

Judicial Diversity Forum – Priorities and Actions for 2025

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Background

The Judicial Diversity Forum (JDF) will have achieved its aim when an individual's protected characteristics or social or professional background are not a significant predictor of success in the professional career towards, appointment to, or progress within the judiciary.

Professional grouping

The JDF has expanded on its aim for the 2025 Action Plan to emphasise the commitment to increasing judicial diversity by seeking the widest possible pool of talent from every part of the legal profession. While we recognise that, in general, some professional groupings may have more access to opportunities to develop relevant experience than others, we do not consider that professional grouping alone should be a determining factor. All eligible groups – barristers, solicitors and chartered legal executives – should have equal access to judicial appointments provided they have the skills and experience to fulfil the role effectively.

Protected characteristics

JDF members have agreed to include a reference to ‘protected characteristics’ with an important explanation on the consideration of age in judicial appointments to account for the requirement that candidates of equal merit must all have at least five to seven years’ professional experience prior to applying, and that there is also a mandatory judicial retirement age which precludes the eligibility of certain individuals.

In addition, it may be that in the future there is a need to broaden out the reference to protected characteristics to include other potentially important elements of diversity, such as national languages, including the Welsh language.

The JDF has a [public commitment](#) to publish an annual action plan outlining the forum’s priorities and activities for its next 12 months’ work. The plan addresses four strategic priorities that reflect the key barriers that remain to achieving its aim:

- 1. Ensure an inclusive and supportive culture in the judiciary and wider legal professions.
- 2. Address barriers to successful applications and identify and eliminate any actual barriers to appointments as operated (including in relation to professional groupings).
- 3. Eliminate structural barriers in access by different professional groups to the judiciary.
- 4. Address barriers to senior legal and senior judicial positions for women, people from ethnic minority backgrounds and disabled people (and other groups as agreed).

The plan uses the Theory of Change model to articulate the change the JDF wants to achieve and how we will achieve it, drawing together the activities of JDF partners. Activities and priorities may be subject to change during 2025 in recognition of the need to respond to emerging diversity issues; the needs of members, candidates, and judges; and wider contextual matters.

While JDF members work in collaboration and support each other’s activities and initiatives; the professions, Judicial Appointments Commission and Judiciary also have distinct areas of focus and activity in recognition of the different roles each play in candidates’ journey to judicial appointment.

Understanding the Theory of Change model

Impact statement	What is the big long-term change you want to see?
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Activities (the things we do)	Timings	Outcome (what changes)	Outcome indicators (what you measure)	Evaluation (your impact)
Who is/ are your target group(s)? What activities (e.g., initiatives) do you deliver for, with or to them?	When will the activity start and end? What at the key milestones? When will you evaluate it?	What are the most important outcomes you want to see for your target group? These are the key changes you want to make e.g., for people, groups, organisations, society. These statements should not be about you or your services.	What are specific, measurable pieces of information that you can collect to keep track of the difference that your work is making?	What data have you collected and what does it tell you about the impact of your work?

Overview of priorities, activities, and activity leads

	Impact	Activity	Activity Lead
Priority Area 1 Ensure an inclusive and supportive culture in the judiciary and wider legal professions	Support provided to effectively foster an inclusive culture, including guidance and training.	E&D Training for the Bar; Guidance/Policy Support for the Bar; implementation of Harman Review recommendations Supporting leadership judges to promote inclusive working environments, Judicial Diversity and Inclusion Strategy with oversight from Judicial Diversity Committee D&I Framework; Developing guidance for member firms and organisations; Member profiles and role models Consultation on draft policy to encourage a diverse legal profession; Convening the sector at the 2025 Reshaping Legal Services conference to promote effective action, impact and accountability in advancing equality and encouraging diversity	Bar Council Judicial Office Law Society Legal Services Board
	Provide ways to report barriers to getting in and getting on in the workplace and promote best practice.	Telephone helpline and other reporting at the Bar (inc. Talk to Spot); Assistance to Bar stakeholders promoting EDI at the Bar Tribunals Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce Judicial Attitudes Survey and Judicial Wellbeing Survey D&I Forums; Networks for disabled solicitors, women, LGBTQ+ and minority ethnic solicitors; Public policy engagement	Bar Council Judicial Office Judicial Office Law Society
	Target programmes to address the remaining barriers to inclusion, focusing on access to the professions and development.	Outreach including Pupillage Fair, 10K Black Interns and other access (work experience) programmes Scholarship and Bursary Programme A Judicial Reverse Mentoring Scheme; Training for new leadership judges; Supporting existing leadership judges Diversity Access Scheme (DAS); disabled and minority ethnic student support webpages; aspiring solicitors pilot programme	Bar Council CILEX Judicial Office Law Society
Priority Area 2 Address barriers to successful applications and identify and eliminate any actual barriers to appointments as operated (including in relation to professional groupings)	Encourage candidates from currently underrepresented groups to apply to roles and provide support to develop their skills and experience.	Communication with members; CILEX Judicial Academy Targeted Outreach Programme candidate resources; Candidate resources; Outreach; Selection process activity Judicial Work Shadowing Scheme; Judicial Mentoring Scheme Targeted Outreach Programme Judge-led application seminars DAS; Judicial exercise support; Networking and support for current and aspiring solicitor judges; Becoming a Judge Scheme for Black, Asian and minority ethnic solicitors; Judicial interview workshop Pre-Application Judicial Education Programme	CILEX Judicial Appointments Commission Judicial Office Judicial Appointments Commission/ Judicial Office Judicial Office Law Society JDF (led by Ministry of Justice)
	Ensure selection processes are fair, and do not specifically deter candidates from underrepresented groups.	Selection process activity; Review of statutory consultation process; Fair selection training; Assessment panel diversity	Judicial Appointments Commission
	Use data to identify remaining barriers and track impact	Qualifying Test research and Work Programme Solicitor judges roundtable; Judicial Attitudes Survey – solicitor background analysis	Judicial Appointments Commission Law Society
Priority Area 3 Eliminate structural barriers in access by different professional groups to the judiciary	Bring in untapped talent from professional groups that have faced barriers to applying for judicial roles.	Work to remove barriers for employed lawyers considering fee-paid judicial office; Work to remove barriers for Crown servant lawyers considering a fee-paid judicial office; Work to review the barriers faced by professional groups such as legal academics and those regulated legal professions who are not currently eligible for judicial office	Ministry of Justice
	Promote opportunities to candidates from these groups and provide support to aid their success in applications	Promotion of and support for mentoring (around judicial appointments) by bar-based stakeholders for the Bar Promoting the options for judicial careers to members from non-traditional backgrounds Flexible Deployment and Assignment Framework; One Judiciary D&I Framework; DAS; Becoming a Judge Scheme; Judicial interview workshop	Bar Council CILEX Judicial Office Law Society
	Improve our understanding of the systemic barriers disproportionately affecting particular professional groups.	Solicitor Judges Roundtable	Law Society
Priority Area 4 Address barriers to senior legal and senior judicial positions for women, people from ethnic minority backgrounds and people with disabilities	Address barriers to getting on in the workplace which make it harder for professionals to progress.	Discrete evidence-led programmes (e.g. Fair Access to Work) to promote and support equality, diversity, and inclusion at the Bar; Research for the Bar Diversity and Inclusion Framework; Developing guidance for member firms and organisations Diversity of the Judiciary statistics	Bar Council Law Society Ministry of Justice
	Raise the profile of judicial career paths among potential applicants, with visible role models in senior positions, and	Promoting the options for judicial careers to members from non-traditional backgrounds Member profiles and role models	CILEX Law Society

(and other groups as agreed)	provide resources to improve applicants' chances of success		
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Priority Area 1

Impact statement	Ensure an inclusive and supportive culture in the judiciary and wider legal professions.
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Support provided to effectively foster an inclusive culture, including guidance and training.

