

NEWS RELEASE

D01/09

20th February 2009

Recorder Selection Exercise Data Published

The Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) today published selection exercise data for the 76 Recorder vacancies across the Northern, North Eastern and Wales circuits. It was the first advertisement for Recorder vacancies since 2005, and the JAC received over 420 valid applications – more than five times the number of vacancies.

It was completed on time.

Recorders work part-time as judges and they usually sit for 15 to 30 days a year.

The selection exercise used a qualifying test - rather than references and a written application form - as the way of short-listing candidates to attend the second stage of the selection process which included an interview, references and two role playing exercises.

The Lord Chancellor has accepted all the JAC recommendations for the posts. The Ministry of Justice will announce the names of the successful candidates as each is appointed to a Circuit.

Men and women, and black and ethnic minority candidates were selected in proportion to the pool of candidates eligible to apply.

The JAC recommended 24 women for appointment. This represents thirty-two per cent of the total Recorder selections made by the JAC. Women only represent 31 per cent of the total eligible to apply for these vacancies.

Similarly the JAC recommended five people from an ethnic minority background for appointment which represents seven per cent of those selected. BME candidates only represent six per cent of those eligible to apply for these vacancies

Barristers applied in greater numbers than solicitors, and were proportionately more successful. Seventy-two per cent of applicants and 86 per cent of successful candidates were barristers.

Twenty-eight per cent of applicants, and nine per cent of successful candidates, were solicitors.

More solicitors were successful this time than in the selection exercises in 2005, which were run under different procedures before the JAC came into being.

In the three previous comparable exercises in 2004-5, for the Northern, North-Eastern, Wales and Chester circuits, 89 per cent of successful applicants were barristers and two per cent solicitors. The other nine per cent of successful applicants were existing judicial office holders. Data from 2005-2005 does not break down judicial office holders into former solicitors and former barristers.

The JAC is working with the Law Society and solicitors' firms to try to get more of the best-qualified solicitors to apply for judicial opportunities.

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EDITORS NOTES

1. Details of the selection exercise for the Recorders - including the written test they sat - are on the JAC website. <http://www.judicialappointments.gov.uk/current/1272.htm>
2. Full data from the Recorder exercise published today are available on: <http://www.judicialappointments.gov.uk/news/annual.htm>
3. Eligible pool figures in the published data are derived from data supplied by the Law Society (July 2007) and the Bar Council (March 2008). The BME figures include 'any other' ethnic group, and exclude 'unknown' (approximately 12-13%). 31% of the eligible pool are female and 32% were recommended for appointment. 6% of the eligible pool are BME and 8% (including 'any other') were recommended for appointment.

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