



**Judiciary of
England and Wales**

Draft Judicial Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Update 2023



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Foreword by the Lady Chief Justice

In November 2020 we published the first Judicial Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, setting an ambitious framework for action over five years to 2025. One of the core duties of my role as Lady Chief Justice is to promote diversity and inclusion and I am very pleased to take on responsibility for leading the judiciary on this agenda.



I fully endorse the strategy. I am aware that the pursuit of diversity and inclusion requires a sustained effort on all fronts, and it is right that we should continue to pursue these objectives.

We have now reached more than halfway through our five-year strategy, and I commend the work that has taken place to date. I would like to pay particular tribute to the contribution made by Lady Justice Simler as the outgoing lead and, more generally, to the efforts of all of the judges involved.

Progress has been made, but there is no room for complacency. We must continually learn from what works, and what does not work, and look for new opportunities to make further improvement. I remain committed to continuing these endeavours to achieve the strategy's core objectives and am pleased with the range of actions proposed as next steps.

Moving forward in the right direction depends on close collaboration with the Ministry of Justice, Judicial Appointments Commission, and the representative bodies of the legal profession. I look forward to continuing this engagement through the Judicial Diversity Forum in order to meet our collective goal of a judiciary that better represents society.

**The Lady Chief Justice of England and Wales,
The Right Honourable the Baroness Carr of Walton-on-the-Hill**

Summary by Lady Justice Whipple



This update provides a summary of the work undertaken over the last year towards implementation of the Judicial Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. It provides an overview of the range of different activity being undertaken by judicial office holders at all levels across the judiciary.

I join with the Lady Chief Justice in thanking Lady Justice Simler for her tireless commitment to increasing diversity and inclusion within the judiciary. During her time as Chair, a great deal of progress was made, and she leaves behind her a legacy of achievement upon which we must now build.

I also thank all those who participate in this important work; I am inspired and encouraged by the commitment and enthusiasm shown by judges and others across the country.

Good progress has been made with the programme of inclusion training developed last year. Judicial leaders and senior judiciary, who have a pivotal role in implementing the aims and objectives of the strategy, received their training in the first half of 2023. The programme will continue for remaining judicial officer holders into 2024.

Judicial leaders are now delivering against the local action plans they developed last year for their court or tribunal centre. This update highlights examples of some of the work undertaken.

Support to strengthen mechanisms for career development of existing judicial office holders has continued this year. Judicial leaders are reporting that appraisal and career conversations are taking place. Refreshed training programmes are continually evaluated, and positive feedback has been received for the peer mentoring that is available within courts and tribunals. The pilot reverse mentoring scheme, which matches judges with professionals from diverse backgrounds, proved very successful and has been rolled out again this year to reach even more participants. Work continues to bring courts and tribunals closer together through the One Judiciary project to achieve a more cohesive, united judiciary; One Judiciary will provide greater opportunities for cross-deployment between jurisdictions which will in turn promote career development and diversification for judicial office holders.

The update also shows that nearly 4,000 individuals registered for judicial appointment outreach seminars over the last year, which support potential applicants to judicial roles. These are run by the judiciary and provide guidance and advice on the selection process and judicial roles. The Judicial Work Shadowing Scheme and Judicial Mentoring Scheme have continued to support those from under-represented groups interested in applying for judicial roles, and the judiciary continue to play a pivotal role in both the Pre-Application Judicial Education programme and the Judicial Appointment Commission's targeted outreach programme which supports candidates from underrepresented backgrounds.

I am pleased that the Court of Appeal and High Court have been able to provide support for a new cohort of aspiring lawyers from under-represented backgrounds through the Bridging the Bar Academy scheme which aims to provide participants with a unique insight into the work of the courts, judges, and judicial assistants and to encourage their ambition to become barristers. It also provides judges with a unique insight into the obstacles faced by these participants in pursuing their chosen legal careers.

So far as the make-up of the judiciary is concerned, progress has been made in increasing the personal and professional diversity of the judiciary across some areas and in relation to some groups, but the update highlights several areas where more sustained work is necessary. Once again, while the number of Asian and mixed ethnicity individuals in the judiciary is slowly increasing, the number of black professionals securing judicial appointments has remained at 1%. Whilst acknowledging that the applicant pool of black legal professionals that can be drawn on is very small, this is an area we will focus on over the next year and beyond.

The continued work in ensuring all disabled judicial office holders can carry out their judicial responsibilities without unnecessary barriers or delays in the provision of reasonable adjustments is important. Work is ongoing to improve information, advice, and processes in this area. This will be a second area of particular focus over the next year and beyond.

I am delighted and honoured to be appointed the lead judge for diversity and inclusion, leadership development and wellbeing. Oversight of these three areas of work is now combined into a single role to ensure a more coordinated approach. I look forward to meeting the judges who lead in this area as well as the many other judicial office holders who stand behind them and share their ambitions. I also look forward to working with our many partners outside the judiciary. I want to hear your ideas and celebrate your achievements. This is very much a collective endeavour.

