



**CROWN PROSECUTION SERVICE – SPECIALIST ADVOCATE PANEL SCHEME**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE TO REFEREES**

1. Applicants to the scheme should identify referees who will provide references to support their application(s) and ensure that any reference upon which they rely is submitted within the permitted timeframe.
2. The Specialist Panels are as follows:
  - Counter Terrorism Panel – levels 3 and 4 only
  - Extradition Panel – levels 1, 2, 3 and 4
  - Fraud (including fiscal fraud) – levels 2, 3 and 4
  - Proceeds of Crime Panel – levels 2, 3 and 4
  - Serious Crime Group Panel – levels 2, 3 and 4
3. The requirement for references is as follows:
  - Level 1 applicants (Extradition Panel only) should provide one reference
  - Level 2 and 3 applicants should provide two references
  - Level 4 applicants should provide three references
4. References can be obtained from any person whom the applicant believes best supports their application and is prepared to stand as a referee. The table below provides examples of suitable referees for each level. Please note that there is no longer an expectation that Level 2 applications will be supported by a judicial reference.

Level 1 (Extradition only)	Level 2	Levels 3 and 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heads of Chambers</li> <li>• Chambers Advocacy Trainers</li> <li>• CPS Lawyer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupil Master</li> <li>• Heads of Chambers</li> <li>• Chambers Advocacy Trainer</li> <li>• Instructing Solicitors</li> <li>• Leading or opposing Advocates</li> <li>• Instructing members of the CPS or other prosecuting authorities</li> <li>• Advocacy Assessors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current or retired members of the full-time judiciary</li> <li>• Members of the part-time judiciary</li> <li>• Heads of Chambers</li> <li>• Instructing Solicitors</li> <li>• Leading or Opposing Advocates</li> <li>• Instructing members of the CPS or other prosecuting authorities</li> <li>• Advocacy Assessors</li> </ul>

5. 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 local Area CCP, or someone delegated by the CCP, for approval.

6. The referee must complete the Specialist Panel Reference Form on the [Advocate Panel webpage](#). The approved reference can then be sent either to the applicant for submission together with their application, or sent directly to this same [Advocate Panels mailbox](#).
7. Referees should be aware that if the CPS subsequently receives a Freedom of Information Act request for release of the reference the request will be considered in line with the guidance from the Information Commissioner.
8. 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.
9. Referees should complete the appropriate reference form. There are two reference forms, a form for a level 1 Extradition Panel applicant and a separate form for level 2, 3 and 4 applicants for all other Panels.
10. The reference forms can be found in the Specialist Advocate Panel Scheme section on the [CPS Website](#) :
11. Referees should be in a position to speak with authority about the skills specified in the selection criteria relevant to the Specialist Panel applied for. The assessment boards are aware it is generally more difficult for applicants at level 2 to find referees who can speak with authority on all of the required skills and allowances are made for this.
12. Referees will be asked to consider the competencies of the applicant in respect of the level applied for under the following headings:
  - a. Knowledge of the applicant's work?
  - b. Legal decision making and case strategy
  - c. Advocacy
  - d. Interpersonal skills
  - e. Additional information which would assist.
13. 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.