

Further written information from the Judicial Appointments Commission

Please find below information on the JAC's approach to supporting and monitoring applications from LGBT people, as requested at the evidence session on 29 June 2021.

The JAC is committed to supporting the creation of a judiciary that better reflects the society it serves, across all diversity characteristics. The JAC collects monitoring data on sexual orientation from all applications via a diversity monitoring form. The JAC publishes candidate sexual orientation data as part of its annual statistical report, and we have seen steady progress with regards applicants and recommendations over recent years. In 2019/20:

- Across all exercises (legal and non-legal) 6% of applicants were lesbian, gay or bisexual.
- Across all legal and non-legal exercises combined, candidates who were lesbian, gay or bisexual had a lower representation but a higher recommendation rate from application (16%) than candidates who were heterosexual (11%).

JAC data on sexual orientation appears in the annual combined statistical report which includes diversity data on the legal professions, JAC appointments and judicial office holders. Reliable data on sexual orientation is currently not available for the legal professions or judicial office holders, so the JAC is not able to calculate an 'eligible pool' of lawyers with regards sexual orientation.

Sexual orientation as a protected characteristic is considered as part of the equality measures we take to ensure fair and non-discriminatory selection processes. For example, all test materials are reviewed by senior JAC staff and the independent advisory group to ensure there are no elements – such as content or language – which might be stereotypical, offensive, or off-putting for candidates of different sexual orientations.

The JAC encourages and supports LGBT people to apply for judicial appointment through our extensive programme of outreach activity. We highlight diverse judicial role models who speak openly about their sexual orientation and how they have overcome any barriers. We work with specialist LGBT legal organisations to share details of judicial vacancies and JAC representatives speak at their outreach events.

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