**Lady Justice (Philippa) Whipple,
Chair of the Judicial Diversity Committee of the Judges' Council**

Current levels of representation

The speed of change in the diversity of the judiciary is affected by a number of features. The judiciary is a second career dependant in large part on recruitment from the legal professions. There is a statutory requirement for at least five or seven years of post-qualification experience (PQE) for legally qualified judicial posts. The most recent statistics show that of those who applied for court and tribunal positions requiring at least five years' PQE, candidates had around 18 years' experience on average. Of those who applied for positions requiring at least seven years' PQE, candidates had around 20 years' experience on average. The 'turnover rate' within the judiciary is low¹ and the time taken between applying for a judicial role and taking up post can be as long as twelve months. It is too early to make any assessment as to potential impact of the increase in retirement age on recruitment of a greater number of diverse judges. This though will need to be looked at alongside the shortfall in some recruitment for salaried judicial roles which the increase has assisted. The judiciary is working with HMCTS and MoJ to promote the magistracy and increase the number of diverse magistrates recruited.

This report includes statistics that show the change in representation since the launch of the strategy in 2020. The data shows a 1% change in representation of Asian courts and tribunal judges and for non-legal members with no change for magistrates. There is no change with regards to representation of black courts and tribunals judges and magistrates, with a 1% change for non-legal members. As part of the evaluation work mentioned in next steps, we will continue to consider how activities and initiatives could prioritise or target specific under-represented groups. A particular focus for the year ahead will be on the profile of black judges.

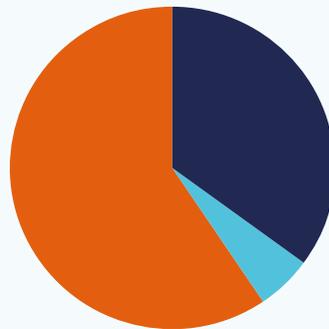
¹ The Diversity of the judiciary: 2023 statistics show that 230 judges within courts and tribunals left post in the previous twelve months, with 327 new entrants to legal posts.

The judiciary at 1 April 2023:

3169 non-legal members of tribunals

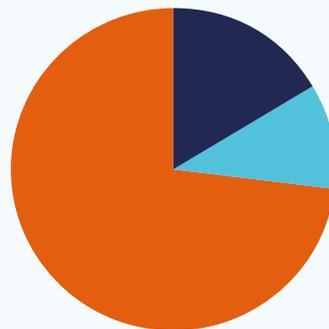
13340 magistrates

3483 Court Judges



- 1228 salaried full time
- 189 salaried part time
- 2066 fee-paid

1809 Tribunal Judges

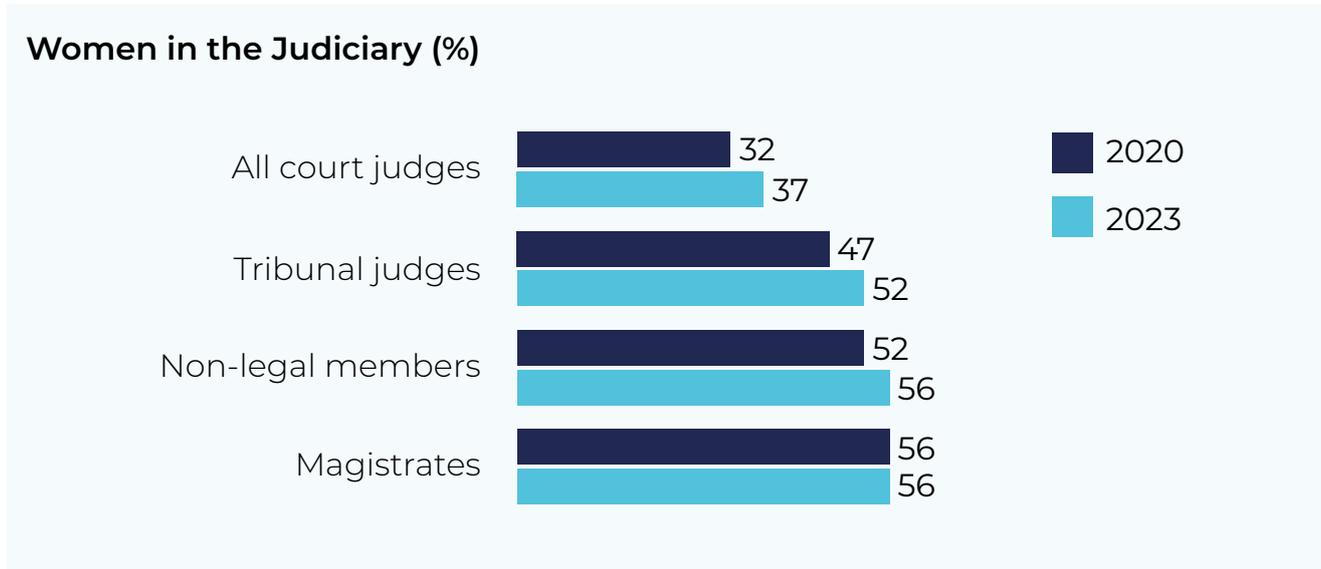


- 301 salaried full time
- 191 salaried part time
- 1317 fee-paid

Change in representation since 2020:

