

SCOTTISH CIVIL JUSTICE COUNCIL
CANDIDATE INFORMATION FORM
SOLICITOR MEMBERS

This document provides information and guidance for individuals wishing to apply to become advocate members of the Scottish Civil Justice Council. It complements the Lord President's [Statement of Appointment Practice](#) for appointments to the Council.

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What Council membership will involve

Time commitment

As a Council member, you may expect a commitment of around 12 days' a year for Council business, including 6 Council meetings, 4-6 Committee meetings, and time for training and preparation.

It is important that members are available to attend Council and committee meetings. Papers will be circulated in the fortnight prior to Council meetings, which are held approximately every 8 weeks.

Tenure

Members are appointed for 3 years (but can be reappointed), unless they: resign, become disqualified from membership, are removed by the Lord President, or cease to fall within the category of membership to which they were appointed.

Expenses and remuneration

Members will be able to claim for costs associated with Council or committee business, including attending meetings, training and preparation time. Members who incur financial loss or extra expenditure associated with Council or committee business, will, in exceptional circumstances, be considered for reimbursement of reasonable costs. Members will not receive remuneration.

The expenses scheme for members is available [here](#).

Applying for Council membership

Who can apply

Solicitor members must hold a practising certificate and have at least 5 years' experience of litigating in the Court of Session or civil proceedings in the sheriff court.

To be considered for appointment, applicants must not be disqualified from holding office (section 9 of the Scottish Civil Justice Council and Criminal Legal Aid Act 2013 specifies that the following are disqualified from appointment: MSPs, MPs, MEPs, councillors of any council constituted under section 2 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994; members of the Scottish Government; and Ministers of the Crown).

Assessment

Candidates will be assessed on merit and with a view to achieving a suitable range of skills and expertise across the membership to enable the Council to fulfil its functions effectively.

Assessments will be based on the candidate's written application. Where more than one candidate is successful at the application stage, candidates will be invited to interview by an appropriate selection panel.

Selection criteria

The selection panel will be looking for applicants to have a selection of the criteria with the intention that the successful candidates will between them cover them all.

Essential requirements for advocate members are indicated by an asterisk (*). This means that you must meet this as a **minimum** requirement, if you are to be considered for appointment as an advocate member.

While it is not expected that individual applicants will be able to meet every one of the criteria listed, it is in your best interests to provide specific examples for as many of the criteria as you can.

Criteria for selection will include the following:

1. Legal knowledge and skills

- Knowledge and experience of civil law and the civil justice system, including any specialist areas*
- Ability to interpret and apply laws and regulations*
- Knowledge and experience of sheriff court civil procedure and sheriff court rules or knowledge and experience of Court of Session procedure and Court of Session rules*

2. Understanding of people and society

- Knowledge of issues affecting individual users of the justice system, including in relation to accessibility for equalities groups and rural or island communities
- Knowledge of issues affecting businesses and other organisations which use the civil justice system
- Awareness of the interests of litigants in the civil courts
- Knowledge of the voluntary sector, particularly in an organisation with links to the civil justice system
- Experience and knowledge of consumer affairs

3. Knowledge and understanding of the wider justice system and issues affecting it

- Knowledge of the non-commercial legal advice sector
- Awareness of alternative methods of dispute resolution

- Awareness of developments in civil justice policy and policy initiatives with implications for the civil justice system
- Knowledge and understanding of the effects of the criminal justice system on the civil justice system

4. Personal qualities

- Integrity and objectivity
- Commitment to developing the Scottish civil justice system and the law of Scotland
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Commitment to public office

Completing the application form

The application form asks you to give examples of where you have demonstrated the skills and knowledge and criteria required for this appointment. The examples you choose need not only come from your working life but may also include home life, voluntary activities and the like. Please note that job titles etc. on their own will not be taken as evidence of meeting the criteria and the selection panel will not make assumptions based on titles alone.

For each example you should state:

- in what capacity you acquired the skills and knowledge i.e. what did you do, how did you do it, why did you do it and what was the result;
- how recently you acquired them; and
- how frequently you applied the skills or knowledge.

It is important that you provide specific examples of how you meet the criteria. A useful way to set examples out is to use the STAR method:

Situation – Describe the situation and explain what happened

Task – Outline the task you had to complete and describe your responsibilities

Action – Explain the steps that you took or the decisions you made

Result – Explain the outcomes of your actions.

Submitting the application form

Application forms should be submitted by **midnight on Friday 18 August 2017**.

We would be grateful for application forms to be submitted by email where possible to: scjc@scotcourts.gov.uk.

If submitting by post, please send to: Scottish Civil Justice Council (Appointments), Parliament House, Edinburgh, EH1 1RQ.

Equal opportunities form

We would also be grateful if applicants would submit the equal opportunities monitoring form alongside their application form. The information provided will help us to monitor the recruitment and selection process to ensure that there is no discrimination and will be used for anonymised statistical and research purposes. The information will not be made available to either the sifting or the interview panel.

Interviews

Where more than one candidate is successful at the application stage, candidates will be invited to interview by an appropriate selection panel. Interview panels will be held in Edinburgh on **Tuesday 12 September 2017**.

The interviews will be competency based and may ask some technical questions. This helps to assess your abilities against the criteria for the role.

Candidates will be assessed on their merits and with a view to achieving a suitable range of skills and expertise across the membership to enable the Council to fulfil its functions effectively. You must meet the eligibility requirements and all essential requirements for the role in order to be considered suitable for appointment.

Feedback

Where requested, the panel will endeavour to provide feedback timeously.

After the application process

Council meetings

It is important that members are available to attend Council and committee meetings. SCJC meeting dates are available [here](#).

Important dates

Application Timeline	
Date	Task
24 July 2017	Launch recruitment exercise (4 week period).
Midnight, 18 August 2017	Closing date for applications.
By 01 September 2017	Applicants informed of sifting panel's decision. If more than one candidate is successful, invitations to interview to be issued.
12 September 2017	Interview panel, if required.
By 15 September 2017	Applicants informed of decision and offers of appointment made.
By 22 September 2017	Applicant accepts/declines offer of appointment. Statutory consultation with Law Society of Scotland.
By 16 October 2017	Appointment made.
20 November 2017	Attendance at first SCJC meeting

*It is intended to conduct all interviews on this date. Please contact us at the details provided immediately below should you be unavailable on this date.

Further information and contact details

For further information please contact Mandy Williams at scjc@scotcourts.gov.uk / Scottish Civil Justice Council, Parliament House, Edinburgh, EH1 1RQ / 0131 240 6769.