



**Northern Ireland
Judicial Appointments Commission**

Feedback Policy

**Selecting the Best Applicants and
Promoting Diversity**

1. Introduction

1.1 NIJAC was established on 15 June as an independent public body under the Justice (Northern Ireland) Acts 2002 and 2004 (as amended). Upon the devolution of justice on the 12 April 2010, the Northern Ireland Act 2009 extended our statutory duties.

1.2 NIJAC is an appointing body, selecting and appointing to non-crown judicial offices in various Courts and Tribunals throughout Northern Ireland. We select and make recommendations for crown appointments up to and including High Court judge.

1.3 It is the NIJAC's policy to have due regard for the need to promote equality of opportunity for all applicants in the appointments process, irrespective of:

- gender (including sex, pregnancy, maternity leave, and gender re-assignment)
- marital status and civil partnership status
- religious belief and / or political opinion
- race and/or ethnic origin
- age¹
- sexual orientation
- and
- between men and women generally
- between persons with a disability and persons without
- between persons with dependants and persons without

1.4 NIJAC's goal is to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable to do so, a judiciary which is reflective of the community in Northern Ireland.

¹ Under Statute the upper age limit of 70 years applies to judicial appointments

2. Rationale

- 2.1 The provision of feedback is to provide applicants with constructive information about their application, quality of evidence, and performance in a particular scheme.
- 2.2 It is important to note that providing feedback does not constitute coaching or mentoring but provides an opportunity for an applicant to reflect on their strengths and areas for development demonstrated against the selection criteria set out in the personal profile advertised for the particular scheme.

3. Policy Objectives

- 3.1 The key objectives of the feedback policy are:
- 3.1.1 to provide feedback that is objective and fair; and
- 3.1.2 to enable applicants to receive feedback on their performance in the assessment process at shortlisting and / or final assessment in a positive and confidential setting.

4. Scope of the policy

- 4.1 The feedback policy applies to all those who are involved in providing feedback to applicants, and to applicants receiving feedback.

5. Principles

- 5.1 NIJAC selects and appoints on merit, through fair and open competition and by selecting from the widest possible range of eligible applicants. Our work is based on the principles of:
- Merit;
 - Independence;
 - Diversity;

- Fairness;
- Transparency;
- Accountability, and
- Partnership.

The feedback policy and procedure is designed to embed NIJAC's working principles through the provision of constructive feedback to applicants after the shortlisting and final assessment stages.

- 5.2 Feedback will be provided in a timely manner following the completion of the various stages of the appointments process i.e. as soon as is practicable after shortlisting and final assessment outcome known as appropriate.
- 5.3 While this policy aims to cover all potential scenarios, it may be set aside in exceptional circumstances and alternative arrangements implemented, for example, when high volume of applications are received.
- 5.4 The feedback policy and procedure are separate from, and independent of, the complaints procedure.
- 5.5 Feedback facilities are not to be used as an appeal mechanism, or as a route to discovery to aid a complaint. If an applicant is considering whether to complain they should consult NIJAC's Complaints Policy and Procedure and specifically the time limit outlined.
- 5.6 The provision of feedback facilities will be dependant upon the resources available within NIJAC. Although every effort will be made to facilitate feedback, there may be occasions when this may be provided in a general way for all applicants particularly when there are high volume schemes and where shortlisting test are used.

- 5.7 Generic feedback for schemes which used a shortlisting test will be published on the website and will include a summary of the banding of scores.
- 5.8 Written feedback will be available at shortlisting stage where a papersift is used when it is requested within 5 days of the notification of the outcome being sent. Written feedback will provide an account of the applicant's demonstration of evidence against the advertised criteria and the Personal Profile for the office under recruitment.
- 5.9 Oral feedback will be available for shortlisted applicants after the final assessment stage when it is requested within 5 days of the notification of the outcome being sent. NIJAC will aim to publicise the proposed date of this feedback in the Applicant Information Booklet. Applicants will be notified that feedback will normally only be available on the advertised date. The content of the feedback will reflect the agreed moderated assessment of the Selection Committee. Telephone feedback may be used when there is a high volume of applicants or at the applicant's request. NIJAC will provide each oral feedback recipient with a written outline of the scheme in advance of the feedback meeting. The written communication will facilitate the meeting to focus on providing feedback on the individual's performance.

6. Implementation

- 6.1 In order to implement this policy NIJAC shall;
- 6.1.1 Communicate this policy via the website to applicants for judicial office, and those involved in the administration and provision of feedback.
- 6.1.2 Provide guidance on giving feedback for those involved in the provision of feedback.

7. Time limits for requesting feedback

7.1 Applicants must request feedback within five days from the date of written notification of the outcome at shortlisting or final assessment stage.

8. Variation to Policy

8.1 This policy, or the arrangements under it, may be varied, amended or adjusted at any time.

9. Monitoring and Review

9.1 The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed every three years as required by the employment statutory codes of practice or as required and action taken as necessary.

Signed: Adeline Frew
Acting Chief Executive
7 June 2018