

# Press release: New programme to boost judicial diversity

Lawyers from underrepresented groups will be better supported to become judges following the launch of a new online education programme today (24 April 2019).

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## Press release: New programme to boost judicial diversity

- government-funded judicial education programme
- greater support for eligible lawyers applying to be a judge
- joint initiative between the government, judiciary and legal professional bodies

Developed using government funding, the programme is the first joint initiative from the Judicial Diversity Forum (JDF), which aims to encourage diversity within the judiciary.

The Pre-Application Judicial Education (PAJE) programme will help lawyers develop their understanding of the role and skills required of a judge, before they apply. The programme will provide advice to applicants on how to prepare for the next step in their career as well covering a range of topics necessary to being a judge including judgecraft, ethics and resilience.

It will deliver a mixture of online resources and discussion groups led by judges, allowing participants to explore perceptions of the barriers to a judicial career. Targeted participants from underrepresented groups will have access to judges who will share their insight into the realities of being a judge and the ways in which participants can try to overcome perceived barriers.

Lord Chancellor, David Gauke, said:

Encouraging diversity is important in fostering a legal system that better reflects and represents the range of voices in our society.

The PAJE programme is a positive step forward to support lawyers from all backgrounds, including those from underrepresented groups as they aspire towards a judicial career. We are strengthening our world-renowned justice system by drawing on a greater diverse range of knowledge and expertise.

The Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, Lord Burnett, said:

This programme is an important part of the support offered to talented and diverse lawyers with judicial aspirations.

Promoting diversity and appointing on the basis of merit are mutually reinforcing because the wider the pool the greater the availability of talent, the greater the competition for places and the greater the quality of appointments.

Lord Kakkar, Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission and the Judicial Diversity Forum, said:

Taking the first step towards a judicial role can feel like a big decision. This initiative, which gives priority to those from currently under-represented groups, will help potential candidates understand what is required and be better prepared for judicial appointment.

The Judicial Appointments Commission is pleased to be part of this and looks forward to reporting on its impact in future years.

## Notes to editors

- JDF is made up of the Judiciary, Ministry of Justice, Judicial Appointments Commission, The Bar Council, The Law Society and the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives
  - Those who wish to take part in a discussion group are invited to complete an application form. Priority will be given to lawyers from underrepresented groups: women, individuals from BAME backgrounds and those with a disability. Lawyers with a non-litigation background (including solicitors and chartered legal executives) will also be encouraged to apply.
  - The PAJE programme has 2 elements:
    - online learning, that has launched today (24 April 2019), which is available to all participants on an unlimited basis
    - targeted judge-facilitated discussion group, that will launch September 2019, with four courses running this autumn
  - Information on the [PAJE programme](#) and access to the online learning platform will be available on the judiciary website. It will include a link to the digital resources and will hold information about the discussion groups as well as details on the application process.
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## **Press release: Dignity of women in custody ensured by planned law change**

Police will have to ask female detainees whether they are likely to require sanitary products, which they will be given free, under Home Office plans.

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## **Press release: Dignity of women in custody ensured by planned law change**

The Home Office is set to change the law to ensure all menstruating women, and others with personal health and hygiene needs, are treated with dignity whilst in custody.

Police forces will have to ask female detainees at the earliest opportunity whether they are likely to require sanitary products, which they will be given free of charge.

The changes will also require police forces to make arrangements for all detainees to speak in private to a member of custody staff of the same sex about personal needs relating to their health, hygiene and welfare.

The Home Office completed a public consultation, which saw overwhelming support from the public and the police for the proposals.

Minister for Policing and the Fire Service, Nick Hurd, said:

I have been clear that everyone who enters custody should be treated with dignity and have their personal needs met.

Great progress has been made by the police, ICVA and the College of Policing on this issue, and today we are announcing how we will ensure these standards are met across the board.

The Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) wrote to the Home Office last year concerned that women were being left without basic sanitary protection in police cells.

Examples included one force not providing tampons to women for safety reasons, female detainees being stripped of all clothing, including underwear, and placed in paper suits with no menstrual products being offered. There are also concerns about a lack of access to hand-washing facilities and the use of CCTV in cells.

