



INFORMATION PACK - VACANCY FOR APPOINTMENT FOR

PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME COURT

Introduction

As a result of the retirement of Lord Reed in January 2027, applications are sought for the appointment of President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom. The President of the Court occupies the most senior UK judicial position, with responsibility for the Supreme Court and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council and has a national and international public profile. The role requires not only outstanding judicial skills but a leader of the highest calibre. The President has a range of statutory functions and responsibilities and is expected to lead with authority on external relationships nationally and internationally, including relations with governments, Parliament, other courts, and the media. The President must have excellent communication skills and the ability to work effectively and build rapport with the public and individuals from diverse backgrounds. The President must also foster collegiality amongst the Justices and a collaborative working culture within the administration.

The selection commission welcomes applications from the widest range of applicants eligible to apply. Information about the Court can be found on the Court's website. Applicants and potential applicants are welcome to contact Vicky Fox, the secretary to the selection commission, to arrange to discuss the role of President in greater detail with the current President of the Court and to visit the Court. Contact details can be found at the end of this pack.

Statutory selection process

The President is selected in accordance with the provisions of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005, as amended ("the Act"). The Act requires the Lord Chancellor to convene a selection commission, the membership of which is prescribed in the statute and in the Supreme Court (Judicial Appointments) Regulations 2013. There is a full description of the process on the Court's website.

For this competition, the selection commission comprises:

Mr Colm Donaghy (Chair)	Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission
Baroness Carr of Walton-on-the-Hill	Lady Chief Justice of England and Wales
Lord Lloyd-Jones	Justice of the UK Supreme Court
Dr Uchechi Igbokwe	Judicial Appointments Commission, England and Wales
Mr Lindsay Montgomery	Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland

UK Supreme Court

The Court was created by the Constitutional Reform Act 2005. Under the Act, there are 12 Justices, including the President and Deputy President.

The President of the Court occupies the most senior UK judicial position, with responsibility for the Supreme Court and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC), the day-to-day administration of which is largely delegated to the Chief Executive. Each jurisdiction of the UK has its own judicial head and court administration, and these do not form part of the remit of the President of the UKSC.

The Court sits as the final Court of Appeal for civil cases in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and for criminal appeals in England and Wales and Northern Ireland and exercises the devolution jurisdiction formerly exercised by the JCPC. Justices of the Supreme Court also sit in the JCPC which forms the final Court of Appeal for a number of Commonwealth countries, Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories.

The Court is located in Parliament Square, London. The JCPC sits in the same building. The Court may, from time to time, choose to sit in other parts of the United Kingdom to hear particular cases. The JCPC occasionally sits outside the United Kingdom.

The role

The responsibilities and functions of the President include:

Judicial work

- Effective presiding in the Supreme Court and JPC hearing complex and high-profile cases, with significant importance across the United Kingdom and JPC jurisdictions.
- Providing leadership and direction for the administration of justice within the Court to maximise coherence, efficiency and effectiveness.
- Providing direction and guidance to ensure matters of procedure are conducted efficiently and effectively, including considering amendments to Rules and Practice Directions.
- Participating fully and collegiately in discussions and decisions on cases heard before the Court and applications for permission to appeal.
- Writing, with appropriate dispatch, judgments of the highest quality, commanding the respect of colleagues and commensurate with the role of President; and ensuring the timely delivery of judgments by the Court generally.

Leadership

- Leading the Court to maintain its standing and reputation, inspiring confidence in the Court externally with the judiciary of the UK, the legal profession, Parliament, Government, the wider public and internationally.
- Acting to ensure constitutional boundaries and judicial independence are well-understood and protected.
- Leading the Justices as a cohesive and committed team, working closely with the Deputy President, and including work allocation, welfare issues, chairing regular Justices' meetings and the UKSC Strategic Advisory Board.
- Leadership of the administration of the Court, working closely with the CEO to set the vision and direction for the administration of the Court.

Relationships

- Representing the Court with authority, explaining the role of the Court and the importance of the rule of law to the Executive, Parliamentarians, the media, professional and other bodies and the public.
- Appearing annually before the House of Lords Constitution Committee, and meeting on occasion with the Speakers of the House of Commons and House of Lords.
- Representing the Court internationally to increase understanding between jurisdictions, to support the development of the rule of law, and maintain the international standing of the UK courts and common law of England and Wales.

- Regular collaborative liaison with the most senior judges of the three jurisdictions covered by the UKSC, including visiting Edinburgh, Belfast and Cardiff regularly.

Statutory Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for appointment applicants must, under section 25 of the Act, meet the following requirements:

Either: applicants must have held high judicial office for at least two years.

“high judicial office” means office as a judge of any of the following courts: the Supreme Court; the Court of Appeal of England and Wales; the High Court of England and Wales; the Court of Session; the Court of Appeal of Northern Ireland; the High Court in Northern Ireland;

Or: applicants must satisfy the judicial-appointment eligibility condition on a 15-year basis or have been a qualifying practitioner for at least 15 years.