	Activities	Timings	Outcome	Outcome indicators	Evaluation
1.1	<p>Law Society: Diversity and Inclusion Framework</p> <p>The D&I Framework helps law firms create their own action plans to improve diversity and inclusion. This framework sets out three steps firms should take to develop and deliver a strategic approach and action plan, and also consider how to monitor and identify any areas for ongoing improvement:</p> <p>Establish Purpose – why you need to act. Develop a Plan – what actions you will take. Ensure Performance – how you will ensure actions are delivered and lead to change. The Framework includes a toolkit firms can use to assist in creating their action plan.</p> <p>The framework continues to overarch all D&I work. Office holders and all Law Society staff push the framework at events and other external engagements. The Law Society is refining its messaging to target parts of the profession, such as what partners should be asking within their firms, breaking down and focusing on particular parts of the profession, considering providing more precedent documentation, as well as publishing more impact stories.</p> <p>In 2025, one impact story was published.</p>	September 2022 onwards	<p><i>Short-term:</i> Members embed D&I in line with the Law Society framework.</p> <p><i>Long-term:</i> A solicitor profession that is diverse and inclusive and is delivering high quality legal services to people from all backgrounds and advancing the rule of law because of its diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>The remaining barriers to entry linked to socio-economic disadvantage, disability or ethnicity are reduced.</p> <p>The retention, progression and pay gaps that currently exist for those in marginalised groups, particularly in the largest law firms, have closed.</p>	<p>Member use of framework.</p> <p>Feedback on usefulness of the framework.</p> <p>Adoption of framework by members & member businesses.</p> <p>Levels of awareness of framework by members (e.g., through networks).</p> <p>Case studies of adoption of the toolkit – impact stories.</p>	<p>The Framework was launched on 28 September 2022. Data, feedback, and case studies to be evaluated over the next three years. Webpage views and engagement statistics are reviewed to inform length and content of future impact stories and future content for the framework.</p> <p>The framework and impact stories have been featured in the Law Society's D&I Update a and in the Law Society's Professional Update, which is sent to the membership.</p> <p>Feedback from over 25 organisations has been that while many know of the framework, respondents do not always appreciate that it contains strategic learning relevant for all sizes and kinds of firms. Members who have used the framework are positive, with many welcoming the focus on a strategic and impact driven approach.</p>
1.2	<p>Bar Council: Equality & Diversity Training for the Bar</p> <p>E&D Training, as well as wider education on Equality Diversity & Inclusion (EDI), across the Bar.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Barristers are informed about their ethical duties with respect to EDI in the Bar Standards Board (BSB) Handbook; barristers and their staff understand the importance of EDI and how EDI issues manifest at the Bar – Barristers are less likely to discriminate.</p> <p>Training is available via Chambers or Bar Council (Open Courses). All barristers and pupils, and chambers staff are able to access training (training is paid for by barristers/chambers).</p>	<p>Feedback is sought on training from participants (improved understanding/ awareness/ intention to take action).</p>	<p>We have a record of all training delivered and monitor feedback.</p>
1.3	<p>Bar Council: Guidance/ Policy Support for the Bar</p> <p>On compliance with the BSB's E&D Rules and good practice, including e.g., target setting and EDI programme development.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Chambers' EDI policies and practices exceed minimum standards required by the BSB;</p>	<p>Downloads (guides are available online) and anecdotal feedback; adaption of template</p>	<p>Feedback on guides is collected.</p>

			chambers are informed about good practice.	polices into Chambers policies.	
1.4	Judicial Office: Supporting leadership judges to promote inclusive working environments Leadership judges have been supported in their efforts to promote a more respectful and inclusive working environment within courts and tribunals. Among other things, written guidance and online resources have been developed to help them in meeting their greater diversity and inclusion responsibilities. This has included guidance on recognising and addressing micro aggressions, building cultural awareness, and taking inclusive actions. The online resources also include case studies and suggested actions for leadership judges to consider.	Ongoing	Leadership judges who can promote a more respectful and inclusive working environment within courts and tribunals.	Intranet analytics. Responses to relevant questions in the Judicial Attitudes Survey.	The 2024 Judicial Attitudes Survey includes additional questions about how judges feel about diversity and inclusion, including the different activities sponsored in this area (since the 2022 survey). There are also new questions on leadership generally. It is anticipated that the survey results will be available in early 2025. Proposed for 2025 Evaluation of the Judicial Attitudes Survey to inform activity and the development of the Judicial Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2026-2030.
1.5	Judicial Office: Judicial Diversity and Inclusion Strategy A five year strategy sets out the ambition, aim and objectives for the judiciary over a five year period. Supported by a Judicial Diversity Committee made up of judges from across the courts and tribunals.	2020-2025 strategy Annual updates	A structure and public commitments to progress diversity and inclusion within the judiciary.	Annual updates and end of strategy evaluations	The 2024 annual update reporting progress on previous commitment was published in January 2025. Proposed for 2025 An evaluation as the first Judicial D&I Strategy draws to a close at the year end. Development of the next five year strategy.
1.6	Law Society: Developing guidance for member firms and organisations Materials to guide member firms and organisations. In 2025, refreshed and additional guidance was published on: Disability inclusion in law firms and legal teams race and ethnicity language Disability and neurodivergence in the solicitor profession, including guidance for disabled solicitors asked to speak at events Inclusive greetings including the use of ‘Dear Sir’ Articles were also produced on menopause, mental health, and other topics. Produce case studies on solicitor judges who can talk to their experiences and be role models, including examples of non-litigator solicitors becoming judges. Ongoing flexible working top tips / case studies. Raise awareness with large legal employers re availability of judicial path for their fee earners / “retirement planning” packs produced by large firms for their partners.	Ongoing	Set clear expectations for member firms and organisations and provide guidance on good practice. Raise awareness of judicial path targeted at large legal employers.	Web analytics. Feedback from members.	Impact of and engagement with guidance is measured through member feedback and web analytics.
1.7	Law Society: Member profiles and role models Member profiles and stories were shared throughout the year to spotlight achievements, inspire, and to mark key awareness dates including;	Ongoing	Candidates from a wide range of backgrounds see that there are non-traditional routes to the judiciary and progressing in	Web and social media analytics	Web and social analytics data is collected and analysed to target messaging and audiences.

	<p>the story of MaameYaa Kwafo-Akoto, partner at A&O Shearman and the story of Manuel Delgado the first known Black solicitor to qualify in England and Wales as part of Black History Month</p> <p>Kayleigh's story, Michael's story and Zareen's story for Pride month 2025</p> <p>Articles in the Law Society gazette for South Asian Heritage Month</p> <p>The profile of Amandeep Khasriya for International Women's Day</p>		their career through role modelling and story-sharing.		
1.8	<p>Legal Services Board: Consultation on draft policy to encourage a diverse legal profession</p> <p>The LSB aims to consult on draft policy proposals to advance equality and encourage diversity in the legal profession through effective regulation</p>	November 2025 – March 2026	<p>A clear framework of expectations for regulators of legal services is developed to meet statutory objectives to encourage diversity in the legal profession for the public good.</p> <p>The LSB proposes an ambitious framework that reflects the available regulatory levers to achieve desired outcomes and to drive cultural change in the profession.</p>	Feedback from the consultation will tell us whether our proposed approach is fit for purpose and likely to effectively create change.	Longer-term robust evaluation plans will be developed alongside the consultation, with input from the consultation supporting these plans. Our review of success measures will be carried out through, for example, the LSB's Regulatory Performance Assessment exercise, as well as other relevant and appropriate channels.

Provide ways to report barriers to getting in and getting on in the workplace and promote best practice.

	Activities	Timings	Outcome	Outcome indicators	Evaluation
1.10	<p>Bar Council: Telephone helpline and online reporting for the Bar</p> <p>A telephone helpline (for barristers and pupils facing unequal treatment and chambers/others looking to manage issues/develop good E&D practices) and AI/online reporting for incidents of discrimination, harassment, and bullying</p>	Ongoing	<p>Barristers & Pupils feel supported and have access to advice and guidance on EDI issues if they face an issue (reach – 17k barristers and 500 pupils pa).</p> <p>Chambers have access to advice and guidance in order to improve EDI practice (all chambers/those with a management role in chambers).</p>	We do not record calls or incidents on the helplines (confidential service) and therefore cannot track outcomes.	We do not record calls or incidents on the helplines (confidential service).
1.11	<p>Bar Council: Assistance to Bar stakeholders promoting EDI at the Bar</p> <p>E.g., FreeBar, Black Barristers Network</p>	Ongoing	Bar-based Networks and their members and all stakeholders feel supported and are effective in promoting EDI at the Bar.	Feedback from Networks/Stakeholders and their members.	Feedback collected
1.12	<p>Judicial Office: Senior President of Tribunals' Diversity Taskforce</p> <p>The Senior President of Tribunals has formed a Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce to implement the Judicial D&I Strategy in the tribunals by providing additional support to leadership judges in a</p>	Ongoing	Provision of intranet content for tribunals leadership judges to share good practice in supporting an inclusive	Anecdotal evidence from tribunals leadership judges and tribunals judges.	Progress was made across a range of projects including input to the Salaried Part Time Working Policy launched during 2025.