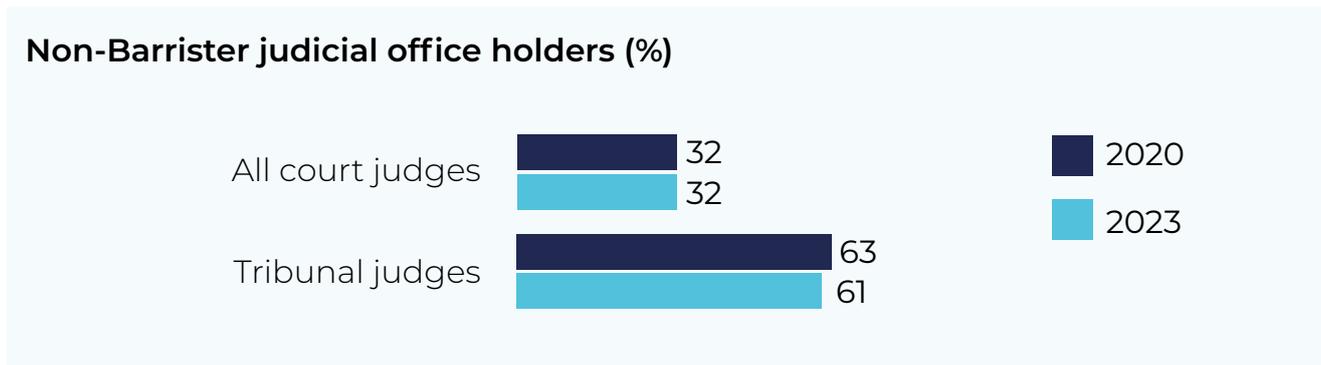
Women in the Judiciary

5% increase in court judges, 5% increase in tribunal judges, 4% increase in non-legal members, no change in magistrates



Professional background

No change in court judges from non-barrister backgrounds, 2% decrease in tribunal judges from non-barrister backgrounds

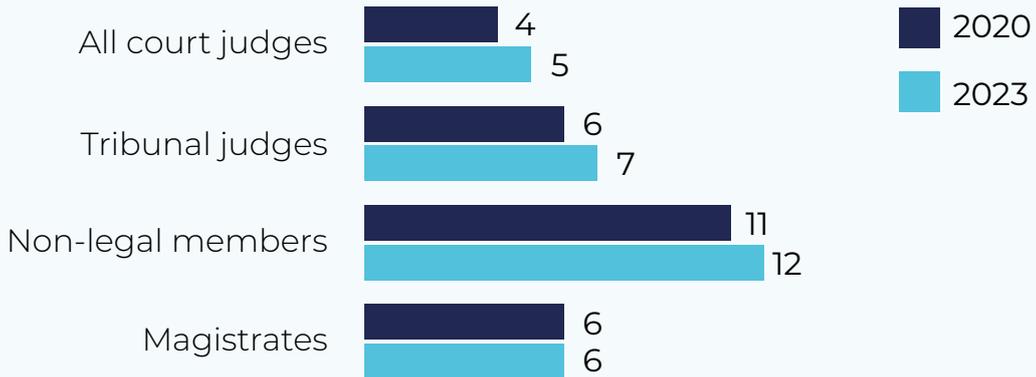


Black, Asian and minority ethnic judicial office holders:

Asian ethnicity

1% increase in all court judges, tribunal judges, non-legal members and no change in magistrates

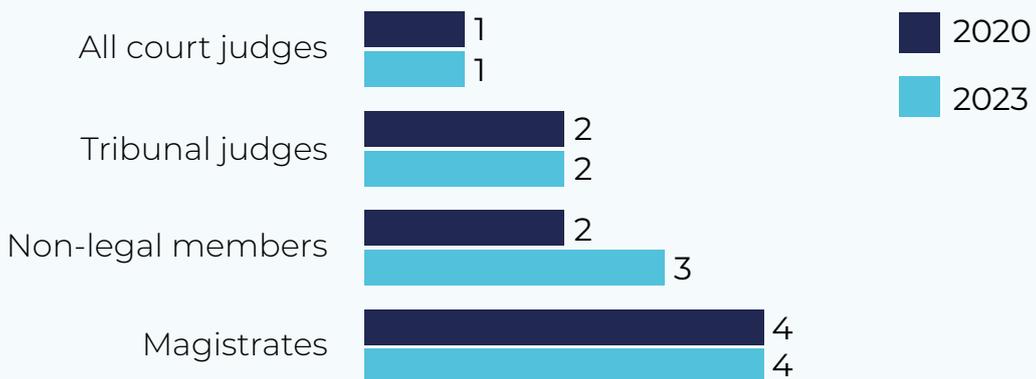
Asian judicial office holders (%)



