

Junior Lawyers Division

Executive committee elections 2019

Guidance for student representative candidates

September 2019

Introduction

This guide to the Junior Lawyers Division student representative elections 2019 sets out the following information:

- General information about the JLD
- Role of student representative
- Main committee tasks and responsibilities
- Main national committee tasks and responsibilities
- The executive committee positions explained
- The appointment process
- Timetable

Please note

If you are thinking of standing for the JLD executive, then it is important that you:

- Read the guidance notes as set out below.
- Read the FAQs which can be found at www.lawsociety.org.uk/juniorlawyers
- Note that there are separate guidance notes and nomination form for the main executive committee vacancies at www.lawsociety.org.uk/juniorlawyers

1. About the Junior Lawyers Division

The Junior Lawyers Division (JLD) was launched in January 2008. It is a division of the Law Society of England and Wales, and as such is part of the formal representation structure for the profession. The JLD replaced the former national Trainee Solicitors Group (TSG) and Young Solicitors Group (YSG).

The aims of the division echo that of the Law Society, but it is solely in existence to support the junior members of the profession in issues which are unique to them or which impact on them. To this end, the division lobbies the Solicitors Regulation Authority as well as government on matters of interest to its members. It also provides pastoral support, advice, assistance and information to its members. You can find out more online at www.lawsociety.org.uk/juniorlawyers.

2. Role of student representative on the JLD executive

(i) Role Overview

The JLD is looking for a student to assist it to better represent the views of the student element of the membership. The student representative role will be no different from that of a regular executive committee member and the student representative will be expected to present the same level of commitment to the JLD as a regular executive committee member.

There may be specific issues/areas affecting students (e.g. SQE, periods of recognised training, etc for which it is expected that the student representative will lead on, with additional support from the executive committee.

Where there are queries, or events which require JLD support and/or attendance the student representative is encouraged to assist and/or attend where possible as the JLD believes this will enhance experience and

awareness of the profession which is a valuable skill for succeeding in the role and ultimately boosting career prospects.

On 1 September 2019 the JLD expanded its membership remit to include solicitor apprentices. Responsibility for solicitor apprentices will fall within the remit of the student representative position.

(ii) Term

The position of student representative is for a **one-year** term. However, you are eligible to re-apply at the end of this term for a general executive committee member position, which is two years.

(iii) LPC forums / skills days

The JLD executive committee organises 'LPC forum' events (maximum of two per year), designed to inspire and advise students entering the profession on how they can secure a training contract. One of these events will be held in London and the other in a region.

- **February each year – outside of London**
- **October each year - London**

The main responsibility of the student representative is to lead the organisation of these events with additional support from the executive committee throughout. This is a great opportunity to utilise contacts whilst making new ones to boost your profile. The student representative will have the opportunity to introduce the events and speakers on the day.

(iv) Social media

The JLD recommends that you set up accounts on different social media (in particular Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn) if you have not done so already. This will be useful for you in engaging with members, keeping an eye on legal updates and boosting your own professional profile. The JLD also promote events via these channels.

(v) Miscellaneous

From joining the JLD you will have the opportunity to meet a wide variety of legal professionals practising in many different environments. The JLD encourages those applying for the role of student representative to engage with these individuals and members throughout their term to have the most valuable experience.

There will also be opportunities to write articles, blog, and provide comments for legal press which is invaluable exposure.

In addition, the first three runners up in the student election will be offered positions as student representatives on the JLD national committee (see item 4 below). These are one-year seats also. Student representatives on the national committee are not required to attend the handover weekend.

3. Main executive committee tasks and responsibilities

- (i) As a member of the executive you will need to attend JLD meetings and events as follows:
- JLD executive and national committee meetings which are usually held in London at the Law Society's offices on a Saturday or Sunday approximately every six to ten weeks. If you miss three consecutive committee meetings you will be asked to step down and your seat will be re-opened. If there are two meetings over the course of a weekend, such as a national and an executive meeting, this will count as a single meeting.
 - Two full weekends (e.g. the JLD annual conference and ball, and the executive handover weekend). The executive handover weekend this year is scheduled for 9 & 10 November in Leeds.

The JLD also holds up to four skills events on a Saturday aimed at different sectors of the JLD membership (LPC students, trainees and junior solicitors). Attendance at all four of these events would not be mandatory unless you have responsibility for helping to organise one of them or wished to attend in order to assist on the day. The LPC forum mentioned above at 2(iii) will make up two of these four days therefore your attendance at these two days is required.

- (ii) In addition to the weekend meetings you may find yourself working on JLD matters for three to five hours a week. However, this is an average over the course of the committee year and there will be peaks and troughs.
- (iii) Being a member of the executive requires drive and commitment and the ability to communicate with the national committee and local groups. You will need to be able to persuade the committee of your views and to represent the JLD outside the committee to the legal community generally. This may be in the form of attendance at various socio-legal events, as well as meetings directly in relation to JLD matters.
- (iv) You should keep yourself informed of the work of the JLD and the Law Society and current issues in general, particularly those affecting the JLD membership and the legal profession. You should be prepared to work constructively with other Law Society committee members, council members and staff and to perform an ambassadorial and advocacy role for the JLD.
- (v) Most importantly you should not see your role in isolation; the executive work closely at every stage and you should be prepared to help with tasks not necessarily within your remit, whenever necessary. This may include approaching speakers in the organisation of conferences or attending meetings to pursue JLD policy issues, as well as decision making within the executive as a whole.

4. Main national committee tasks and responsibilities

- (i) As a member of the national committee you will need to attend national committee meetings, which are usually held in London at the Law Society's offices on a Saturday or Sunday at least three times a year. Full attendance at all the national committee meetings is required.

