



PRESS RELEASE (for immediate release)

119 NEW QUEEN'S COUNSEL APPOINTED IN 2017 COMPETITION

The appointments of 119 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, David Lidington 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 remain concerned that the number of female applicants remains comparatively low, but I am pleased that of those women who did apply, over 60% were successful. I was also pleased to note that 18 BAME applicants were appointed, a record number.

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 2017 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 119 appointments are:

- 32 women applicants of the 50 who applied. Last year, 31 out of 56 female applicants were successful;
- 18 applicants who declared an ethnic origin other than white of the 33 who applied. Last year 16 such applicants out of 37 were appointed;
- 21 applicants aged over 50 were appointed. Last year 20 such applicants were appointed. The youngest successful applicant is 34 years old and the oldest is 63; and
- Five solicitor advocates of the ten who applied. In the previous competition six 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 2017 competition were:

Sir Alex Allan (Chair)
Maggie Semple OBE
Quinton Quayle
Ranjit Sondhi CBE
Wanda Goldwag
Edward Nally
Dame Janet Smith
Martin Mann QC
Shaun Smith QC
Tony King

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 2017 competition closed on 30 March 2017 and the Selection Panel submitted recommendations to the Lord Chancellor on 27 October 2017. Each applicant has been considered against five competencies:
 - Understanding and using the law
 - Written and oral advocacy
 - Working with others
 - Diversity
 - Integrity
5. 187 of the 272 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 2018.

6. The new Queen's Counsel announced today will formally become silks when they make their declaration before the Lord Chancellor at the ceremony on 26 February 2018.
7. 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.