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Dear member of the Circuit,

The results of the CPS grading exercise are now being sent out. It has taken a long time and I know how important the decisions are to everyone. If you were unsuccessful, details of the appeal process are on the CPS website, documents 14 and 15, at

http://www.cps.gov.uk/advocate_panels/application.html.

Your feedback should identify where special attention is required. If it does not, tell me. My advice is to look at your original application and do what you can to supplement it in your written submissions and by any further evidence you can provide. Simply repeating what you said previously will obviously not do. The key, as always, is to make sure that you provide examples from your practice of how you meet the particular competencies. To state the obvious, make sure that your submissions are well written, well presented and properly evidenced. Take advice from a colleague whose judgment you respect. Your head of chambers and the Bar Mess Chairs should all be able to help. I am due to sit on the appeal panels and cannot therefore advise you myself about the particular content of your appeal submissions/evidence. However, the following Silks took part in either the initial panels or the moderation process and all are also willing to provide assistance: Ian Wade, Orlando Pownall, John Dodd, Christopher Kinch, Rosina Cottage, Kaly Kaul, Christopher Donnellan, Tracey Ayling, John McGuinness, Jeremy Benson, Andrew Munday, Richard Sutton, Simon Spence, Brian O'Neill, Ben Aina, Jonathan Kirk and Antony Chinn. You do not need to know them to contact them. So do not despair. Help is available. There is an appeal process and further evidence can be submitted. The closing date is 15 February 2012.

Kind regards

Nicholas Hilliard

From Nicholas Hilliard QC
Leader of the South Eastern Circuit