



JUDICIAL OFFICE

# Judicial Office: Business Plan

2014-15

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# Foreword

## By the Lord Chief Justice and Senior President of Tribunals

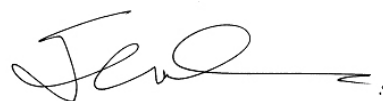
We welcome the Judicial Office Business Plan for 2014/15. It demonstrates clearly the breadth of your work and the invaluable support you provide to the judiciary, across a range of areas. In supporting and advising the judiciary, you also contribute to the efficient running of courts and tribunals across the country.

The Judicial Office is no different from other public sector organisations and has continued its work against a backdrop of continuing change and budget restrictions. We are grateful for the way in which Judicial Office staff have reacted so positively to meeting the demands we all face, by maintaining the high standards that the judiciary and the public expect. This has been the first full year for Jillian Kay as Chief Executive and the way in which the Judicial Office is responding in these times of reducing resources is a testament to her leadership.

We take this opportunity to thank all staff in Judicial Office for the advice and support they provide to us, our colleagues and the wider judiciary. Your work is essential in enabling an independent judiciary to continue to perform its constitutional role as guardian of the rule of law, delivering a justice system which serves the public. These goals are not mere rhetoric; they are essential to the proper functioning of the State. The year ahead will be challenging for the judiciary, and for the courts and tribunals. Such times cannot be met without the support and advice provided by all of you; we look forward to working with you to meet these challenges.



**Rt.Hon. Lord Thomas**  
**Lord Chief Justice**



**Rt.Hon. Sir Jeremy Sullivan**  
**Senior President of Tribunals**

## CEO Introduction

Last year was an eventful one for the Judicial Office. We welcomed a new Lord Chief Justice, Lord Thomas of Cwmgiedd, and were involved in major reforms across the courts and tribunals system, in the introduction of broadcasting from the Court of Appeal and the creation of the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office under new regulations for judicial conduct. We supported the Chief Coroner in the development of his three year plan, delivered a significant programme of training to judicial office-holders, and have supported the newly created Judicial Diversity Committee in developing a strategy to ensure the discharge of the Lord Chief Justice's new statutory responsibility.

We also conducted a full review of our functions and services to ensure that we could live within a reduced budget, while protecting the amount of judicial training offered through the Judicial College. We delivered a £1.4m reduction in our core budgets, and have reduced staff headcount by around 10 per cent, through a reorganisation which we will continue to implement in the early part of the year ahead.

In the year ahead, we are clear on our priorities: continued support to the judiciary by all parts of the Judicial Office to improve the justice system; working collaboratively with our partners to make progress on judicial diversity; and continuing to ensure that all of our functions are carried out as efficiently and effectively as possible. I look forward to working with all of our staff, with the judiciary and our partners in the year ahead.



**Jillian Kay**  
**Chief Executive, Judicial Office**

## Judicial Office

The Judicial Office (JO) was established following the Constitutional Reform Act 2005. It is answerable to the Lord Chief Justice and Senior President of Tribunals and also carries out some functions related to the judiciary on behalf of the Lord Chancellor. The JO delivers a wide range of functions for the senior judiciary and to 37,000 judicial office-holders including training (through the Judicial College), communications, human resources, welfare, legal and policy advice. Through the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office, it deals with complaints about the conduct of judicial office-holders. The JO also provides support to the Chief Coroner and to the Judge Advocate General.

**Status:** The JO is an Office of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). It is funded by the MoJ and is accountable through the Permanent Secretary for financial propriety and regularity.

**Purpose:** To support the judiciary in upholding the rule of law and delivering justice impartially, speedily and efficiently in the interests of society as a whole.