	variety of ways, including providing practical initiatives to advance the D&I objectives, and information and resources to support them.		<p>environment, leading to wider dissemination of good practice.</p> <p>An audit of diversity and inclusion initiatives in the tribunals further enables sharing of good practice across the tribunals.</p> <p>Increased awareness amongst tribunal judges of other career opportunities available to them.</p> <p>Launch of a Career Development and Progression Scheme for tribunal judges following an initial pilot.</p> <p>Awareness and understanding of the tribunals are increased both within the judiciary and with external stakeholders.</p>	<p>Sharing of best practice with the Judicial Diversity Committee of the Judges' Council.</p> <p>Responses to relevant questions in the Judicial Attitude Survey.</p>	The Career Development and Progression Scheme for tribunal judges has now run for three years and this year has been expanded to include court judges.
1.13	<p>Judicial Office: Judicial Attitude Survey</p> <p>Includes collection of data on inclusive culture and wellbeing</p>	Ongoing	Judges have a forum by which to express their experiences of inclusive culture and wellbeing.	Incremental improvement in positive response rates to questions relating to inclusive culture.	<p>Additional questions on leadership, inclusion and wellbeing were included in the 2024 survey to provide data to allow for better evaluation.</p> <p>Additional diversity monitoring categories were included, providing an opportunity to assess whether responses are consistent across different diverse identities.</p> <p>The results of the survey have been published, and work is underway to progress a range of activities aimed at addressing responses in relation to bullying, harassment, discrimination and exclusionary behaviour.</p>
1.14	<p>Law Society: D&I Forums</p> <p>D&I forums targeted at D&I practitioners and leads in large law firms and in-house legal departments.</p>	Ongoing; quarterly	D&I practitioners can share best practice to improve performance in their own organisations.	<p>No. of participants.</p> <p>Feedback.</p> <p>Monitor RSVPs and engagement on ongoing basis.</p>	<p>Forums provided useful feedback which will inform future initiatives. Feedback is shared with wider D&I team and wider Law Society – attendees are also asked for feedback on areas that they would like further support, and this informs future forum topics.</p> <p>In 2025, we convened our large firm and in-house communities through a series of roundtables to discuss challenges and share best practice on topics such as technology and EDI, senior leadership accountability and governance of EDI initiatives and mental health and wellbeing. Approximately 20-30 people attended each of the forums.</p>
1.15	<p>Law Society: Networks for disabled solicitors, women, LGBTQ+ and minority ethnic solicitors.</p> <p>These are made up of people identifying with a particular characteristic and those supporting greater inclusion.</p>	Ongoing	Raise awareness, increase visibility, and build a sense of belonging in the profession for solicitors from diverse backgrounds, as well as supporting individuals with informal mentoring and help.	<p>Social media engagement.</p> <p>Use of content and tools.</p> <p>Web analytics.</p> <p>Member survey awareness results.</p>	<p>Women Solicitors Network: LinkedIn group increased to 4,227 members.</p> <p>LGBTQ+: LinkedIn group: increased from 3,089 members to 4,806 members.</p> <p>Ethnic Solicitors Network (ESN): LinkedIn group has increased from 3,280 members to 4,790 members</p>

			Create and communicate content on a range of issues.		Disabled Solicitors Network (DSN): LinkedIn group increased from 673 members to 860 to 1,002 members.
1.16	Law Society: Public policy engagement Use our external influence and representative voice to advocate for policy change to advance diversity in the profession, and by doing so, within legal services and the rule of law.	Ongoing	Engage with the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) / LSB on: Differential outcomes. Disproportionate impact of regulatory action. Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) (in relation to D&I). Wider engagement (disability)	Examples of input leading to change or development in policy. Members view of our work in Judicial Diversity – member feedback & awareness levels.	Differential outcomes by ethnicity The Law Society has engaged with and influenced the SRA research into differences in legal qualification outcomes by ethnicity conducted by the University of Exeter and published in June 2024 by: The voices and experiences of minority ethnic solicitors through our ESN contributed to the research through the reference group. Attended the summit in October 2024 to discuss the findings from the report and actions that can be taken to address differential outcomes and continue to attend forums convened by the SRA. Reviewed the recommendations from the report and the SRA's programme of work to see how the Law Society's existing and upcoming workstreams can support the aims of this work Launched a student webpage to support minority ethnic students interested in a career in law. The Law Society will continue to engage with and ensure the action plan and subsequent SRA work to assess the impact of the SQE considers whether there are any disproportionate impacts on students from underrepresented groups. Disproportionate regulatory action against minority ethnic solicitors The research has been published by the SRA and the Law Society will engage to discuss the findings and influence the development of an action plan ensuring the voices and experiences of our communities including the ESN continue to feed in. SQE in relation to D&I Feedback received from candidates on challenges with the process for requesting and the provision of reasonable adjustments is shared with the SRA. This year the SRA updated the reasonable adjustments procedure to make it simpler and more streamlined. The Law Society will continue to seek and share themes and concerns from feedback from candidates to strengthen the support given by Kaplan/SRA to disabled students undertaking the SQE. Continuing to engage with the SRA to seek data published by SRA on SQE pass rates by provider and type of course/self-study to support both candidates choosing courses but also help target interventions, particularly to support candidates from low socio-economic backgrounds.

Target programmes to address the remaining barriers to inclusion, focusing on access to the professions and development.

	Activities	Timings	Outcome	Outcome indicators	Evaluation
1.17	CILEX: Scholarship and bursary funding	May –August 2024	Awarding of Scholarships to study the CILEX Professional Qualification (CPQ) and within that Millicent Grant Scholars	Numbers and type of awards made.	Demography and numbers of successful candidates. Tracking progress in supported programmes.

	CILEX aims to facilitate greater participation in legal careers by way of its Scholarship and Bursary Programme funding for its education courses run through the CILEX Foundation.		from particularly under-represented groups. Awarding of Bursaries to support the study of discrete parts of the CPQ.		
1.18	Judicial Office: A Judicial Reverse Mentoring Scheme to match judges with legal professionals from diverse backgrounds.	2025 cohort to run March to December 2025	To foster greater understanding among the judiciary of the experience of individual lawyers from under-represented groups, and of the barriers faced by under-represented groups in accessing a career in law and in the judiciary.	Positive feedback from both mentees and mentors. Evidence majority positive outcomes and improvement over time as appropriate.	The fourth successful cohort of the Judicial Reverse Mentoring Scheme ran throughout 2025 with 35 mentoring pairs. This provided judicial office holders with insights into the experiences of legal professionals from backgrounds currently underrepresented within the judiciary.
1.19	Judicial Office: Training for new leadership judges Includes guidance on role in achieving the aims of the Judicial D&I Strategy. Appointment of leadership experts to conduct a training need analysis, evaluate impact of current leadership training and make evidence-based recommendations for future leadership training programmes.	training year 2023-24 Ongoing	Leadership judges who can promote a more respectful and inclusive working environment within courts and tribunals.	Post-training feedback from delegates to identify usefulness and quality of training.	A training needs analysis was completed, and insights are being used to inform the future development of the College's leadership training provision from 2026. The College continued to deliver the Essential Leadership programme to newly appointed leadership judges, which provides an introduction to the fundamentals of effective leadership in the judicial context including the importance of creating an inclusive workplace.
1.20	Judicial Office: Supporting existing leadership judges In promoting a more respectful and inclusive working environment within courts and tribunals. Includes online resources to support in meeting their diversity and inclusion responsibilities which includes guidance on recognising and addressing micro aggressions, building cultural awareness, and taking inclusive actions.	Ongoing	Leadership judges who can promote a more respectful and inclusive working environment within courts and tribunals.	Increase in intranet analytic year on year. Incremental improvement in statistics for relevant Judicial AttitudeSurvey questions.	The College designed a new programme for existing senior judicial leaders, based on a training needs analysis. It was piloted between January and June 2025 for c.20 senior judges. The pilot encompassed two workshops, virtual masterclasses. peer learning groups, coaching and pre- and post-course activities. Diversity and inclusion were woven through the course design. Evaluation of the pilot has been completed and in December 2025 the senior judiciary agreed next steps for progressing the Judicial College's training offer for leadership judges, which will be taken forward in 2026/27.
1.21	Law Society: Diversity Access Scheme (DAS) Provides scholarships, mentoring and work experience to diverse aspiring solicitors who face financial and other significant challenges in the pursuit of their legal education and career.	Ongoing	Increase in number and proportion of people from financially disadvantaged backgrounds undertaking legal education or pursuing a career in law.	We keep track of how many awardees secure training contracts. DAS alumni sit on the interview panel and on the mentoring programme.	In 20 years since its launch in 2004, the Diversity Access Scheme (DAS) has provided 4,000 hours of mentoring and spent £3.5 million supporting 300 talented trainees who face exceptional social, educational, financial, or personal obstacles to qualifying as a solicitor to pursue their career ambitions. DAS alumni are in every part of the profession, from the City to legal aid centres, from high street firms to in-house teams at banks. Of the past four cohorts, all the 2020 awardees have secured or have completed training contracts; 70% of the 2021 cohort have secured training contracts; 4 of the 2022 cohort are amassing qualifying work

