



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (Updated July 2019)

This document provides summary answers to questions frequently asked by advocates and their clerks regarding the Advocate Panel arrangements.

PRIOR TO SUBMITTING ANY APPLICATION, ADVOCATES ARE STRONGLY ADVISED TO READ AND DIGEST THE RELEVANT GUIDANCE AVAILABLE ON THE [ADVOCATE PANELS WEBPAGE](#).

1. How will I know if my application was received?

All emails sent to the [Advocate Panels](#) mailbox prompt an automated message to the sender confirming receipt.

*If you did **not** receive this message, your application has **not** been received by the CPS and you should resend it.*

For applications submitted during the annual application window, it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that their application is safely received before the window closes. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted, except in exceptional circumstances.

2. How long will it take to receive my Level 1 Application result?

There is no set timescale for announcing results, although every effort is made to return results as quickly as possible.

3. I am applying to join at Level 1, how many references should I submit?

Applicants for level 1 should provide one reference. An appropriate referee might be a Pupil Master, Head of Chambers or a chambers advocacy trainer who has seen the applicant perform advocacy.

4. I am applying to join the Panel at Level 2, how many references should I submit?

Level 2 applicants should provide two references.

5. I am applying to join the Panel at Level 3, how many references should I submit?

Level 3 applicants should provide two references with at least one from the full-time judiciary.

6. I am applying at Level 4, how many references should I submit?

Level 4 applicants should provide three references. At least one reference, but no more than two, should be from members of the full-time judiciary. Applicants with significant prosecuting experience should provide at least one reference from an instructing lawyer. However, if you have not undertaken a significant amount of prosecuting work and are unable to supply such a reference, this should not prevent you from applying.

7. I am applying to upgrade my level on the CPS Advocate Panel. How many supporting documents/references should I provide?

Applicants have the *option* of submitting one new supporting document with their upgrade application.



The single document, which must be submitted by the applicant, together with their completed upgrade application form, must be from a single author e.g. a letter of support, an example of written work, a reference. A compendium of documents will not be accepted.

8. I am applying to join the CPS Advocate Panel Rape List, how many references should I submit?

Applicants for the Rape List should provide one reference.

9. My referee would like to submit their reference separately, is this possible?

Yes, a referee can submit a reference form separately to the [Advocate Panels](#) mailbox if they wish. It remains the applicant's responsibility to ensure that their reference(s) are submitted to the CPS by the deadline date. The CPS will not chase outstanding references. It is the applicant's responsibility to contact the referee if there is a delay in the sending of the reference.

If a referee has confirmed to you that they are intending to submit their reference direct to the CPS, you (the applicant) should inform the Advocate Panel team in advance by email who will be sending the reference and when it can be expected. Applicants should confirm with the Advocate Panel mailbox that their reference has been received if it is being sent separately.

10. Can I request a reference from a CPS member of staff?

Yes.

Instructing members of the CPS may compose a reference for an Advocate Panel applicant. Any reference provided by an instructing member of the CPS will be considered an organisational reference, and not a personal one. The draft reference must be referred to either the Area CCP / Head of Casework Division, or someone delegated by the CCP / Head of Casework Division, for approval.

11. What information do I need to provide to those providing a reference on my behalf?

The [Explanatory Note to Referees](#) document provides guidance for those providing references.

It remains the applicant's responsibility to secure the referee's agreement to provide a reference, to provide the referee with the correct reference form and to ensure that the reference is submitted to the CPS by the deadline date. Accordingly, applicants should ensure that potential referees are given sufficient notice (28 days) of what they are required to provide and the date for submission.

12. I have been informed my reference will be submitted after the annual application window, will this still be accepted?

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that their reference(s) are submitted to the CPS by the deadline date.

Completed references should either be submitted by the applicant, in a single submission, together with their application form to the [Advocate Panels](#) mailbox. Alternately, referees may send a copy of their reference directly to [Advocate Panels](#) mailbox – see 9 above.



