

EXAMPLE TEMPLATE

Independent Assessment Form

Assessor:

Assessor Position:

Purpose of independent assessments

Independent assessments are intended to provide direct evidence of the candidate's suitability for the post for which they are applying and to corroborate the information supplied by the candidate.

Independent assessments are treated as evidence and given equal weight to every other source of evidence the JAC uses to assess merit. They contribute to the overall assessment of the candidate and are considered at the sift and interview stage of the selection process.

Confidentiality

The JAC treats all independent assessments as confidential and will not disclose the submission to the candidate.

The panel may use the content of an independent assessment to probe a candidate at selection day or to provide written feedback, but this will be done in a way that does not attribute the information to the assessor.

If you raise a serious allegation which the JAC considers should be investigated, the JAC will not identify you as the source without your consent.

Guidance

The JAC operates a policy of **name-blind sifting**. As a result, **please refrain from referring to the candidate by name**.

You are requested to provide specific examples of the candidate's performance against the competency areas, avoiding generalities and assertions as these do not provide evidence.

You should think about examples that are based on challenging, complex or highly sensitive situations, particularly if the candidate is applying for a salaried role.

The candidate may provide you with evidence of their work (for example, judgments) to assist you in writing a well evidenced account of their suitability against the competencies.

You may also consult others who know the candidate well – providing they are not conflicted in any way – should you need to, but they must also provide specific examples rather than generalities and assertions. If you include the contributions of others, please ensure that you attribute the comments to the contributor with reference to their name and their relationship to the candidate.

When completing this form, you may find it helpful to structure your examples using the SOAR approach:

SITUATION: briefly explain a situation the candidate was directly involved in that resulted in a distinctive outcome

OBJECTIVE: briefly describe what the candidate had to achieve

ACTION: describe the action the candidate took and how they achieved the objective. This section provides the most important evidence and should be the focus of your answer.

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RESULT: describe the outcome of the candidate's action

If you have conducted a judicial appraisal of the candidate, you may refer to it as part of your assessment but please do not send the JAC the full appraisal since it will not be provided to the panel. Rather, you should identify particular sections of the appraisal that are relevant to the competency framework and write about these under the relevant headings.

Below are two extracts from independent assessments which showcase well evidenced examples of a candidate's work that the panel can use when considering the candidate's overall grade:

The first example is from an assessor who knows the candidate's work well and gives a specific, detailed and relevant example under Exercising Judgement:

Exercising Judgement

The candidate represented the Defendant in the matter of A v B in a road traffic accident claim. Causation of the Claimant's injuries was disputed. The candidate felt that the Defendant had good prospects of challenging the injury claim but limited prospects of challenging the vehicle damage claim. The candidate presented their case calmly, clearly and concisely, despite encountering aggressive pressure at the door of the Court. After giving advice, the candidate was able to negotiate a settlement of the vehicle damage claim and the Claimant agreed to abandon the injury claim, thereby saving a significant amount in damages and costs.

The second example is of an assessor using the candidate's appraisal to demonstrate evidence for Assimilating and Clarifying Information:

Assimilating and Clarifying Information

On their appraisal day a case was moved into their list only 30 minutes before the start of the court day so although they had arrived early to ensure all their cases were pre-read, they had to assimilate and absorb a new file of papers and skeleton arguments on an unusual point of law at very short notice. During the course of argument further points were also raised by the advocates. The candidate coped extremely well with the situation and extracted the relevant points and issues from the papers and ensured the advocates addressed those issues. The candidate listened carefully to the additional arguments raised to assess relevance and once the candidate had heard enough to do so, directed the arguments to the most pertinent points.

Before writing your assessment, we recommend you read our detailed [guidance on independent assessments](#). The guidance includes further examples of helpful independent assessments and how appraisals can be used in an assessment.

Do you have any concerns about being an assessor?

Knowledge of the applicant

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How do you know the applicant?	
How long have you known the applicant?	
How recent and frequent has your contact been with the applicant and how well do you directly know their work?	
Do you know anything about the candidate that may render them unsuitable for judicial office? (If yes, please provide details)	

Competencies

Please provide evidence-based examples to demonstrate their suitability for the role

Exercising Judgement

Demonstrates integrity and applies independence of mind to make incisive, fair and sound decisions

- Applies the relevant law and procedure correctly to progress the case
- Presents decisions clearly and in a considered way
- Demonstrates independence of mind
- Ensures fairness; demonstrates integrity and acts without bias or prejudice, especially in challenging, complex situations

Possessing and Building Knowledge

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Possesses a detailed knowledge of own field of practice and an ability and willingness to learn and develop professionally

- Demonstrates a detailed knowledge of the law and procedure in own field(s) of practice
- Demonstrates an ability to acquire knowledge rapidly, especially of unfamiliar or complex subject matter
- Keeps abreast of changes in the law, new *court/tribunal* processes and procedures
- Pursues continuous learning and professional development, regularly sharing relevant information and knowledge with others when appropriate

Assimilating and Clarifying Information

Quickly assimilates information to identify essential issues, develops a clear understanding and clarifies uncertainty through eliciting and exploring information

- Effectively assimilates and processes large amounts of complex information from multiple sources
- Identifies, and ensures the focus remains on, the relevant issues
- Critically analyses information and applies appropriate weight to it in order to reach a reasoned decision

Working and Communicating with Others

(‘Others’ include judges, magistrates and those involved in the administration of justice, as well as all court users). Values diversity and shows sensitivity to the different needs of individuals, groups and communities. Demonstrates good communication skills and develops effective working relationships with all

- Establishes authority and demonstrates courtesy, gaining the confidence of others to maintain control and defuse tension
- Communicates effectively both orally and in writing in a manner that ensures understanding by others in physical or remote settings
- Listens attentively to ensure a fair opportunity to all parties to present their case whilst ensuring the efficient disposal of the proceedings

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- Shows an awareness of the importance of diversity, takes an anti-discriminatory approach and demonstrates sensitivity to the particular needs of different individuals, communities and groups

Managing Work Efficiently

Works and plans effectively to make the best use of resources available

- Manages time and prioritises tasks to ensure efficient completion of workload, both in and out of court
- Resolves problems independently but seeks advice and offers assistance to others when appropriate
- Demonstrates resilience, responding calmly and flexibly to changing circumstances and pressure
- Utilises available resources, including making full use of the latest technology, to carry out the role in the most efficient way

For salaried exercises only: Did you use the candidate's most recent appraisal when providing evidence of how the candidate manages their work?

Do you have any comments of note?

(If yes, please provide any other information in relation to the candidate's knowledge, skills and personal attributes of which you would like panel members to be aware.)