting and challenging one that involves working as part of or with appointment panels engaged in judicial appointment rounds. This will include assessing applications, often under considerable time pressure, and candidates at interview, whilst requiring fairness and consistency in approach. We are looking for people who possess the range of skills and abilities required to perform successfully as a Legal Appointment Advisor.

You will be required to:

- Actively participate in recruitment exercises, to agreed timescales
- Prepare high quality written material such as case studies, questions etc. which are used to test candidates' legal knowledge and interpretation of the law
- Assess written applications independently and work as part of a panel during the longlisting, shortlisting and interview stages. In particular, be able to assess candidates' legal knowledge and their ability to interpret and apply the law
- Work collegiately with other panel members to reach an agreed position, offering constructive challenge and building consensus
- Provide constructive feedback to unsuccessful candidates
- Work effectively with panel chairs and other colleagues, to help ensure the smooth and effective running of the selection panel
- Participate in improvement and development projects or reviews
- Be competent in the use of standard IT packages.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times, including the security of JABS data and information held on your computing equipment - an essential aspect of the role

In carrying out your role you will be required to uphold and support our Values, Objectives and Aims and comply with the JABS Code of Conduct for Legal Appointment Advisors which mirrors the Code for Board Members.

#### **4. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

You are eligible to apply providing:

- You are a solicitor, or an advocate, practising as such in Scotland.

## 5. SKILLS AND QUALITIES

We will assess each applicant against the set of skills and qualities below that are necessary for the role.

### Criterion 1

**For this role you must have substantial professional standing and experience as a solicitor or advocate currently practising in Scotland.**

- You should demonstrate evidence of your professional standing and experience which may include but is not confined to a leadership role in your place of work, contribution to a relevant professional body, experience of providing training and development to your peers.
- You should indicate the breadth of work which you have undertaken.

### Criterion 2

**For this role you must be able to make balanced and fair assessments of candidates' applications and, at interview, of a candidate's suitability for judicial appointment, for which you will receive training. In particular, as a Legal Appointments Advisor you will be required to assess candidates' knowledge of and skills and competence in the interpretation and application of the law.**

- You will be required to make fair and balanced individual assessments of applications, including written work, and at interview of candidates for appointment.
- You must have the ability and practical knowledge required to assess an individual's knowledge of the law and competence in the interpretation and application of the law as well as assessing personal and judicial qualities.

### Criterion 3

**For this role, you must have the ability to understand and analyse complex information and to make objective balanced judgements.**

- You must be competent in the analysis of complex information where important decisions are being made
- You must be able to display sound judgement in decision making.
- You must be able to defend decisions

### Criterion 4

**For this role, you must have the ability to work collaboratively, challenge constructively and work in a consensual environment.**

- You must be able to stand back, set aside personal views and listen objectively to others.
- You must have the ability to express disagreement constructively and respectfully with Board and staff colleagues.
- You must be able to support attempts to achieve consensus and able to accept a consensus decision even if it goes against a personal view.

### Criterion 5

**For this role you need to show strong written and verbal communication skills.**

- You must have the ability to write high quality case studies and other written material for use in judicial appointment rounds.
- You must have the ability to question candidates appropriately in an interview setting.

## **6. Fit and Proper Person Checks**

Applicants will be asked whether there are any issues in their personal or professional lives which might be incompatible with the Board's values, objectives and aims or with the JABS code of conduct for Board members (which will apply to Legal Appointments Advisors). They will also be asked if they have had professional complaints upheld against them. Applicants will also be asked to consent to the Board contacting the SLCC, the Law Society or Faculty of Advocates, in this regard.

## **7. Conflict of Interest Checks**

Applicants will be asked whether they have any personal or professional relationship with any of the Panel Members. For this exercise, the members of the panel will comprise the following:

Lindsay Montgomery, CBE (Chairing member)

Liz Burnley, CBE (Lay member)

May Dunsmuir (Judicial member)

Morag Ross, KC (former Legal member)

## 8. THE SELECTION PROCESS

This selection process will consist of:

- An application form
- Shortlisting by the panel
- Interview including a presentation and assessment exercise. For those who are invited to interview, they will at the same time be advised of the topic for the seven-minute presentation.

### Completing the application form

To complete the application form, you will need to register with our online system. You can do this by following the link on our website. If you have any difficulties, please contact the Business Management Unit on 0131 528 5101.

