



Service Level Agreement
Between the Northern Ireland Lay
Magistrates' Association and
Judicial Studies Board

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Introduction

The purpose of this Service Level Agreement is to clarify the business relationship between the Judicial Studies Board for Northern Ireland (JSB) and The Northern Ireland Lay Magistrates' Association (the Association). It serves to inform all Association members of the level of service it can expect to receive from staff in JSB, and provide advice on the role that the Association plays within our business relationship.

It is intended that this document will be a useful source of information and guidance for all Lay Magistrates, and will enhance the working relationship between JSB and the Association, while maintaining the independence of the Association.

Background

JSB falls under the auspices of the Office of The Lord Chief Justice, and amongst other things is responsible for training Lay Magistrates and paying agreed related expenses.

The Association is an independent body, led by an *Executive Committee*. The Committee is usually comprised of representatives from each county court division (except in the case of Belfast which has two representatives), a Training Committee representative, and four office holders - Chairman, Vice-chairman, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer. Committee members who represent their county court divisions normally arrange and facilitate meetings within their respective divisions.

The Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) pays Lay Magistrates travel and expenses in respect of their services, by virtue of Section 9 (11) of the Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002. These expenses are paid in accordance with the current rates and conditions. Claim forms for travel and subsistence expenses are issued by JSB at training events and are also available on request.

Judicial Studies Board Responsibilities

JSB will pay expenses to Lay Magistrates for attendance at training events and meetings organised or **approved in advance** by JSB

JSB is also responsible for providing the secretariat to the *Lay Magistrates' Training Committee (LMTC)*. The composition of the LMTC is laid down in its Constitution.

JSB is responsible for identifying training needs for Lay Magistrates, organising and facilitating relevant training, and evaluating all training delivered. It is also responsible for ensuring that the training delivers the best value for money.

The following services will be provided by JSB in order to give effect to its training responsibilities:

1. Provide the secretariat for the LMTC and pay associated travel expenses.
2. Provide induction training for newly appointed Lay Magistrates and supply appropriate materials.
3. Organise an annual programme of training in agreement with the LMTC.
4. Process payments for travel expenses and fees for attendance at training events that have been organised by or approved in advance by JSB.
5. Process travel expenses payments for attendance at meetings organised by JSB.
6. Arrange travel and accommodation, and process agreed expenses claims for attendance at external training events approved by JSB, following the prior submission and approval of a JSB External Course application form from the prospective attendee. See **Annex A**.
7. Issue information bulletins and training materials as necessary.
8. Provide advice and guidance on any training related matter.

9. Monitor/balance the Lay Magistrates proportion of the JSB budget.

The following services will be provided by JSB to support the work of the Association.

- a) Administer the Association Annual General Meeting (provided that a training event takes place).
- b) Process travel payments for attendance at divisional Association meetings (up to a maximum of 4 per year in Belfast and 3 per year in all other divisions and not more than 1 visit per year to criminal justice related establishments) - provided that prior approval has been given by JSB. The number of meetings will be kept under review.
- c) JSB will approve the training topic and cost of room hire for divisional Association meetings in advance, and will provide security advice regarding the venue. The venue should be the most economical possible and may include use of the court estate. An application seeking funding approval should be submitted to JSB, giving as much notice as possible but not less than 2 weeks, to ensure sufficient time for approval and security clearance. See **Annex B**.
- d) Process invoices and reimburse approved expenditure for room hire for divisional Association meetings provided that a training event has taken place and that a training report and an attendance list have been submitted.
- e) Undertake periodic reviews of the training element and administration of divisional Association meetings.
- f) Arrange, when available, accommodation within the court estate for Executive meetings. Process travel claims for attendance at Executive meetings (up to 4 per year, NILMA will endeavour to arrange 1 of the 4 meetings as part of the AGM – attendance lists must be supplied).

Association Responsibilities

The Association is run by and receives funding from Lay Magistrates.

The following services will be provided by the Association in order to support the work of JSB.