Black ethnicity

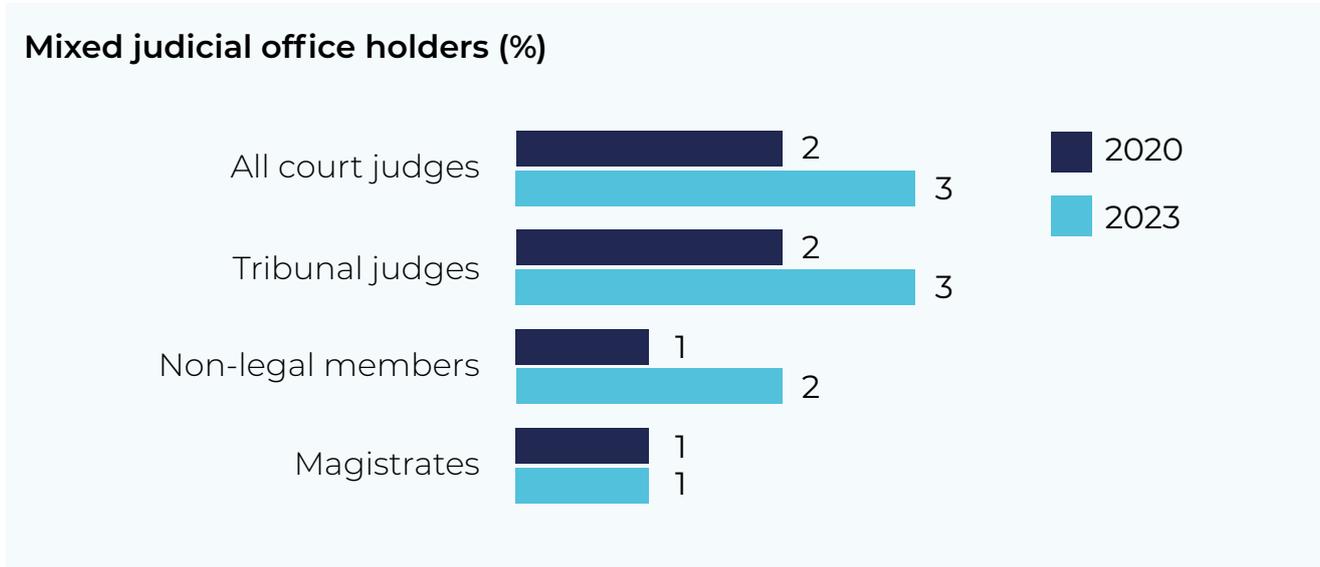
No change for all court judges and tribunal judges, 1% increase in non-legal members and no change in magistrates

Black judicial office holders (%)



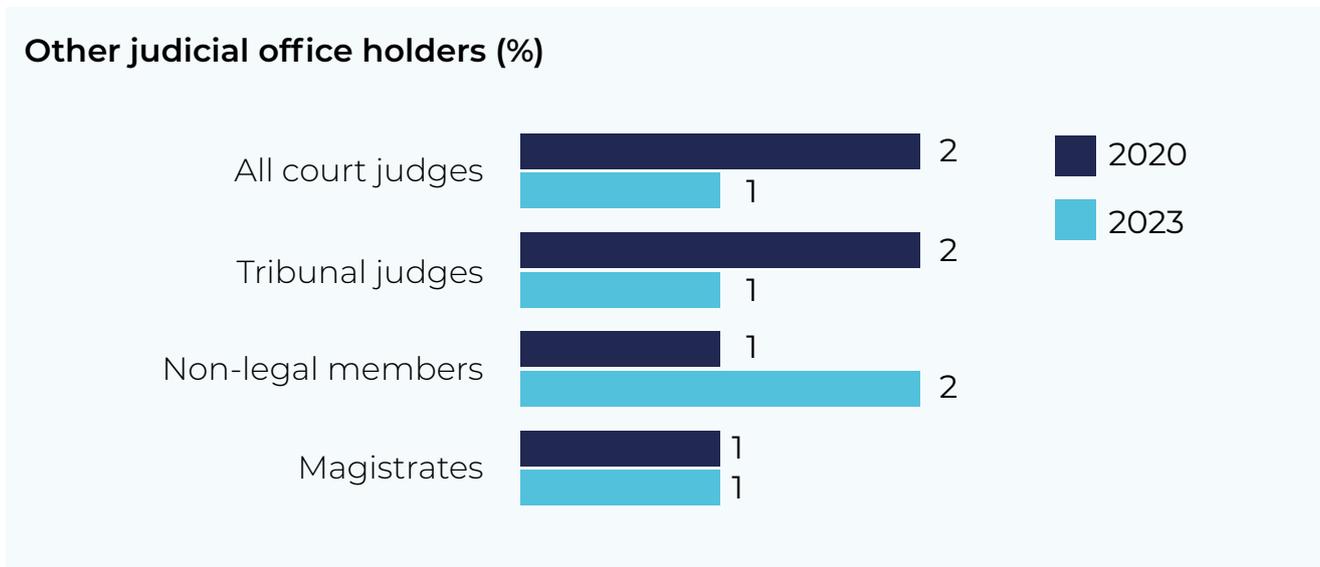
Mixed ethnicity

1% increase in all court judges, tribunal judges and non-legal members 1% increase, no change for magistrates



