



PRESS RELEASE (For Immediate Use)

95 NEW KING'S COUNSEL APPOINTED IN THE 2023 COMPETITION

The appointments of 95 new King's Counsel (also known as silk) are announced today.

These appointments are made by His Majesty The King on the advice of the Lord Chancellor, Alex Chalk KC MP, following consideration by the independent King's Counsel (KC) Selection Panel.

Monisha Shah, Chair of the Selection Panel, said today:

"I would like to offer my congratulations to all the new silks announced today. The selection process is a rigorous and demanding one and I believe that every one of these new silks will be a credit to their profession.

The competency framework for the award of King's Counsel is set by the Professions. It is heavily dependent on the strength of the evidence provided by leaders and peers about each applicant. The submission of honest, evidence-based assessments is pivotal to the work of the Selection Panel. On behalf of the panel, I would like to thank the nearly 2000 assessors who provided assessments to the Selection Panel this year.

We continue to monitor the number of applications received from a diverse range of backgrounds and seek to ensure that our process is as clear and transparent as possible. To that end, we seek feedback and offer a range of events and webinars where prospective applicants can meet with members of the panel and engage with them directly. I am reassured that the number of applications we received this year are indicative of the clarity of our process and a confidence in our system.

The KC award for excellence is based on evidence from assessors. We do not operate quotas for appointment; however we continue to monitor diversity data closely and while I would not expect successful applications from those with protected characteristics to increase each and every year, I am pleased to note that application rates from people of minority ethnic backgrounds and female applicants are strong and the number of successful applications remain broadly in line with the eligible population."

A full report on the 2023 competition will be published on the KC Appointments website.

A list of the new silks is attached. The statistics for successful applicants are as follows;

- The overall success rate was 33.6%; 95 out of a total 283.
- 65 male applicants, 32% success rate
- 30 female applicants, 38% success rate.
- 13 applicants who declared an ethnic origin other than white, 27% success rate
- 8 applicants who declared a disability; 47% success rate
- One solicitor; 14% success rate
- One employed barrister; 14% success rate.

Notes for Editors

1. King's Counsel are appointed by The King, 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 King's Counsel Selection Panel for the 2023 competition were:

Monisha Shah (Chair)
Christina Blacklaws
Dr Douglas Board
Matthew Chapman KC
Dr Katrina Easterling
Paul Grant
Sir Paul Morgan
Sara Nathan OBE
Dame Anne Rafferty
Mena Ruparel
Prof. Leslie Thomas KC

The Selection Panel is supported by its own Secretariat.

3. The KC 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, and there were further fine-tuning adjustments in 2019 and 2020. The selection process is financed entirely through applicants' fees. A copy of the agreed Process and further information is available from the King's Counsel Appointments website: www.kcappointments.org
4. Applications for the 2023 competition closed on 24 March 2023 and the Selection Panel submitted recommendations to the Lord Chancellor on 31 October 2023. Each applicant has been considered against five competencies:
 - Understanding and using the law
 - Written and oral advocacy
 - Working with others
 - Diversity action and understanding
 - Integrity
5. KCA collects 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 review all the evidence on each interviewed applicant.

6. 147 of the 283 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 applications in March 2024.
7. Copies of the Selection Panel's report will be available on the KCA website shortly. Further information can also be obtained from Hannah Miller, Chief Executive of KCA, on 0207 831 0020.