1. The Executive Committee will endeavour to ensure that all Association members are provided with a copy of the Rules of the Association.
2. The Executive Committee will endeavour to ensure that all members are aware that the Association is independent from the NICTS and JSB.
3. The Executive Committee will provide timely notification to JSB of its membership, including office holders, and any changes to that membership.
4. The Executive Committee will notify JSB of the names of Divisional Chairs and Divisional Secretaries, and any changes as they occur.
5. Executive and Divisional Secretaries or Chairs will give advance notice to JSB of meetings of the Executive Committee, Divisional meetings and visits to custodial or attendance centres, and children's facilities. This notice is required in order that JSB can approve expenditure and can check the security suitability of the proposed venue and date.
6. Executive and Divisional Secretaries or Chairs will provide JSB with timely lists of attendances at meetings of the Executive Committee, Divisional meetings and visits to criminal justice related establishments within one week of the event in order that relevant travel claims can be processed in an efficient manner. Any associated training report should be sent to JSB within two weeks of the event.
7. The Association will reimburse members for expenditure on stationery used and phone calls made in carrying out Association duties.
8. Association members will adhere to the NICTS guidelines when submitting claims for expenses. Detailed guidelines are set out in the Lay Magistrates Induction Booklet which can be accessed via the Lay Magistrates' Resources section of the JudiciaryNI website www.judiciary-ni.gov.uk.
9. The Association will remind its members that the appropriate registration list should be signed at the beginning and end of

training events facilitated by JSB in order that the training fee may be paid.

10. The Association will remind its members to reply to invitations to training events by the date of response on the invitation and to inform JSB if at a later date they find they are unable to attend.
11. The Association will endeavour to ensure that members inform JSB of any change to contact details.
12. A copy of the Association rules can be found at **Annex C**.

Other Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Contacts

The Association comes into contact with other offices within the NICTS.

- ◆ Judicial Services Team in Management Support Branch deals with terms and conditions of appointment. Contact Paul Walsh 028 9072 8863.
- ◆ Lay Magistrate Liaison Officers in each courthouse deal with all matters associated with sittings in court. Contact details for LMLOs can be obtained from the JSB office - 028 9072 5904 judicialstudiesboard@courtsni.gov.uk

Professionalism within Judicial Studies Board

JSB staff are committed to carrying out this service fairly and with integrity, respecting the confidence of Lay Magistrates at all times and will seek continually to improve the service we provide, as resources permit, and update and refresh our knowledge.

JSB will continue to work closely with the Association to ensure that mutual aims regarding the delivery of training are achieved.

Contact details

Contact details for the JSB office are as follows:

Telephone: 028 9072 5905

Email: judicialstudiesboard@courtsni.gov.uk



EXTERNAL COURSE APPLICATION FORM

Name:	
Course Title:	
Topics covered in the course:	
Course date(s):	
Course venue:	
Registration fee:	

1. Information in support of the Application [Please indicate here what you see as the learning objective for you and state the reasons why you feel attendance at the course would benefit you in your capacity as a judicial officer]*

2. Proposed dates of travel & approximate cost:

3. Please state if accommodation is required and if so, specify dates:

Yes No

Dates:

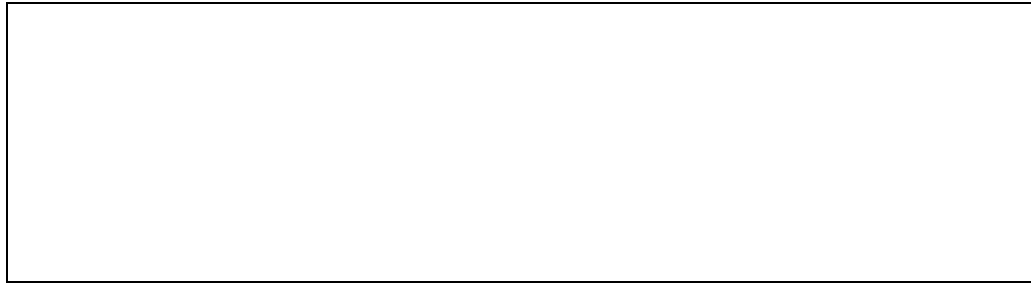
4. Please list below any conferences sponsored by JSB or otherwise you have attended or plan to attend in the previous or next 12 months.

Details:

5. How did you find out about this course?

JSB Trawl Event Organiser Other

If other please specify below



If your application is successful JSB will make your travel arrangements, this is to ensure that we comply with tax law regarding Benefit in Kind (BIK). You may continue to claim mileage and subsistence in the normal manner on submission of a travel claim.