Other ethnicity

1% decrease for all court and tribunal judges, 1% increase in non-legal members, no change for magistrates



Further information and statistics covering all court and tribunals can be found in the statistical publication available from Gov.UK: [Diversity of the judiciary: 2023 statistics](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/diversity-of-the-judiciary-2023-statistics) – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Note: numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number and therefore actual percentage change(s) may not match totals illustrated.

Objective 1: Creating an environment in which there is a greater responsibility for and reporting on progress in achieving diversity and inclusion

Responsibility for progress in, and reporting on, achieving greater diversity and inclusion is a requirement of all judicial office holders in leadership and management positions. Leadership Judges will be supported in their efforts to promote a respectful and inclusive working environment, encouraging a wider, more diverse pool of talented lawyers to apply for judicial roles in the area for which they have responsibility, and supporting the progress and development of those who are appointed in their area.

Overall Progress

Judicial leaders have developed and are implementing local diversity and inclusion plans and now report on the actions they are taking. The reporting provided is enabling good practice to be shared among leadership judges. “Focal Point” judges, drawn from the pool of Diversity and Community Relations Judges (DCRJ’s) support the development of action plans. Similarly, a number of Magistrates drawn from the Diversity and Community Relations Magistrates (DCRM’s) do the same within the Magistracy.

Support for judicial leaders has been strengthened in a number of ways since 2020. A “core value” on diversity and inclusion for judicial leaders has been agreed, reinforcing the importance of their role in fostering a respectful and inclusive culture. Guidance and resources have been developed to assist judicial leaders. The diversity and inclusion content of leadership training has been improved, including through two “master classes”.

The Senior President of Tribunals formed a Diversity Task Force in 2021 to implement the Strategy in the Tribunals. The Task Force has supported judicial leaders, including by suggesting practical initiatives to advance diversity and inclusion objectives, and providing information and resources to support them. Annual reporting on action plans informs the development of further priorities for the Task Force.

Achievements in 2023

In 2022 leadership judges developed the first iteration of their local diversity and inclusion action plans. In 2023 they have continued to implement and refine the plans and are reporting on progress. Progress reports are being analysed to help understand what actions have the greatest impact and to share good practice across regions, which is providing good insights into the effectiveness of action being taken.

Judicial leaders are embedding diversity and inclusion activity into existing structures, for example by including diversity and inclusion as a standing agenda item for local meetings, so that progress is discussed regularly. In some areas a Diversity and Inclusion Lead has been appointed to help report on activities implemented and share good practice.

Some judicial leaders have also begun gathering localised diversity data and workplace inclusion insights through other means, for example by seeking feedback on diversity and inclusion issues in exit interviews in the tribunals. In one region, a local diversity and inclusion committee has designed a survey to gain a better understanding of attitudes in the region. These data will enable leadership judges to take a more targeted approach to inclusion locally.

Inclusion training for judicial leaders took place between November 2022 and June 2023. Those attending the training have been provided with further resources, including guidance to support self-reflection. Judicial leaders were encouraged to share their reflections from the training with their judicial office holders locally and provided with a guide to support further discussions. Reports from judicial leaders show that these conversations are taking place and judicial office holders have discussed how the information gained from the training can be implemented and embedded in local action.

Further practical guidance has been provided to support judicial leaders in translating the training into action, including:

- Leading inclusion through communication.
- Addressing inappropriate behaviour displayed in front of others.
- Receiving feedback about your own inclusive behaviour as a leader.
- Navigating pushback to diversity and inclusion initiatives.
- Creating inclusive meetings and discussions.
- Giving feedback to an individual about their behaviour.

The seminar content for new leadership magistrates was reviewed in autumn 2022 and adapted prior to delivery between January and May 2023 to further promote an understanding of diversity and inclusion responsibilities and to provide opportunities to reflect on and adjust behaviour, working practices and procedures. Feedback on the seminars was positive and training will be reviewed again prior to the next round in 2024.

Next Steps

Mechanisms for reporting on local action plans will be further developed to provide the data needed for effective evaluation, to facilitate further sharing of good practice, and to identify any areas requiring greater attention.

Resources to support judicial leaders in undertaking local “inclusion checks” are being developed. This will provide an opportunity to assess the impact of the adoption of the core value for judicial leaders and of discussions on inclusion held following inclusion training. Resources are also being developed to help judicial leaders ensure their judicial office holders can access any disability support needed.

