



**Courts and
Tribunals Judiciary**

Judicial Strategy for International Engagement 2025-29



May 2025

Contents

Foreword by the Lady Chief Justice	2
Executive summary	3
Part I: The value of international engagement	4
Part II: Strategic priorities	5
Part III: Effective engagement	7

Foreword by the Lady Chief Justice



As Lady Chief Justice of England and Wales, it is a privilege to oversee the huge breadth and significant variety of our international judicial engagement. While always aware of the global reputation of the judiciary of England and Wales, it has nevertheless been instructive to see first-hand the immense work that our judges contribute to sustaining and building upon that status.

I am pleased to present the Judicial Strategy for International Engagement 2025-29, a testament to our unwavering commitment to upholding the Rule of Law, fostering international judicial cooperation, and enhancing the capabilities and capacity of judges here and abroad.

In an increasingly interconnected and complex world, the judiciary's role extends beyond national borders. Our engagement with international counterparts is not merely a matter of diplomacy; it is a vital component of our mission to ensure justice, stability, and prosperity both at home and abroad. This strategy outlines our approach to international engagement, emphasising the importance of judicial dialogue, capacity building, and the promotion of judicial values. It seeks to capitalise on the soft power of our law and institutions, assets which contribute enormous value to the UK economy and reputation.

This strategy also reflects how seriously I take issues of judicial reputation, safety and security. Effective engagement requires careful consideration of risks and resources. This strategy provides a framework for making informed decisions about when and how to engage internationally, ensuring that our work is striking the right balance between domestic responsibilities and the opportunity for meaningful, lasting impact.

I extend my gratitude to all those who have contributed to the development of this strategy, including partners in government departments, the professions, and the charitable sector. Their insights and dedication have been invaluable in shaping a document that will guide our international judicial engagement for the years to come.

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

Executive summary

The Judicial Strategy for International Engagement aims to assist individual judges and the judiciary as an institution when considering whether, and how, to engage internationally.

It is publicly available and covers the period from 2025-29. It builds on the long history of international engagement by the judiciary which has, increasingly, been undertaken in a structured, strategic and sustainable manner.

This strategy seeks to do three things:

- provide the rationale for international engagement, explaining the value of judicial dialogue and the impact it has
- set strategic priorities, recognising a more turbulent world and the need to focus activity on where it will make the most difference
- advise judges on how to safely engage in an effective manner.

The expectation is that the careful decision on when and how to engage will be taken with senior judicial guidance. This approach is not intended to compromise the independence of individual judges, but instead to safeguard judicial independence and reputation, and provide expert support for judges. It also ensures centralised record-keeping.

The strategy is structured accordingly:

- Part I: The value of international engagement
- Part II: Strategic priorities
- Part III: Effective engagement

This strategy applies to the judiciary of England and Wales. There is already a constructive and valuable existing relationship, with regular bilateral meetings taking place with the UK Supreme Court and the administrations of Northern Ireland and Scotland. We will continue to discuss international engagements in such meetings, seeking further opportunities to cooperate and coordinate our work.

Part I: The value of international engagement

Adherence to the Rule of Law – nationally and internationally – maintains peace and prosperity. Fair, stable and predictable legal frameworks are necessary for generating inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth.

International judicial engagement by the judiciary of England and Wales, overseen by the Lady Chief Justice and fully supported by the Senior President of Tribunals, is a substantial asset in achieving these principles. This important work supports the Rule of Law, projects judicial values, and enhances the judiciary of England and Wales' global reputation while promoting its interests. There is a unique value in judges talking to each other, sharing experience and developing thinking together. Countries' prosperity and security are enhanced by supporting judicial systems, individual rights and the Rule of Law. Our judiciary, the wider UK, and other jurisdictions all benefit from engagement.

The work of English and Welsh judges in multilateral organisations contributes to the international effort to deliver cross-border consistency and further the respect for international law. Capacity building – such as improving the quality of judicial decision making, combatting corruption, tackling backlogs and improving the treatment of vulnerable witnesses – strengthens the capability of justice systems around the world. Strands of judicial engagement focussing on the commercial courts help to promote predictable business environments.

International dialogue delivers mutual benefits; international engagement assists the independent judiciaries of the UK to perform their role in a better-informed way and to learn from the innovation of others in delivering efficient and effective justice. It allows the judiciary to ensure that international judiciaries and supranational courts are properly informed about the legal system and laws of the UK. It also allows for collaboration on, and comparison of, approaches to cross-border or novel issues including insolvency, mediation and arbitration, family matters, extradition, digital assets and artificial intelligence.

International engagement also shines a light on the reputation and value of English and Welsh law, including its certainty, flexibility and widespread international adoption. The judiciary has an important part to play in helping to protect and promote the reputation of both English and Welsh law, and the UK's jurisdictions. They both have enormous value to the UK economy.

