



**JUDICIAL
APPOINTMENTS
BOARD FOR
SCOTLAND**

**THE OFFICE OF SUMMARY SHERIFF
2023
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland invites applications from suitably qualified individuals who wish to be considered for appointment to the office of summary sheriff.

Sheriffdom	Posts/Base Court(s)	Further details
Lothian & Borders	1 x summary sheriff / Edinburgh	
North Strathclyde	1 x summary sheriff / Dumbarton (floating) 1 x summary sheriff / Greenock (floating) 1 x summary sheriff / Paisley (floating)	
Glasgow and Strathkelvin	2 x summary sheriff / Glasgow*	* It should be noted that candidates with considerable civil and/or family experience are sought for these posts.
Tayside, Central and Fife	1 x summary sheriff / Stirling (floating) 1 x summary sheriff / Perth (floating) 1 x summary sheriff / Kirkcaldy (floating)	
South Strathclyde, Dumfries and Galloway	1 x summary sheriff / Ayr (floating)** 1 x summary sheriff / Hamilton (floating)	** Candidates should note that this post is split is between 0.6 in Ayr and 0.4 SSD&G floating

Further vacancies may arise during the course of the appointment round but the locations of these are not yet known.

For all posts, successful applicants will have to be flexible in that they may have to work in any court in the Sheriffdom, or even across Sheriffdoms if necessary. This will be more prevalent for those appointed to floating posts, and each sheriff principal will agree a base court with those appointed to floating posts (unless stated above) and discuss the courts they would expect them to work from on a regular basis.

It should be noted that candidates with considerable civil and/or family experience are sought for the Glasgow and Strathkelvin posts.

Each summary sheriff has the same powers and responsibilities throughout Scotland. In the cities and larger towns, a number of sheriffs and summary sheriffs may work in the same building. In some courts there may be only one summary sheriff. In the more rural areas, particularly those in the islands, a summary sheriff may sit in more than one court building during the course of a week.

2. THE OFFICE OF SUMMARY SHERIFF ROLE PROFILE

Please read the [role profile](#) document (produced by the Judicial Office for Scotland) on our website.

3. ELIGIBILITY

3.1 Eligibility criteria

Eligibility for appointment to the role of a summary sheriff is set out in section 14 below of the Courts Reform (Scotland) Act 2014. Candidates must have:

- been an advocate or solicitor for at least ten years immediately prior to appointment; or
- held another judicial office such as part-time sheriff or part-time summary sheriff.

Those seeking appointment should be judicial office holders or practitioners of standing, whether King's Counsel, advocates or solicitors. They should preferably have considerable court experience.

Section 14 of the Courts Reform (Scotland) Act 2014¹ as follows:

Qualification for appointment

(1) An individual is qualified for appointment to a judicial office mentioned in subsection (2) if the individual—

(a) immediately before the appointment, held any other judicial office specified in that subsection, or

(b) at the time of appointment—

(i) is legally qualified, and

(ii) has been so qualified throughout the period of 10 years immediately preceding the appointment.

(2) The judicial offices are—

(a) sheriff principal,

(b) sheriff,

(c) summary sheriff,

(d) part-time sheriff,

(e) part-time summary sheriff.

(3) For the purposes of subsection (1), an individual is legally qualified if the individual is a solicitor or an advocate.

Summary Sheriff

A summary sheriff needs to have a sound grasp of summary criminal procedure or areas of civil law most commonly encountered in the simple procedure courts. A knowledge of family law and procedure is an advantage.

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/18/section/14/enacted>

It is essential that those applying for a summary sheriff post who do not have knowledge or experience in one discipline demonstrate an ability to learn and gain knowledge and experience in that area.

Once appointed, there will be opportunities for further study, training and development, and mentoring will also be made available.

However, it is important that a summary sheriff is a lawyer of sufficient standing to command confidence in his or her decisions with immediate effect, and it is critical that you can demonstrate both the ability and the motivation to succeed at this level across a broad range of civil and criminal work.