DCRJJs and DCRMs submit returns indicating their outreach activity annually. A review of this process and what it captures will be undertaken to maximise opportunities for sharing best practice and highlighting any areas that require greater focus.

The biennial Judicial Attitudes Survey results and the annual diversity statistics for the judiciary will enable ongoing progress to be tracked.

Objective 2: Supporting and building a more inclusive and respectful culture and working environment within the judiciary

We will continue to ensure that all serving judicial office holders feel supported and included, whatever their personal or professional backgrounds. Their lived experience will be better understood, respected, and valued, and will be considered when policies, practices and initiatives are developed.

Overall Progress

A health and wellbeing survey conducted in 2021 provided data on judges' and magistrates' experience of inclusion in the judiciary, including in relation to bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Further qualitative research was then commissioned to gain a better understanding of the issues experienced, and to identify action to address them. This led to the launch of a statement of expected behaviour in January 2023.

As above, inclusion training was provided to judicial leaders from November 2022 onwards. Similar training has been included in continuation and induction training for all judicial office holders since April 2023.

The Judicial College is also conducting an audit of all training in three phases relating to diversity and inclusion. Two phases of the audit have been completed.

The results of the health and wellbeing survey also informed further action to strengthen the support for judicial office holders in ways that support the development of an inclusive culture, with a particular focus on support for mental wellbeing.

Achievements in 2023

The Statement of Expected Behaviour was launched in January 2023 alongside the previous update on the diversity and inclusion strategy. The statement is being used widely, including in the human resources support provided to judicial leaders. It has been incorporated into inclusion training and forms part of the induction training for all judicial office holders.

Inclusion training for existing salaried and fee-paid judicial office holders started in April 2023 and will continue for the remainder of the 2023-24 training year. Training for tribunal members will continue into 2024 reflecting the different continuation training cycles. Feedback is collected from each course and has been positive against each of the metrics assessed.

The Judicial College has reviewed content on its online learning platform, which was launched in September 2022, to ensure training materials meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Content is regularly sampled and any materials that do not meet the standards are identified. This work will continue as further content is added to the platform, including materials for magistrates as the College takes on responsibility for all magistrates training.

A pilot judicial reverse mentoring scheme launched in 2022, matching 17 judges with legal professionals from under-represented groups. The aim is to foster a greater understanding amongst the judiciary of the experience of individual lawyers in pursuing a legal career. The pilot included evaluation throughout to assess the value of the scheme for both mentors and mentees.

Based on the results of the evaluation, a further cohort started in 2023 with three times as many participants. Learning the lessons from the pilot, participants have been provided with better support and more resources to support the mentoring sessions. Confidential forms have been introduced to ensure participants feel confident about providing feedback.

The Judicial Health and Wellbeing Strategy is aligned with this strategy. Its objective on mental wellbeing is an important link to this Strategy because poor diversity and inclusion practice can impact mental wellbeing. Relevant action taken includes provision of guidance in coping with anxiety, more information on how to access workplace adjustments for those with disabilities, and improved menopause guidance. The Judicial Health and Welfare policy and process has also been amended to help ensure judicial office holders get support more quickly.

Next Steps

The rollout of inclusion training to all existing salaried and fee-paid judicial office holders will continue throughout the 2023-2024 training year and into 2024-2025 for tribunal members where necessary.

Research will be undertaken to inform the development of action to support inclusion in the magistracy, potentially including training or other resources.

Further work will be done to ensure judicial leaders have the information and guidance needed to support judicial office holders with disabilities access the adjustments they need quickly and to ensure processes are in place to implement them.

The final phase of the Judicial College diversity and inclusion audit will continue throughout 2024.

A revised version of the Equal Treatment Bench Book will be published in 2024. A comprehensive review is underway, focusing on updating and streamlining the content to ensure it continues to be a practical, comprehensive and up to date resource.

Objective 3: Supporting and developing the career potential of existing judges

All serving judicial office holders will be supported and encouraged to develop and fulfil their potential whatever their personal or professional background.

Overall progress

Judicial leaders play an important role in supporting the development of judicial office holders within their areas of responsibility. Salaried judges have been given the opportunity to discuss their aspirations and development needs with their Leadership Judge in a career discussion. Leadership judges have been provided with guidance and case studies to support these discussions.

Where used, appraisals have provided judicial office holders with support and feedback from a judicial peer, providing the opportunity to discuss best practice and identify developmental actions.

A peer mentoring scheme was launched in 2022 for Circuit and District Judges to provide judges with an opportunity to be mentored by a more experienced “peer” to promote their personal and professional development.

The Flexible Deployment and Assignment Framework, introduced in 2020, is designed to facilitate increased opportunities to deploy judges between jurisdictions. A working group of judges and officials has been established to identify where flexible deployment and assignment could help address shortages in resources.

