



**The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom and
the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council
Guide to Conduct for Retired Justices
(2025)**

Introduction

1. The Supreme Court and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (collectively referred to hereafter as ‘the Court’) have a Guide to Judicial Conduct that sets out the standards of ethical conduct to be expected of Justices. However, the Guide does not apply to retired members of the Court.
2. Retired Justices may still be regarded by the public as representatives of the Court. They are therefore encouraged to refer to this guidance, so as to avoid any public statements or activity that may tarnish the reputation of the Court.
3. This guide supplements the Guide to Judicial Conduct by explaining the standards of conduct to be expected of retired Justices. Retired Justices should look to the UKSC Conduct Guide as a source of guidance, together with this additional guidance. Retired Justices who are members of the Supplementary Panel should also be guided by the Guide to Conduct for Members of the Supplementary Panel.

Guidance

4. As a general proposition, retired Justices are entitled to exercise the rights and freedoms available to all citizens. However, Justices accept that the nature of their office exposes them to considerable scrutiny and puts constraints on their behaviour which other people may not experience. This scrutiny can continue in retirement when a retired Justice chooses to undertake certain public activities.
5. Retired Justices of the Supreme Court have accepted appointment as arbitrators, conducted inquiries, sat as judges of foreign courts, given speeches to commercial or trade promotion organisations, published their memoirs, participated in the work of the House of Lords, and contributed to public debate, for example by taking part in discussion panels or giving media interviews on legal matters and the administration of justice.
6. None of these post-retirement activities necessarily runs counter to this guidance, but some of them are capable of presenting risks to public confidence in the independence and impartiality of Justices, and in the Court itself. Retired Justices are publicly identified as such and their post-retirement activities are therefore relevant to the Court’s reputation. Retired Justices should therefore exercise discretion as to whether their retirement activities might compromise the Court’s independence or impartiality, actual or perceived.

7. Activities which are highly likely to present a risk to the Court's reputation include participation in party-political activities or events, or the public expression of opinions on matters involving a strong element of party-political controversy. Caution should also be exercised about the public expression of opinions about high-profile issues of public policy or about matters that have come before the Court. In cases of doubt, advice should be sought from the President of the Court.