

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the time commitment for these roles?

Our fitness to practise partners are expected to commit to at least 20 hearing days per year. For our lay chair adjudicators and legal advisers this increases to 25 to 30 days per year. Partners will also be expected to attend at least 2 days of training per year (either remotely or in person in Sheffield).

2. Can I still apply to be a partner if I have been subject to a fitness to practise complaint?

Unfortunately, any applicant currently subject to a fitness to practise sanction or ongoing fitness to practise investigation with us or any other regulator (of any discipline) is ineligible to apply.

If any previous investigation did not result in an adverse outcome (such as a sanction being applied to your registration), you are eligible to apply.

3. Can I apply to be a partner if I have a criminal conviction or ongoing criminal investigation?

We cannot accept applications from anyone who is subject to a criminal conviction or ongoing criminal investigation.

4. I am a qualified social worker but I am no longer registered. Can I apply for a fitness to practise lay adjudicator or a lay chair adjudicator role?

Unfortunately, if you have a social work qualification that would allow you to hold registration as a social worker. This means you are not eligible to undertake a lay adjudicator or lay chair role.

5. I am a qualified social worker, but I have not practised for many years and/or am no longer registered. Can I still apply for a fitness to practise social worker adjudicator role?

You must be registered with us to be eligible for a social worker adjudicator role. It is preferable that our social worker adjudicators are still practising social work.

6. I am a solicitor or barrister. Can I apply for the legal adviser role?

To be eligible to apply for the legal adviser role, you must be:

- an experienced and practising registered solicitor or barrister in England and Wales,
- an advocate or solicitor in Scotland, or
- a member of the Bar of Northern Ireland or solicitor of the Supreme Court of Northern Ireland.

You need to have at least 10 years post qualification experience.

7. What are the fees?

These rates are gross and therefore include VAT.

The fees are:

- Legal advisers: £525 per day
- Lay chairs: £340 per day
- Lay adjudicator/social worker adjudicator: £310 per day
- Training day rate for all roles: £310 per day

8. Do I have to be a UK national to apply for these roles?

You must be free to remain and eligible to work in the UK.

9. Is there an upper or lower age limit?

There is no upper age limit. Applicants will need to be at least 18 years old to apply for partner roles.

10. Can I take up one of these positions if I have a full time job?

Yes, though you will be expected to commit to the number of sitting days specified for the role in question and to the training days.

11. Are these fixed term appointments?

The initial term of appointment will be for a period of 4 years. You may be reappointed for a further period of 4 years but there should be no expectation of a further term.

12. Do I need to use a computer?

Yes, you will need to have access to and be able to use computer software, email and the internet to a competent standard. This will be important for both carrying out the role, undertaking training and for the interview.

13. Can I get feedback if I am unsuccessful?

Unfortunately, due to the volume of applications expected for these roles, individual feedback will only be available to those who are taken through to the interview stage.

14. If I am unavailable for the interview dates, are alternative dates available?

The dates set out for interview are the only dates the panel can offer. You will have a choice of dates over a given period, but you will need to be available to attend one of those dates to be considered further.

15. Will I need to come to Sheffield?

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of our hearings have taken place online using video conferencing facilities. We are currently consulting on rule changes that will allow us to keep utilising remote hearings where suitable and appropriate. Partners will still be expected to travel to Sheffield for in person hearings or training when required. Expenses will be paid for UK travel, accommodation and subsistence in accordance with our partner expenses policy.

16. Will training be provided?

Yes, training will be provided for all successful candidates. Training will take place in June 2022 and will be via Microsoft Teams. Future training may be held either remotely or in person in Sheffield.

17. When will I be expected to start in the role?

Partners will be expected to start sitting from July 2022. Availability for sitting will be sought as soon as offers are made to successful candidates.

18. How do Social Work England contract with their partners?

Partners are independent contractors that deliver services to us. Partners do not have contracts of employment. We are only able to contract with partners and issue payments to individuals as 'sole traders' – we are unable to contract with or pay personal service companies, limited companies or pay partners like employees via payroll. Partners are responsible for maintaining their own tax

records as self-employed sole traders. More information about sole traders and the tax requirements can be found [on gov.uk](#).

19. If I have a disability, can I have a guaranteed interview?

Yes. Our partner roles are being recruited to under the Disability Confident scheme. Where the applicant wishes to be considered under the scheme, if they reach the benchmarking score across all scored questions on the application form, they will be automatically offered an interview.

20. I may need a reasonable adjustment in order to participate in the application process fully. What should I do?

If you feel you may need a reasonable adjustment in order to participate in the application process fully, please contact socialworkengland@gatenbysanderson.com to discuss your needs and we will do our best to accommodate them.

21. I have some further queries, who should I contact?

If you have further queries and would like to contact someone, please email socialworkengland@gatenbysanderson.com who will be able to assist you.

22. When does the application process close?

The application process will close on 28 January 2022 at 12pm midday. We would strongly recommend that you submit your application well in advance of the deadline, to allow sufficient time to deal with any issues you may encounter which require support from the GatenbySanderson team. If you do experience any difficulties with the online process please contact GatenbySanderson at socialworkengland@gatenbysanderson.com before the deadline for the process. If you contact us after the deadline, we will be unable to accept your application.

We will be updating our frequently asked questions as the campaign progresses so do check back regularly for further information.