



FACULTY OF ADVOCATES

Scholarships

Guidance Notes for Applicants

Introduction

The Faculty of Advocates is committed to ensuring that membership of Faculty is open to all with the skill, aptitude and motivation to practise as Advocates.

Prospective members of Faculty are required to complete a nine-month period of training, known as devilling. This training is provided free of charge to all those who meet the admission criteria. In addition, the Faculty offers a number of scholarships each year to assist prospective devils who may require support with living expenses during the devilling period.

In the last 5 years, over 60 scholarships have been awarded, with over £350,000 worth of support provided to devils.

Available scholarships

The Lord Reid Scholarship

The Lord Reid Scholarship is the most prestigious scholarship. It is awarded in honour of the late Lord Reid of Drem from a bequest provided by him. One Lord Reid Scholarship is awarded annually, to the most outstanding candidate. In recent years, the Lord Reid Scholarship award has been in the region of £10,000.

The Faculty Scholarships

One or more Faculty Scholarships may also be awarded to candidates of particular merit. In recent years, Faculty Scholarship awards have been in the region of £5,000.

The SCLR Scholarship

The SCLR Scholarship is generously funded by the Scottish Council of Law Reporting and is administered by the Faculty's Scholarship Committee. The criteria and award levels are similar to those of the Faculty Scholarships.

The Lord Hope Scholarships

The Lord Hope Scholarships are funded by contributions made by existing members of Faculty. The principal focus of the Lord Hope Scholarships is to provide assistance to candidates who may be prevented from devilling if they do not have access to financial support. Lord Hope Scholarships may be awarded by themselves or in conjunction with other scholarships where a candidate demonstrates both particular merit and particular need.

The size and number of Lord Hope Scholarships will depend on the need and number of eligible applicants but, often, around eight to ten scholarship awards have been made for amounts ranging between £3,000 and £8,000.

Applicants must demonstrate sufficient ability to merit the award, but greater weighting is given to those in financial need or to those from groups currently under-represented at the Scottish bar.

Application process

Application deadlines are summarised in the table below. Applications for scholarships are invited in the Spring before the Autumn deadline for matriculation as an Intrans. This is in the calendar year before the year in which a candidate intends to start devilling.

There is no set application form. Candidates are invited to submit a CV summarising their qualifications, experience and achievements, whether in law or in other fields. A covering letter should also be submitted.

The covering letter should briefly address your reasons for wishing to call as an Advocate and summarise the key attributes that you think will help you succeed in practice.

If you consider that you are a member of a group which is under-represented within the Faculty, or the legal profession in general, and you wish this to be taken into account, please also explain this where it is not already apparent from your application. 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 may discuss matters in confidence with the Secretariat Officer before submitting their application.

Finally, if you believe that you will not be in a position to devil without receiving financial support in the form of a scholarship award, please also briefly outline what support or savings you do have, your fixed liabilities and commitments (such as housing and childcare) and any allowance you are making for costs associated with devilling (for instance, travel to Edinburgh). The Scholarship Committee have found it helpful if candidates are able to give a figure for the minimum size of award they anticipate they would require to allow them to devil by reference to their resources and anticipated commitments over the period of devilling.

When weighing applications, the Scholarship Committee may also give weight to those who have had a shorter time in practice as a solicitor or those who have worked in less well-remunerated parts of the legal profession, as there will have been less opportunity to save. The committee will also be likely to give preferences to applications where candidates have already made choices or sacrifices to enable them to save towards devilling, so if you have done this, or have good reasons why you have been unable to do this, please also mention this in your application.

Any information you provide as part of your scholarship application will not be shared outwith the Scholarship Committee and will not be used for any other purpose than deciding your application for a Scholarship.

Award of scholarships

Applications will be sifted on the papers and candidates may also be asked to attend an interview with members of the Scholarship Committee. Some awards may be made without interview.

Decisions on scholarship awards will be made in good time for candidates to know whether they have been awarded a scholarship and how much that scholarship is before they commit to matriculation as an Intrans. 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 Intrans*, and giving notice of their intention to commence devilling.

An offer of a scholarship will be withdrawn if the successful applicant is not able to 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 wishes 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.

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.

Procedure

The procedure for awarding scholarships for those intending to commence devilling in 2024 is as follows:

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| April 2023 | 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. |
| May 2023 | 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 2023 | Candidates are called for interview, where necessary. 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 2023 | Deadline for matriculation |
| June 2024 | Deadline for notification of commencement of devilling. |
| September/October 2024 | Devilling commences. Payment of the first instalment of the scholarship. |
| February 2025 | Payment of the second instalment of the scholarship. |

Further information

Further information concerning Scholarships can be obtained from the Secretariat Officer, Catriona King (catriona.king@advocates.org.uk)

Scholarships for 2024

The deadline for applications for those intending to commence devilling in 2024 is Friday 28 April 2023.

Edinburgh
March 2023