13. **I am applying to upgrade my level on the CPS Advocate Panel. Which form should be completed for an upgrade application?**

The Upgrade Application Form should be completed and is available on the [Advocate Panels webpage](#).

14. **Is it possible to apply for more than one level?**

New applicants should determine which level they wish to apply for and apply for one level only.

Applicants will be automatically considered for the level below, if unsuccessful at the level originally applied for.

15. **I am a member of the 'Rape List.' What training is required?**

Details of the accredited training that Rape list advocates must regularly undertake are outlined in the [Selection Criteria for the Rape list](#) – paragraphs 10 to 15.

16. **I have just completed RASSO Refresher Training, who should I inform?**

Please contact the [Advocate Panels mailbox](#) with the details of the course, including the date you attended and your training record will be updated.

17. **How long will it take to receive my Rape List Application result?**

There is no set timescale for announcing results, although every effort is made to return results as quickly as possible.

18. **I was unsuccessful in my application and subsequent appeal to join the CPS Advocate Panel Rape List. When can I next apply?**

Unsuccessful applicants to the 'Rape List' will be permitted to re-apply but ***no sooner than six months*** from the date of the original assessment. Future applications should take into account any feedback provided.

19. **Are Temporary Membership applications accepted throughout the year?**

Temporary Membership applications are only accepted between 1 November and 31 July, inclusive.

20. **How long will it take to receive my Temporary Membership Application result?**

There is no set timescale for announcing results, although every effort is made to return results as quickly as possible.

21. **When will my Temporary Membership expire?**

Temporary membership will automatically expire when results of the annual application window exercise are announced on the CPS website – usually by 31 December.

Temporary members should submit applications for permanent membership during the annual application window to secure their place on the Panel(s). Applicants will only be permitted to make one temporary membership application.

22. **I have applied to join/upgrade during the application window, when will I receive my application result?**



The CPS aims to notify applicants of the results no later than 31 December.

23. Is it possible for me to apply for permanent membership after the annual application window has closed?

Applications to join the Advocate Panel at **Level 1** are accepted throughout the year.

Applications for permanent membership at **Levels 2, 3 and 4** are only accepted during the annual application window.

24. I haven't received my result, but colleagues within my chambers have. What should I do?

Please contact [Advocate Panels mailbox](#). It may be that your application was not received or there is a delay in the sending of your result. All applications should receive an automated message from the Advocate Panels mailbox. If you did not receive this message, your application was not received.

25. When will my name appear on the published list?

The published list is refreshed every month.

If you have received your result confirming your appointment, but do not see your name on the published list, after the date you were notified, please contact the [Advocate Panels mailbox](#).

26. I applied to upgrade a year ago but was unsuccessful, when can I next apply to upgrade?

Applicants who are unsuccessful in their application to upgrade to level 2, 3 or 4 may re-apply at the next annual application window. This follows the relaxation of the 3-year rule which prevented unsuccessful applicants re-apply for 3 years.

27. I was successful in my upgrade application last year, can I apply to upgrade again this year?

Applicants, who are successful in their upgrade applications to level 2 or 3, are permitted to apply to upgrade again at the next annual application window, provided they feel they meet the selection criteria for that level.

I am having difficulty with my form.

We do not have alternative versions of the forms that can be sent. If you are having difficulties completing the drop down options on the form, this may be due to using a Mac computer.

Please either complete and submit the form on a different type of computer or, alternatively, complete all of the sections that you can typed, and then write in the other sections and send us a scanned form.

28. Can I submit my application on paper by post?

No. All forms must be submitted electronically, using the 2016-2020 panel forms available on the [Advocate Panels webpage](#).

29. Can an existing Panel member ask to leave the Panel in order to allow them to re-apply at a higher level during the next application window?

Members of the current iteration of the Advocate Panel can only apply to upgrade their level from level 1 to 2, level 2 to 3, or level 3 to 4 and cannot leave the Panel and subsequently apply to re-join in order to avoid this and apply to a higher level.