Law Society of Scotland

Appointment of

Head of Conduct and Standards

September 2026

Project code: QBWVC2

Saxton Bampfylde

Introduction

The Society is the member led organisation which regulates and represents over 13,000 Scottish Solicitors working in Scotland, across the UK and abroad, and assures the high standards for which the Scottish legal profession is known.

Today's legal sector is constantly changing. The Scottish legal services market is diverse, from small firms in communities across the country through to major international law firms with offices around the world. Almost a third of Scottish solicitors now work in-house, whether in the public or private sector. The range of legal services in demand by civic Scotland and offered by legal professionals has never been wider, with technology transforming the way in which many of those services are provided.

The Scottish legal profession provides tens of thousands of well-paid, highly skilled jobs, and contributes well over £1 billion to the Scottish economy each year. The skills of Scottish-trained solicitors are highly valued around the world.

The Society provides professional and wellbeing support and specialist training for its members, to ensure they maintain the knowledge and skills they need, throughout their careers. We also work with schools and universities around legal education, not only to ensure that the next generation of solicitors has the skillset they need for the developing legal sector, but also to ensure that the profession reflects the society that it serves in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Our policy work in providing scrutiny of new legislation, and so shaping good law that works in practice, forms a core part of our public interest contribution to civic Scotland. It is also a key aspect of our representation of the Scottish legal profession.

We set and maintain standards, rules and guidance for solicitors throughout their route to qualification and after admission to practise. We monitor compliance and act to protect consumers, support and maintain the proper administration of justice, and uphold the rule of law. In May 2025 we saw landmark reforms to the way the profession is regulated passed by the Scottish Parliament through the Regulation of Legal Services (Scotland) Act 2025. The new legislation sets out comprehensive reform to how we regulate - improving the complaints system, providing stronger consumer protections and transparency, and introducing entity regulation. It will allow us to modernise and streamline our regulatory processes around the provision of legal services, ensuring better protection for consumers and allowing new opportunities for the Scottish legal services market to thrive.

In October 2022 we published our five-year strategy, which will direct our work up to 2027. The strategy sets out our ambitions across five key areas:

- Supporting our members to thrive
- Modern and effective regulation acting in the public interest
- Innovation and efficiency
- Influential voice that enhances our legal sector and justice
- Leading the profession

About us

The Law Society of Scotland is the professional body regulator for Scottish solicitors and was established in 1949. We have an overarching objective of leading legal excellence and strive to excel and to be a world-class professional body, understanding and serving the needs of our members and the public. As part of our regulatory duties, we set and uphold standards to ensure the provision of excellent legal services and ensure the public can have confidence in Scotland's legal profession.

The Law Society also has a statutory duty to work in the public interest in relation to the profession, a duty which we are strongly committed to achieving through our work to promote a strong, varied and effective legal profession working in the interests of the public and protecting and promoting the rule of law. We seek to influence the creation of a fairer and more just society through active engagement with the Scottish and United Kingdom governments, parliaments, wider stakeholders and our membership.

The Law Society of Scotland (LSS) is the professional body for over 13,000 Scottish Solicitors. It is a body set and up and governed by statute. It is governed by a Council of up to 48 individuals (both solicitor and non-solicitor). Regulatory functions are carried out by an independent Regulatory Committee. It has a staff of around 190 and around 650 volunteers (solicitors and non-solicitors) assist in carrying out its work.

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More information can be found at:

- Who We Are
- Strategy 2022-2027
- Annual Plan 2024-25
- Annual Report 2023/24
- Regulation of Legal Services (Scotland) Act 2025

The role

Job Purpose

The purpose of this role is to lead and efficiently manage the Society's regulatory duties insofar as they involve dealing with regulation of professional conduct of solicitors and regulatory performance of entities delivering legal services, including complaints investigation and disciplinary proceedings. The post-holder also plays a key part in leading and implementing regulatory transformation at the Society.