					<p>experience whilst 11 candidates have completed their LPC or SQE and one is still studying; and six of the 2023 cohort have completed their studies while the remaining seven are studying part time.</p> <p>15 awards were made in 2025.</p> <p>The interview panel consists of four qualified DAS alumni solicitors.</p> <p>In addition, the Law Society secured funding from the SRA 'SQE Access Fund' to support 31 DAS awardees and 6 additional candidates who got to the interview stage of the DAS selection process but did not secure an award. We estimate that the funding will cover between 30 – 40 SQE assessments for the 37 candidates, with variation arising from postponed assessments and potential required resits.</p>
1.22	<p>Law Society: Aspiring solicitors project</p> <p>Insights collected by The Law Society from universities, students and firms highlighted the lack of consistent information about entering the profession and the difficulties young people have in transitioning from education to the workplace.</p> <p>A pilot programme has been developed. A group of universities have been invited to take part in the pilot to test new content and activity and help The Law Society measure engagement / interest in such a programme. The selection criteria were based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographical spread to cover regional and economic variances. • Weighting towards non-Russell Group universities. • Clearly stated Diversity and Inclusion objectives • Contribution to the initial insight gathering exercise and early expression of interest. • Validation from senior university faculty staff to encourage engagement with students and support for the project. • Strong Local Law Society and / or Junior Lawyer Division groups. • Existing Law Society connections. 	Ongoing		<p>The aspiring solicitor project is framed around the following objectives:</p> <p>Share good practice and support students' transition into the world of work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase engagement with The Law Society and improve understanding of its work. • Provide consistent and engaging information about pathways into the legal profession. • Inspire students and contextualise learning. 	<p>Activities in 2024 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of new student web hub to bring together information and practical guidance to help students understand the law profession, pathways to becoming a solicitor and ideas and guidance to help them on the way. The site includes checklists, guidance notes and case studies of people who've made the leap to successfully qualifying as a solicitor. Content will be shared with the university pilot group and further ideas considered based on user insights. • Virtual event programme: online events focused on helping undergraduates understand the skills and behaviours that are needed to become a successful solicitor. Feedback from attendees has been 'excellent'. • University e-mail circular – shared with universities in pilot group. <p>Feedback from pilot universities and students will be gathered along with web analytics to inform potential for scaling activity to a wider audience.</p>

Priority Area 2

Impact statement	Address barriers to successful applications and identify and eliminate any actual barriers to appointments as operated (including in relation to professional groupings).
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Encourage candidates from currently underrepresented groups to apply to roles and provide support to develop their skills and experience.

	Activities	Timings	Outcome	Outcome indicators	Evaluation
2.1	<p>CILEX: Communications with members</p> <p>In order to overcome any negative perceptions about applying for the judiciary, CILEX is continuing to push via its communications with members the possibility of applying for judicial office and the</p>	Ongoing	Email reminders of selection exercises members are eligible for and reminding them of the support available to them via PAJE, CILEX	Changing attitudes and intentions of members in feedback to CILEX.	There is evidence that this is working, 85% of CILEX members believed that it was possible for them to become a judge.

	support that can be provided to those wishing to pursue this option.		Judicial Academy and Judicial Development Programme (though latter under review, so reference to that reduced at present).		
2.2	CILEX Judicial Academy CILEX is developing a Judicial Academy for launch in 2024 to provide a longer pipeline of CILEX members ready with the judicial skillset.	Initial pilot starting in January 2025 with a cohort of 30 participants.	Work continues to develop content & structure for the academy programme with a view to providing confidence building, personal advocacy skills, access to networks, mentoring and a career development plan for legal professionals considering judicial appointment within a 3–5-year timescale.	Applications and development will be monitored by the academy.	The pilot cohort of 30 is starting in January 2025. The Course is expected to last between 18 and 24 months. Feedback and evaluation will be gathered at intervals.
2.3	CILEX: Liaising with Judicial Office for seminars specifically aimed at CILEX members	Ongoing	To organise seminars with the Judicial Office to encourage CILEX members to apply for the Judiciary. Using a mixture of Judges who are CILEX Judges, fully aware of the CILEX route, to address issues specific to CILEX members, using inclusive language, and ensuring CILEX members genuinely consider judicial appointment to be an option, and giving them tools to navigate the application process and ability to work in the judiciary.	Sign-ups for seminars; feedback from seminars, understanding whether they have made CILEX members more or less likely to consider applying for judicial appointment	Feedback. Consider live feedback in seminar or feedback after the event.
2.4	Judicial Appointments Commission/ Judicial Office: Targeted Outreach Programme Established in September 2020, as a pilot, to focus on the progression and recommendation of four key target groups (women, ethnic minority people, disabled people, and solicitor candidates) across five, senior salaried court and tribunal roles (High Court, Deputy High Court Judge, Recorder, Circuit Judge and Upper Tribunals) and their main fee-paid pipelines. The team, separate from assessments and decisions, engages with candidates from these under-represented groups. Support includes consultations with a former JAC Commissioner, further discussions with a judicial guide, who is familiar with the JAC selection exercise process, as well as signposting to supporting schemes from JDF partners. The programme was made permanent in April 2023 and expanded to include all legal exercises, with streamlined ways of working to support a wider pool of candidates.	Ongoing Review the Targeted Outreach Programme after two years following its re-launch and expansion.	Increase the number of candidates from target groups being successfully recommended for judicial appointment, as well as the progression of candidates in like-for-like selection exercises.	A candidate's progress is tracked by the Targeted Outreach team, monitoring the progression, recommendation, and satisfaction rates throughout their journey on the programme. The data includes: The total number of candidates on the programme and how long they have been supported for, including where candidates have received support from a judicial guide.	As of December 2025, the programme has received over 1,190 applications, of which, following sifts by former JAC Commissioners, 666 candidates are taking part in the programme and receiving support from a former Commissioner and/or a judicial guide. Of accepted candidates, 71% are women, 60% are ethnic minority, 19% declared a disability, and 67% are solicitors. Monitoring and evaluation remain central to the Targeted Outreach Programme. Analysis shows that female ethnic minority solicitors on the programme have been appointed at rates over approximately two and a half times higher than comparable candidates over the last three years, and Black candidates have been shortlisted at around twice the rate of all Black applicants to legal exercises. As of December 2025, 57% of participants who have been on the Programme for at least 12 months and made at least one application

	<p>The programme is currently supported by 8 former Commissioners, from the JAC Commission Board.</p> <p>The Judicial Guide scheme, which launched in January 2021 continues to provide additional support to candidates.</p> <p>To date, over 355 candidates have received support from a member of the judiciary, and 153 Judicial Guides have been trained and accredited through the scheme.</p> <p>The JAC has enhanced the programme delivery throughout 2025 through the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of the 2024 to 2025 Enhanced Support Pilot, which tested new support mechanisms. • Expansion of former Commissioner support to the programme. • Continued enhancement of data sets, analysis and evaluation tools. • Increasing the level of senior judicial stakeholder engagement, to increase the number of stakeholder referrals to the Programme • Delivery of interactive training sessions for all Judicial Guides, utilising peer expertise to inform consistent and high-quality support to candidates. • Development and launch of stage-by-stage resources for targeted outreach programme candidates, from November 2025. • Collaboration with specific jurisdictions to develop bespoke insight resources targeted at underrepresented candidates. 			<p>The shortlisting and appointment rate of Targeted Outreach candidates before and after joining the programme, to assess the impact of the support provided.</p> <p>Comparing the success rates of candidates on the programme with the wider pool of judicial applicants of similar characteristics.</p> <p>We also qualitatively measure candidate experience of the programme.</p>	<p>have reached a selection day or been recommended for appointment, and 33% have been successfully recommended to a judicial role.</p> <p>The Targeted Outreach programme supports candidates applying to legal selection exercises, therefore candidates taking part in the programme are required to have a legal qualification. Candidates often apply to a range of selection exercises to develop their skills throughout a judicial career. Some of the candidates taking part in the programme have also applied to and been successful in non-legal selection exercises.</p>
2.5	<p>Judicial Appointments Commission: Candidate resources</p> <p>We continue to broaden the range of free resources available on our website to help candidates from all backgrounds prepare for application and apply when they are ready. This includes the publication of enhanced guidance for candidates on JAC online tests and practice scenario test questions.</p> <p>As part of the JAC's 2024-27 Business Strategy, we have developed and launched a new website, aimed at improving functionality, accessibility, and the overall user experience for prospective candidates. This fulfils a key commitment to deliver clearer, more accessible communications.</p> <p>We are also working with JDF partners to develop a centralised online "hub" to help candidates access support across all JDF partner initiatives.</p>	Ongoing	<p>A diverse range of candidates engage with the resources and feel better informed and well prepared to make an application to a JAC selection exercise.</p> <p>Candidates from a wide range of backgrounds feel assured that there are non-traditional routes to the judiciary and are inspired to apply for JAC selection exercises.</p>	<p>Quantitatively measure the level of engagement with candidate resources through indicators from website statistics.</p> <p>Qualitatively measure the impact of the resources on candidates, for example through candidate feedback from outreach events.</p>	<p>A direct impact is difficult to ascertain. However, statistics from our website are useful in indicating the reach of, and the level of engagement with, JAC candidate resources.</p> <p>In 2025, our 'Prepare before you apply' page of candidate resources has been viewed 11,447 times. In the same timeframe, the 'Hear from successful candidates' webpage has been viewed 1,633 times, and our QT preparation resources have been utilised 8,900 times.</p>
2.6	<p>Judicial Appointments Commission: Outreach and engagement activities</p> <p>We continue to deliver our extensive programme of outreach activities to ensure that candidates from a wide range of backgrounds are able to engage with current and future selection processes. This activity includes providing support for outreach</p>	Ongoing	<p>Encourage individuals from underrepresented backgrounds to consider applying for judicial roles and are adequately prepared to make an application.</p>	<p>We track the number of outreach events attended by JAC staff and Commissioners, and the number of prospective candidates attending these events.</p>	<p>In the 2025 calendar year, the JAC spoke at 40 stakeholder events with a focus on outreach targeted at encouraging individuals from underrepresented backgrounds to consider applying to judicial roles. Prospective candidates are provided with information about the JAC selection process, preparation guidance and signposting to further support programmes. These events are well-attended, with a Judicial Office-run outreach seminar for the Employment Tribunal Non-Legal</p>