3.2 Professional Qualifications, Training and Career History

Your career in the law and success in that career is importance, we also value any information about non-legal career experience, or in voluntary, or other work, or any other general experience that may be relevant to the qualities required for judicial office.

Judicial experience, whether part-time or otherwise, is something that we may take into account, however, it is not a requirement in Scotland for appointment to full-time judicial office. Please provide evidence that shows your knowledge and experience that demonstrates the skills and qualities required for judicial office.

4. SKILLS AND QUALITIES

We will assess each applicant against a set of skills and qualities that are necessary for the role.



The [Skills and Qualities](#) for this role can be found on our website.

5. AM I READY

Before applying, you may find it helpful to consider your readiness against the questions in the [“Am I Ready?”](#) tool on our website.

6. THE PROCESS

You can view the whole assessment process, including guidance, hints and tips on our [website](#).

7. ONLINE APPLICATION

The first time that you apply online for a judicial vacancy, you will be required to register on our website. If you have any difficulties with the registration process, submitting the application form or any technical issues, please contact the Business Management Unit on mailbox@jabs.gov.scot

When you submit your application, you will receive acknowledgement by email. You should contact us if you have **not** received an acknowledgement within 24 hours of submitting your application.

Applications received after 12 noon on the closing date will not be accepted.

8. COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

The online system is designed to be intuitive and includes instructions for completion. You should also see the [Application section](#) of our website before completing the form.

There are some areas that require instruction and these are detailed below:

8.1 Name

It is mandatory to include your full name, including any middle names as this will be used for essential consultation purposes if you are shortlisted and for the purposes of obtaining a Royal warrant should you be recommended for appointment. Please note that we require the exact name that you are registered with on the Solicitors Roll or when you were admitted as a member of the Faculty of Advocates for essential consultation purposes.

8.2 Career History

We are aware that some applicants may have more than one current position, however, the application system only allows you to enter one. You should enter your main role in the “Current Job” section, and the others in the Previous job section. The system will ask you for a date left for these jobs, you should enter the date that you submit the application. You do not have to detail all of your work history but are welcome to provide detail of roles that are relevant to your application for summary sheriff.

8.3 Character and Conduct

It is important that you disclose any criminal convictions as well as any other issues which may call into question your suitability for judicial office. Since judicial appointment is an excepted office in terms of Part 2 of Schedule 4 of The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exclusions and Exceptions)(Scotland) Order 2013, you should include any spent

convictions and details of any disposal by the court including spent convictions and fixed penalties (such as traffic offences). You should provide details including dates and the nature of the offence.

8.4 Conflict of Interest

You should declare any potential conflict of interest that may arise through a relationship, personal or professional, with any of the Judicial Appointments for Scotland Board Members. This may include, but is not limited to: close friend, social friend, family friend, social associate, work colleague, employed by same organisation, has appeared before me, related, business relationship.

Details of the full Board are provided [on the JABS website](#).

You should also declare if appointed if you are aware of any other potential conflict of interest.

8.5 Self-Assessment

For information on how to complete this section of your application, please refer to the "[What we are looking for](#)" section on our website.

8.5.1 Legal knowledge, skills and competence

In addition to the information on our website, you should consider the following information for this role.

Summary sheriff Essential Requirement

The essential requirement for the role of a summary sheriff is to possess the ability and legal standing to perform the functions of the office.

This requires knowledge and experience of summary criminal procedure or civil law, in particular simple procedure and family law.

It is essential that those applying for a summary sheriff post who do not have knowledge or experience in one discipline demonstrate the ability to learn.

Your self-assessment should include specific examples which demonstrate depth of knowledge, and competence in your own area(s) of legal practice. It should also include example(s) which illustrate an ability to acquire and apply new areas of legal knowledge in depth and with speed and accuracy.

8.5.2 Written work

Summary sheriff

You are asked to upload **one** example of written work for which you alone have been responsible and explain, briefly, how it demonstrates your knowledge of the law and your skills and competence in the interpretation and application of the law.

The application system has a set word limit of 150 words for this section, and it will not allow you to exceed this.

Your written work example must be in PDF format.