It is appreciated that there may be times when your spouse may be travelling with you, or you may wish to stay in a specific hotel. These bookings can be accommodated through the DOJ Travel Desk. In the example of spousal travel, we will recoup the costs for your spouse from you. On an occasion where you wish to stay at a specific hotel, should the cost of your hotel be greater than the cost of the booking which would have routinely been made by the DOJ Travel Desk, we will be required to recoup the difference in costs between the DOJ quote for accommodation and the actual cost of accommodation from you. Similarly if you chose to extend your trip and travel on an alternative date, JSB will be required to recoup from you any additional costs incurred for your requested flight booking compared to the flight that would have been routinely booked by the travel desk.

Applicant's signature:

Name in block capitals:

Date:

**N.B.* In the event that the number of applicants exceeds the number of funded places available all applications received by the JSB Office within the stated timescale will be submitted to a sub-committee of the Judicial Studies Board for its determination. Consequently, the more information which you provide in answer to question 1 the better able the sub-committee will be to consider fully the merits of your application.

For JSB use only

Date referred to the JSB committee:

Application granted / refused*

*Delete as appropriate

Annex B

NOTIFICATION OF LAY MAGISTRATE DIVISIONAL MEETINGS AND VISITS

To be submitted to Judicial Studies Board for approval in advance of event

MEETING

DATE OF MEETING	
TIME OF MEETING	
VENUE	
NUMBER OF LMs EXPECTED TO ATTEND	
COST OF ROOM HIRE	
TRAINING TOPIC	
NAME OF SPEAKER	
HAS SPEAKER CONFIRMED ATTENDANCE?	

VISIT

DATE OF VISIT	
TIME OF VISIT	
VENUE	
NUMBER OF LMs EXPECTED TO ATTEND	

NAME _____

POSITION _____

DIVISION _____

For Office Use

Security clearance granted
Expenditure authorised

RULES OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND LAY MAGISTRATES' ASSOCIATION

1. NAME NORTHERN IRELAND LAY MAGISTRATES' ASSOCIATION

2. OBJECTS

- a) To promote and encourage liaison between members throughout Northern Ireland.
- b) By discussion and exchange of information and views to make the procedure, treatment and penalties uniform and consistent throughout Northern Ireland.
- c) To assist and advise in the preparation of training programmes for members.
- d) To discuss and advise on projected legislation and/or other changes affecting all matters coming within the judicial competence of Lay Magistrates.
- e) To make known the work, objects and scope of the Lay Magistracy in Northern Ireland
To join and/or become affiliated to other similar Associations in England, Wales and Scotland and/or International Associations.
- g) To promote and encourage liaison between other groups including, but not limited to: Police Service of Northern Ireland, Public Prosecution Service, Probation Board for Northern Ireland, Youth Justice Agency, Youth Conferencing Service, Guardian Ad Litem Agency, Judicial Studies Board for Northern Ireland and Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts.

3. MEMBERSHIP

The Association shall consist of Ordinary, Honorary or Associate members.

a) Ordinary Members

All members of the Lay Magistracy in Northern Ireland, who have paid the annual subscription.

b) Honorary Members:

Members who have served on the bench for at least ten years AND who have rendered outstanding service to the Association AND who have retired by virtue of age or for other reasons acceptable to the Association shall be eligible for election to Honorary Membership at an Annual General Meeting of the Association. Nominations should reach the Executive Committee via the Divisional Representative, at least three months before the AGM.

- II. Persons who have been directly connected with the administration of the law as it concerns the young and who may be elected at an Annual General Meeting of the Association.

- c) **Associate Members:**
Persons or associations of persons who, by their qualifications, appointments or achievements or, in the case of associations, by their objectives, can contribute to the work of the Association, shall be eligible for election to associate membership at an Annual General Meeting of the Association on payment of such annual subscription as may from time to time be resolved at an Annual General Meeting.
- d) **Loss of Membership:**
Membership is lost:
 - a. by resignation in writing addressed to the Secretary or to the Executive Committee;
 - b. by being struck off the list of members for non-payment of the subscription;
 - c. by exclusion following a decision taken by at least a two thirds majority of members present, and eligible to vote, at an Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting for damaging the prestige, good name or interests of the Association.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

4.1 PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT

- a) The Association shall have a President and a Vice-President.
- b) The President shall be the Lord Chancellor.
- c) The Vice-President shall be elected at an Annual General Meeting and shall hold office for five years unless removed from office as under Section 3.d. (iii).
- d) The Vice-President will be eligible for re-election for one further period of five years. -
- e) Nominees for the position of Vice-President must have been a member of the Lay Panel or a Lay Magistrate of at least ten years standing who have rendered outstanding service to the Association.
- f) Nominations should reach the Executive Committee at least three months before the Annual General Meeting.
- g) The Vice-President shall deputise for the Lord Chancellor at all formal gatherings of the Association.
- h) The Vice-President shall take the Chair for the election of a new Chairman.