Achievements in 2023

Judges across the courts’ judiciary continue to be offered the opportunity to be mentored by a more experienced peer. In addition to the benefits for mentees in identifying practical ways to develop and increase confidence, mentors also benefit from exposure to different perspectives and develop their leadership skills. Feedback from peer mentees indicated that they felt their matches had either met or exceeded their expectations in relation to what they had hoped to achieve from their mentoring arrangement.

Career discussions enable judges to appreciate what is needed to progress and can encourage people who may not naturally feel they belong in senior positions to consider progression. Feedback from leadership judges suggests that effective career discussions are taking place across some jurisdictions for salaried judges. Work is in hand to encourage more consistent take-up.

A Judicial Career Development and Progression Scheme was launched in 2023 by the Tribunals Diversity Task Force. A total of 23 judges have been matched, with participants receiving independent advice, support, and guidance from a more experienced judge.

A number of expressions of interest (EOI) exercises have been run to deploy judges flexibly into various jurisdictions, aiming to provide additional capacity where needed as well as supporting career development. Levels of interest indicate the value these opportunities offer to judges. Examples include deployment of First-tier Tribunal and Employment Tribunal judges into the County Courts and of District Judges (Magistrates Courts) to sit in the Crown Court.

Next Steps

Arrangements for Career Discussions will be refreshed, and updated guidance will be provided. Feedback on impact and use will be sought.

Plans are being developed to provide judicial leaders with feedback on how they have carried out their leadership responsibilities, including those relating to inclusion. Arrangements will be piloted in 2024. Once introduced they will be offered to all new judicial leaders and be available to existing judicial leaders by request.

Use of EIO exercises to deploy judges flexibly into various jurisdictions will continue to support judges' career development, taking into account the high level of interest from Tribunal Judges.

The judiciary is working with the Judicial Appointments Commission to provide more detailed information on the location of vacancies in exercises to select Circuit and District Judges, and to allow candidates to express preferences on this basis. It is hoped this will enable potential candidates who might have been deterred previously, for example those with caring responsibilities, to consider applying.

The Senior President of Tribunals' Diversity Task Force plan to develop a roadmap for engagement with the Judicial Appointments Commission and judicial panel members to ensure that the work of Tribunal Judges in court selection exercises is both understood and valued. As Tribunal Judges have a more diverse profile, increasing their success rate in court appointments should benefit the diversity profile of the judiciary overall.

Objective 4: Supporting greater understanding of judicial roles and achieving greater diversity in the pool of applicants for judicial roles

We will make even greater use of online platforms and resources to support and build outreach within schools, local communities and within the legal profession. Targeted activities, steered by stronger data, analysis, and insights, and delivered together with the legal professions, and the Judicial Appointments Commission will reach, support and encourage a wide range of well qualified applicants from diverse personal and professional backgrounds into the judiciary. We will use improved data and analysis to target activities aimed at encouraging greater diversity within the magistracy.

Most outreach activity had to be paused or adapted to conform to restrictions in place during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Judicial Mentoring Scheme (JMS) and application seminars were delivered online and visits to schools were paused. The Judicial Work-Shadowing Scheme (JWSS) was substituted with a 'conversation with a judge' to offer people considering a judicial career insight into the work of a judge.

A judicial careers portal was launched in 2021 to provide a single hub through which legal professionals and judicial office holders interested in joining or progressing within the judiciary can access relevant resources.

Outreach schemes started in-person events and activities again in late 2021, since then the number of people engaged has grown each year. An increasingly targeted approach is being adopted, with visits to schools focused in areas with more diverse and/or less advantaged student populations. The Judicial Mentoring Scheme is available only to applicants from an under-represented group. The remaining outreach programmes target under-represented groups.

Judicial diversity statistics indicate that the profile of judges identifying as black has not changed in almost a decade and remains at 1%, slightly lower than the proportion of senior legal professionals. Recommendation rates for black candidates in judicial selection exercises also remain lower than for white candidates. This indicates a need to target activities further towards this group.

Achievements in 2023

The Targeted Outreach Programme jointly run with the Judicial Appointments Commission is now working with around 280 potential candidates as they make applications for a range of judicial roles. From April 2023, the programme has been expanded in terms of reach and eligibility. Circa 108 judges from a wide range of jurisdictions have been trained to act as judicial guides to participants on the programme. To date, of the 46 candidates reaching appointment, a number have achieved more than one appointment, resulting in 54 total appointments. Of these, 29 are solicitors, 42 are women, 28 are from minority ethnic backgrounds, and 11 declared a disability.

An evaluation of the work-shadowing and mentoring schemes ending in late 2022 resulted in improvements being made to the application process and a video summarising the JMS being profiled on social media channels. Evidence indicates a positive response to this material with 980 video views on LinkedIn and a 94% increase in viewership to our LinkedIn account.

The evaluation also prompted cooperation with HERBAR, a women barristers' hub, to promote the schemes through a seminar targeted at female and ethnic minority lawyers. Interest from this event contributed to the increase in applications.

