



LEGAL ASSISTANTS POSTS RECRUITMENT 2026

A Guide for Applicants

Scottish Law Commission
11 Parliament House, Parliament Square, Edinburgh EH1 1RQ
Tel: 0131 244 6605; Email: LARecruitment@scotlawcom.gov.uk
Website: www.scotlawcom.gov.uk

About the Scottish Law Commission

The Scottish Law Commission (the Commission) was set up under the Law Commissions Act 1965 for the purpose of promoting the reform of the law of Scotland.

The main task of the Commission is to make recommendations to government on ways in which the law of Scotland can be improved, brought up to date and simplified. This includes the consolidation of statute law and statute law revision.

The Commission is chaired by a Senator of the College of Justice. The previous Chair, Lady Paton, retired in December 2025 and the process of appointing a new Chair is underway. There are three full-time Commissioners and a part-time Commissioner. Current Commissioners are: Professor Gillian Black, Roisin Higgins KC, Professor Frankie McCarthy and Ann Stewart.

The core legal staff providing support to Commissioners comprise six qualified lawyers, called project managers, who are members of the Government Legal Service for Scotland. There are also a small number of legal assistants at any one time. In addition, the Commission works with the Parliamentary Counsel Office who prepare the draft legislation which is usually annexed to Commission reports. The Commission also has three business support staff; and a professional librarian service.

How the Commission works

Programmes and References

The Commission works on a number of law reform projects. These are set out in our current Programme of Law Reform, which is approved by Scottish Ministers. Our 11th Programme runs from 2023 to 2027. In addition the Commission may be asked to make recommendations on specific matters referred to it by Ministers.

Working in teams

Each project team is led by a Commissioner, who is supported by a project manager and a legal assistant. A team will work on a particular project developing proposals for the reform of the law. The proposals are set out in a discussion paper which, after being agreed by all Commissioners at a Commission meeting, is published for consultation. Following the consultation period the comments from consultees are analysed by the team, and the

Commission's policy is agreed by Commissioners. Recommendations for reform are then made in a report (usually with draft legislation) which is submitted to Scottish Ministers or, in relation to reserved topics, to the UK Government. Certain projects are carried out jointly with the Law Commission for England and Wales.

Current projects

Projects are currently underway or planned on a range of topics under the Eleventh Programme of Law Reform, including:

- Aspects of leases
- Aspects of family law – civil remedies for domestic abuse
- Consolidation of nature conservation law
- Execution of documents
- Executry
- Heritable securities

Working as a legal assistant

Scope of the work

Legal assistants will be assigned to one or more of the teams dealing with current projects and will therefore have an opportunity to participate actively in the process of law reform. Each team meets regularly, often weekly or more frequently, to plan tasks and to review legal research. We encourage all team members to engage in discussions and we value everyone's contributions.

Legal assistants may also be required to work on consolidation. This involves intensive study of statutory texts. It provides an opportunity for legal assistants to develop a sound knowledge of the tools and techniques required when working with legislation.

Nature of the work

The Commission's core legal staff carry out legal research and participate in the formulation of policy along with Commissioners. They assist in drafting discussion papers and reports, and prepare these for publication. They also have a role in instructing draft legislation, dealing

directly with the Parliamentary Counsel Office. Legal assistants participate in all these tasks, under the supervision of their project manager. They are encouraged to work independently and to take responsibility for the work allocated to them.

Much of the work involves discussion at team and Commission level. Legal assistants will be expected to prepare papers for team and Commission meetings and to participate in discussion. They are expected to take minutes of meetings and follow up decisions taken.

The work may require liaison with the Scottish Government and with UK Government departments. There may also be close contact with the Law Commission of England and Wales, in relation to joint projects, and with professional and other organisations, as well as with the Commission's consultees and advisory groups.

Legal assistants will often be asked to analyse responses from consultees to Commission discussion papers and to present their analysis to team and Commission meetings. They are also expected to assist advisory groups and working parties which include senior legal practitioners.

The library

The Commission has a well-stocked library which is managed by a professional librarian.

Provision of IT equipment

Legal assistants will have the use of a networked laptop. We work within the Scottish Government security IT network. Access to legal databases is available. Training will be given as required.

Terms of appointment

Location

The Commission is based at Parliament House, 11 Parliament Square, Edinburgh EH1 1RQ. Commissioners and staff work on a hybrid model, with some time (at least 40%) spent in the office each week.

Period of appointment

The Commission is seeking to appoint legal assistants on a fixed term contract for a period of one year, commencing at the end of August 2026.

Salary

The salary for legal assistants appointed on a fixed term contract of one year is currently £34,936 per annum, payable monthly in arrears by bank or building society credit transfer.

Working hours

The normal working pattern is 35 hours per week excluding meal breaks. The Commission operates a flexible working hours scheme and legal assistants may opt to participate in this scheme. Details will be given to legal assistants on their arrival.

Holidays

Legal assistants on a fixed term contract of one year will have an annual paid holiday allowance of 25 days, in addition to public and privilege holidays.

Pension

Pension benefits are provided under Civil Service Pension arrangements. Legal assistants may choose between two pension arrangements:

alpha. This is an occupational pension scheme that currently has a contribution rate dependant on salary. As your employer we meet the rest of the cost of the scheme. You will be automatically enrolled into alpha upon appointment; or

Partnership pension account. This is a stakeholder pension with a contribution from ourselves. How much we pay is based on your age. We pay this regardless of whether you choose to contribute anything. You do not have to contribute but, if you do, we will also match your contributions up to 3% of your pensionable earnings. The contributions are in addition to the age-related contribution mentioned above.

