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Information Pack:

00402: Fee Paid Vice President of the Valuation
Tribunal 2008

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INTRODUCTION

The Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) is now inviting applications for the post of Vice President of the Valuation Tribunal for England (VTE). The closing date for applications is **15 December 2008**. There will be up to four candidates to be placed on a list under section 94 of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005, from which appointments may be made as subsequently required by the Lord Chancellor under section 87 of the Act. There will be one immediate appointment from this list. The Secretary of State (for Communities and Local Government) will, after receiving advice from the President of the VTE and Valuation Tribunal Service, set and subsequently advise on the final number of vacancies.

The VTE is a new Tribunal which will hear appeals in England against decisions relating to council tax and business rates. The post of the Vice President will involve assisting the President, in his/her role as judicial head of the VTE and in managing and leading the volunteer membership. Candidates will be expected to travel frequently to London (where the Headquarters of the Valuation Tribunal Service is) and regularly to other locations, across England.

This pack contains the information that you need about the appointments. It includes eligibility criteria and the job description. It also describes the selection process that the JAC will follow, with relevant dates and advice on how to prepare for the various stages of this process.

Before you can be considered for appointment, there are eligibility requirements that you must meet. The JAC is also required to assess your character. Before applying you should read these requirements and the guidelines that the JAC uses to assess character. These can be found on our website (www.judicialappointments.gov.uk) along with outline terms and conditions of service and terms of appointment for these posts. You will also need to demonstrate the qualities and abilities required for this office.

The independent JAC selects candidates for judicial office. It does so on merit, through fair and open competition, from the widest range of eligible candidates.

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

To be eligible for appointment as a Fee Paid Vice President of the VTE you must meet the following requirements.

Age

There is no upper or lower age limit for candidates apart from the statutory retirement age of 72. The age at which someone is appointed as a Vice President must allow for a reasonable length of service before retirement, usually about five years.

Nationality

You must complete a declaration of your nationality in the Application Form. In order to qualify for this post, you must be a citizen of:

- the United Kingdom; or
- another Commonwealth country; or
- the Republic of Ireland.

Character

The JAC is required by statute to appoint only persons of good character. In order to make these assessments we have developed Good Character Guidance which you can find on our website at www.judicialappointments.gov.uk. You can also write to us to request a copy (see the 'Contacts and Further Information' section of this Information Pack for our contact details).

The Good Character Guidance gives you some indication as to whether anything in your past conduct or present circumstances might affect your application for judicial appointment. You should read it carefully before completing the Application Form.

Good character questions and declarations

You are required to answer a number of questions related to good character in the Application Form and must make appropriate declarations as requested.

Applicants for judicial appointments are not protected by sections 4(2) and 4(3) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Any convictions which would normally be regarded as having expired under that Act should therefore be declared in writing (Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions) Order 1975). You must provide details of all offences for which you have been convicted or cautioned. Details should include the nature of each offence, date of conviction or caution and the penalty imposed.

Where proceedings of any kind are pending, you should give details of the offence with which you have been charged or the disciplinary process you are subject to and, if known, the date when the case or action may be heard. It is important that you inform us of the outcome of any case or action concluded while your application is under consideration. Similarly, if you are charged with any offence or any action is brought against you after submitting your application you should inform us immediately (see the 'Contacts and Further Information' section of this Information Pack).

In all cases, please provide as much detail as you can and indicate if there are any mitigating factors that you think the JAC should take into account in assessing your good character.

Good character checks

The JAC will also carry out checks on all candidates whom it intends to recommend for appointment. Further information about these checks will be provided separately to relevant candidates.

Failure to have declared any matters that come to light from these checks may prejudice the outcome of your application.

Disqualification

You should note that the House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975 applies to this office.

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.

Please note that the JAC does not normally reimburse any expenses incurred in attending interviews, although we may be able to meet any additional travel costs incurred as a result of having a disability.

If you are recommended for appointment, reasonable adjustments will be considered if you have a disability under the meaning of the Disability Discrimination Act, as they are for serving judges who have or develop an impairment or long-term health condition. Any reasonable adjustments to enable you to take up appointment will be discussed separately with you by the Department for Communities and Local Government after the JAC has made its recommendation.

JOB DESCRIPTION

The following information has been provided by the Ministry of Justice and the Department for Communities and Local Government.

The Vice President(s) will support the President of the VTE in his/her role as judicial head of the VTE. The Vice President(s) may be assigned to a specific role¹. Interface with the Valuation Tribunal Service (VTS) will be through the national VTE President.

Overall purpose of the role:

The VTE will hear appeals against decisions relating to council tax and business rates. A significant element of the role will involve supporting the VTE President in sustaining and enhancing public confidence, leading, developing and inspiring a volunteer membership, strengthening judicial independence and promoting effective working partnerships with others.

Other key functions include:

- To support and assist the President in his/her role as judicial head of the VTE.
- To support the VTE President in providing leadership to and communication with Tribunal members
- To support the President in strengthening judicial independence and enhancing public confidence in the VTE
- To strengthen links between members and the national President.