Key Responsibilities

- Lead the Professional Conduct Team including Managers, Reporters, Clerks to the Professional Conduct Sub-committees and Fiscals, ensuring a supportive, collegiate and high performing culture.
- Ensure that complaints are handled, investigated and prosecuted competently and timeously and that any sanctions are enforced.
- Manage appeals, claims and judicial reviews related to complaints.
- Plan and oversee Professional Conduct Team budget including income, staff and other costs.
- Operate as a key member of the Regulation Directorate's senior management team, building positive working relationships with the Executive Director of Regulation and other senior managers in the Regulation Directorate and contributing to the creation and implementation of the Society's strategy.
- Create an annual operating plan for the Professional Conduct Team that fits with our overall plan and long-term strategy, has the necessary resource and support to deliver on it and the appropriate KPIs and strategic measures to manage performance.
- Innovate new strategies for the handling of complaints in line with legislation, changes to legislation, regulatory best practice, recommendations and directions from the Scottish Legal Complaints Commission (SLCC) and the SLCC Annual Plan.
- Collaborate and co-operate with other team leaders in the senior management group across the Law Society, to deliver cross team initiatives.
- Work closely and effectively with various Law Society committees including the Regulatory Committee, the Professional Conduct Sub-committees (x2) and the Complaints & Oversight Sub-committee. Ensure that the relevant regulatory sub-committees are properly supported and resourced and make high quality regulatory and disciplinary decisions.
- Develop positive and influential working relationships with colleagues internally and key external stakeholders such as the SLCC, the Scottish Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal, the Lord President, the Scottish Government, the Legal Defence Union, the Society's instructed agents and others.
- Respond effectively to handling complaints from the SLCC and work closely with the Corporate Complaints Team to respond to corporate complaints from those affected by the conduct and regulatory complaints processes.
- Lead and implement the transformation of the conduct complaints process and the introduction of the regulatory complaints regime for authorised legal businesses under the Regulation of Legal Services (Scotland) Act 2025 and for licensed legal services providers under the Legal Services (Scotland) Act 2010.
- Influence potential legislative or regulatory change to bring about improvements to the complaint handling process for the benefit of the public and the profession.
- Contribute to the Society's responses to external policy consultations, or correspondence from the Lord President, SLCC, SSDT, Scottish Government or other external stakeholders.
- Prepare and deliver talks and training (internally and externally) about the Society's conduct and regulatory complaints regime and broader points of professional conduct and entity standards policy or practice.
- Work positively with the Communications team to ensure the Society responds appropriately to press enquiries relating to conduct and regulatory complaints.
- Carry out any other reasonable duties that may be expected by the Executive Director of Regulation.

Person Specification

Knowledge, skills & experience

Essential:

- Ability to lead and motivate a team
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to influence and engage stakeholders at all levels
- Good presentation skills
- Excellent analytical skills and ability to understand and solve complex problems, presenting proportionate and risk-based solutions
- Creative thinker who is willing to make risk-based decisions
- Able to work both independently and as part of a cross-functional project team
- Able to respond positively and flexibly to change with a solution-based approach

Desirable:

- Knowledge of legal case management systems, secure e-mail systems and membership databases
- Knowledge of key legislation underpinning Scottish solicitor regulation – namely the Solicitors (Scotland) Act 1980, the Legal Profession and Legal Aid (Scotland) Acy 2007, the Legal Services (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Regulation of Legal Services (Scotland) Act 2025

Qualifications and training

Essential:

- Relevant degree, professional qualification or equivalent experience in regulation, law or a related discipline.

Desirable:

- Qualified solicitor, advocate or other legal professional qualification.

Work experience

Essential:

- Experience of managing a regulatory complaints regime
- Experience of structuring and leading a team
- Demonstrable success managing change and performance/business improvement initiatives in a complex environment
- Experience of developing and delivering priorities within operating plans which align to organisational strategic objectives
- Used to handling a high-volume and often reactive workload in a fast-paced environment, working to strict timescales
- Successfully leading a team through challenging external scrutiny, ensuring morale, performance and quality remain high
- Experience of quality control and improvement including the interpretation of statistics and management data
- Experience of preparing and managing budgets

Desirable:

- Extensive experience of handling conduct complaints
- Experience of handling regulatory complaints at entity level
- Experience of litigation (preferably civil litigation) and/or administrative law
- Demonstrable success in delivering transformative change while concurrently maintaining operational performance
- Experience of developing regulation strategy
- Experience of working in an organisation with complex governance
- Track record of working successfully with committees or boards
- Experience of working in a regulatory role in a law firm
- Project management experience

Competencies & values

- Demonstrates our values of respect; openness; progress; integrity; and inclusion
- Demonstrates our competencies of personal responsibility, expertise and judgment, building relationships and innovation
- Motivated to deliver change and improved performance
- Strong self-awareness including high personal resilience and tolerance of stress, recognising impact on others and a commitment to learning
- Team player

Other

- Some evening & out of normal hours work required
- Able to work effectively from home and from the Society's Edinburgh office

Terms of appointment

Job Title – Head of Conduct and Standards

Reporting to – Executive Director of Regulation

Responsible for – 4 x Direct Reports; Professional Conduct Manager, Professional Conduct Operations Manager, Disciplinary Proceedings Manager and Investigations Manager

Location – Edinburgh / Remote

Contract type – Permanent

How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to the Law Society of Scotland on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at roles.saxbam.com using code **QBWVC2**

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is **noon on Thursday 22 October 2026.**

* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

GDPR personal data notice
According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

Due diligence
Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.

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