

Non-legal roles in the judiciary

Your professional or specialist knowledge could have benefits beyond your day job – you might be able to use your expertise to help deliver justice in England and Wales, by sitting as a part-time tribunal member.

Not all members of the judiciary are lawyers. The judiciary includes medical practitioners, Chartered Surveyors, people who are experienced in dealing with the physical and mental needs disabled people, and people who have served in the armed forces to name a few – all of whom were appointed because of the specialist knowledge they have of a particular area. That knowledge means they have a unique insight to understand certain evidence and can work with other tribunal members to make the right decisions on cases.



Why apply?

“I’d encourage anyone to apply. It’s important judicial work and – in human terms – really fascinating; you often feel very humbled by the people who come before you.”

– Catharine Seddon, non-legal member (Fee-paid Disability Member of the First-tier Tribunal)



As a tribunal member, you will make a difference in the heart of the judicial system by being fully involved in hearings and decision making.

With non-legal roles, you do not need any legal training, rather you use your personal or professional experience in a certain area to help other tribunal members understand more about the issues they are being presented with – be those, for example, medical, disability, drainage or surveying cases. You help make sure that there is a full understanding of the facts of a case and that the parties involved get a fair hearing. Tribunals hear evidence from witnesses, decide cases and, in some cases, can impose penalties including fines. Your role on the bench alongside other members is central to making decisions and delivering justice.

How to know if a role is right for you

At the JAC, we believe in the creation of a judiciary that better reflects the society it serves. We appoint candidates on merit which means we are looking for those who can bring their abilities, experiences and transferrable skills to the role. We encourage applications from candidates from a diverse range of backgrounds and have [targeted initiatives to support groups](#) we know are currently under-represented: women, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic candidates, and disabled people.

The nature of the work suits candidates who have good attention to detail and can quickly assimilate information, are good at communicating and explaining – especially when talking about their area of specialism – manage their work effectively, make considered decisions based on evidence, and work well with others. We will test these competencies as part of the selection process.

A role could be right for you if you have some level of expertise in your area of work – you don’t necessarily need to have decades of experience. Check the eligibility criteria for the role, which will be stated on the vacancy page and make sure you can provide clear evidence for how you meet these requirements.



Non-legal tribunal member roles are part-time positions that you can hold alongside your day job. However you should also make sure you can commit the time, both to prepare for the selection process and to the role should you be successful. The majority of roles are paid, either with an annual salary or daily fee.

What to expect from the process

The process to appoint non-legal tribunal members is thorough: we need to have a detailed appointment process to make sure the right people are taking on these important roles. However, the application form itself is often quite straightforward – at this stage we need you to show that you meet the eligibility requirements. For some roles, you will simply need to list relevant experience and memberships. For other roles, you may need to provide an eligibility statement.

If you are asked to provide an eligibility statement, you should read the eligibility requirements closely and make sure you meet all these requirements. If your eligibility statement does not give clear evidence of how you meet each requirement, you will not be able to go any further in the process.

You will also need to nominate people to provide [independent assessments](#) about you. Make sure you are asking the right people to give these assessments, who know your work and will be able to explain how you meet the competencies.

Selection day

You can find out more about the selection [process on our website](#). For some roles, we will use an online test based on a tribunal situation to sift candidates before deciding which candidates to take forward to selection day.



If you are invited to selection day, you will take part in interviews with both situational and competency questions. In the situational questions we will test your knowledge, but we will be looking for evidence of competencies throughout this part of the selection process too. For the competency interview, you should check the competency framework, which will be available on the vacancy page for the exercise.

You should prepare thoroughly before you apply for a role to make sure you are ready.

How to prepare



If you see a role you think could be right for you, take the time to research it thoroughly, checking you meet the eligibility criteria. If you can speak to people currently doing the job, and/or observe cases, it will be really useful to your understanding of the job and will help you in the application process.

Take a look at our [website](#) where we have a number of [case studies](#), tools and further guidance on preparing for application. We strongly recommend you take advantage of this guidance to make sure you know what to expect and your application is as strong as possible.



Next steps

If a role in the judiciary sounds interesting to you, there are a few things you can do to find out more and stay up-to-date:

- Subscribe to [Judging Your Future](#), the monthly vacancies newsletter
- Sign up for email alerts for individual [vacancies](#) to receive notifications about the launch dates
- Visit the [Judiciary website](#) to learn more about the work of judicial office holders
- Read Judicial Office's [Introduction to Tribunals](#) to see which roles you could be eligible for

