

**Post Selection Day Evaluation and Feedback Report
143 – Chairmen of the Valuation Tribunal for
England**

February 2020

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an evaluation of the selection days for Chairmen of the Valuation Tribunal for England as well as capture general feedback on candidate performance. The report describes how selection days were undertaken by both panels and candidates; including what characterised stronger and weaker demonstrations of the competencies needed to fulfil the requirements of this role.

Competency Framework

At selection day, the situational questions and the competency-based questions were designed to assess the following competencies:

- Exercising Judgement
- Possessing and Building Knowledge
- Assimilating and Clarifying Information
- Working and Communicating with Others
- Managing Work Efficiently

The assessment criteria were developed so that candidates could demonstrate the proficiency and capability transferable to the role from other contexts. The specific behavioural indicators under each competency were designed to reflect the aptitude and faculty that an effective Chairman of the Valuation Tribunal for England is expected to have. This enabled us to assess candidates in a fair and consistent way.

Performance of candidates

50 candidates applied for this exercise. All 50 candidates were invited to selection day. 9 candidates withdrew before selection day.

28 candidates were recommended by the Judicial Appointments Commission to the Lord Chancellor for appointment. 13 candidates were assessed as 'not presently selectable'.

Selection day

Situational questions

Development

The situational questions were drafted by the President of the Valuation Tribunal for England. In common with all the selection tools developed for this exercise, the situational questions were designed to assess relevant transferable skills and to minimise the extent to which candidates might be advantaged or disadvantaged by their professional background. The JAC Advisory Group, which is composed of members of the judiciary and representatives of the legal professions and chaired by a lay JAC Commissioner, offered advice and guidance during their development.

The effectiveness of the situational questions was assessed by means of a dry run with a range of volunteers from relevant candidate groups. This provided an opportunity to trial the test material and make any necessary amendments.

Structure of the situational questions

There were 3 written scenarios with a series of questions on each scenario. All 3 scenarios asked the candidate to take on the role of the Chair of the Valuation Tribunal and consider issues that are typical of those likely to arise in this post.

In scenario 1 the candidates were required to consider an appeal regarding a council tax disablement relief. The candidates were expected to weigh the appellant's arguments in favour of tax reduction against the arguments of the Billing Authority. The candidates were required to decide whether the appeal should be allowed and provide detailed reasoning.

In scenario 2 the candidates were required to consider an appeal decision regarding the valuation and council tax banding of a property. The candidates were expected to weigh the appellant's arguments in favour of changing the band of the property against the arguments of the Listing Officer who contends that the band is correct. The candidates were required to decide the correct valuation band of the property and provide detailed reasoning.

In scenario 3 the candidates were required to consider 5 procedural issues that are typical of those likely to arise in the post of a Chairperson. The candidates were expected to decide the course of action for each issue and provide detailed reasoning.

Advance preparation

The candidates invited to selection days were asked to familiarise themselves with the following materials that were provided to candidates approximately one week in advance:

- Scenarios 1,2 and 3 including extracts from relevant legislation
- Glossary of common terms

Assessment of candidates' responses to the situational questions

The evidence for each competency is assessed as either outstanding, strong, sufficient or insufficient. The panels then make a final overall assessment of candidates as either outstanding, strong, selectable or not presently selectable.

Outstanding evidence included:

- Discussing the importance of the room for the health and quality of life of the disabled individual
- Identifying that the eligible person might be different from the qualifying individual
- Identifying that the appellant and his partner might be jointly and severally liable for the council tax
- Discussing the irrelevance of the comparable evidence presented by the appellant
- Demonstrating ability to case manage the tribunal list
- Demonstrating ability to deal with parties who fail to comply with tribunal directions

Strong evidence included:

- Identifying the causative link between the disability and the need for the room
- Referring to the relevant date of valuation and the antecedent valuation date
- Referring to relevant evidence such as the comparable entries and the tone of the list in a hierarchical importance
- Demonstrating ability to make and communicate difficult decisions to parties

Sufficient evidence included:

- Identifying that the appellant's partner is a qualifying individual using the room for the needs of his disability
- Deciding that the appellant is entitled to relief
- Providing good reasoning if deciding that the appellant is not entitled to relief
- Deciding that the banding determined by the Listing Officer is correct
- Reasoning their decision by referring to the appropriate evidence
- Demonstrating ability to work as a team with other panel members
- Demonstrating willingness to hear all appeals from appeals list while ensuring that fairness and justice is served

Insufficient evidence included:

- Failing to demonstrate understanding of the pre-reading material
- Focusing on irrelevant details of the scenarios
- Not reaching the correct decisions and not providing sufficient analysis
- No reference to the causative link between the disability and the use of the room
- No reference to the law or any discussion of the Tone
- No reference to the overriding objective

Competency based interview

Each candidate then had a competency based interview. Here the panel was seeking further evidence and examples from the candidate of the required competencies and in the context of the role of **Chairman of the Valuation Tribunal for England**. The competency based interview assessed the competencies not covered during the situational questions.

Managing Work Efficiently

Outstanding evidence included:

- Demonstrating a clear understanding of how to manage a busy day
- Making sound decisions with clear and concise reasoning
- Demonstrating outstanding approach to ensuring efficiency
- Demonstrating determination to resolve problems
- Showing resilience and ability to adapt to changing circumstances
- Dealing with pressure in a calm and organised manner

Strong evidence included:

- Demonstrating a well-paced approach to answering the scenario questions
- Showing strong collaboration skills
- Showing strong commitment to ensuring efficient utilisation of resources
- Making clear and balanced decisions

Sufficient evidence included:

- Showing reasonable and considerate management of workload
- Ability to resolve problems independently
- Showing willingness to seek advice and engage colleagues

Insufficient evidence included:

- Inability to pace through the situational questions
- Lack of focus and confidence in decision making
- Little evidence of collaboration skills
- Inability to manage resources
- Little evidence of resilience

Working and Communicating with Others

Outstanding evidence included:

- Ability to adapt approach of work and make reasonable adjustments to address special needs of individuals
- Showing sensitivity and empathy in dealing with vulnerable individuals
- Demonstrating assertiveness in maintaining working relations
- Fostering a collaborative working environment

Strong evidence included:

- Promoting positive working relationships
- Using a clear, structured and succinct approach to answering the interview questions
- Ability to handle stressful situations in a calm manner
- Demonstrating strong interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence
- Showing appreciation of diversity issues

Sufficient evidence included:

- Ability to collaborate with team members
- Ability to diffuse tension
- Recognising the importance of diversity
- Acceptable ability to accommodate needs of vulnerable individuals

Insufficient evidence included:

- Unfocussed approach to answering interview questions
- Lack of clarity and brevity
- Answers which were considered routine and not compelling

Feedback from Candidates

After the selection days, candidates were invited to complete an anonymous candidate survey. 24 candidates responded to the survey. Based on the results of the survey:

The instructions provided beforehand enabled me to prepare for the selection day.

- 80% of candidates either agreed or strongly agreed
- 10% of candidates disagreed
- 10% of candidates neither agreed nor disagreed

I understood what was expected on the selection day.

- 85% of candidates agreed or strongly agreed
- 5% of candidates disagreed
- 10% of candidates neither agreed nor disagreed

The situations discussed in the situational questioning were realistic and relevant to the role.

- 95% of candidates agreed or strongly agreed
- 5% of candidates disagreed

The situational questioning gave me a chance to display how I would react to various situations.

- 95% of candidates agreed or strongly agreed
- 5% of candidates disagreed

I am confident in the situational questioning as a JAC selection tool.

- 86% of candidates either agreed or strongly agreed
- 14% of candidates neither agreed nor disagreed

The interview questions gave me the opportunity to demonstrate my skills, abilities and competence for this role.

- 67% of candidates either agreed or strongly agreed
- 19% of candidates neither agreed nor disagreed
- 14% of candidates disagreed

The panel behaved professionally and treated me with respect.

- 90% of candidates either agreed or strongly agreed
- 10% of candidates disagreed

I am confident in the interview as a JAC selection tool.

- 81% of candidates either agreed or strongly agreed
- 14% of candidates neither agreed nor disagreed
- 5% of candidates disagreed