	<p>events on specific JAC exercise vacancies as well as targeted outreach events to promote judicial careers more broadly to groups underrepresented in the judiciary, for example solicitors and ethnic minority people.</p> <p>We also run outreach events specifically tailored to groups such as Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)/Government Legal Department (GLD) lawyers and legal academics, which highlight possible pathways to the judiciary and explain any specific eligibility restrictions.</p> <p>We continue to support the delivery and development of the Pre-Application Judicial Education (PAJE) Programme. The JAC presents at workshop 4 of each series, providing the participants with information on the JAC process and the competency framework.</p> <p>As part of the JAC's 2024 – 2027 Business Strategy we have committed to reviewing our approach to ensure we are attracting the widest possible fields of suitably qualified candidates. We are placing a particular focus on broadening our reach to new candidate pools of Black lawyers, those from underrepresented professional backgrounds – including chartered legal executives – and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.</p> <p>We have reviewed our communications and outreach approaches, with the implementation of a new Communications and Engagement Strategy with a focus on tailoring our outreach activities enhancing the support offered to candidates.</p> <p>We are also working to better understand the priorities of stakeholder groups, allowing for a more collaborative approach to addressing issues surrounding judicial diversity. This includes a project focused on underrepresentation of Black lawyers in the judiciary. In support of this work, we hosted a roundtable with Black legal professionals in December 2025 to discuss their experiences of the legal professions, the appointments process and the judiciary.</p>			<p>For key exercises, we track the percentage of candidates applying who have attended an outreach event in advance.</p> <p>We also measure qualitative data in the form of candidate feedback from outreach events.</p> <p>Ensure our outreach is tailored and targeted where it is most needed, is reaching broad audiences, is combating myths, and is focusing on explaining the fairness and transparency of our processes.</p>	<p>Member exercise attracting over 800 attendees. Of those who applied for the exercise, 29% declared that they had attended an outreach event.</p> <p>In November 2025, the JAC hosted its first candidate seminar, attended by over 400 prospective applicants, providing guidance on the selection process and the Judicial Skills and Abilities Framework.</p> <p>We continue to contribute to a range of outreach events, including smaller bespoke sessions, for example, we supported a seminar with the Law Centre, and attended a webinar with the Western Circuit Women's Forum.</p> <p>We continue to receive positive feedback from attendees at outreach events and are combining in-person and remote outreach events in response to candidate and stakeholder feedback and adapting our content to meet the needs of applicants.</p>
2.7	<p>Judicial Appointments Commission: Explore the potential barriers facing neurodivergent candidates.</p> <p>Explore with candidates, judges, and experts the potential barriers facing neurodivergent candidates within our processes. Commission research to better understand the requirements of neurodivergent individuals and ensure our processes are inclusive, accessible, and fair.</p>		<p>The JAC processes are inclusive, accessible, and fair to neurodivergent candidates.</p>	<p>The JAC processes reflect best practice in recruitment and appointment for neurodivergent candidates.</p> <p>Qualitative feedback shows neurodivergent candidates have received the appropriate support to allow them to fairly participate in our processes.</p> <p>The JAC monitors and regularly implements lessons learnt to further improve</p>	<p>The JAC published the findings of the review, and several recommendations have already been implemented.</p> <p>The research highlighted several examples of good practice already embedded in JAC processes, including our candidate-led approach when discussing reasonable adjustments and our commitment to avoiding a 'one size fits all' model.</p> <p>A review of the reasonable adjustment policy will take place in 2026.</p>

				support and guidance for neurodivergent candidates.	
2.8	Judicial Office: Judicial Work Shadowing Scheme. The Judicial Work Shadowing Scheme gives eligible legal practitioners who are considering a career in judicial office an opportunity to talk to or shadow a judge. The interaction can cover any aspect of a judge's work, both in and out of court and allows participants an insight into a judicial role.	Ongoing	Improved understanding among potential applicants of the work of a judge. Increase in diversity of legal professions applying for and securing their first judicial appointment and mirroring that success back at other lawyers and those wishing to pursue a legal career.	Continuing feedback from those who have been on the scheme. Data from JAC applications indicating previous participation in the scheme.	Since January 2025 there have been approximately 400 applications to the scheme. Over 9% of participants identified as Black.
2.9	Judicial Office: Judicial Mentoring Scheme. The Judicial Mentoring Scheme offers lawyers from under-represented groups the chance to be mentored by a judge. The mentoring provides a safe environment to discuss issues inhibiting application to judicial office, establish what skills and experiences are needed to support application and to identify what further development may be required prior to application.	Ongoing	Applicants from under-represented groups are better prepared for selection processes; leading to, increase in diversity of legal professions applying for and securing their first judicial appointment and mirroring that success back at other lawyers and those wishing to pursue a legal career.	Continuing feedback from those who have been on the scheme. Data on comparative success rates among those who have taken part.	The scheme relaunched in 2025 as the Judicial Outreach Mentoring Scheme offering a cohort model with additional support and networking opportunities with 70+ matched pairs. Over 11% of the 2025 cohort identified as black.
2.10	Judicial Office: Judge-led Pre-application seminars. Judge-led pre-application seminars are held throughout the year to encourage applicants and help them understand the work of the chamber/jurisdiction. They provide up to date guidance and advice on the selection process and judicial roles. The seminars are facilitated by the Judicial Office and supported by members of the judiciary, JAC staff and/or a JAC commissioner. Seminars support the Judicial Appointment Commission's recruitment programme, and each seminar is linked to an individual recruitment campaign (e.g., Recorder).	Ongoing	Increased number of well-evidenced applications per exercise. Applicants from under-represented groups are better prepared for the selection process. Increased diversity in applications for first judicial appointment and greater awareness raising of judicial opportunities amongst legal professionals especially those from under-represented	Increase in well-evidenced JAC applications. Data from JAC applications indicating previous participation in the scheme.	There has been a year-on-year increase in pre-application seminars as the profile of the Attraction and Outreach Team has been gaining visibility with the jurisdictions and Chambers. There were 15 pre-application seminars in 2023, 19 in 2024 and 22 in 2025. The overall reach (those registered) is approximately 11.5k. With around 68% of those joining the online sessions. During 2025, approx. 31% of attendees identified as an ethnic minority, 4% identified as disabled, 52% as non-barristers, 70% as attended a UK state school. Seven bespoke seminars targeted at underrepresented legal professionals have taken place encouraging interest in the judiciary. Attendees at online events averaged 13% for black attendees and 29% at a face-to-face event.

