



# FACULTY OF ADVOCATES

## Lord Reid, Lord Hope and Faculty Scholarships

### Guidance Notes for Applicants

#### Introduction

The Faculty of Advocates is conscious that lack of means, during devilling (pupillage), may constitute an obstacle to those who wish to practise as Advocates. It therefore offers annual scholarships the purpose of which is to afford assistance to those intending to commence devilling and apply for admission to the Faculty.

Three scholarships schemes are available to prospective devils: the Lord Reid Scholarship, the Faculty Scholarship, and the Lord Hope Scholarships.

The Lord Reid Scholarship is awarded in honour of the late Lord Reid of Drem, who generously bequeathed sums to the Faculty with the intention that they be used for educational scholarships. One Lord Reid Scholarship is usually awarded annually, to the outstanding applicant.

One or more Faculty Scholarships will usually be awarded each year. Whilst an applicant must demonstrate sufficient ability to merit the award, the Faculty Scholarship is directed more at permitting talented applicants who are in financial need, to pursue a career at the Bar. The Faculty Scholarships will also take account of the need to encourage those from groups which are currently under-represented at the Scottish bar.

The Lord Hope Scholarships are funded by contributions made by existing members of Faculty. This scheme was launched in 2018. It is designed to improve accessibility to the Bar. Whilst it remains an important part of the assessment process that candidates are able to demonstrate ability or potential for professional practise, greater weighting is given to the promotion of access to the Bar. Accordingly, in this regard financial need and diversity (in particular, encouragement of applications from under-represented groups, such as women, the disabled, persons of a BAME background and persons who were state educated) are of greater importance in the assessment of applications.

All decisions on awards are made by the Faculty of Advocates' Scholarship Committee, appointed annually by the Dean of Faculty. **In a change to recent years, scholarship applications will be considered, and successful candidates notified, in advance of the deadline for matriculation as Intrants rather than shortly before the commencement of devilling.** However, the final award of the scholarship will be conditional on selected candidate matriculating as an Intrans, meeting the requirements set out in the *Regulations as to Intrants*, and giving notice of their intention to commence devilling.

#### Amount of Awards

The size and number of scholarship awards is entirely at the discretion of the Committee, after consideration of the number and quality of applicants as well as the funds available in any given year.

The Lord Reid Scholarship will consist of a fixed sum to reflect the merit of the successful candidate. It is anticipated that this award may be in the region of £10,000. At the discretion of the Committee, this award may be supplemented to reflect the particular financial circumstances of the successful candidate.

Faculty Scholarships will be awarded based on the assessed need of the successful candidate(s). In recent years, awards have varied between £3,000 and £10,000.

The Lord Hope Scholarships can vary widely, depending on circumstances. In 2018, the awards ranged between £3,000 and £7,250.

## **Criteria**

As the scholarships seek to enable persons of talent and ability to enter the profession of advocate, the merit of candidates is the principal consideration of the Lord Reid Scholarship and an important factor in the Faculty Scholarships.

In considering whether to make an award, the Committee will therefore wish to consider the following factors in relation to each individual applicant: academic merit (including strength of law and other degrees), postgraduate qualifications, relevant academic or professional teaching experience, publications (books, articles, or other), professional experience (whether in legal or other fields), any areas of special legal interest or experience.

In order to assess a candidate's financial circumstances, candidates who wish to be considered for a Faculty Scholarship (or supplementary award for the Lord Reid Scholarship) should also provide sufficient information on their financial and personal circumstances. This may include information on financial commitments expected over the year of devilling (mortgage payment or rent, travel costs, books / IT, dependent child or caring responsibilities) and financial resources available (earning capacity in recent years, savings, support from spouse/partner or parents). The Committee will also take into account the fact that those who are considering practising as an advocate at an early stage of their career as a solicitor may have had less opportunity to save towards funding of devilling.

Candidates should also ensure the committee is aware where the candidate is a member of a group which is under-represented at the Scottish bar. This may include (but is not limited to): women, those with disabilities, single parents, carers, the care-experienced, members of ethnic minorities, or those from families where parents are not university-educated or in professional occupations. Those in any doubt about whether one or more of these (or similar) criterion apply should discuss matters in confidence with the Secretariat Officer before submitting their application.

Scholarships are awarded on the understanding that it is the applicant's intention to pursue a career in active practice at the Scottish Bar on completion of the devilling period. Any scholar who does not complete devilling and enter practice for three years thereafter may be required to repay any scholarship. The Committee will of course take into account personal circumstances in deciding whether to seek recovery.

An offer of a scholarship will be withdrawn if the successful applicant does not commence devilling in the Autumn immediately following the making of the award. The withdrawn award may be offered to another unsuccessful applicant, distributed among the successful applicants, or retained in the scholarship fund, at the discretion of the Committee. If such an applicant later decides to commence devilling in a subsequent year and again seeks a scholarship, he or she must re apply. Any new application will be considered along with other applications made in that year.

## **Procedure**

The procedure for awarding scholarships for those intending to commence devilling in 2020 is as follows:

April 2019	There is no set application form, although clearly any application should address fully the criteria for the making of an award as noted above. This would normally be in the form of a full curriculum vitae together with a brief note of the applicant's financial position. The names of two referees should be given, being persons qualified to attest to the applicant's suitability for an award having regard to the criteria.
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May 2019	All written applications are considered by the Committee and a short list will be drawn up. Written references are then sought from the referees given by the short-listed candidates. Unsuccessful candidates are notified.
May/June 2019	Short listed candidates are called for interview. Interviews are conducted by the whole Committee, and usually last 20 - 30 minutes.  The interview is not intended as a formal test of academic legal knowledge, but rather to amplify the information already provided on the written application and to enable the applicant to demonstrate his or her suitability for an award. Any short-listed candidate who is unable to attend for interview at the appropriate time may request in writing that their application be considered <i>in absentia</i> .  Decisions on awards are made as soon as possible following the interviews and candidates notified accordingly.
mid-October 2019	Deadline for matriculation
June 2020	Deadline for notification of commencement of devilling.
September/October 2020	Devilling commences. Payment of the first instalment of the scholarship.
February 2021	Payment of the second instalment of the scholarship.

### **Further information**

Further information concerning Scholarships can be obtained from the Secretariat Officer, (alice.walker@advocates.org.uk)

### **Scholarships for 2020**

Edinburgh  
April 2019