



UKSC AND JCPC USER GROUP MEETING

At 16:30pm on Wednesday 22 January 2025

At: The Supreme Court,

In person and Remotely via Teams

Chaired by Lord Hodge

In attendance from the Court: Lord Briggs (via Teams)

Laura Angus, Registrar

Celia Cave, Registrar (via Teams)

Sam Clarke, Director of Corporate Services and Change

Vicky Fox, CEO

MINUTES

1. Welcome to the UKSC and JCPC user group and introductions (Lord Hodge)

Lord Hodge welcomed attendees and introduced Lord Briggs, as well as Sam, Vicky, Laura and Celia.

2. Court activities (Vicky Fox)

Vicky gave a summary of the recent successes of the Court and in particular the ways that the UKSC marked its 15th year anniversary last year, which included:

1. An exhibition setting out some of the most important judgments of the last 15 years;
2. Justices attending anniversary events in all four Nations of the UK; and

3. the updating of a booklet of public international law cases with a foreword by Lord Lloyd-Jones.

Vicky further set out the international and outreach work of the Court. Finally, Vicky celebrated Dame Janice Pereira sitting with the JCPC last term, and confirmed that she will continue to do so this term (sitting remotely). Lord Hodge confirmed that it is the ambition of the Court to invite other Justices from JCPC jurisdictions to sit on JCPC cases in the future.

3. Change Programme Update (Sam Clarke)

Lord Hodge commended Sam on delivering this programme on time and in budget.

Sam Clarke gave an update confirming the two new websites and the case management Portal have launched. She thanked all users who had contributed to the user research over the life of the Change Programme, plus those who took part in the soft launch. All had given vital feedback. She gave a summary of issues that had come up since go-live and the fixes that were implemented.

Participants of the meeting gave further feedback on their experiences and Sam confirmed that each piece of feedback is being logged and, where appropriate, action taken.

4. Registry Items (Laura Angus and Celia Cave)

Celia Cave explained that the transition of the new system has been efficient for Registry staff, as it has been easier to navigate and input information.

Laura Angus gave the following update:

- a. There will be no DX service at the Court from 1 April.
- b. There is new very detailed electronic bundle guidance on the website, which is applicable for all appeal bundles (whether the case is a Portal or non-Portal case).
- c. There are an abundance of FAQs and video guides to help with the new system. Parties are politely asked to check these, as well as reading the Rules and PDs before asking for assistance.
- d. The old rules and PDs are still on the website in the 'How to Appeal' → 'non-portal forms and rules' section. If your case was not filed on the Portal, it will be subject to the 'old' rules and PD.

- e. For old cases, parties can correspond via email, and for Portal cases, parties must use the new 'correspondence' function on the Portal.
- f. A new practice has been put into place where Registry is asking parties to draft orders once judgments been handed down.

5. Junior Counsel (Lord Hodge)

Lord Hodge clarified the UKSC practice note regarding junior counsel (issued in March 2024). Lord Hodge confirmed that it is not a requirement for junior counsel to speak if there is no opportunity for them to do so. The purpose of the practice note is to give junior counsel more exposure to appellate pleading and to encourage and develop junior lawyers.

Lord Hodge confirmed the practice note does not apply to the JCPC at present.

6. AOB (Celia Cave)

A question regarding the embargo of a judgment before it is handed down.

Celia clarified that the embargo means that the content of a judgment cannot be shared with the client, but the existence of it can.

7. End (Lord Hodge)

Lord Hodge thanked participants for their time and feedback. He noted that this a time of radical change in ways of working but is very hopeful the new system continues to work to make the Court more efficient.