



## King's Counsel Appointments: 2026 Competition

### FAQ for Applicants

We hope that these FAQ are helpful in addressing some common queries regarding the Silk application process. However, the KCA Secretariat are happy to speak to applicants and answer questions on any part of the process, at any time.

Prospective applicants who would like further information should contact:

Telephone: 0207 831 0020

Email: [applications@KCappointments.org](mailto:applications@KCappointments.org)

Additional guidance is also available on our website [www.KCappointments.org](http://www.KCappointments.org)

<b>PROCESS AND TIMINGS</b>	<b>PROCESS AND TIMINGS</b>
When will applications open for the 2026 KC competition and for how long?	Applications for the 2026 competition will open on 13 March and will close on 24 April.
When will I be told whether I have been invited for an interview?	Invitations for interview (and letters informing those applicants who are not invited to interview) will be sent on 18 September.
When and where are interviews held?	Interviews are likely to be held between 28 September and 16 October, in London and Manchester.
If I am not invited to interview, when will I receive my feedback?  Should I be invited to interview but subsequently not recommended for appointment, when will feedback be provided?	Feedback for applicants not recommended for interview will be provided in November.  Applicants not recommended after interview will receive feedback with their notification letter on 21 January 2027.



<p>When will the Selection Panel's recommendations be conveyed to the Lord Chancellor?</p>	<p>The recommendations will be submitted in mid-November.</p>
<p>When will the results of the competition be announced?</p>	<p>The Ministry of Justice control the date of the public announcement; for this year's competition we are aiming to announce the outcome on 22 January 2027, and we will publish the full list of new KCs on our website.</p> <p>We will inform applicants in advance of announcement, on 21 January.</p>
<p>When will the KC appointments ceremony take place?</p>	<p>The date depends on the availability of the Lord Chancellor and on the Parliamentary authorities making Westminster Hall available. It is likely to take place in March 2027, and we will notify recommended applicants directly, as well as updating the website.</p>
<p>I have a question about the KC ceremony – can you help?</p>	<p>Other than informing applicants of the date and passing on briefing from the Crown Office, KCA plays no part in the arrangements for the KC ceremony.</p> <p>Please direct any such queries to the Crown Office.</p>

<b>THE APPLICATION FORM</b>	<b>THE APPLICATION FORM</b>
<p>Is the 'twelve cases within the past three years' criterion a strict rule, or is there some flexibility?</p>	<p>The panel understand that there are a number of reasons why applicants may not be able to provide twelve cases in the past three years and do not wish to disadvantage those who, for example, have a disability, have taken a career break, parental leave or have been in long Inquiries, etc over the previous three years. Having fewer than twelve cases is not a bar to application, although it is possible that fewer cases may not cover the breadth of evidence required.</p> <p>You should make it clear in your application why you are unable to provide twelve cases. If you do not provide a reason, you may be contacted by the Chief Executive after submission of your application and/or the Panel may raise this with you at interview, should you be offered one.</p> <p>It may be worth considering whether there are any cases from slightly outside of the three-year window that could be included. However, applicants should bear in mind that the further back they go, the less assessors are likely to remember of the case and their role in it.</p>
<p>Is it acceptable to refer to a case outside of my 12 significant cases as part of my self-assessment?</p>	<p>It is fine to refer to a case outside of the twelve listed cases if this provides evidence of a particular competency.</p>

<p>Is it permitted to cite an ongoing case which has not yet reached a conclusion, but which could be used to provide an appropriate example?</p>	<p>There is no bar to using an ongoing case. However, there needs to be sufficient progress in the case at the point assessments are requested in early May, to allow assessors to be able to provide a worthwhile assessment.</p>
<p>Should I check an assessor is happy to provide an assessment before I list them?</p> <p>Can I tell potential assessors that I have listed them?</p>	<p>Applicants do not need an assessor's permission to list them on their application. However, the Panel recognises that it may be helpful for applicants to inform assessors that they have listed them and for assessors to receive copies of written submissions to refresh their memories, should they be approached by KCA.</p> <p>However, applicants should not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask for sight of any assessment provided by an assessor.</li> <li>• Lobby assessors for support.</li> <li>• Provide suggested wording for an assessor to use.</li> <li>• Check if an assessor has been approached or provided an assessment; and/ or, Copy assessors into any correspondence with the KCA.</li> </ul> <p>The KCA Secretariat will manage all direct contact with assessors as part of the application process. Assessors have been asked to let the KCA Secretariat know if an applicant approaches them in any of the ways set out above.</p>
<p>Will my 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> nominated assessors be told that they have been 'nominated'?</p>	<p>Your assessors will not be informed if they are nominated and will be treated in the same way as any other assessor.</p>



