PRESS RELEASE (For Immediate Use)

105 NEW KING'S COUNSEL APPOINTED IN THE 2024 COMPETITION

The appointments of 105 new King's Counsel (also known as silk) are announced today.

These appointments are made by His Majesty The King on the advice of the Lord Chancellor, Shabana Mahmood KC MP, following consideration by the independent King's Counsel (KC) Selection Panel.

Monisha Shah, Chair of the Selection Panel, said today:

"I would like to offer my congratulations to all the new silks announced today. The selection process is a rigorous and demanding one and I believe that every one of these new silks will be a credit to their profession.

The competency framework for the award of King's Counsel is set by the Professions. We do not operate quotas for appointment and the process is heavily dependent on the strength of the evidence provided by leaders and peers about each applicant. The submission of honest, evidence-based assessments is pivotal to the work of the Selection Panel. On behalf of the Panel, I would like to thank the over 2,200 assessors who provided assessments to the Selection Panel this year.

I am particularly pleased to note the many successful applicants from a range of diverse backgrounds including minoritised communities and those with disabilities. However, we continue to be concerned about the lack of success of black applicants and the challenges they face to demonstrate their excellence in the higher courts of England and Wales in the course of their careers.

Within the boundaries of our remit, the KCA panel seeks to ensure that our own process of application is clear and transparent for all applicants from all backgrounds, regions and specialisms. To that end, in addition to detailed guidance on our website, we offer a range of events and webinars during the year where prospective applicants can hear from members of the panel and engage with us directly. We have also engaged extensively with clerks, heads of chambers, early and mid-career barristers, circuits, solicitor groups, specialist bar associations and various EDI networks within the profession to offer information, guidance and resources about the KC application and appointment process. I am positive that the number of applications we received this year are indicative of the clarity of our process and a confidence in our system."

A full report on the 2024 competition will be published on the KC Appointments website.

A list of the new silks is attached. The statistics for successful applicants are as follows;

- The overall success rate was 32%; 105 out of a total 326.
- 72 male applicants, 30% success rate
- 33 female applicants, 39% success rate.
- 18 applicants who declared an ethnic origin other than white, 30% success rate
- 8 applicants who declared a disability; 42% success rate
- One solicitor of five solicitor applicants; 20% success rate

Notes for Editors

1. King's Counsel are appointed by The King, on the advice of the Lord Chancellor. She 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 King's Counsel Selection Panel for the 2024 competition were:

   Monisha Shah (Chair)
   Dr Douglas Board
   Matthew Chapman KC
   Paul Grant
   Diana Luchford
   John Montague
   Sir Paul Morgan
   Sara Nathan OBE
   Dame Anne Rafferty
   Mena Ruparel
   Sultana Tafadar KC

   The Selection Panel is supported by its own Secretariat.

3. The KC 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, and there were further fine-tuning adjustments in 2019 and 2020. The selection process is financed entirely through applicants' fees. A copy of the agreed Process and further information is available from the King's Counsel Appointments website: www.kcappointments.org

4. Applications for the 2024 competition closed on 19 April 2024 and the Selection Panel submitted recommendations to the Lord Chancellor on 13 November 2024. Each applicant has been considered against five competencies:

   - Understanding and using the law
   - Written and oral advocacy
   - Working with others
   - Diversity action and understanding
   - Integrity

5. KCA collects 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 review all the evidence on each interviewed applicant.

6. 150 of the 327 applicants were offered an interview by the Selection Panel (although one did not attend due to ill health). All unsuccessful applicants receive written

personal feedback on their application. The Panel expects to invite applications for the next round of applications in March 2025.

7. Copies of the Selection Panel's report will be available on the KCA website shortly. Further information can also be obtained from Hannah Miller, Chief Executive of KCA, on 0207 831 0020.