- (ii) National Committee meeting dates for 2019 were:
 - Saturday 26 January 2019
 - Sunday 7 April 2019 (the day after the annual conference)
 - Saturday 12 October 2019
- (iii) National committee members are expected to attend each meeting having read the committee papers and agendas which will be sent to you in advance and be prepared to contribute to a discussion on the contents.
- (iv) National committee members will be expected to publicise any JLD events, contribute to policy discussions and papers and remain in contact with the executive committee.

5. The executive committee roles explained

There are nine seats on the JLD executive committee as follows:

- **Chair**
 - **Vice chair**
 - **Student representative**
 - **Six executive officer / ‘free seats’** (tasks allocated following elections)
- (i) In addition, there are three JLD Law Society Council members, who are ex-officio members of the executive and as such attend all executive and national committee meetings.
 - (ii) **Chair:** Chairs the executive and national committees, acts as the Division’s spokesperson and consequently is the person most often seen in the press. Time commitment of the chair is high, being taken up with papers and article writing, co-ordinating other committee members’ activities, attending events on behalf of the group, responding to enquiries and so on. Liaises closely with the Law Society staff and council members. This role will only be up for election when the vice chair is unable to continue in the position, for whatever reason (see below). Due to the nature of the chair position, it is restricted to those who have previously sat on the executive committee in the first instance. Therefore, this role is closed for nominations this year. For further information about the role of chair see corresponding guidance notes for candidates standing for other places on the JLD executive. After the chair steps down from their term of office they have an ex-officio role on the committee (role is known as immediate past chair)
 - (iii) **Vice chair:** Shadows the chair and the time commitment is therefore correspondingly high. The vice chair will head up the division’s policy sub-committee and will therefore be expected to write papers on behalf of the JLD e.g. consultation responses, policy briefings etc., as well as making regular contributions to the website on policy issues of the day. There are fewer events to attend which means less time out of the office, but the vice chair does need to be prepared to travel. S/he also needs to be able to work closely with the chair and may often take responsibility for specific projects. It is intended that the vice chair is the “chair in waiting” and will become the chair for the second year of their two-year seat. For further information about the role of vice chair please see corresponding guidance notes for candidates standing for the other positions on the JLD executive.

Please note: *The vice chair role is an annual appointment. Each year the vice chair will automatically become chair. This means that the successful candidate for vice chair 2019 will become chair in 2020.*

- (iv) **Student seat:** The student seat will be up for election at the beginning of each academic year. This is a one-year post only, in order to ensure that a student member is able to initiate policy relating to student members (including solicitor apprentices), share specific concerns and deal with queries from student members. The position is intended for a current LPC student or recent LPC graduate who is working as a paralegal or actively seeking a training contract. They will have responsibility for student related issues and are encouraged to be involved in the elements above.
- (v) **Executive officer / free seats:** Candidates do not stand for specific positions on the executive committee. However, following the election tasks and responsibilities will be allocated. Standard matters which an executive member can expect to be involved in are as follows:
- Local group support
 - Membership issues
 - Policy – lobbying and consultations
 - Pro bono liaison
 - Pastoral care
 - Publications
 - Careers information
 - Event organisation
 - Sponsorship/Affinity management
 - International liaison
 - Mentoring
 - Training issues
 - Writing articles
 - Event attendance

6. The appointment process for student representatives

- (i) In order to stand for the post of student representative you must be a:
- Current LPC student.
 - Recent LPC graduate actively seeking a training contract.
- (ii) Candidates will need to be nominated by two other members of the JLD (for example, an LPC student, LPC graduate, trainee or solicitor up to five years and 364 days PQE as of the close of nominations on 16 October 2019) and complete a statement amounting to no more than 300 words maximum, detailing:
- What you are currently doing, be it studying, working as a paralegal or otherwise employed and actively seeking a training contract
 - Your reasons for standing
 - Why you feel you would be the best candidate for the job
 - Relevant skills (e.g. communication, ability to get on with people etc)

- Any prior relevant experience of organising events, working on committees, etc
- What you think you can offer to the role and JLD members.

Voting

- (iii) Details of all nominations and statements received will be copied and circulated to JLD national committee and candidates a week or so prior to the date of the results being announced (see timetable below).
- (iv) Nominations can be withdrawn at any time although candidates should formally notify the Returning Officer, Yvonne Treacy of the Law Society (contact details can be found on the prescribed nomination form).
- (v) Only the JLD national committee members are eligible to vote. The JLD national committee comprises of the JLD executive committee and the representatives of the local JLD groups. Voting will be conducted by the Electoral Reform Society via a secure voting website with each national committee member being assigned a personal identification code and when voting they are able to select up to four candidates in order of preference.

Results

- (vi) The results of the election process will be announced by email on 31 October 2019. The successful candidate for the position of student representative on the executive committee will be expected to attend the handover weekend on 9 & 10 November in Leeds. Accommodation will be paid for by the JLD. Travel expenses will be reimbursed.

7. Timetable

Action	Date
Deadline for submission of nomination form and election statement	16 October 2019 at 12pm
Voting period	24 October – 30 October 2019
Announcement of results to candidates	31 October 2019
JLD executive handover weekend, Sheffield	9 – 10 November 2019

8. Why should you apply?

The responsibilities listed above are non-exhaustive and there is huge scope for any student representative to bring issues they are passionate about to the executive

committee for consideration and really get involved in any legal issue they believe impacts the JLD's membership.

If you care about the profession you are intending to join- this is a fantastic opportunity to make a valuable difference and guide the changing shape and future of your profession!

Closing date for nominations is Wednesday 16 October 2019 at 12pm.

If you have any questions or queries, please go online to
www.lawsociety.org.uk/juniorlawyers or email juniorlawyers@lawsociety.org.uk