	Additionally, seminars targeted at individual audiences (e.g., CILEX, CPS lawyers) and will feature judges relevant to the role being recruited, or from the target audience.		groups and those who have taken a less conventional path into the legal profession e.g., legal executives.		
2.11	Law Society: Diversity Access Scheme (DAS) See action 1.20				
2.12	Law Society: Judicial exercise support Providing support through online webinars and guidance to assist solicitors in preparing for judicial exercises.	Ongoing	<i>Short-term:</i> Participants feel more confident and prepared when applying for judicial roles. <i>Long-term:</i> More solicitors are appointed to the judiciary.	Number of attendees at webinars. Web analytics.	In 2023, we held a ‘career pathways’ webinar, featuring a panel consisting of Lady Rose, Justice of the Supreme Court, JAC Lay Commissioner, Jane Furniss CBE, and Judge Mulready (First Tier Tribunal Judge, Immigration and Asylum Chamber) for Law Society members to learn about the judicial selection process, the required competencies for judicial roles and required preparation. The webinar attracted 378 registrations with 222 attendees on the day. There were 33 responses to the feedback questionnaire. Average (mean) scores out of 5 were: online classroom 4.6. content 4.8. speakers 4.9. pacing of event 4.7. navigating Law Society Learning 4.3. booking process 4.5. Thirty-two out of 33 said they would recommend the event to a friend/colleague, 31 out of 33 said they would use the content of the event to assist in judicial application
2.13	Law Society: Solicitor Judges events In 2025, the Law Society hosted two in-person regional events for members to develop skills and confidence for judicial selection exercises in Leicester and Leeds. The events were aimed at members who are aspiring solicitor judges seeking to develop skills and confidence for judicial selection exercises. The format was based on a panel discussion with current solicitor judges, followed by an audience Q&A and networking. 2026 events will be held in Liverpool (March) and Birmingham (June).	Ongoing	<i>Short-term:</i> Encourage solicitors from diverse backgrounds and with varied experience to apply for judicial posts. Long-term: Support and encourage more members to achieve judiciary positions aiming for an increased and diverse representation within the judiciary from the	Attendance and feedback from in-person events. Report summarising contributions from the roundtable	Feedback from these events will be used in order to inform future seminars and the development of digital resources.

			solicitor profession. Use insights to highlight any barriers with key policymakers and stakeholders.		
2.14	Law Society: on demand training Development of top tips for solicitors to succeed in the application process (to get you to interview stage) – paid training / on demand course. Webinar / on demand recording: Q&A with panel of solicitor judges on how they navigated the selection process x1	Ongoing	<i>Short-term</i> To support solicitors through the application process with accessible tips and guidance <i>Long-term</i> To encourage more successful solicitor applications	Numbers of attendees	Post event feedback survey
2.15	Law Society: Becoming a Judge Scheme workshops Becoming a Judge scheme for Black, Asian, and ethnic minority solicitors interested in a judicial role. This involves professional coaching as well as support from sitting judges.	Ongoing	Increase number of solicitors from minority ethnic backgrounds who become judges.	Participant satisfaction feedback survey.	Monitor delegate feedback.
2.16	Law Society: Judicial interview workshop Runs six times a year and provides advice and practice for judicial interviews.	Ongoing	<i>Short-term:</i> Participants feel more confident and prepared in advance of interviews for judicial roles. <i>Long-term:</i> More solicitors are appointed to the judiciary.	Number of participants. Participant feedback.	Each session hosts up to 8 attendees.
	Bar Council: Promotion of careers as a Judge to the Employed Bar	2026	Articles and events to promote careers as a judge for the employed Bar.	Greater awareness of opportunities for employed barristers.	Participation in events/activity and feedback.
2.17	Pre-Application Judicial Education (PAJE) programme PAJE is run jointly by members of the JDF, with course design supported by Judicial Office/Judicial College, course delivery overseen by the three professional bodies and administration shared between the professional bodies and the MoJ. The programme consists of a series of online videos and four judge led workshops based on the skills required by judges. The JAC attend workshop four to ensure candidates are briefed on the selection process. During 2024-2025, PAJE administered three courses. During 2024-25, MOJ undertook an evaluation study of the programme, to explore whether PAJE is meeting the needs of the underrepresented groups it aims to support and what could be done to better meet their needs. The findings from the review were based on 26 qualitative interviews with PAJE course delegates, facilitator judges and individuals involved in the design or delivery of PAJE.	Ongoing. PAJE plans to run three courses in 2026	PAJE's objective is to support talented lawyers from under-represented groups to feel more equipped, confident, and prepared when considering applying for a future judicial role. PAJE has also commenced monitoring the social background of participants and will develop indicators this year.	Over 90% of participants that provided feedback this year considered that the programme had fulfilled its objectives and made them better prepared to apply for the judiciary. At least 90% of PAJE participants have at least one characteristic currently under-represented in the judiciary. A growing proportion of PAJE applicants subsequently apply for judicial office. Participants progress further in the selection process	As of December 2025, for the 951 participants who completed PAJE at least a year ago, 699 (74%, up from 71% in 2023-24) have since applied for a judicial role. 25% (171 participants) of those have been recommended for appointment, up from 23% a year earlier. Of the 171 participants recommended, 78% (134) are female, 47% (81) are from an ethnic minority background, 63% (108) are solicitors and 15% (25) are disabled.

	During 2025-2026, MOJ plans to work with partners to develop the next phase of PAJE following recommendations from the review. During 2024-25, MoJ worked with JDF partners to ensure the different outreach programmes currently offered, including PAJE, are better co-ordinated, to reduce duplication and make it easier for potential participants to understand the options to develop their skills. This work will continue in 2026.			following their participation in the programme than comparable applicants who have not participated in PAJE.	
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Ensure selection processes are fair, and do not specifically deter candidates from underrepresented groups.

	Activities	Timings	Outcome	Outcome indicators	Evaluation
2.18	<p>Judicial Appointments Commission: Selection process activity</p> <p>We will continue with our activities to ensure application processes are open and fair, including continuing to monitor target group progression at every stage for all exercises, continuing to implement name blind sifting in all our sifting tools, undertaking equality-proofing of all shortlisting and selection materials (including via our independent advisory group) and employing the equal merit provision (EMP) at shortlisting and selection stages.</p> <p>As part of the JAC's 2024 – 2027 Business Strategy we have committed to reviewing our approach to EMP, and working with external experts to review our selection methods used in our largest exercises including exploration of any potential alternatives.</p>	Ongoing	<p>This activity ensures that we continue to take all measures possible to support the aim of increasing diversity in the judiciary.</p> <p>Application processes for JAC selection exercises are open, fair, and free from bias, ensuring that we can meet our statutory duty to select solely on merit.</p> <p>This activity will also ensure that candidates have confidence in the integrity of JAC processes.</p>	<p>As JAC selection process activity covers a range of initiatives, and progress is measured in a number of ways:</p> <p>The progression of target candidate groups is monitored at key stages in the selection process. The number of candidates progressing as a result of EMP each year is also monitored and reported on in the annual report. Candidate feedback is collected following each key stage of the selection process, which measures candidate experience of the process, identifies levels of candidate confidence in the selection tools, and captures diversity monitoring information.</p>	<p>As JAC selection process activity cuts across of a range of initiatives, it is difficult to clearly pinpoint the direct impact of this activity. However, the impact of individual initiatives can be measured e.g., the number of candidates progressing as a result of EMP each year.</p> <p>For exercises reporting in the 2024-25 period, as a result of applying EMP, 32 candidates were advanced to the next stage of the process at the shortlisting stage, and 6 candidates were recommended at final decision-making stage.</p> <p>In 2025, the JAC commissioned the Work Psychology Group to review shortlisting approaches. The review confirmed that current JAC processes align with best practice and that no alternative methods would be better suited to the JAC's context.</p>
2.19	<p>Judicial Appointments Commission: Review of Statutory Consultation</p> <p>In March 2022 we published the independent review into the operation of Statutory Consultation and the Commission's response to the review working with Judicial Office and JDF partners. It found that evidence-based Statutory Consultation can support selection panels in assessing candidates, and that there is no direct evidence that the process impacts disproportionately on recommendations for appointment for any group. The Commission has been taking forward recommendations made in the review from September 2022 as part of a revised approach to Statutory Consultation within the existing statutory framework.</p>	<p>Review completed in Spring 2022 and a revised approach implemented in September 2022.</p> <p>An evaluation into the revised approach was completed in 2025.</p>	<p>Most new entrants to the judiciary will be via exercises where Statutory Consultation will likely be waived.</p> <p>Candidates from target groups feel more confident in applying for judicial appointment knowing that Statutory Consultation has not been found to have any disproportionate impacts, having been independently reviewed and with</p>	<p>Is there any observable increase in target group representation in applications overall for exercises post-implementation of recommendations?</p> <p>Is there a noticeably bigger shift in target group applications in exercises that Statutory Consultation has been agreed to be waived?</p>	<p>Recommendations from the review have been implemented for exercises launching from September 2022 onwards.</p> <p>The revised approach to the operation of statutory consultation was evaluated in 2025, with the evaluation finding that the revised approach is working well. The evaluation was considered by the JDFO in November 2025 and professional bodies agreed to work with the JAC to help better communicate the changes to the operation of statutory consultation to prospective candidates</p> <p>In January 2026, the evaluation was published on the JAC website alongside revised guidance issued to statutory consultees and candidates.</p>