## Strategic Objectives

- A:** Support and enable leadership and governance for the judiciary
- B:** Support the effective administration of the courts and tribunals
- C:** Support the judiciary in its responsibilities for justice and constitutional matters
- D:** Support the delivery of high quality training which meets the needs of courts and tribunals judiciary
- E:** Promote public confidence in the judiciary through the effective handling of complaints about the personal conduct of judicial office-holders
- F:** Build and maintain effective relationships while widening understanding of the role of the independent judiciary among the public and those with whom we work
- G:** Provide an effective and professional HR service that meets the needs of the judiciary and supports its diversity
- H:** Develop our people and continuously improve our efficiency and effectiveness

## The role of the judiciary

The judiciary is one of the three branches of state. The judiciary, the executive and the legislature have distinct roles and are independent of one another. The role of the judiciary is to uphold the rule of law and to deliver justice in disputes between citizens, businesses and the state fairly and efficiently.

The principle of judicial independence underpins this and has been recognised for many centuries. The democratic health of a nation requires that individual judges and the judiciary as a whole are impartial and independent of all external pressures and of each other. This allows litigants and the wider public to have confidence that their cases will be decided fairly and in accordance with the law, including those to which the executive is a party.

Judicial independence has been underlined in recent years by the enactment of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005. The Lord Chief Justice has responsibility under the Act for representing the views of the judiciary of England and Wales to Parliament and Government; for their welfare, training and guidance and for the deployment of judges and allocation of work in courts in England and Wales. The Act also places a duty upon both the Lord Chief Justice and the Lord Chancellor to take such steps as each considers appropriate for the purpose of encouraging judicial diversity. The Act recognised the constitutional principle of the rule of law and placed an explicit statutory duty on all government ministers and those with responsibility for matters concerning the judiciary or the administration of justice to uphold the independence of the judiciary. It also placed the Lord Chancellor under a specific statutory duty to take particular account of the need to defend judicial independence. Finally, it barred government ministers from any attempt to use such special access to the judiciary that they might have as a means to influence judicial decisions.

Under the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007, the Senior President of Tribunals is responsible for the leadership, guidance and training of the tribunals' judiciary. The Senior President's responsibilities extend to Scotland and Northern Ireland, as well as to England and Wales. The Act also extended the protection of judicial independence as set out in the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 to tribunals' judges.

As well as delivering their functions hearing individual cases, all judges play an important part in improving the operation of the justice system through their leadership and practical experience. Much of what is done beyond the courtroom is done in their own time. The work of the Diversity and Community Relations Judges is one illustration of leadership by judges in the local community. It is also important to acknowledge the enormous contribution made by the 22,000 magistrates who deal with 95 per cent of all criminal cases in England and Wales and a substantial amount of non-criminal work. As unpaid volunteers, magistrates epitomise social responsibility; and they are an integral part of the wider judicial family.

## Priorities

Our priorities for 2014/15 are:

- Delivery of the judiciary's diversity strategy, supporting the Lord Chief Justice's Diversity Committee.
- Supporting the judiciary as partners in the HMCTS reform programme.
- Strengthening arrangements for the judicial role in the performance management of courts and tribunals.
- Supporting the implementation and development of judge-led reforms of the justice system to increase quality and efficiency and to maintain public confidence.
- Ensuring the judiciary is well placed to build and maintain appropriate relationships with the Executive and Parliament.



## Plan for addressing priorities

### A: Support and enable leadership and governance for the judiciary\*

Actions	Start	End
Support a co-ordinated, strategic and corporate approach to judicial decision making through effective advice and support to the Judicial Executive Board (JEB), Judges' Council and its sub committees, the Tribunals Judicial Executive Board (TJEB) and Judicial College Board.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
Work with HMCTS to provide JEB with appropriate statistical and other information to enable them to provide assurance for and to improve judicial performance management of courts and tribunals across all jurisdictions.	<b>Monthly from April 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
Support judicial involvement in wider work to reform the justice system, including through the Criminal Justice Board, Family Justice Board and Rule Committees.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
Review and develop the information on judicial governance on the judicial intranet and website.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>July 2014</b>