¹ The role is to be decided by the VTE President, on appointment

Judicial duties:

The Vice President(s) will undertake such judicial duties as may be assigned by the VTE President, and will include:

- Communicating with members on judicial matters
- Convening and chairing meetings of members in the region (if any) assigned to the Vice-president
- Dealing with complaints against the conduct of tribunal members and tribunal processes
- Deputising for the VTE President as and when directed
- Attending and participating in meetings convened by the VTE President
- Ensuring that members meet the required standards of competence for Tribunals by applying the appropriate systems for mentoring, appraisal and training established by the VTE President and VTS
- Assisting the VTE President in developing advice to members on matters of law and procedure affecting the VTE
- Keeping up to date with relevant law and practice, and taking responsibility for self development
- From time to time (as appropriate and agreed with the VTE President) acting as a panel member or chairman at tribunal hearings²

Further Information

Further information about this post can be found on the JAC website:
www.judicialappointments.gov.uk.

If you would like further information about the Valuation Tribunal, please contact Tina Townsend, Chief Executive of the Valuation Tribunal Service, on **020 7841 8700**.

² The President, Vice President, Chairmen and Members of the VTE are not paid for sitting on tribunals, therefore sitting on a hearing panel will not count towards fee paid days

THE SELECTION PROCESS

Application form

Details of the qualities and abilities against which you will be assessed are set out in the Application Form. You can draw on your full range of work and personal experience to demonstrate these qualities and abilities including, for example, voluntary work or any publication to which you have contributed. Please be specific in giving information.

Timetable

Closing date for applications	15 December 2008
Provisional date for interview	23-27 February 2009

Shortlisting

If you are shortlisted, you will be invited to an interview. The interview will take place in London and further details will be sent to you with your invitation to attend. We are sorry that we are not able to provide written explanations to candidates who are not shortlisted.

References

We may seek information from people who are well placed to comment on how you meet the qualities and abilities. Referees are usually approached before the sift takes place and will be encouraged to draw on appraisal material if it is available. The material provided by referees will usually inform decisions at sift, interview, and final selection decisions by the JAC Commissioners.

Candidate nominated

You are invited to nominate up to three referees who know you well either personally or professionally. **We strongly recommend that you check with your referee that they are not conflicted in any way.**

JAC nominated

The JAC may also request references from those identified in the section of this pack titled 'JAC nominated referees'.

Please provide the name, title, position and address of your relevant judicial and/or professional referees. You may also tell us if you do not wish us to approach the relevant professional referee now, but you must give reasons. If you do not currently hold a judicial office and have excluded your relevant professional referee, you must suggest an alternative referee who is familiar with your work.

Conflict of interest

The Judicial Appointments Commissioners are listed at the back of this pack. You should not nominate a Commissioner as a referee. You should also state in the Application Form if you are in any way related to, or known to, any of the Commissioners and give details.

Outcome of the selection exercise

You will be advised of the outcome of your application in writing.

If you are unsuccessful at the selection day stage of the process, you can request a written explanation. You should make this request within six weeks of the date of the letter informing you that you have not been successful. We will aim to respond to your request within four working weeks.

Complaints procedure

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the way your application has been handled, please refer to the JAC's published complaints procedure, which is available from our website, or in writing on request.

CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Obtaining an application form

All the information about applying for this selection exercise is available at www.judicialappointments.gov.uk (current selection exercises).

The Application Form for this selection exercise can be obtained electronically by downloading it from the website.

Please contact the Judicial Appointments Applications Service (JAAS) team at the JAC if you wish to request a hard copy of the Application Form or Information Pack, or if you have any questions about submitting your application.

If you need the form and/or pack in a different format, for example Braille, please contact the JAAS team.

Acknowledgement of your application

You should receive an acknowledgement of your application within five working days of receipt. If you do not, please contact the JAAS team by telephone or e-mail.

Contact details

1. JAAS

Reference: 00402 (Please use this reference on all communications)

Judicial Appointments Commission
2nd Floor, Steel House
11 Tothill Street
London
SW1H 9LH

DX 149822 WESTMINSTER 6

E-mail: jaas@jac.gsi.gov.uk
Telephone: 0203 334 0123

2. Selection Exercise Team:

Mary D’Arcy	020 3334 0304	Assistant Director
Maggie Garrett	020 3334 0305	Deputy Selection Exercise Manager

E-mail: mary.d’arcy@jac.gsi.gov.uk

E-mail: maggie.garrett@jac.gsi.gov.uk

Fax: 020 3334 0133

3. Director:

Sue Bush 0203 334 0566

E-mail: susan.bush@jac.gsi.gov.uk

JAC NOMINATED REFEREES

The JAC may also request references from those categories listed below.

Judicial referees

If you hold a judicial office not in this list, please contact the JAC so that we can consider who should be nominated as your judicial referee.

If you sit on a Tribunal, the Tribunal President or equivalent.

If you are a Sheriff, the Sheriff Principal (Scotland only)

Professional referee

If you are employed, your line manager or equivalent.

If you are a solicitor, your managing partner or relevant equity partner.

If you are a barrister, your Head of Chambers.

If you are an advocate, the Dean of the Faculty of Advocates (Scotland only).

JAC COMMISSIONERS

Chairman of the JAC

Baroness Usha Prashar CBE

Members

Mrs Justice Jill Black DBE

Dame Lorna Boreland-Kelly DBE

Professor Dame Hazel Genn DBE QC

Lady Justice Heather Hallett DBE

Her Honour Judge Frances Kirkham

Sir Geoffrey Inkin OBE

Mr Edward Nally

Ms Sara Nathan OBE

District Judge Charles Newman

His Honour Judge David Pearl

Mr Francis Plowden

Ms Harriet Spicer

Mr Jonathan Sumption OBE QC

Lord Justice Roger Toulson