

INFORMATION SHEET

JUNIOR COUNSEL PANEL TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

The Attorney General for Northern Ireland wishes to appoint new members to three Junior Counsel Panels for (1) Charity Law; (2) Public Law and (3) Recently Qualified Barristers¹.

The Attorney General invites applications for appointment from Barristers able to practice in Northern Ireland. These appointments will initially be for a period of three years.

Terms of appointment

The following paragraphs set out the principal terms which attach to appointment

- (i) Appointment is to a Panel or Panels of Junior Counsel to the Attorney General for Northern Ireland. Appointed Junior Counsel may be instructed on any matter falling within the Attorney's General range of responsibilities.
- (ii) Appointment does not guarantee that instructions will be issued to any appointee.
- (iii) The Attorney General reserves the right to instruct Counsel outside the Panels should this be considered necessary, particularly in relation to highly specialised areas of law where Counsel with appropriate experience are not available within the Panels.
- (iv) Appointments to a Panel or Panels of Junior Counsel to the Attorney General for Northern Ireland will initially be for a period of three years. The period of appointment to the Charity Law Panel and the Public Law Panel may be renewed for a further period of three years. In addition, members of the Recently Qualified Panel may at the end of the initial 3 year period, on evidence of satisfactory performance, be appointed to the Charity Law Panel and/or the Public Law Panel. The Attorney General reserves the right to amend these timescales.
- (v) Appointment to the panels does not affect the appointee's ability to accept instructions from any other source, subject to (vi) below or by direction of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland. However, the Attorney General

¹ Recently Qualified Barristers is defined for these purposes as members of the NI Bar with 0 to 3 years experience with time running from the end of the non-practising pupillage.

INFORMATION SHEET

considers that as a rule, members of the panels should not act on behalf of parties who are engaged in cases either against Attorney General or Northern Ireland Departments or Ministers represented by the Attorney General. Successful applicants may be required to withdraw from the panels in the event that they do so. Accordingly, as panels are likely to be small no appointment will be made of counsel engaged on September 20 in litigation against parties represented by the Attorney General or the Attorney General himself.

- (vi) Junior Counsel are expected to give priority over other business to instructions from the Attorney General for Northern Ireland.
- (vii) Work undertaken on behalf of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland in terms of instructions pursuant to an appointment as:
 - Junior Counsel for both the Charity Law Panel and the Public Law Panel should be charged at no greater than a rate of £120 per hour excluding VAT. This rate is to include all associated costs.
 - Junior Counsel for the Recently Qualified Panel should be charged at no greater a rate of £60 per hour excluding VAT. This rate is to include all associated costs.

An invoice should be submitted for payment only on completion of case work. The invoice should contain a detailed breakdown of work carried out and a record of time spent. Invoices will be subject to scrutiny by the Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland. Agreed invoices will normally be payable within 30 days of receipt.

- (viii) Reasonable expenses in relation to travel and subsistence will be reimbursed for work undertaken outside Northern Ireland. Expenses will be paid in accordance with the Northern Ireland Civil Service Travel and Substance Guidance.
- (ix) The Attorney General for Northern Ireland will monitor the performance of all Junior Counsel appointed to a Panel. Counsel may be removed from a Panel if performance is deemed unsatisfactory.
- (x) Appointment to a Panel of Junior Counsel to the Attorney General for Northern Ireland does not attract any salary, pension or similar benefits.
- (xi) Where a Panel member takes Silk, he or she can continue to act in cases in which instructions have already been received.

INFORMATION SHEET

Appointment process

A selection panel comprising the Attorney General; a senior member of staff from the Office of the Attorney General and a nominee of the Chair of the NI Bar Council will meet to sift applications. Only those applications which meet the sift requirements will be considered further. If an application meets the sift requirements the selection panel may make appointments without the need to interview if the applicant demonstrates sufficient relevant experience. In other cases applicants may be called to interview where the selection panel considers this appropriate. The selection panel will appoint as Junior Counsel those who appear to be best qualified regardless of ethnic origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, political affiliation, religion or disability.

Timetable for appointment process

Applications must be hand delivered so as to be received by the Office of the Attorney General no later than 12.00 noon Friday 2 December 2016.

Interviews, if necessary, will be held on a date to be arranged.

INFORMATION SHEET

Applications

Applications for appointment must be hand delivered to:

**Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland
Linum Chambers
2 Bedford Square
Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7ES**

Criteria for appointment [Charity Law and Public Law Panels]

Consideration of applications will take into account the following selection criteria:

- A Barrister able to practice in Northern Ireland by date of application;
- Overall experience and skills specifically in written and oral advocacy at the appropriate levels in one or more of the following panel area's:
 - I. Charity Law; and/or
 - II. Public Law, in particular devolution issues. In this context Public Law is taken to mean Constitutional Law and Administrative Law
- Public Law Panel Only - Experience of working for or against public bodies;
- University honours degree at level 2:1 or better
- Willingness to give pro-bono seminars/lectures to such public bodies or organisations as maybe directed by the Attorney General for Northern Ireland.

Criteria for appointment [Recently Qualified Panel]

Consideration of applications will take into account the following selection criteria:

- A Barrister able to practice in Northern Ireland by date of application with 0 to 3 years experience;
- An aptitude for a high level of skills in written and oral advocacy;
- University honours degree at level 2:1 or better;

INFORMATION SHEET

- Evidence of commitment to high quality continuing professional development (e.g. participation in the Attorney General's Scholarship Competition or active participation in the Attorney General's seminar series for the Young Barrister's Association and Young Solicitor's Association);
- Willingness to give pro-bono seminars/lectures to such public bodies or organisations as maybe directed by the Attorney General for Northern Ireland.