

SCOTTISH LAW COMMISSION AND SCOTTISH LAW SCHOOLS TO WORK MORE CLOSELY TOGETHER ON LAW REFORM



Law reform work in Scotland is to be strengthened and improved following a landmark agreement between the Scottish Law Commission and the country's university law schools.

Lord Pentland, Chairman of the Commission and Kenneth Swinton, Convenor of the Committee of Heads of the Scottish Law Schools signed a Memorandum of Understanding setting out the new arrangements.

It is the first agreement of this type to be signed by the Commission in its 50-year history.

The document provides the framework for enhanced joint working between the Commission and the academic community.

The new scheme will involve University academic staff, post-graduate students or others contributing research to Commission law reform projects.

Ten universities are involved: Abertay, Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Edinburgh Napier, Glasgow, Glasgow Caledonian, Robert Gordon, Stirling and Strathclyde.

The first placement is already underway with Dr John MacLeod of the School of Law at the University of Glasgow working at the Commission on reform of the law on enforcement of securities over land and buildings (mortgages).

Lord Pentland said: "I warmly welcome this ground-breaking agreement, paving the way for improved collaboration between the Scottish Law Commission and the Scottish Law Schools.

"There have always been strong and close links between the Commission and the academic community in Scotland; this agreement seeks to develop and strengthen those links. We are delighted that the Law Schools have been so enthusiastic in their support for the new scheme and we are excited by the prospect of working even more closely with academic colleagues.

"We believe that the Commission's law reform work provides an ideal route for turning scholarly research into real-world impact. We are especially pleased to welcome Dr John MacLeod to the Commission as the first researcher working under the new arrangements."

Ken Swinton, who leads law teaching at Abertay University as well as being Convenor of the CHSLs, said: "The Scottish Law Schools are delighted to have established a framework for collaborative working with the Commission.

"Scotland is a small jurisdiction and this agreement will ensure the resources of the Commission and the Scottish Law Schools are put to the best use for the benefit of the citizens of Scotland.

"It will ensure that Scotland's laws are appropriate for contemporary society and that Scots law offers businesses an environment which balances the needs for clarity and fairness while ensuring certainty with the minimum of formality and transactional costs.

“Scottish academics from all the Law Schools have a lot to contribute to this process and this new agreement will allow their expertise to influence the law reform process and demonstrate clearly how their research can have a direct impact in the development of new laws and policy.”

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. The Scottish Law Commission was set up in 1965 to promote the reform of the law of Scotland. The Chairman is the Hon Lord Pentland, a Court of Session judge. The other Commissioners are Caroline Drummond, David Johnston QC, Professor Hector L MacQueen, and Dr Andrew J M Steven. The Chief Executive is Malcolm McMillan.

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