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## UCL Judicial Institute creates first course in UK for lawyers to gain judicial skills

The UCL Judicial Institute today launches a radical new CPD course for lawyers interested in becoming judges.

The course, ***Understanding Judging: Roles, Skills and Challenges***, is the first course available in the United Kingdom that gives lawyers the opportunity to gain a greater understanding of what it means to be a judge.

The course is aimed at practitioners and legal academics who currently do not hold any judicial post but who may be interested in taking on a fee-paid or salaried judicial appointment in the courts or tribunals in the future. It is designed to enable them to answer two key questions:

- *Is a judicial post right for me?*
- *What is the most appropriate judicial post for me to apply for?*

The first course will be held at the Judicial Institute at University College London on 12-13 November 2011. It is open to all solicitors, barristers, ILEX members, employed lawyers and academics and carries 12 CPD points.

The UCL Judicial Institute has also launched a special “**Increasing Diversity Bursary Scheme**” in which at least 25% of all places on the course will be fully funded for lawyers who are from groups currently under-represented in the judiciary.

Professor Cheryl Thomas, Co-Director of the Judicial Institute, explained that: “This new CPD course reflects the Judicial Institute’s strong commitment to implementing one of the key recommendations made by the Neuberger Advisory Panel on Judicial Diversity last year. The Panel felt that aspiring judicial candidates, especially from non-traditional backgrounds, should be helped to develop the skills they need for judicial appointment before they apply. This is precisely what our new course is designed to do.”

On the 2-day weekend course, participants will gain a clear understanding of different judicial roles, the generic skills needed to be a judge, the key differences between being in practice and being a judge, and the challenges practitioners face when moving from practice into a judicial post.

Professor Dame Hazel Genn, Co-Director of the Judicial Institute and Dean of the UCL Faculty of Laws said that: “This is not a course to help lawyers fill in an application form for a judicial post or do a practice examination. Instead this course will give lawyers an incredibly valuable hands-on, intensive and personal experience of what it’s like to be a judge. We’ve also set the course size at a maximum of 24 people, and most of the work will be done in small groups so everyone can receive the maximum amount of personal feedback.”

Participants will conduct hearings, take part in panel deliberations, and write and deliver a judgment in an actual case. There will also be an opportunity to hear from experienced judges and undertake exercises dealing with judicial ethical dilemmas. The course is taught by a group of highly experienced judicial trainers all of whom also hold or have held judicial posts.

## Notes for Editors:

### About the Course

The first course in ***Understanding Judging: Roles, Skills and Challenges*** runs over the weekend of 12-13 November 2011, at the UCL Judicial Institute, UCL Faculty of Laws in central London. Fees are £500 for the course. The course carries 12 CPD points, and those who complete the course will receive a *Certificate of Judicial Studies* from the UCL Judicial Institute. The creation of this course and the Increasing Diversity Bursary Scheme are part of the Judicial Institute's commitment to implementing Recommendation No. 16 of the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Panel on Judicial Diversity: that courses be developed to help aspiring judicial candidates from groups currently under-represented in the judiciary develop the skills they need for judicial appointment before they apply. A Course Brochure with full details of the course and the Bursary Scheme, and an Application Form for the course can be downloaded from the UCL Judicial Institute website: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/laws/judicial-institute/events.html> and from <http://understandingjudging.eventbrite.com>

### About UCL Judicial Institute

The **UCL Judicial Institute** is the first and only UK centre of excellence for research and teaching about the judiciary. The Institute's purpose is to provide evidence-based understanding and intellectual leadership about the judiciary as a critical social institution and the about the process of judicial decision-making. The Institute carries out leading-edge research on the judiciary and provides outstanding educational opportunities for students, lawyers, judges and those performing quasi-judicial roles. The Judicial Institute is led by co-directors Professor Dame Hazel Genn and Professor Cheryl Thomas and guided by a distinguished Advisory Board. The JI launched in November 2010 with a high profile debate on *The Future of Judging* between Lord Neuberger, Master of the Rolls, Professor Richard Susskind and the Institute Directors. The launch seminar attracted an audience of over 200 including senior judiciary, policy makers, practitioners, third sector professionals and academics from a range of disciplines. For further information on the Institute see: [www.ucl.ac.uk/laws/judicial-institute](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/laws/judicial-institute)

### About UCL

Founded in 1826, UCL was the first English university established after Oxford and Cambridge, the first to admit students regardless of race, class, religion or gender, and the first to provide systematic teaching of law, architecture and medicine. UCL is among the world's top universities, as reflected by its performance in a range of higher education rankings and tables. UCL currently has over 12,000 undergraduate and 8,000 postgraduate students. [www.ucl.ac.uk](http://www.ucl.ac.uk)