	The MoJ will also review the evidence of any impact arising from changes to Statutory Consultation that are being trialled in judicial recruitment with a focus on the large fee paid exercises.		recommendations implemented.		
2.20	Judicial Appointments Commission: Fair selection training JAC panel members are briefed on fair selection before each stage of a selection exercise. This training is aimed at mitigating any bias and covers the assessment of transferable evidence from different professional and judicial backgrounds. The JAC is currently undertaking a review of the fair selection training and will consider improvements that can be made for future selection exercises.	Ongoing	The training provided mitigates the negative effects of potential bias amongst selection panels and equips panel members with the skills to assess candidates and transferable evidence against JAC competency and skills and abilities frameworks. This training ensures that all candidates are assessed fairly and objectively.	Qualitatively analyse feedback on the effectiveness of the training from panel members.	All panel members receive fair selection training before an exercise begins. We are aiming to refresh this training, including specific information on supporting neurodivergent candidates and tailoring our support for smaller exercises. We will be working with panel members to understand how to improve this training and further development of panel member support. All lay panel members receive regular appraisals, which include fair selection.
2.21	Judicial Appointments Commission: Assessment panel diversity We operate a panel gender balance policy and since September 2021 we have monitored the ethnic diversity of panels across the rolling selection exercise programme, inclusive of both lay and judicial panel members. We work closely with the Judicial Office to ensure we convene balanced panels across each exercise, aiming for ethnic diversity in line with the latest ONS data on ethnicity in the population of England and Wales (Census 2021 , ONS). Over the past two years, focused action has actively increased lay panel ethnic diversity for senior competitions such as High Court and Deputy High Court competitions. Since 2022, the JAC has reported panel diversity findings in its Annual Report. Work with MoJ and Department for Business and Trade to consider whether the JAC lay panel member role could be incorporated as a public duty. Ongoing activity to recruit, retain, and train lay panel members. Trialling new approaches to outreach with the aim of developing sustainable future pipelines of diverse lay panel members.	Ongoing	This initiative aims to ensure that judicial recruitment panels are representative of wider society, with transparent reporting providing candidates and the public with the reassurance that our processes are fair and free from bias.	The ethnic composition of panels for each exercise, and at an aggregated level for selection exercises concluding in the financial year, is tracked in two ways: Representation: The percentage of panellists who are from an ethnic minority background. Participation: The percentage of candidate assessments undertaken by at least one ethnic minority panel member.	We have increased the diversity of our cadre of lay panel members through tailored outreach. 76% of our lay panel members are female and we achieve a gender mix on almost every panel convened. 21% of our lay panel members are ethnic minority and 13% of lay panel members declared a disability. We will continue to closely monitor and evaluate this in the next 12 months. Panel ethnic diversity findings for the current selection exercise programme were published in the 2024-25 Annual Report. 394 (lay and judicial) panel members were engaged by the JAC to assess candidates across the 37 selection exercises making up the 2024-25 programme. 17% (59) of panel members declared as ethnic minorities, based on declared ethnicity data (88% declaration rate – 345 declared). Overall, 21 of 37 exercises saw over 17% ethnic minority representation on panels. 7 of the 14 exercises with more than four panel members (50%) met the 17% target.

Use data to identify remaining barriers and track impact.

	Activities	Timings	Outcome	Outcome indicators	Evaluation
2.22	Law Society: Events for aspiring solicitor judges In Autumn 2024, the Law Society held a roundtable with the Lady Chief Justice and fee-paid and salaried judges from a solicitor background to examine their experiences of judicial	Ongoing	Use insights to highlight any barriers with key policymakers and stakeholders.	Attendance and feedback from in-person events.	Two events scheduled in 2026 in Liverpool (March) and Birmingham (June)

	<p>selection processes, as well as challenges they face as members of the judiciary.</p> <p>Regional roundtables were held in Manchester (2024), Leeds and Leicester (2025).</p>				
2.23	<p>Judicial Appointments Commission: Qualifying Test qualitative Research and Work Programme</p> <p>In March 2025, the JAC completed the Qualifying Test Work Programme, a set of actions agreed by the JAC and JDF partners to address findings of our 2-year research project investigating lower success rates at the QT stage for ethnic minority and non-barrister candidates. Improvements have been made across the process, covering guidance provided to candidates regarding how to prepare for QTs, the drafting process for QT questions and their content, time allowed to complete the test, and feedback and messaging provided to unsuccessful candidates.</p> <p>For the year ahead, the JAC will collect data to assist with evaluating the impact of the changes.</p>	<p>Completion of QT Work Programme: 2024-25</p> <p>Evaluation of changes made post QT research: Autumn-winter 2025</p>	<p>Improvements made to the QT process as a whole, including communication to candidates, preparation materials, test questions, test practical arrangements, and feedback to candidates, will improve the success rates of ethnic minority candidates and non-barrister background candidates at the QT, closing the gap in success rates to white and barrister candidates respectively.</p> <p>The improved messaging and resources available to assist preparation for the QT will also improve candidate perceptions of the fairness of this selection tool and encourage candidates who are unsuccessful at the QT stage initially to apply again in the future.</p>	<p>We will track the success rates for these groups on each QT, and measure how the gap in success rates changes over time.</p> <p>We will also measure performance of target groups on the individual components of each QT (Situational Judgement Test and Critical Analysis Test) to understand which component is seeing improvement.</p> <p>We will conduct bespoke evaluation methods for each element of the work programme to attain an understanding of its impact. For example, the number of visits to new webpages, and candidate feedback received relating to specific elements.</p>	<p>The JAC will be conducting a review of the impact that changes from the implementation of the JDF QT work programme have had. We hope to conclude this in 2026.</p>

Priority Area 3

Impact statement	Eliminate structural barriers in access by different professional groups to the judiciary
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Bring in untapped talent from professional groups that have faced barriers to applying for judicial roles.

	Activities	Timings	Outcome	Outcome indicators	Evaluation
3.1	<p>Ministry of Justice: Work to remove barriers for employed lawyers considering fee-paid judicial office</p> <p>This includes identifying changes that can be made which will make it more likely that employers will support staff who apply to become fee-paid judges.</p>	End of 2026	Lawyers who are employed feel more confident that they can apply for judicial office without detriment to their employment and their employers will be more prepared to support them to do so.	<p>The number of applicants from employed sectors of the legal profession increases for fee paid judicial office, tracked through the diversity of the judiciary report from 2025/26 onwards.</p> <p>An increase in the proportion of employed lawyers applying for development programmes (PAJE, Targeted Outreach</p>	Work ongoing during 2025. No update – but progress expected in 2026

				<p>etc) demonstrated by survey completion.</p> <p>Overall diversity statistics for applicants increases over time due to higher applications from the more diverse employed sector of the legal profession, as measured by JAC data.</p>	
3.2	<p>Ministry of Justice: Work to review the barriers faced by professional groups such as legal academics and those regulated legal professions who are not currently eligible for judicial office</p> <p>Following feedback from JDF in November 2024, undertake broader consultation and consider options.</p>	End of 2026	Identify options to allow legal academics to apply for a wider range of judicial office. Identify whether there is interest among membership of the remaining legal professions regulated by the LSB in becoming judges and the options to implement a change.	Complete evaluation of options and discuss with key stakeholders.	Work was ongoing during 2025 and is due to be progressed in 2026
	<p>Ministry of Justice: Reasonable Adjustments Policy</p> <p>The MoJ first published a reasonable adjustments policy for judicial office holders in 2011.</p> <p>In 2023 officials across the different organisations which use the policy (MoJ, HMCTS, Judicial Office) agreed to update it. The policy applies to all salaried and fee paid Judicial Office Holders (JOH), including judges, magistrates and non-legal members of tribunals in England and Wales, and members of reserved tribunals in Scotland and Northern Ireland whose terms and conditions are decided by the Lord Chancellor.</p>	Ongoing			<p>In 2025 the Lord Chancellor agreed to an update of the reasonable adjustments policy.</p> <p>As well as shortening the policy and ensuring it was consistent with changes to the law since 2011, the revised policy aims to clarify the responsibilities for providing reasonable adjustments among the different organisations which work with the judiciary. This is especially important when a judge is first appointed.</p>

Provide opportunities to candidates from these groups and provide support to aid their success in applications.

