



Life as a legal assistant

The Scottish Law Commission's role is to recommend reforms to improve, simplify and update Scots law. The Commission's work is largely set out in its Programmes of Law Reform. Under the current Programme, the Commission is considering reforms in relation to: heritable securities, civil remedies for domestic abuse, aspects of leases, nature conservation law consolidation, executry and execution of documents. As a legal assistant, you may be given the opportunity to engage in this stimulating and challenging legal work, and gain a unique insight into the process of law reform.

When you begin work, you will be assigned to one or two Commission projects and will work with a Project Manager and Commissioner as a valued member of a team. Both through internal work with your team and meetings with interested parties, you will work with leading solicitors, advocates and academics, members of the judiciary, parliamentary counsel and others in recommending changes to the law.

Depending on the stage your project has reached, you may find yourself carrying out the initial research on the present law, identifying problems and looking to other jurisdictions for possible solutions. You may also help in drafting discussion papers, evaluating and summarising consultees' responses to the discussion papers, and in drafting reports and explanatory notes to draft Bills. You will provide administrative support for the team; and also be involved in team, Commission and external Advisory Group meetings, the latter often attended by accomplished professionals from the legal world or beyond.

Throughout your time at the Commission you will be actively encouraged to express your own views and ideas in relation to your projects. Your level of responsibility on the tasks assigned to you will increase as the year progresses. The work is challenging and mentally stimulating, but working as part of a team means there is always supervision, encouragement and support when you need it. You will also benefit from a full induction and on-the-job training.

You will also be involved in different aspects of Commission life such as social media and helping organise social activities.

The office environment of the Commission is relaxed and friendly and you will have access to a wide range of databases and internet resources. The Commission also benefits from an extensive specialised library, and occupies newly refurbished premises in Parliament House in central Edinburgh. A hybrid working scheme is in operation.

Our assistantships are suited to recent graduates, of both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, and recently qualified lawyers seeking a new direction in their career. The positions offer an excellent opportunity to begin or build upon a variety of legal careers. Former legal assistants have gone on to successful careers as solicitors, in the private and public sectors, in the UK and overseas, as advocates, and as academic lawyers.

Previous legal assistants made a short video about working at the Commission which you may find helpful – [“A day in the Life of a legal assistant”](#).

To find out more, call the Commission (0131 244 6605) and ask to speak to one of the current legal assistants.