A person is a qualifying practitioner if s/he is an advocate in Scotland or a solicitor entitled to appear in the Court of Session and the High Court of Justiciary; or s/he is a member of the Bar of Northern Ireland or a solicitor of the Court of Judicature of Northern Ireland.

A person satisfies the judicial-appointment eligibility condition on a 15-year basis if s/he has been a solicitor of the senior courts of England and Wales, or barrister in England and Wales, for at least 15 years; and has been gaining experience in law during the post-qualification period.

The meaning of “gaining experience in law” is set out in section 52(2) to (5) of the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007 and relates to a period engaged in law-related activities, which are defined as the following:

- The carrying out of judicial functions of any court or tribunal
- Acting as an arbitrator
- Practice or employment as a lawyer
- Advising (whether or not in the course of practice of employment as a lawyer) on the application of the law
- Assisting (whether or not in the course of such practice) persons involved in proceedings for the resolution of issues arising under the law
- Acting (whether or not in the course of such practice) as mediator in connection with attempts to resolve issues that are, or if not resolved could be, the subject of proceedings

- Drafting (whether or not in the course of such practice) documents intended to affect persons' rights or obligations
- Teaching or researching in the law; or
- Any activity that in the relevant decision-maker's opinion (this means the Lord Chancellor or his designated official) is of broadly similar nature to an activity with paragraphs (a) to (h).

The Commission will expect applicants to have substantial judicial or equivalent experience.

The successful applicant will be selected on merit. In accordance with section 27(5A) of the Act, if the Commission considers two persons to be of equal merit, it may prefer one of them over the other for the purpose of increasing diversity within the Court. Subject to the principle of selection on merit, the Commission will also take into account the need for an appropriate balance of expertise and professional experience within the Court.

Additional criteria for appointment

Applicants that are not serving Justices will need to fulfil the statutory eligibility requirements set out above, the criteria below and the additional criteria that can be found at Annexe B to this information pack.

All applicants for this role must demonstrate the following criteria to an exceptional degree:

1. Outstanding judge and leader
 - Outstanding intellectual and legal ability sufficient to preside over the Supreme Court and JCPC. The President must have the highest legal standing, commanding the confidence of the Justices, the judiciary and the legal profession.
 - The vision, strategic thinking and communication skills to lead the Court and maintain its standing and reputation.
 - A deep understanding and experience of constitutional and political issues and their potential impact on the Court, including the operation of the jurisdictions in each part of the UK and their relationship with the Court.
 - An ability to anticipate and respond to future challenges with an understanding of the dynamic context in which the judiciary operates.
 - A commitment to inclusive leadership, promoting inclusivity and valuing diversity in all aspects of work.
 - An ability to work closely with the CEO and to lead and inspire continuous improvement in ways of working so that the Court remains world leading.

2. Communication skills

- The ability and experience to engage fully and deal effectively with members of the public, members of the executive, Parliament, and the devolved governments on the basis of mutual respect and comity between branches of the state; the media and professional and other bodies, representing the Court with authority.
- Awareness and understanding of external pressures and the impact of external scrutiny on the Court.
- The ability to work collaboratively and collegiately with the Justices including on pastoral issues, and with the administration,
- The ability to communicate and work effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds and experience in building trust and rapport with diverse groups and individuals, including students, lawyers and the public

3. Personal qualities

- Personal authority to influence, guide, and inspire others
- Strong self-awareness, approachable, fostering trust and open communication.
- Accessible, engaging communication style
- Resilience and firmness of purpose when under pressure, coupled with sureness of touch.
- Decisiveness.
- The energy and stamina required for long working hours.

The successful applicant will be expected to serve for a reasonable amount of time and usually a minimum of three years.

Flexible working

The Supreme Court supports flexible working, subject to the needs of the Court. Further information can be obtained from Vicky Fox – contact details can be found at the end of this pack.

Age

Subject to the statutory requirements above, there is no lower age limit for this appointment.

The judicial mandatory retirement age is 75 years. The selection commission will consider applications from candidates who can offer a reasonable length of service

before reaching the retirement age of 75 following recommendation. For this selection exercise a reasonable length of service is usually three years.

Salary

Salary levels are set by the Senior Salaries Review Body. The current annual salary for President of the UKSC is £290,213.

Pension

Supreme Court Justices are eligible for membership of the Judicial Pension Scheme 2022 (JPS 2022) and any further amendments to the scheme at the time of appointment. JPS 2022 was established under the Public Service Pensions Act 2013, with the rules of the scheme set out in the Judicial Pensions Regulations 2022.

Further information about the scheme is available [here](#).

Disqualification

The House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975 applies to this office.

Nationality

Applicants need to fulfil one of the following nationality requirements – they must be a citizen of:

- the United Kingdom;
- another Commonwealth country;
- the Republic of Ireland; or
- hold dual nationality, one of which falls in one of the above categories.

Health

If recommended for appointment, applicants must be able to fulfil the duties of the judicial role to which they are appointed and may be required to undergo a medical examination. Reasonable adjustments will be made if they have a disability as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

The selection process

Applications need to be submitted by **5pm on 17th April 2026**. They should be sent by email to grainne.hawkins@supremecourt.uk. Applications will only be accepted electronically.

