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Deputy High Court Judges – Fixed Term appointments (under s. 9(4))

The Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) will be launching a selection exercise for Deputy High Court Judges on 15 November 2016. There are 15 vacancies across the Chancery, Family and Queen's Bench Divisions of the High Court.

This is an exciting opportunity for practitioners without previous judicial experience to apply to be a Deputy High Court Judge. As the JAC Commissioner for this exercise, I am keen to attract the strongest possible field of applicants. I would be grateful if you could notify your members of these vacancies and encourage those who are ready to do so, to apply.

The work of a Deputy High Court Judge is important, challenging and varied. Successful candidates will deal with complex cases that require meticulous preparation. Depending on the jurisdiction for which the candidate is selected, these cases may include:

Chancery Division (CD):

- Complex cases arising out of business and property law disputes, both national and international.

Family Division (FD):

- The most complex public and private law cases involving children and families, including finding of fact hearings dealing with controversial and difficult medical issues.
- Financial disputes, including: substantial asset divorce cases; Schedule I cases in relation to children where the parents are unmarried, and financial cases and jurisdictional disputes following foreign divorce decrees.
- Child abduction and international family law, including relocation cases and the inter-relation of the law of England and Wales with European law.

Queen's Bench Division (QBD):

- Hearing complex cases in contract, tort and other areas and possibly specialist topics such as planning, commercial, defamation and construction.
- In the administrative court, judicial review claims and statutory challenges to the actions of public authorities, such as government ministers, local authorities and other public sector bodies.

Most sittings will be at the Royal Courts of Justice in London, but all deputy High Court Judges must be prepared to sit on Circuit, if invited, including Wales (which is beginning to enact primary legislation different to the law applicable in England).

Candidates for these posts will be expected to demonstrate their exceptional ability. We have set out some examples of exceptionality on our website to help candidates to identify potential examples from their own area of expertise. This table of examples is not exhaustive and intended only as a guide to assist candidates. Candidates may well have other evidence of exceptionality of this calibre that is not included in this table and they should not be deterred from applying if their area of work is not covered by our range of examples.

Appointments will be for a fixed, four year term. It is expected that successful applicants will wish to apply for a salaried post in the High Court within the period of their appointment as deputy. Candidates subsequently applying to be a High Court Judge will be expected to have gained sufficient relevant judicial experience over a two to four year period and to provide a reasonable length of service of five years in the High Court. For this reason, candidates applying for *this* exercise are expected to be able to provide a reasonable length of service of at least **eight years** to enable the required sittings to be undertaken prior to application to the High Court, and to allow for the subsequent five years' reasonable length of service.

Further details, including eligibility criteria, are on the JAC website at

<https://jac.judiciary.gov.uk/vacancies/044>

The JAC encourages diversity and welcomes applications from groups that are currently under-represented in the judiciary. All recommendations will be made solely on merit.

If you have any queries, the following JAC staff will be happy to assist: Linda McCabe on 0203 334 6588 or Françoise Cave on 0203 334 6078.

Yours sincerely



Alexandra Marks
JAC Commissioner