



UKSC and JCPC User Group Meeting

At 5:00pm on Wednesday 22 July 2026

Held remotely via Microsoft Teams

Chaired by Lord Sales

In attendance from the Court:

- Lord Sales
- Vicky Fox, Chief Executive
- Sam Clark, Director of Corporate Services
- Laura Angus, Registrar
- Celia Cave, Registrar

MINUTES

1. Welcome to the UKSC and JCPC User Group and Introductions (Lord Sales)

Lord Sales welcomed attendees to the meeting and gave a brief introduction. Apologies were noted from Lord Briggs. Lord Sales introduced members of the Court attending the meeting, including Vicky Fox, Sam Clark, and Registrars Laura Angus and Celia Cave.

2. AI Update (Lord Sales)

Lord Sales provided an update on the Court's approach to artificial intelligence. He explained that the Court has been taking expert advice and monitoring developments across the legal profession. The Court intends to begin piloting Microsoft Copilot for internal administrative purposes only and will not use AI for

judicial decision-making or judicial functions. It was also noted that the Court is considering issuing guidance regarding the use of AI by court users. In the meantime, counsel and solicitors remain personally responsible for the accuracy of all material submitted to the Court and should take particular care to check AI-generated content for errors or hallucinations.

3. Consultation on Written Case Length (Lord Sales)

Lord Sales informed attendees that the Court is considering reducing the current written case limit to 30 pages and introducing a maximum word count of 15,000 words*. He explained that the existing 50-page limit was intended to operate as a maximum rather than a target and that concerns had arisen regarding attempts to circumvent current requirements through formatting adjustments.

Lord Sales emphasised that the Court wished to encourage concise and focused advocacy while remaining interested in receiving feedback from court users before any final decision is made. It was confirmed that procedural applications would remain available in appropriate cases where a longer written case is justified.

4. Court Updates (Vicky Fox)

Vicky Fox provided a number of Court updates. She noted the retirement of Lord Richards and the appointment of Lord Snowden. She also advised attendees of Lord Reed's planned retirement in January 2027, Lord Lloyd-Jones' retirement on reaching the mandatory retirement age in January 2027, and Lord Stephens' planned retirement in April 2027. Selection commissions are underway or planned in connection with these vacancies and announcements will be made in due course.

Vicky also reflected on the Court's successful sitting in Glasgow during May 2026. The Court heard three appeals and undertook a substantial programme of outreach and engagement activities with legal professionals, students and local

organisations. Vicky expressed the Court's expressed gratitude for the support and welcome received during the visit.

Attendees were further reminded that the Court's Annual Report and Accounts for 2025–26 had been published and was available on the Courts' websites here:

[Annual reports and accounts - UK Supreme Court](#)

And

[Annual reports and accounts - JCPC](#)

5. JCPC Visa Arrangements (Vicky Fox)

Vicky Fox advised that the Court is now able to support representing counsel with their visa application to attend JCPC hearings in person by enabling a **gratis** visa route.

Working with the Home Office to enable this option underlines the Court's commitment to access to justice for all and we are pleased to be able to further support JCPC Counsel with their visas.

When a hearing date is confirmed, counsel should confirm with Registry (through the portal) that they will attend in person and that they will be requesting a visa.

The Court will supply an **invitation letter** and **further guidance** on how to apply.

It is to be noted that:

- Such visa applications will go through the usual database checks and that additional information may, in some circumstances, be required (the visa team will obtain this direct through the applicant).
- Such visas are for counsel appearing for JCPC cases, and any additional travellers (e.g. family members), would need to follow the 'normal' route for obtaining their visa.
- If a situation emerged where a visa was to be refused, as part of the 'gratis' process, the applicant would be given the option to 'withdraw' their application.

Counsel intending to attend hearings in person should notify Registry through the Portal once a hearing date has been confirmed. The Court will then provide supporting documentation and guidance relating to the visa application process. It was clarified that the arrangement applies to counsel appearing before the JCPC and does not extend to accompanying family members or other additional travellers.

6. JCPC Fees Consultation (Lord Sales)

Lord Sales provided an update on the consultation regarding JCPC fees. The consultation opened in June and runs until 22 September 2026. Attendees were advised that fees have remained unchanged since 2013 and that proposals have been developed to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the Court. The consultation includes options for a general fee increase, a phased increase structure and the introduction of a fee structure for References. Feedback from stakeholders is welcomed before a final decision is taken later in the year.

7. Practice Direction Amendments (Laura Angus)

Laura Angus outlined a number of minor amendments to the UKSC and JCPC Practice Directions. These changes include:

- A new process allowing replies to Notices of Objection in very limited circumstances.
- Amendments reflecting current practice regarding Notices of Intention to Proceed in the JCPC.
- Changes concerning the binding and presentation of hard-copy documents – making the current wording mandatory not advisory.
- Clarification that transcriber breaks during hearings will **not** be granted by the Court.
- Reversal of the presumption regarding court dress.
- Amendments relating to fee notes and costs procedures.

The revised Practice Directions will be published on the Courts' websites in due course.

8. Registry Items (Celia Cave)

Celia Cave raised a number of Registry matters and reminders for court users.

These included:

- Judicial directions will normally be communicated through the Portal and parties are responsible for monitoring updates and complying with directions.
- Registry continues to refer litigants in person who obtain permission to appeal to Advocate and welcomes expressions of interest from firms willing to assist on a pro bono basis. Registry would act as a signposting service to these firms, not as a referral service.
- A reminder that Bundles should not be more than 700 MB. That's a limit not a target. They should be a maximum of approximately 100 MB unless there are a number of linked and/or complex cases. The bigger the bundle, the harder it is for the Justices to navigate in real time in hearings. The rule of thumb would be 2,500 pages should be around 90 MB.
- A gentle request to please not ask Registry staff to interpret PD or Rules.
- Please also do not ask the Registry staff or judgments clerk to interpret the PD on the judgments embargo. The purpose of sharing the judgment is for typographical errors, so please bear this in mind.
- Registry staff are unable to provide legal advice. Parties should exercise their own professional judgment when completing court forms and procedural documents.

9. AOB

Several questions were raised by attendees concerning Portal functionality, electronic bundles and procedural matters. Discussion included the availability of Notices of Appeal on the Portal, the content contained within downloaded Notices

of Appeal and the structure of electronic hearing bundles. The Registrars confirmed that these matters would be considered further as part of ongoing development and review of Court processes.

Attendees also discussed the proposed reduction in written case length. Views were expressed regarding flexibility for minor transgressions of the page or word limit and the management of complex cases. Lord Sales indicated there would be a strict limit with a liberty to apply, and reiterated that the Court is actively seeking feedback from users before reaching a final decision. (*An email seeking feedback has now gone out to Portal users seeking feedback by 15 September to UKSCandJCPCinformalconsultation@supremecourt.uk . The proposal is for a limit of **30 pages**, and a maximum of **12,000** words).

A question was also raised regarding the availability of gratis visas for attorneys. Vicky Fox clarified that eligibility depends on the individual's role in the proceedings and whether they are appearing as counsel.

Close