\*Leadership and Management training programme – see Section D

**B: Support the effective administration of the courts and tribunals**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>End</b>
Support effective judicial participation as partners in the HMCTS reform programme.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
Continue to support the implementation of judge-led reforms in criminal, civil, chancery, tribunals and family justice and monitor their impact on efficiency and effectiveness.	<b>Ongoing</b>	
Support the development of further judge-led reforms, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The President of the Queen's Bench Division's review of criminal justice</li> <li>• The President of the Family Division's review, with the Head of International Family Justice, of the processes supporting judges dealing with family cases with an international element.</li> </ul>	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
Support the Technology Executive Board, working with HMCTS to facilitate the development of IT systems that support the Judiciary, including e-judiciary.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
Support the Chief Coroner in the implementation of his three year plan.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>

### C: Support the judiciary in its responsibilities for justice and constitutional matters

Actions	Start	End
Support the LCJ and SPT in their statutory responsibilities to communicate the views of the Judiciary to Parliament and to the Executive	<b>Ongoing</b>	
Support the LCJ and SPT in their responsibilities for Wales and continue to build on the relationship between the judiciary, Parliament, the Welsh Assembly and the Welsh Government	<b>Ongoing</b>	
Maintain and develop the relationship between the LCJ and SPT and the Lord President of Scotland and Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland including the hosting of bilateral events	<b>Ongoing</b>	
Support the judiciary in developing and delivering its strategy and objectives in European and international matters	<b>Ongoing</b>	

## D: Support the delivery of high quality training which meets the needs of courts and tribunals judiciary

Actions	Start	End
Support the review of existing training policies for all judicial office holders in order to ensure they meet current judicial training needs and reflect programme evaluation, improved e-learning capability and secure best value within available resources.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>Dec 2014</b>
Assist in developing the new College strategy for 2015-2017.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
Support the delivery of the agreed programme of approximately 400 courses for JOH as cost effectively as possible including working with MOJ estates to identify appropriate training venues across England, Wales and Scotland and securing best value through procurement contracts.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
Carry out a training needs analysis for the training of Coroners' Officers, formulate the policy for delivering training for coroner's officers and establish an initial pilot training programme.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
Support training in addition to normal programmes for 600 JOHs in supporting vulnerable witnesses; 1300 in private family law; and 850 in the Social Security and Child Support Tribunal in Personal Independence Payments and Universal Credit.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
Support the design and delivery of a specific course for the judiciary in Wales to build confidence in the use of the Welsh language and design a similar programme for magistrates and where appropriate materials to deal with differing Welsh legislation.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
Support the judiciary to participate in appropriate international judicial training projects which strengthen judicial independence and reinforce the judiciary as a key institution of democratic governance, where these are externally funded, in particular designing a course on judicial ethics suitable for international delivery.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
Further develop the Judicial College Learning Management System (LMS) an on line system which supports distribution of course materials and houses jurisdictional e-libraries and e-learning, and extend its use across the College to facilitate access to training materials and improve the efficiency of the administration of training events.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>

Plan for addressing priorities

Actions	Start	End
Support Course Directors and Training Leads in designing and producing at least 15 interactive e-learning modules over the next two financial years and explore wider use of alternative training methods such as forums and webinars as part of a wider range of methods of judicial training made available to judicial office holders.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
Under judicial supervision, deliver a new Leadership and Management programme for new and existing leadership judges, using materials provided electronically on LMS between face to face sessions, to assist development of leadership skills.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
Assist the Ministry of Justice in building an understanding of the financial impact of O'Brien and other litigation on training resources for salaried and fee-paid judges training programmes, to inform their decisions on appropriate budgetary adjustments to enable continued training programme delivery and meet legal obligations.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>

**E: Promote public confidence in the judiciary through the effective investigation of complaints about the personal conduct of judicial office-holders**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>End</b>
Review 2013 rules and regulations and make recommendations for amendment as appropriate	<b>Oct 2014</b>	<b>Feb 2015</b>
Develop the quality of investigations through a programme of continuous improvement training for staff	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
Explore the use of on-line systems for complaints	<b>Sept 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
Work with Judicial HR, Judicial College and private offices to promote a clearer idea of acceptable conduct and how to avoid complaints being made.	<b>Ongoing</b>	
Continue to improve the JCIO’s level of service to both customers and stakeholders (including guidance and support) and respond to lessons from Judicial Appointments and Conduct Ombudsman investigations	<b>Ongoing</b>	
Work with the Office of the Chief Coroner to develop guidance to Coroners on conduct	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>June 2014</b>