Applications to both schemes are increasing. Recent data shows an increase in applications to the JWSS by a third to circa 100 in one quarter. Applications to the JMS have increased in the past year to circa 120 as of August 2023; 50 new mentors have been recruited to meet the demand. Evaluation of both schemes is underway to understand how participants benefit and how they influence applications for judicial office. Initial returns are positive.

Since November 2022 around 4,000 individuals, largely from under-represented groups have signed up for online judge-led application seminars run by the judiciary. These provide insight and information into the application process and the role of a judicial office holder.

A more targeted approach to schools' engagement has been undertaken in 2023, aiming to visit schools with the most diverse pupil profile and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. 92 schools in areas of low social mobility have been identified and are being invited to book a visit from a Diversity and Community Relations Judge (DCRJ) and Diversity and Community Relations Magistrate (DCRM).

The DCRJs and DCRMs have reported on their activities which, this year, have included engagement with schools with pupils from low socio-economic backgrounds, businesses, and community and faith groups. Since November 2022, 53 additional DCRJs and 12 DCRMs have been appointed to these voluntary roles. Additionally, there is an ongoing recruitment campaign for the role of 14 Family DCRMs for all regions and Wales.

DCRJ's and other members of the judiciary work with the National Justice Museum who host events in court buildings (in addition to the museum) offering court experiences to school children. So far this year events have been held in 12 courts across the country.

These activities have been complemented by locally led outreach. Examples include partnerships established by judicial leaders with local organisations for under-represented lawyers; local and specialist virtual careers events to encourage lawyers from under-represented groups to apply for judicial office, and work shadowing schemes for students from local universities.

The Judicial Office has provided support to artist Carey Young whose exhibition titled 'Appearance', at Modern Art Oxford, showcased women judges from a range of different demographics and jurisdictions. The exhibition received positive press coverage and the gallery attracts over 100,000 visitors a year.

Social media content has continued to be disseminated to showcase the diversity that exists within the judiciary. The content, which has resonated well with audiences, focuses on the diverse backgrounds of judicial office holders and the outreach work that they undertake with schools and communities. On average this social media content receives an engagement rate of around 5%, higher than the average of between 1-3%. News items on the judiciary website feature testimonials from judicial office holders from diverse backgrounds regularly for example to mark [Eid-ul-Fitr](#) and [LGBTQ+ Pride Month](#).



Next Steps

Issue a statement encouraging greater participation of junior counsel in advocacy before the courts, as appropriate. This would mark the support of the judiciary for the greater development of female advocates, who may be less likely to be lead advocates.

Analysis of DCRM and DCRJ activities along with evaluation from the 2023 DCRJ conference is underway and will inform further support and direction that can be offered to maximise the impact of these roles.

Following recent legislative change enabling members of the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEX) to apply for more judicial roles, we will work with CILEX to encourage participation in appropriate outreach schemes. A bespoke seminar for their members is also planned, which will focus on demystifying the judicial application process and advising on how best to present experience as a member of CILEX.

A second cohort for the Bridging the Bar initiative completed a week sitting in with a senior judge in Autumn 2023. Participants undergo a selection process to join the scheme and are from underrepresented groups. There will be opportunities for judicial office holders to learn from participants by hearing about the obstacles they have faced in seeking to pursue a career at the Bar and their aspirations. The scheme will be evaluated to measure its impact and benefits.

Schools in areas of low social mobility will be encouraged to engage in our schools visits programme following evaluation of current arrangements.

Evaluation of all outreach activity will enable gaps and opportunities to be identified. As above, we have already identified a need for activities that support black lawyers effectively.

The Judicial Diversity Committee

The implementation of this strategy is supported and overseen by the Judicial Diversity Committee. Its work has been enhanced through the appointment of judicial office holders to lead on particular aspects of inclusion. Portfolios include support to judicial leaders, links with the Judicial College, and oversight of the DCRJs and outreach work.

The Committee recognises the importance of good data in informing priorities for action. Declaration rates and diversity profiles are reviewed annually to inform further action and priority areas. A commitment was made in 2020 to encourage judicial office holders to be able to self-classify against a wider range of diversity characteristics. As well as informing priorities, there will be greater transparency in published profiles of the judiciary once standard thresholds have been reached.

As of 1st April 2023, there was on average a 30% improvement rate on original declaration categories. Judicial leaders have been active in encouraging judicial office holders to keep diversity data up to date. Another campaign was launched in August 2023 to encourage judicial office holders to share their diversity data on the Judicial HR System, with a particular focus on disability. New categories have been introduced to gain a deeper understanding of the profile of the judiciary, including in relation to socioeconomic background. It is hoped these can be reported on in future, and in particular, that initiatives to address under representation on a socioeconomic basis can be considered and devised in the near future.

The Committee strongly supports work to evaluate the impact of action to promote diversity and inclusion, so as to understand the effectiveness of initiatives undertaken and to inform future priorities. They will continue to oversee the work of the Judicial Office diversity team to design and monitor effective ways to evaluate and understand the impact of our programmes.



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