4.2 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- a) The Executive Committee of the Association shall consist of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, a Training Committee representative and not more than eight Divisional representative members.
The immediate past Chairman shall remain on the Executive Committee, in an advisory capacity, without voting rights, for a period of one year.¹

¹ Rules amended at AGM 2010

- The Executive Committee may, if it is deemed necessary, co-opt additional Lay Magistrates for a period of up to one year.
- b) The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall hold office for two years. The Vice-Chairman shall be eligible for election as Chairman.
 - c) In the event of the Vice-chairman being unable, or unwilling, to go forward as Chairman the outgoing Chairman shall be eligible for re-election for one further period of one year.
 - d) A representative member shall, so far as possible, be elected from each of the Crown and County Court Divisions in Northern Ireland except in the case of the Belfast Division which shall elect two representative members
 - e) The Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer shall retire annually but shall be eligible for re-election each year.
 - f) Except as allowed for in clauses (b), (c) and (e) representative members will sit on the Executive Committee for a period not exceeding three years. However, in exceptional circumstances, such members may be eligible to sit for a period of one further year.
 - g) The Executive Committee shall have power to co-opt for the remaining term of office when an elected Executive Committee member ceases to occupy that position.
 - h) Nominations for any vacancy or vacancies in the offices of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer or Representative Members shall be forwarded in writing to reach the Honorary Secretary not later than three months prior to the date of the Annual General Meeting,
 - i) The Executive Committee shall have power to submit nominations to the Annual General Meeting in respect of any vacancy which may occur on the Committee.
 - j) The Executive Committee and Sub-Committees shall meet at such intervals as are deemed appropriate by the Chairman, but not less than four times per year.
 - k) Five members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.
 - l) Membership of the Executive Committee will be deemed to have ceased where a member is absent from more than two meetings in a year, unless through illness, or other valid reason.
 - m) A Member of the Executive Committee deemed to have damaged the prestige; good name or interests of the Association may be suspended prior to a full hearing at the next Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting. Removal from office requires a decision taken by at least a two thirds majority of members present at that meeting and eligible to vote.

5. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- a) An Annual General Meeting shall be held between September and October² each year and every member shall receive not less than twenty-one days notice of such meetings.
- b) An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be convened upon a request by the Executive Committee or upon a requisition by not less than twenty members, which requisition shall state the business to be

² Rules amended at AGM April 2011

considered at the meeting. Such meetings shall be held within twenty-one days of the receipt of the Notice of Requisition by the Secretary.

- c) At any General Meeting every ordinary paid up member present shall have one vote.
- d) Twenty members present shall form a quorum for a General Meeting.
- e) Decisions shall be taken by a simple majority except as allowed for under Clauses 3d. (c), 4.2. (m); and 9.
- f) In the case of an equality of votes the Chair shall have a casting vote.

6 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Ordinary Members and Associate Members shall pay such annual subscription as may from time to time be resolved at an Annual General Meeting.

7. BANKING ACCOUNT

- a) Subscriptions and all other monies received by the Association shall be paid by the Treasurer into a Bank Account in the name of the Association at the Branch of Bank Ltd or such other bank as the Executive Committee may decide.
- b) Cheques shall be signed by any two of three designated members of the Executive Committee.
- c) The accounts of the Association shall be audited and presented at the Annual General Meeting each year.

8. EXPENSES OF MANAGEMENT

All the proper costs, charges and expenses of and incidental to the management of the Association shall first be defrayed out of the income of the Association.

9. AMENDMENT OE RULES

These rules may be altered repealed or added to by a resolution passed by no less than a two-thirds majority of members present in person, and entitled to vote, at an Extraordinary General Meeting convened for that purpose.

10. DISSOLUTION

If the Association is dissolved, any property remaining after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to some other institution or institutions having objects similar to those of the Association.

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