**F: Build and maintain effective relationships while widening understanding of the role of the independent judiciary among the public and those with whom we work**

Actions	Start	End
Increase the level of proactive communication to extend positive messages about the value and contribution of courts and tribunals.	<b>April 14</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
Explore the potential for greater use of digital and social media to engage different/new audiences and improve the accessibility/usability of all channels	<b>April 14</b>	<b>October 2014</b>
Monitor and review the use and impact of broadcasting from the Court of Appeal and its benefits in raising public awareness of the work of the courts and judiciary.	<b>Ongoing</b>	

## G: Provide an effective and professional HR service that meets the needs of the judiciary and supports its diversity

Actions	Start	End
Support the Diversity Committee in the delivery of the Judicial Diversity Strategy over the next 18 months, working closely with key stakeholders, keeping abreast of developments in the diversity field and making best use of available resources to support the delivery, such as e-learning via LMS.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>October 2015</b>
Support the development of proposals to facilitate the most effective use of the judiciary for the delivery of justice.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
Ensure the successful delivery of e-HR and develop the potential of e-HR as a source of statistical and management information to underpin diversity and workforce planning.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>March 2015</b>
Assist and support the Judicial Pensions Committee in responding to the government's proposed reforms of the Judicial Pension Schemes.	<b>Ongoing</b>	
Ensure effective support for judicial welfare, including through policy and procedures for managing sick absence, performance, conduct and grievance.	<b>Ongoing</b>	
Pilot and introduce a scheme of appraisal agreed with the senior judiciary and HMCTS. Work with the Judicial College and Judicial Appointments Commission to develop appropriate links between appraisal, training and appointments.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
Support the senior judiciary in relation to implementation of the appointments provisions of the Crime & Courts Act 2013.	<b>Ongoing</b>	
Support the Lord Chancellor in respect of his/her responsibility for the terms of appointment and conditions of service for judicial officeholders by providing interpretation and advice to the judiciary and HMCTS and by identifying to MoJ where reform may be required and how that reform may be made.	<b>Ongoing</b>	
Support the Senior Presiding Judge and Lord Chancellor in fulfilling their responsibilities for magistrates and advisory committees.	<b>Ongoing</b>	



## H: Develop our people and continuously improve our efficiency and effectiveness

Actions	Start	End
Implement and evaluate changes to our organisation and roles developed through the 2013 'options for change' programme.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>August 2014</b>
Ensure effective learning and development across the JO through the creation of a JO-wide learning and development plan and promotion of relevant opportunities and courses to staff, including e-learning.	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
Develop the JO Intranet so that it delivers information to staff more effectively and trial new web-tools to improve information sharing and staff collaboration.	<b>TBC</b>	<b>TBC</b>
Explore methods of increasing flexible working including project working.	<b>Ongoing</b>	<b>July 2014</b>

## Staff headcount

	<b>FTEs</b>
Chief Executive	1.0
Judicial College	57.5
Business Support	13.0
International	3.7
Jurisdictional Support	47.6
Judicial HR	40.7
Judicial Conduct Investigations Office	15.0
Press & Communications	7.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>186.3</b>

## Budget 2014-15

	<b>£000's</b>
Staff costs	8,492.0
Judicial College	8,339.0
Centrally Managed Expenditure	562.0
International	56.0
Jurisdictional Support	156.0
Civil Justice Council	40.0
Family Justice Council	16.0
Judicial HR	257.0
Judicial Conduct Investigations Office	34.0
Press & Communications	153.0
<b>Total*</b>	<b>18,105</b>

\* Excludes any additional costs arising from *Miller & Others v Ministry of Justice*