Nationality requirements

With effect from 1 January 2021 the civil service nationality rules, that apply throughout the UK, are amended to reflect the UK's exit from the European Union. It remains the case that you will be eligible to apply for any job in the Scottish Government if you are:

- a UK national or have dual nationality with one part being British;
- a national of the Republic of Ireland; or
- a national of a Commonwealth country.

In addition, you will be eligible to apply for a Scottish Government job if you are:

- a national of any of the member states of the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland and certain Turkish nationals who were working in the UK Civil Service on or before 31st December 2020;
- a national of any of the member states of the EEA or Switzerland and certain Turkish Nationals who have built up the right to work in the Civil Service on or before 31st December 2020 and have leave to remain in the UK either through the EU Settlement Scheme or limited or indefinite leave to remain; or
- a certain category of family member of a relevant national of any of the member states of the EEA or Switzerland or certain Turkish nationals.

Further information about civil service nationality rules is available here: [Nationality rules - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/nationality-rules)

Any applicant with, or applying for, EU Settled Status, must provide one of the following;

- If you have already been given Settled Status, please e-mail evidence of this to LARecruitment@scotlawcom.gov.uk when you submit your application.
- If you have applied for Settled Status and are awaiting a decision, please e-mail LARecruitment@scotlawcom.gov.uk confirming this when you submit your application. Failure to provide this information or a suitable alternative evidencing your right to work in the UK will result in your application being automatically rejected.

The information provided concerning right to work in the UK will not be provided to the sifting panel. A Hiring Manager, who does not sit on the panel, will assess this.

The Scottish Law Commission and the Scottish Government are committed to equality of opportunity of employment for all, on the basis of ability, qualifications and fitness for work. Applications are invited from all those who are, or expect to be, qualified and eligible irrespective of race, age, gender, marital status, disability, religion or belief or sexual orientation.

Application and selection procedure

Qualifications required

To carry out the role legal assistants need to have achieved high academic standards in Scots law and have excellent research skills. Legal assistants also need to have an excellent understanding of the Scottish legal system and core subjects such as property law. The **minimum** requirement is that an applicant must have obtained or expect to obtain by summer 2026:

- a First or Upper Second Class Honours LLB Degree in Scots Law
- a pass on the accelerated (graduate entry) LLB course in Scots Law.

Applications from other suitably qualified candidates who have relevant experience may exceptionally be considered. Any applicant wishing to be considered in this way must set out in the Personal Monitoring Information Form (Form 1) how they demonstrate the necessary knowledge, understanding and experience of Scots law needed for the post.

Disability

The Scottish Government and the Commission are participants in the "Positive about Disabled People" scheme. Under the terms of the scheme we will offer to any applicant who considers themselves to have a disability and who meets the essential criteria for appointment a guaranteed interview.

Under the terms of the scheme, applicants should consider themselves to have a disability in terms of the Equality Act 2010. Further guidance in relation to the meaning of disability is accessible on the Equality and Human Rights Commission website.

To take up the option of a guaranteed interview, applicants should tick the relevant option on the personal monitoring information form (form 1).

We will also consider and implement any reasonable adjustments you may require for interview, or during the course of your employment should you be successful in securing a post.

Find out more about the Disability Confident Scheme at [Disability Confident Scheme | Civil Service Careers](#)

Application form and Personal monitoring information form

At the Scottish Law Commission we aim, as far as is possible, for a process of anonymised sifting in our legal assistant recruitment. The intention is to minimise unconscious bias in our recruitment procedures.

In this process, we use two forms: an Application Form (Form 2) and a Personal Monitoring Information Form (form 1). The Application Form will be reviewed by the sifting panel, to assess how well the applicants demonstrate the requirements and competencies required for the role. The Personal Monitoring Information Form allows us to adhere to statutory obligations and to monitor equality and diversity aspects of our legal assistant recruitment. It is also used to assess applicants' right to work in the UK and our minimum criteria for academic requirements. **The Personal monitoring information form will not be seen by members of the sifting panel.**

Please also submit a copy of an essay on a legal topic, preferably from a Law Honours course. If not from a Law Honours course, please briefly indicate on the application form why you have chosen the essay.

Please make sure that the title or subject of the essay is clearly marked on it **but please remove your name and all other identifying characteristics from your sample of written work. If your writing displays the name of the academic institution to which the writing was submitted, please also remove all incidences of the institution's name.** Ensuring that your sample does not have your name or any other identifiers on it will assist us in adhering to anonymised sifting.

The written work must not be more than 5,000 words. An extract from a larger piece of work is acceptable.

The writing is intended to allow us to assess a candidate's competencies in presenting written work. The legal content will not be discussed in any detail if the candidate is invited for interview. Please do not include your name on the sample of written work.

Please submit your application by email only to Scott Macdonald at LARecruitment@scotlawcom.gov.uk.

Closing date for applications

Applications must be received by noon on Thursday 26 February 2026.

Interviews

Applications will be sifted and those selected for interview will be notified by e-mail during March. Interviews are likely to take place in April, and this will be via Microsoft Teams. Please note that the interviews will be mainly competency-based.