



Reference number: 13/2010

Date: 13 December 2010

Press Notice

Courtesy titles for Justices of the Supreme Court

Her Majesty The Queen has signed a warrant declaring that every Justice of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom will in future be styled as 'Lord' or 'Lady', to ensure that all Justices of the Court are described and addressed in a similar manner.

The announcement means that Sir John Dyson, the most recent appointment to the Supreme Court, who is not a Life Peer and was appointed from the Court of Appeal of England and Wales, will now be styled Lord Dyson.

Lord Phillips, President of the Supreme Court, said: "One of the hallmarks of the new Court is that, in order to ensure the complete separation of the Court from the legislature, new Justices are not made Life Peers, and that those who are already Life Peers are unable to sit and vote in the House of Lords.

"However, the appointment of colleagues who are not Life Peers has inevitably led to some confusion about the manner in which they should be described and addressed. This announcement is a welcome move to help us introduce consistency and avoid the complications of a variety of titles being employed."

Today's announcement means that the courtesy title will be conferred upon new Justices for life once they are sworn in at the Supreme Court. The wife of a Justice will be described as "Lady..."

Ends

Notes to editors

Today's announcement also resolves a potential anomaly posed by Justices being appointed from different jurisdictions. Differences in practice between England, Wales and Northern Ireland on the one hand and Scotland on the other mean that Justices appointed from the senior judiciary of the

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latter jurisdiction carry with them the judicial title of 'Lord' or 'Lady', which they are granted for life when joining the Court of Session; whereas those Judges appointed from the former jurisdictions generally carry with them a title of 'Knight' or 'Dame'. This would mean that, even once all those Justices who have previously served as Lords of Appeal in Ordinary retire, the issue of mixed titles would have remained.

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