<p>Can coroners be listed as Judicial Assessors?</p>	<p>All persons acting in a judicial capacity are eligible to be listed as a judicial assessor, which includes coroners.</p>
<p>Is it acceptable for an applicant to use Adjudications amongst their 12 cases?</p> <p>Can an adjudicator be a judicial referee?</p>	<p>An adjudication could be a legitimate case and an adjudicator would be a legitimate judicial assessor, although the weight the Panel can give to their assessment will depend on whether the adjudicator is familiar with the standards expected of KCs in England and Wales</p>
<p>The guidance indicates that an applicant need list only six client assessors, against the twelve judicial/practitioner assessors required.</p> <p>Is it acceptable to name only six client assessors or could this have an adverse effect on my application?</p>	<p>Setting the minimum number of client assessors at six is designed to reflect the fact that an applicant may not have a client in every case that they list. However, we require at least six to be able to obtain sufficient evidence of excellence.</p> <p>However, KCA also recognises that employed barristers and solicitors may only have fewer clients given the nature of their practice. This will be taken into account by the Panel.</p> <p>Where applicants can list a client assessor in a case, they should do so.</p>
<p>For those with international practices, can cases or arbitrations governed by foreign law, or heard in international courts, form part of the twelve cases on the application form, or must all twelve cases be governed by English law and/or in the English courts?</p>	<p>Cases from international courts can be included as part of a silk application, however applicants should bear in mind that the award of KC is for excellence in the courts of England and Wales and therefore the most valuable evidence comes from cases with links to the law of England and Wales, whether these are cases in the Courts of England and</p>

	<p>Wales or cases in other common law jurisdictions. Applicants should make it clear in their application how each case is linked to the law of England and Wales. Assessors are also required to demonstrate how their evidence relates to that law.</p> <p>Additionally, certain jurisdictions have their own award for legal excellence which may, for some applicants, be more suitable to apply for.</p>
<p>Some of my assessors' contact details have changed. What should I do?</p>	<p>Please contact the KCA Secretariat who will make the necessary amendments. Note that no assessors can be added or deleted after the closing date for applications, even if one or more of those originally listed is no longer available.</p>
<p>What is the purpose of the broad/specialist fields of work question in Section B?</p> <p>And should the percentages match those provided to the BSB for the annual Authorisation to Practice, or should they be based on some other factor, for example receipts or time spent?</p>	<p>The purpose of the specialism and area of practice fields is to provide the Panel with a sense of your specialism as an advocate as they review your application. The figures can be based on receipts/time spent if you wish or can be a broad-brush indication of your area of expertise.</p> <p>If you wish to alert the Panel to a skew in your specialism over past years, you can do so in the 'Other' information section (Section G) of your application.</p> <p>The only other significance is that, if appointed, your largest percentage specialism will be provided to the Crown Office for use in the appointment ceremony.</p>

<p>Public Inquiries are a major area of practice for many, offering predictable hours for those with caring responsibilities. However, unless Counsel to the Inquiry, they do not offer many opportunities for advocacy.</p> <p>What is KCA's advice for those in this position?</p>	<p>The panel accept that applicants may be able to list fewer cases in this situation and take that into account when considering applications.</p> <p>Inquiries may offer the opportunity to provide good evidence in respect of Competencies A, C and D in particular. Where evidence might be lacking in oral advocacy this could be gained by, for example, undertaking pro bono work.</p>
<p><b>FEES AND PAYMENT</b></p>	<p><b>FEES AND PAYMENT</b></p>
<p>How are the application fees set?</p>	<p>The fees are set by the KCA Directors. All costs related to the selection process are met by applicants' fees and there is no subsidy from the professional bodies or from the taxpayer. We try to keep the costs as low as possible, but they reflect the necessity of administering a process as rigorous as the KC competition.</p>
<p>What are the fees for the 2026 competition?</p>	<p>The application fee for the 2026 competition is £2,275 plus VAT, payable in full by the application deadline.</p> <p>For those entitled to pay the concessionary fee for low incomes, the fee is £1,137.50 plus VAT.</p> <p>The appointment fee for those applicants who are successful in the competition will be £4,000 plus VAT, or £2,000 plus VAT for those entitled to pay the concessionary fee. This is in addition to the cost of £264 for the Letters Patent.</p>



	<p>The concessionary fee is available to those with gross fees, drawings, or earnings of £90,000 or less in the most recent year.</p> <p>KCA reserves the right to seek verification of entitlement to a concessionary fee. If you are uncertain whether you are entitled to claim the concessionary fee, please contact the Secretariat as soon as possible.</p>
<p>How do I make payment?</p>	<p>Payment must be made by BACS directly to our account.</p> <p><b>Bank:</b> Royal Bank of Scotland, London Victoria, 119-121 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6RA  <b>Sort Code:</b> 15-80-00  <b>Account:</b> King's Counsel Appointments  <b>Account No:</b> 10578135</p> <p>You must quote your surname and ID number as the reference for your payment. You may wish to ask your bank for confirmation of payment.</p> <p>VAT receipts will be sent as soon as possible after the close of the competition.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>OTHER</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>OTHER</b></p>
<p>How do I disclose that I have had professional dealings/have a personal relationship with a member(s) of the KC Selection Panel?</p>	<p>Please include this information in Section D of the application form. Potential recusals are considered on a case-by-case basis by the KCA Secretariat.</p>



<p>Should I be successful, can I accept instructions in my new appointment as a KC before the Silk ceremony?</p>	<p>You do not formally become a KC until you have made the declaration before the Lord Chancellor, at the ceremony arranged by the Crown Office</p>
<p>Can I nominate an individual for an Honorary KC?</p>	<p>KCA is not involved with the appointment of Honorary KCs. They are managed by the Ministry of Justice who can be contacted at: <a href="mailto:HonoraryKC@justice.gov.uk">HonoraryKC@justice.gov.uk</a></p>