Written work should demonstrate your knowledge of the law. Examples include:

- advice given to clients in the form of letters or memos
- opinions or notes
- written submissions or other written legal argument
- reports
- judgments
- stated cases
- decision letters given in a judicial, tribunal or similar capacity
- written advice given internally in a firm or other institutional environment
- any other written explanation of the law, and how that applies in the circumstances of a particular case or other factual situation.

Your example should ideally be recent and should clearly demonstrate the legal competence criteria. The panel requires a written passage (or passages) not exceeding a total of 1200 words to assess for this purpose. If you submit a document that is longer than 1200 words, you must highlight the passage that is relevant to the criteria. Failure to do so will result in the panel only reading the first 1200 words.

You should **delete or redact any references to the identity of clients** or others in such documents. The selection panel will treat your examples in confidence.

Your written work examples must all be uploaded in one PDF document.

To convert a Microsoft Word Document to PDF format you must:

1. Open the Microsoft document that you would like to convert to PDF.
2. Click 'File,' then click 'Save As'
3. Click the 'File Format/ Save as type'
4. Select 'PDF' on the drop down list.
5. Click 'Export/ Save.' This will save your document as a PDF however, you will still have the original Word document.

8.5 Location Preferences

You will be asked to indicate in order of preference, the locations you would accept a position in if recommended for appointment. Place '1' next to your first choice. Additional locations for which you may wish to be considered should be ranked accordingly, e.g. your second choice should be marked as '2', your third '3' and so on. You can give locations equal preference and have several '1s' or '2s'.

Any vacancies for which you would not accept a recommendation should one be offered should be marked with a '0'. You can provide a reason for this response to let us know why you are not interested in the location for example distance to travel.

You will also be asked to indicate which **Sheriffdoms** you would be willing to work in should additional vacancies arise. You will also be asked to rank these in order of preference as above.

9. ENHANCED DISCLOSURE

We are required to carry out Enhanced Disclosure checks for judicial appointments.

A link to the online disclosure application form and guidance note will be sent to you with the outcome decision letter if you are invited to interview.

You are required to pay the cost of the disclosure check, which is £25.

10. CONSULTATIONS

We will ask for consultations relating to applicants who are invited to interview. These consultations will be sought from (amongst others):

- The Lord President
- Sheriffs Principal
- The Crown Agent
- Professional bodies (such as the Faculty of Advocates, the Law Society, the Society of Solicitor Advocates etc)

11. FEEDBACK

The Board will seek to provide feedback, on request, to candidates who are not shortlisted or are unsuccessful following interview. The details of the process for feedback will be provided to you in the outcome letter at the end of the relevant stage of the competition.

12. TIMETABLE

DATE / TIME	EVENT
11 August 2023	Advertisement published
1 September 2023 / 12 noon	Closing date and time for application forms
10 November 2023	Applicants notified of outcome of initial assessment
November – December 2023	Interviews
January 2024	Board Decision Meeting
January 2024	Applicants notified of outcome of interview
By (subject to Disclosure Scotland checks)	Recommendations for appointment* to the Scottish Government. Formal appointment by Ministers will follow.

*Only those with a satisfactory disclosure check will be recommended for appointment.

When we make a recommendation for appointment to the First Minister, the Scottish Government undertakes a number of further steps before the First Minister makes the final decision to recommend an individual for appointment. These steps include statutory consultation with the Lord President and arranging a Royal Warrant. The timescale for concluding the recommendation process may vary but can take a number of weeks to complete.

Once we submit the recommendation to the First Minister, our role is complete and we have no control over the timescale for the subsequent completion of the appointments' process.

13. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

We are committed to considering any reasonable adjustment requests at all stages of the recruitment process, to ensure that you can participate in the appointment process fairly.

If you require any reasonable adjustments in completing the application form, please contact the Business Management Unit on mailbox@jabs.gov.scot

If you are recommended for appointment, any discussion about reasonable adjustments should be with the Judicial Office for Scotland.

14. COMPLAINTS

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the handling of your application, you should refer to the [Complaints Handling Procedure](#) on our website.