When you submit your application, you will receive acknowledgement by email. **You should contact us if you have not received an acknowledgement within 24 hours of submitting your application.**

**Applications received after 17:00 on the closing date will not be accepted.**

### Self-assessment

Along with completing sections on the form relating to education (and submitting a CV in a PDF format) you will also be asked to complete the self-assessment section of the form.

The “self-assessment” section of the application form asks you to assess yourself against the skills and qualities required for this role.

You should give **specific examples** of where and how you have demonstrated the skills and qualities relevant to this role.

Please do not rely on generalised descriptions of work carried out, do not give assertive or aspirational statements or merely refer to positions held. You must give specific examples of experience or achievements. You should, as far as possible, give different examples for each criterion in the application form.

Your examples should include:

- A description of the situation and the context
- What you did
- What skills and knowledge you deployed
- Your personal contribution and the outcome

### Shortlisting

The selection panel will undertake the shortlisting process. They will consider your application and CV and assess your examples against the skills and qualities required for the role. They will then meet to agree the shortlist of applicants who will be invited to interview. You will be notified of the outcome of the shortlisting the day after the meeting.



## **Interview**

You will receive full details of the interview process in your invitation to interview letter. However, you should expect the process to include a short presentation and undertaking a practical exercise that seeks to test your abilities in relation to the role, followed by an interview.

The interviews will be held at our offices in Edinburgh. Provision can be made for remote interviews should circumstances require it e.g. Covid related issues. We do not refund travel and subsistence costs.

### **9. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS**

We are committed to considering any reasonable adjustment requests, to ensure that you can participate in the appointment process fairly.

We will consider requests on a case-by-case basis and the information you give will not be used in the selection decisions.

### **10. FEEDBACK**

We aim to offer you feedback at each stage of the process. However, the provision of feedback will depend on the number of candidates and the resources available.

### **11. DISCLOSURE CHECKS**

Successful applicants will be enhanced disclosure checked before they take up appointment.

### **Legal appointment advisor role:**

### **12. REMUNERATION**

You will receive £296 for each full day (7.5 hours excluding lunch break) you work for us. Shorter periods are paid pro rata. From this income Tax and National Insurance will be deducted at source. You will be required to complete a claim form. All reasonable receipted (standard class) travel and subsistence costs will be reimbursed.

### **13. TRAINING**

If you are successful, you will be required to attend an induction event, followed by more in-depth training in advance of becoming a panel member which is remunerated at the rates set out in paragraph 9.

### **14. PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK**

Your ongoing performance will be appraised by the Chairing Board member on an annual basis.

### **15. TIME COMMITMENT**

It is difficult to be precise about the time commitment for this role as the work of JABS is demand led. However, it is likely to be in the order of 20-30 days per year. When involved with appointment rounds these can require more intensive periods of activity during periods of between three and six weeks for shortlisting applications (which can be done from home)

and one to two weeks for interviews. You will also need to attend single days for meetings. Generally, you will be required to work full days and we will give you as much notice as possible. You should be aware that there is no guaranteed level of work and flexibility is critical as the work develops.

If you are appointed by the Board, it will be for such period of not more than three years as the Board may determine. At the end of a period of appointment, a person may be reappointed.

## **16. LOCATION**

Formal meetings and interviews take place at our offices in Edinburgh but can on occasion take place at locations elsewhere in Scotland or remotely. You will be expected to work independently from home to longlist/shortlist application forms.

## **17. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Our Terms and Conditions set out the rules relating to Conflict of Interest.

Legal Appointment Advisors must notify JABS immediately if:

- their involvement in any selection exercise might cause any potential conflict of interest or
- They intend to take up any position, or carry out any work, or provide any advice that might be inconsistent with these Terms and Conditions or might conflict with their work as a JABS Legal Appointment Advisor. A clear example would be offering advice or coaching services to applicants applying for judicial appointments.

Successful candidates will agree not to apply for judicial positions, for which JABS is responsible for nominating appointees, whilst they are Legal Appointment Advisors.

## **18. RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>Event</b>
Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	Advertisement published
17:00 Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Closing date for application forms
w/c Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Applicants notified of outcome of shortlisting
Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> June and Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2023	Interviews
Week ending Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	Applicants notified of outcome of interview