Applicants must provide the following:

- A completed application form and the diversity monitoring form, both available from Grainne Hawkins (grainne.hawkins@supremecourt.uk tel: 020 7960 1906).
- A curriculum vitae
- A supporting statement giving clear evidence to support how they meet each of the additional criteria including the personal qualities for appointment. If you are a serving Justice, your supporting statement should be no more than 3,000 words. If you are not a Justice, your supporting statement should be no more than 4,000 words. This additional word count is to enable you to address the additional criteria required to be a Justice (see Annexe B).
- Applicants should submit five significant pieces of work that demonstrate (i) the applicant's breadth of experience and ability to address legal problems in different areas of the law and (ii) how they meet the additional criteria for appointment, addressing all aspects of the additional criteria. Applicants should include a brief explanation of why these have been chosen, drawing attention to the salient points for the commission. The pieces of writing can include judgments, articles, lectures, opinions or other relevant material such as videos.
- The names of two people who can provide an independent assessment against the additional selection criteria set out above. Assessments may be of most assistance to the selection commission if they do not come from the statutory consultees (Annexe A) who are consulted as a matter of course and if they cover areas not likely to be known to the statutory consultees.

The successful applicant will be selected on merit. In accordance with section 27(5A) of the Constitutional Reform Act, if the Commission considers two persons to be of equal merit, it may prefer one of them over the other for the purpose of increasing diversity within the Court. Subject to the principle of selection on merit, the Commission will also take into account the need for an appropriate balance of expertise and professional experience within the Court.

The commission will undertake the statutory consultations set out under section 27 of the Constitutional Reform Act before short-listing applicants. Short-listing is likely to take place in early May.

The full range of available evidence will be taken into account in making the short-listing decision. The commission may also undertake other non-statutory consultations as it deems appropriate.

Short-listed applicants will be invited to an interview that will take place on **28th May 2026**. Applicants are asked to keep this date free. Interviews will be conducted in person.

Applicants should note that the statutory consultation process following interview can be lengthy and that the final outcome of the competition is unlikely to be known before October 2026. Following the announcement of the successful candidate, feedback will be available to those applicants short-listed for interview but not recommended for appointment. Those not called to interview will receive feedback in writing, if requested.

Reasonable adjustments

We provide reasonable adjustments to ensure candidates with a disability are not placed at a disadvantage. We will also consider making reasonable adjustments for those candidates with a short-term injury or temporary illness. You may request a reasonable adjustment in your application.

Data Protection Act

When writing to the statutory consultees and any non-statutory consultees, the selection commission will wish to send the consultees copies of the application papers submitted by applicants. If there is any information that should be redacted before it is copied and sent to consultees, applicants should indicate this when submitting their application.

Contact details and further information

For further information or to arrange a visit to the Court, please contact Vicky Fox, Secretary to the Commission: tel: 020 7960 1976 or by email at: vicky.fox@supremecourt.uk.

Annexe A Statutory Consultees under section 27(1) of the 2005 Act

- Such of the following who are not members of the commission and who are not willing to be considered for selection:

Justices of the Supreme Court (Lord Lloyd-Jones is a member of the commission)

Lady Chief Justice of England and Wales (a member of the commission)

Master of the Rolls

Lord President of the Court of Session

Lady Chief Justice of Northern Ireland

Lord Justice Clerk

President of the King's Bench Division

President of the Family Division

Chancellor of the High Court

- Lord Chancellor
- First Minister of Scotland
- First Minister of Wales
- Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission

Annexe B Skills and Criteria for appointment as a Justice

The cases dealt with by the Supreme Court include the most complex and important in the courts of the United Kingdom and demand the deepest level of judicial knowledge and understanding, combined with the highest intellectual capacity. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate the following to an exceptional degree:

1. Intellectual capacity, knowledge and expertise
 - Intellectual and legal ability, with a significant capacity for analysing and exploring legal problems creatively and flexibly, together with an appreciation of the role of the Court in contributing to the development of the law
 - Knowledge and experience of a range of legal subjects, and the ability to address problems in unfamiliar areas of the law
 - Clarity of thought and expression, reflected particularly in written work
 - Appreciation of the developing nature of the constitution and law in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales

2. Judicial and personal qualities
 - Integrity and independence of mind
 - Sound judgment and decisiveness
 - Ability to contribute to the collegiate decision-making of the Court through working collaboratively and creating an inclusive environment
 - Objectivity
 - An ability to work under pressure and to produce work with reasonable expedition
 - Self-awareness and the capacity to develop in response to it

3. Understanding and fairness
 - Sensitivity to the needs of different communities and groups
 - Understanding of the role of the Supreme Court in the constitution and its relationship with Parliament, the Executive and the rest of the judiciary.
 - Ability to consider difficult and sensitive issues fairly and dispassionately

4. Communication skills
 - Excellent written and oral skills
 - Ability to work courteously in and out of Court, respecting the views of others.
 - Ability and willingness to engage in the wider representational and leadership role of a Supreme Court Justice, including internationally, for example, delivering lectures, participating in conferences, and talking to students and other groups
 - Willingness to embrace new technology