Part II: Strategic priorities

The past five years have seen an increasingly turbulent world with challenges to the international rules-based order, respect for the Rule of Law, and protection of individual rights. Jurisdictions and their approach to justice may change rapidly, and the status quo cannot be taken for granted. New technologies bring opportunities and challenges for the administration of justice in all jurisdictions. It is essential that judiciaries are able to share best practices in responding to novel situations.

Recognising that change has been swift and, at times, unpredictable, the judiciary will continue to engage internationally on a principled basis. The strategy sets thematic priorities that will guide which engagement should be undertaken. Specific geographical priorities will be identified annually to focus this work further and to ensure it has demonstrable impact. All international engagements, including training, should be consistent with the identified priorities and take place with due regard for judicial values.

The following thematic priorities have been selected for the period 2025-29:

Rule of Law and capacity building

Promoting the Rule of Law is at the heart of the international work of the judiciary. Sustaining and improving the capacity of courts and court administrations is one practical aspect of maintaining the Rule of Law. The Judicial College is well equipped to share learning on general topics such as judgecraft, judicial wellbeing and resilience, and judgment writing, as well as more specialised aspects of the Rule of Law.

International financial and commercial law

International confidence in the quality of a jurisdiction's courts and arbitration services benefits a country's gross domestic product and its wider economy by boosting investment and jobs. Generations of judges, with world-renowned expertise, have established English and Welsh law as a leading global law of choice for commercial and financial matters. London remains a leading centre for international commercial and financial dispute resolution. The judiciary should prioritise its leadership and innovation in business law, enhancing the international reputation of English and Welsh law and the UK's jurisdictions.

International family law

Given the international nature of some family law cases and the associated challenges they pose, it is vital to maintain and develop relationships with relevant international jurisdictions to promote and support the effective operation of international family law instruments, and to promote the adoption of such instruments by current non-parties.

In particular:

- engaging with international judiciaries to assist in individual cases with a cross-border element to facilitate their effective resolution
- foster cross-border understanding
- develop shared good practice
- understand shared challenges and encourage the development of common standards.

Technological innovation

The judiciary continues to innovate, seeking to reduce the cost and time of litigation and to improve access to justice in a variety of areas. Innovations in the resolution of patents and intellectual property disputes will be an important area to explore with other jurisdictions. LawTech UK brings together UK Government, private sector, and the judiciary, and aims to remove impediments to the adoption of new and emerging technologies in the legal and dispute resolution sectors. We will continue to develop international thinking and share learning on Artificial Intelligence, Distributed Ledger Technology, digital assets, smart contracts and pre-court and in-court online dispute resolution in the commercial, financial, family and consumer fields.

International environmental law

Environmental law touches the lives of every citizen, every day, in the context of climate change and all its physical, social and economic consequences. These include energy, waste, water, biodiversity and many other aspects of human existence, responsibility, and activity. As a global area of the law and jurisprudence, which requires international solutions, we will continue to engage with other jurisdictions on how best to address these challenges.

Part III: Effective engagement

Effective international engagement requires considering whether judges should engage and, if so, how they should conduct engagement.

Factors to be weighed up include:

- **Risk:** The safety of judicial office holders and the judiciary as an institution is of paramount importance. In a more turbulent world, with hostile state and non-state actors, the threat of physical, cyber, and other harm is heightened. As representatives of a state institution, judges are more publicly exposed when travelling and should take all necessary precautions, particularly seeking advice from the Judicial Office international team.
- **Reputation:** The judiciary is under scrutiny by a domestic and international audience. It is important to recall that judges, acting in any capacity, are taken to represent the entire judiciary. International judicial activity should only be undertaken after a careful assessment of its impact on personal judicial reputation and on the reputation of the judiciary as a whole. Judges should be especially careful about the opinions they express in an international forum.
- **Resources:** There are limited resources – including financial, judicial time, and staff capacity – which must be focused on the strategic priorities and on where the judiciary's international work can deliver the most impact.

These factors will often entail the striking of a careful balance, weighing the potential value of the engagement and the ability to make a real difference against the potential risk to personal and institutional reputation, as well as the cost of financial and judicial resources involved. Thought should also be given to the risk of not engaging, considering any potential loss of opportunity to make a positive difference or leaving space for other jurisdictions to be active.

Clearly, a factor in favour of engagement will be its relation to a thematic priority under this strategy or a geographic priority identified in the annual plans approved by the Judicial Executive Board.

The Judicial Office international team should always be consulted, and they will liaise with the relevant judicial international leads and partners across government.

Where activities are approved, judges should consider the best means and methods of engagement. The most valuable and lasting engagement often occurs as part of a sustained, strategic course of relationship building. Judges should avoid one-off engagements which offer little impact and consider how best to build a lasting relationship with other jurisdictions. The judiciary has a range of tools, and all are predicated on the unique value of judges talking to other judges. While face-to-face engagements are an essential method of communication and building relationships, the appropriate sharing of information, materials, questionnaires, online roundtables or webinars, and hosting incoming visits all play a part in the judiciary's international activity.



© Crown copyright 2025

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3.

Where we have identified any third party copyright material you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available for download at www.judiciary.uk