



PRESS RELEASE (For Immediate Use)

116 NEW QUEEN'S COUNSEL APPOINTED IN THE 2020 COMPETITION

The appointments of 116 new Queen's Counsel (also known as silk) are announced today.

These appointments are made by Her Majesty The Queen on the advice of the Lord Chancellor, Robert Buckland QC, MP, following consideration by the independent Queen's Counsel Selection Panel.

Sir Alex Allan, Chair of the Selection Panel, said today:

'I am delighted at the announcement of the new silks. I congratulate each one of them. The selection process is a rigorous and demanding one. We collect confidential assessments from judges, fellow advocates and professional clients, who give freely of their time to provide evidence about an applicant's demonstration of the competencies. Those applicants who are not filtered out following consideration of the assessments are then interviewed by two members of the Selection Panel, following which the whole Panel discuss all the evidence on each interviewed applicant.

We were particularly pleased that for the first year ever, the number of women appointed - 40, which amounts to 34% of the total appointed, is almost equal to the proportion of women in the relevant segment of the profession. The number of BAME applicants appointed, although lower than last year's record total of 22, is also almost equal to the proportion of BAME advocates in the relevant segment of the profession.

Each year, the Panel has the difficult task of identifying the truly excellent advocates. I am confident that those appointed today truly deserve to be Queen's Counsel. "

A full report on the 2020 competition, with statistical information relating to successful and unsuccessful applicants, will be published on the QC Appointments website.

A list of the new silks is attached. Among the 116 appointments are:

- 40 women applicants of the 72 who applied. Last year, 30 out of 52 female applicants were successful;
- 14 applicants who declared an ethnic origin other than white of the 30 who applied. Last year 22 such applicants out of 42 were appointed;
- 28 applicants aged over 50 were appointed. Last year 26 such applicants were appointed. The youngest successful applicant is 35 years old and the oldest is 58.
- Six solicitor advocates of the 15 who applied. In the previous competition four solicitor advocates were appointed.

Notes for Editors

1. Queen's Counsel are appointed by The Queen, on the advice of the Lord Chancellor. He is in turn advised by an independent Selection Panel which receives and considers each application and makes recommendations as to appointment.
2. The members of the Queen's Counsel Selection Panel for the 2020 competition were:

Sir Alex Allan (Chair)
Douglas Board
Wanda Goldwag
Rachel Langdale QC
Edward Nally
Rosemary Rollason
Maggie Semple OBE
Monisha Shah
Phillip Sycamore
Andrew Walker QC

The Selection Panel is supported by its own Secretariat.

3. The QC appointment scheme was developed by the Bar Council and the Law Society, with the support of the (then) Department for Constitutional Affairs, and approved by the then Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State (Lord Falconer) in November 2004. Applications were first invited in 2005 and the first round of appointments under the new arrangements was announced in 2006. Refinements to the scheme, building on experience of the first year, were agreed in 2006. The selection process is financed entirely through applicants' fees. A copy of the agreed Process and further information is available from the Queen's Counsel Appointments website: www.qcappointments.org
4. Applications for the 2020 competition closed on 14 April 2020 and the Selection Panel submitted recommendations to the Lord Chancellor on 26 October 2020. Each applicant has been considered against five competencies:
 - Understanding and using the law
 - Written and oral advocacy
 - Working with others
 - Diversity
 - Integrity

5. 177 of the 281 applicants were interviewed by the Selection Panel. All unsuccessful applicants receive written personal feedback on their application. The Panel expects to invite applications for the next round of appointments in February 2021.
6. Copies of the Selection Panel's report will be available on the QCA website shortly. Further information can also be obtained from Russell Wallman, Chief Executive of QCA, on 0207 831 0020.