The changes will ensure that detainee dignity, health, hygiene and welfare products are considered when:

- providing access to toilet and washing facilities
- removal of a detainee's clothing is necessary for investigation
- allowing clothing and personal effects to be retained by detainees

The notice given to detainees informing them of their rights and entitlements in police custody will be updated to reflect the changes to the law.

Kate Kempen, chief executive of ICVA, said:

The Independent Custody Visiting Association welcomes the announced changes to legislation.

These changes ensure that the needs of female detainees are addressed, that detainees have basic privacy to use a toilet and access to menstrual products and that dignity is promoted within the police custody environment.

No detainee should be left to bleed for want of a difficult conversation or a cheap tampon. These changes should ensure that never happens.

Assistant Chief Constable Nev Kemp, National Police Chiefs Council lead on custody, said:

We have worked closely with the Home Office and consulted widely, with partner organisations, police forces and females in developing new guidance and now a change in the law.

We welcome this change because we are a service that has some of the very highest standards of care and transparency when it comes to how we treat those in our custody and these changes only help ensure consistency across Forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The intended changes will be brought into effect when the revised Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) Codes of Practice have been laid in Parliament.

Additionally, the College of Policing has also strengthened its guidance on ensure the needs of menstruating detainees are adequately met.

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# **News story: Public urged not to bring plant pests and disease into the UK**

## **Protecting our plants and trees for future generations**

The UK is blessed with a magnificent and diverse range of plants and trees. They beautify landscapes, public and private gardens and urban areas providing habitats and food to support our wildlife. Yet the threat to the health of our plants and trees from pests and diseases is real and increasing, and we need a strong response.

We must do all we can to reduce these threats and the 'Don't Risk It' campaign aims to protect our country by asking you to not bring back plants, seeds, flowers, fruit or vegetables into the UK from your travels abroad. Pests and diseases can be present on plants, seeds, flowers, fruit and vegetables, even if they look healthy, and on soil clinging to the roots of plants or on plant products, like root vegetables.

We have invested more than £4.5 million to strengthen our border security, recruiting new plant inspectors and enhancing training. The UK Plant Health risk register is the most comprehensive in the world, containing over 1000 pests and diseases which are regularly reviewed and prioritised for action, by government and industry.

But we cannot eliminate all risks and we all have a part to play in protecting our plants and trees for future generations to enjoy.

## **One of the biggest threats to the UK**

One of our big concerns is Xylella, one of the most dangerous plant disease worldwide. Although Xylella is currently not in the UK it is present in regions of Italy, France, Portugal and Spain. Its presence causes major economic and environmental impacts.

Any outbreak in the UK would lead to widespread destruction of plants and trees, the restriction of horticultural trade and the use of pesticides to control the insects which spread the disease. In Italy it is estimated that impact of Xylella on olive trees alone has so far amounted to a loss of €390 million in the past three years.

Xylella has a very broad list of plants and trees that are capable of being infected and carrying the disease, some of which are seen as higher risk than others. At present *Polygala myrtifolia*, Olive, Lavender, Rosemary, Almond and *Nerium oleander* are considered the most significant threat to the UK, but the host list is changing frequently, which is why our advice relates to all plant species.

More information and advice on Xylella can be found on [Defra's UK Plant Health Portal](#).

## How you can play your part

Based on known threats, there are already restrictions or bans on bringing some seeds, fruits, vegetables, cut flowers and live plants back into the UK. More information on these can be found on the [food, plant and animal product imports page](#).

But to help protect our nation's plants and trees we ask you to avoid unnecessary risks by not bringing back any plants or seeds, flowers, fruit or vegetables to the UK. In this way you can play your part, alongside the actions of government and industry, by avoiding, unwittingly, bringing back something which may be infested or diseased.

If you have enjoyed seeing a certain plant or tree on your travels and want to enjoy it in your own garden then always buy from a UK garden centre or supplier. This is the best way you can be sure that they have been sourced responsibly and gone through the necessary processes to ensure they are free from pests and disease.

If you want to learn more, check out the [Plant Health Portal](#), including if you have concerns that your plants are infected with Xylella. If you need to report a suspect pest or disease finding, please contact your relevant plant health officials.