	Activities	Timings	Outcome	Outcome indicators	Evaluation
3.3	Bar Council: Promotion of and support for mentoring (around judicial appointments) by Bar-based stakeholders for the Bar	Ongoing	Barristers who are unable to access advice and support for a mentor for judicial appointment by any other means (e.g., Chambers/SBA or other) are able to access a mentor.	<p>Those needing a mentor are matched with a mentor.</p> <p>Those matched with a mentor are satisfied with the support provided.</p>	Feedback.
3.4	CILEX: Promoting the options for judicial careers to members from non-traditional backgrounds	Ongoing	We want to increase the number of Chartered Legal Executives that participate in	Number of Chartered Legal Executives that participate in PAJE.	8% of PAJE participants in 2021/22 were Chartered Legal Executives, in comparison to 1% of the current judiciary as of April 2022.

	CILEX has always been active in promoting the options for judicial careers to members from non-traditional backgrounds, including actively encouraging these members to apply for the Pre-Application Judicial Education scheme. Of those previously taking part in CILEX's (under review) Judicial Development Programme (JDP), 72% were female, 11% were ethnic minorities and 9% consider themselves to have a disability. Recognising that members with these protected characteristics can often face financial constraints.		PAJE and ultimately increase the number in comparison to current judiciary.		Work continues to increase awareness of PAJE and to encourage applications.
3.5	Judicial Office: Flexible Deployment and Assignment Framework The Flexible Deployment and Assignment Framework provides for increased opportunities to deploy judges between jurisdictions. In devising the Policy, particular regard has been had to the importance of encouraging diversity in the judiciary. Under the framework judges may be deployed for the purposes of professional development.	Ongoing	More judges have opportunities to broaden and develop expertise through deployment into other jurisdictions.	Monitoring of take-up and effects of cross deployment exercises.	Work has progressed to deploy judges flexibly into various jurisdictions where a business need has been identified. This may support judges' career development. Five such exercises will have taken place in 2025/26.
3.6	Judicial Office: One Judiciary A programme of work to bring the courts and tribunals judiciaries closer together, in order to achieve a united and cohesive judiciary and to share resources between jurisdictions. One Judiciary will provide greater opportunities for flexible deployment between jurisdictions, supporting the development of judicial office holders. One Judiciary will also help to create a cohesive and collegiate culture that promotes the inclusion of all judges and will help to encourage a wider pool of applicants to apply for judicial office.	Ongoing	Greater development opportunities for Judicial Office Holders as a result of increased use of flexible deployment. A more inclusive culture across Courts and Tribunals jurisdictions.	Data showing use of flexible deployment. Results of judicial attitude surveys.	Evaluating results of judicial attitudes surveys.
3.7	Judicial Office: targeted outreach to black legal professionals Develop a plan to engage with black legal professionals via representative networks to gain an insight into the barriers that this demographic face with entry into the Judiciary and put in place measure that aim to reduce/or remove them.	Ongoing with annual milestone reviews from end of 2025.	Insight into black legal professionals' perception of the judiciary to better inform ongoing engagement.	Black legal professionals increased engagement in Judicial Office outreach programmes.	Contact and relationships with networks representing black lawyers have continued with outreach events and programmes being mailed directly to drive up engagement. Tracking of attendance is routine. Promoted mentoring opportunities across a range of jurisdictions.

Improve our understanding of the systemic barriers disproportionately affecting particular professional groups.

	Activities	Timings	Outcome	Outcome indicators	Evaluation
3.8	Law Society: Judicial Solicitor Judges Events See action 2.13.				

Priority Area 4

Impact statement	Address barriers to senior legal and senior judicial positions for women, people from minority ethnic backgrounds and people with disabilities (and other groups as agreed).
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Address barriers to getting on in the workplace which make it harder for professionals to progress.

	Activities	Timings	Outcome	Outcome indicators	Evaluation
4.1	<p>Bar Council: Discrete evidence-led programmes to promote and support equality, diversity, and inclusion at the Bar</p> <p>Relevant activity (under our Modernising the Bar/Fair Access to Work Programme) includes:</p> <p>First Seven Years (A programme to better support for the Young Bar, particularly in practice development)</p> <p>Practice Management Guidelines and Standards (A programme to improve practice management including distribution of work¹, billing and marketing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Client Briefing Practices (A programme to tackle discrimination in the way barristers are briefed) <p>Mentoring and promotion of reflective practice (Activity which supports stakeholder-based mentoring and delivers mentoring guidance and training); promotion of reflective practice for career development)</p> <p>Tackling Sexual Harassment & Bullying (Post Harman – appointment of a Commissioner for Conduct to lead our comprehensive programme to challenge behaviours and support targets of inappropriate behaviours). Women in Law Pledge (To promote setting sex/other equality equality-based targets)</p>	Ongoing	<p>Practitioners of all backgrounds feel supported as they commence their careers and have a greater opportunity to establish a sustainable practice.</p> <p>All barristers have fair access to work.</p> <p>All barristers can access mentoring and support to develop their careers.</p> <p>Harassment and bullying are not tolerated at the Bar of England and Wales.</p> <p>Chambers proactively tackle sex and other forms of inequality.</p> <p>The Bar is an inclusive working environment.</p>	<p>Differences in practice (specifically income) based on background are reduced.</p> <p>Feedback from practitioners.</p> <p>Reports of Bullying & Harassment are reduced.</p>	<p>Surveys; Research and earnings audits.</p> <p>Activity to support this in the last 12 months includes (but is not limited to): Harman Review into Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment at the Bar (2025); Reflective practice/coaching promotion and Balint Legal Reflective Practice Pilots (2025); continued promotion of our Wellbeing Certification Programme; updated data on earnings by Sex; ongoing training/bespoke advice for chambers on earnings monitoring, including on use of our Monitoring Distribution of Work Toolkit as well as on anti-bullying and harassment awareness and – for chambers – training on managing complaints ; Guidance includes an update to our Starting at the Bar: Your essential guide (2025) for new practitioners.</p>
4.2	<p>Bar Council: Research for the Bar</p> <p>Data on the profile of pipeline and the profession intersection, including by different ethnic minority groups and trends. Focussed on access, retention, and progression to silk in the profession.</p>	Ongoing	Data enables policy and practice to be targeted towards underrepresented groups, date supports positive action initiatives	Research prompts focussed action by Bar based stakeholders.	Feedback
4.3	<p>Ministry of Justice: Diversity of the Judiciary statistics</p> <p>Produce the publication of the annual Diversity of the Judiciary statistics.</p>	July 2026	The annual Diversity of the Judiciary report provides detailed information on the makeup of the judiciary, recruitment outcomes and the composition of the pipeline in the professions, which offer important evidence to help target and tailor support to underrepresented groups in the judiciary and improve diversity.	<p>Future policy and practice will be underpinned by comprehensive data on how lawyers with particular characteristics progress through the legal professions, judicial applications and progression within the judiciary.</p> <p>As data quality improves, a wider range of characteristics will be included in the report's data sets. Disability, social</p>	<p>The Ministry of Justice published a new dashboard tool to make it easier to view and interpret some of the data within the report</p> <p>The 2025 report included expanded data on disability and more data on social background, measured by type of school attended. We are committed to extending reporting on disability and social background in future years.</p>

¹ This includes activity on income monitoring by Protected Characteristic.

				mobility, and more detailed reporting on ethnicity have been identified as priorities.	
	Ministry of Justice: Salaried Part Time Working The first SPTW policy was issued in 2001 and applied to new salaried appointments. In April 2005, the policy was extended to include all existing salaried JOHs below the High Court. In 2014, the policy was further extended to include the High Court and Court of Appeal.				In 2025 the Lord Chancellor agreed to an update of the SPTW policy. The changes were relatively minor, but the policy encouraged SPTW to be made available for a greater proportion of senior appointments, subject to operational requirements. In April 2025 20% of salaried Courts judges and 47% of salaried tribunal judges were working a part time pattern.
4.4	Law Society: Diversity and Inclusion Framework See action 1.1				
4.5	Law Society: Developing guidance for member firms and organisations See action 1.5				

Raise the profile of judicial career paths among potential applicants, with visible role models in senior positions, and provide resources to improve applicants' chances of success.

	Activities	Timings	Outcome	Outcome indicators	Evaluation
4.6	CILEX: Promoting the options for judicial careers to members from non-traditional backgrounds See action 3.4				
4.7	Law Society: Law Society: Member profiles and role models See action 1.6				