

# Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission



## Guidance for Applicants

### For Fee-Paid Medical Appointments

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# NIJAC

*Northern Ireland Judicial  
Appointments Commission*

## **Introduction**

This document sets out guidance for lay applicants for judicial appointments. The purpose of the guidance is to demystify the judicial assessment and selection process and to focus applicants on their preparation for assessment. Not all the information in this guide may be relevant to a particular scheme and therefore all applicants should read their scheme's Applicant Information Booklet carefully.

All applicants are reminded that effective preparation for the assessment and selection process is a key step in increasing your chances of success. All applicants are advised to read this guidance and access NIJAC's other guidance through the job portal and other information available on [NIJAC's website](#).



## Preparing for Judicial Assessment and Selection

The experience of most organisations involved in appointments is that applicants who make a significant effort in their preparation perform very well. NIJAC's experience is no different. We strongly encourage anyone making an application to prepare thoroughly. In order to assist you in that preparation we set out a number of actions that you can take to increase your awareness of the role you intend to apply for and to inform you about parts of the assessment process that you can make specific preparations for.

There are a number of activities that will assist you in your research and preparation:

- When aiming to secure judicial appointment, it is imperative that you research the judicial office you are interested in. This will also assist in ensuring this is an office in which you wish to serve. Research significant, emerging and/or topical areas associated with the jurisdiction of the court or tribunal.
- Look ahead at the types of judicial office you are interested in. Remember fee-paid office is a great opportunity to develop knowledge, experience and skills.
- A key factor in the process is the Judicial Profile. The Judicial Profile is an overall framework which provides a picture of what is required of those to be appointed to judicial office. It is essential that you examine the Criteria and Elements required (as demonstrated through the Person Specification for each role) throughout each step of the process.
- Develop examples which demonstrate the abilities that the job requires. You can do this by keeping a note of the work you have been involved in, particularly any complexity associated with it. This will assist you in providing examples regarding your skills, attributes, behaviour and effectiveness.
- It is understood that privacy of application is a very important issue. However, you are encouraged to talk to people who may be able to assist you in your research, preparation and application. Use the various informal and formal networks available to you.
- Use the Point of Contact associated with a recruitment scheme (if one is available). The Point of Contact will be a named serving judicial office holder who is not on the Selection Committee and will be able to give great insight to serving in judicial office. This means you can obtain helpful information in a confidential way. The Application Information Booklet will advise how you can contact the Point of Contact.



## Demystifying the Person Specification

The **Person Specification** reflects what is required to serve successfully in a particular judicial office under recruitment. It is the key information for applicants to make reference to when completing their application and in thorough preparation for the assessment and selection process. The Person Specification is important because it sets out the Criteria and Elements for appointment and is the basis against which applicants will be assessed.

The Person Specification is derived from **The Judicial Profile**.

The Judicial Profile is an overall framework divided between two overarching areas: Skills & Attributes and Behaviours & Effectiveness.

Within both of the overarching areas there are three criteria:

### Skills & Attributes

- Knowledge and Expertise
- Intellectual Capacity
- Exercising Judgement

### Behaviours & Effectiveness

- Leading and Collaborating Effectively
- Communication Effectively
- Managing Effectively

The Judicial Profile is a 'living' framework which expands and flexes to the needs of each judicial office at each iteration of recruitment.

The Person Specification is created for each role by the Selection Committee. Each Selection Committee will utilise The Judicial Profile framework to make its own determination on the criteria and elements to be used as the measure against which merit is determined.

As well as the Judicial Profile framework there will be two other significant components to that process:

- Job Description
- Co- Opted Member - Input of the presiding officer at the relevant tier (or a colleague nominated by them)

Through a process of job analysis the Selection Committee for each scheme will identify the criteria and elements from within the Judicial Profile framework which are relevant to the role and devise a unique Person Specification from which they will determine merit.

The key for you as an applicant is to ensure that you read the Person Specification carefully and are able to evidence how you meet the criteria and elements listed.

The assessment of your application will be based on how well you demonstrate each aspect.

The Person Specification relating to the job you are applying for is available in the Applicant Information Booklet for the role.

In summary the criteria outlined in the Person Specification:

- Identifies the necessary skills, attributes, behaviours and aspects of effectiveness that the ideal appointee/s should have.
- Reflects the requirements of the office outlined in the Job Description.
- Are measured throughout the process e.g. in your application form at shortlisting, and during your interview complemented by other methods such as a situational assessment, written exercise or a role-play.



## How are you assessed?

Applicants are assessed in a range of ways throughout the process. Assessments provide a comprehensive overview of an applicant's strengths and areas for development. Each assessment is designed to simulate, as closely as possible, the work of the role being recruited to.

An application form containing a **Self-Assessment** is normally the first step and is submitted for most recruitment schemes. Meeting the eligibility requirements is the first hurdle. Once NIJAC has assessed that your application meets the eligibility requirements, you will then progress to the shortlisting stage. If shortlisted, applicants will then be invited to the final stage of assessment which is likely to include an interview.

NIJAC uses a combination of methods to assess suitability for judicial office which aim to assess the different elements of the Person Specification. Medical schemes will typically only use an interview as the chosen method of assessment.

**Interview** questions will focus on the assessment of some or all of the criteria set out in the Person Specification. Examples that you have provided in the self-assessment may be questioned further by the interviewer so be prepared to expand on the information that you have provided. It may also examine how you may deal with specific challenges should you be appointed. Some questions may combine one or more areas of the Person Specification.

**Personal Integrity** – The Applicant Information Booklet (AIB) sets out the range of pre-appointment checks that all successful applicants will be subject to prior to appointment. All applicants for office are required to declare a range of convictions and other issues upon application for judicial office. Please check the AIB closely for the relevant detail.