Office of the
Advocate General
for Scotland

Director and Solicitor to the Advocate General for Scotland

Office of the Advocate General for Scotland

Senior Civil Service Pay Band 2 (£105,000 to £145,000)

Closing Date: 26 November 23:55

The UK Government's Scottish legal team

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Director and Solicitor, Office of the Advocate General for Scotland.

The organisation is central to the UK's legal framework, and a key part of the UK Government's legal community, providing the advice, legislative support, and litigation services required to safeguard the devolution settlement and enable government policy in Scotland. Leading the Department that supports the Advocate General as a Law Officer sits at the intersection of public law and constitutional policy across the United Kingdom.

This is a senior leadership post, both in the UK Government's legal profession and as the senior civil servant heading a ministerially led department, advising and supporting the Advocate General for Scotland.

You will hold overall accountability for the department, leading its 4 expert legal divisions across Edinburgh and London.

You will set strategic direction, be responsible for the corporate operations, and ensure the Office delivers authoritative, practical advice to the Advocate General for Scotland, UK Government Ministers, and UK Government departments.

We are looking for an experienced senior leader with excellent legal judgment, strong strategic awareness and the ability to steer a specialist department in a fast-paced, changing environment to reflect the Cabinet Secretary's aspirations for the Future Civil Service.

I look forward to receiving your application.

Best wishes,

Juliet Chua CB, Director General, Economic and Domestic Affairs Secretariat

About the Office of the Advocate General

The Office of the Advocate General (OAG) is the UK Government's Scottish legal team and is a unique place to work in the UK Government. It is a dedicated department of approximately 50 lawyers and support teams based in Edinburgh and London.

At the core of OAG's mission is supporting and delivering for the Advocate General for Scotland, Baroness Smith of Cluny KC, who is a Minister of the Crown and one of the UK Government Law Officers. OAG's responsibilities include:

- Providing legal advice to UK government departments on policy and legislation affecting Scotland and the Scottish devolution settlement.

- Representing the UK Government in courts and tribunals in Scotland.

- Supporting the Advocate General in their capacity as a UK Law Officer, including the exercise of statutory functions under the Scotland Act 1998.

While the post holder discharges their responsibilities to the Advocate General for Scotland, pastoral care and line management sits with the Director General for the Economic and Domestic Affairs Secretariat, Office for the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

HM Advocate General for Scotland, Baroness Smith of Cluny KC

About the four Divisions of OAG

Office of the Advocate General for Scotland

The Litigation Division provides Scots law advice and support in respect of any action raised by or against a UK government department in Scotland, directly advancing the Advocate General's litigation strategy. It also supports the Advocate General in relation to their devolution issue functions under the Scotland Act 1998 and in respect of any action raised or defended in the Scottish Courts.

The Advisory and Legislation Division provides legal advice and services to UK government departments, ensuring Scots Law and the devolution settlement are taken into account in line with the Advocate General's policy objectives and constitutional priorities for UK government legislation.

The HMRC Division deals with HM Revenue & Customs' legal work in Scotland, supporting the Advocate General's oversight of major revenue litigation. This covers tax appeals through the tribunal system and on appeal to the higher courts, as well as a variety of other litigation for the department. The team also provides advisory services to HMRC in relation to Scottish matters, and undertakes some legislative work, notably in connection with the annual Finance Bill.

The Legal Secretariat to the Advocate General provides direct operational, policy, and ministerial support to the Advocate General in their capacity as a UK Law Officer, including the exercise of statutory functions under the Scotland Act. It also supports them with their wider ministerial responsibilities, including supporting them as a member of Cabinet Committees and as a Member of the House of Lords.

The Role

Job Title

Director of the Office of the Advocate General & Solicitor to the Advocate General

Contract Type

This role is offered on a permanent basis.

This is a full-time role and applications to work part-time cannot be considered. Applications on a job-share basis will be welcomed and will be considered in line with the relevant Civil Service guidance.

This role has an expected minimum assignment duration of three years, reflecting the deliverables identified. This is an expectation rather than a contractual requirement and does not form part of your terms and conditions. If applying as job share partners, please review the guidance here; hub page | Civil Service Careers

Applications are encouraged from those outside the civil service, who will become permanent civil servants. For existing civil servants, the role can be offered through a secondment and prior agreement from the home department should be sought.

Location

London (Dover House) or Edinburgh (Queen Elizabeth House) with expectation of regular travel. No relocation costs will be paid. All employees will be expected to spend a minimum of 60% of their working time in an office, (subject to local estate capacity). Please contact Belinda Beck at belinda.beck@saxbam.com if you would like to discuss.

Salary

The salary for this role falls within the MoJ SCS Pay Band 2 range, between £105,000 and £145,000.

(Existing Civil Servants will be appointed on level transfer or promotion in line with Civil Service pay arrangements. On promotion, salary will increase either to the minimum of the SCS Pay Band 2 range or by up to 10% of current basic salary, excluding allowances, whichever is greater. Candidates appointed on level transfer will retain their existing basic salary, excluding allowances.)

The Role

This role offers an exceptional opportunity to serve as the most senior official in the Office of the Advocate General, leading a dedicated, highly specialised, and compact department. This is a highly autonomous role with strategic influence across UK Government departments and Scotland, and direct partnership with UK Government Law Officers and Ministers.

You will sit at the very heart of public law and government decision making. You will have unique opportunities to collaborate across UK Government departments and Scotland to influence, shape, and deliver

on the most pressing legal and constitutional issues of the day.

The primary purpose of the Director of OAG is to provide direct legal and operational support to the AGS, serving as the legal head of the department and senior operational leader responsible for delivering the AGS's legal priorities, overarching strategy, performance, and governance.

This role holds overall management and legal accountability for delivering services to the UK Government on Scottish matters, safeguarding the devolution settlement, and driving excellence in support of the Law Officer.

This is primarily a senior leadership role. While you will be the ultimate legal authority within OAG, your core focus will be leading, inspiring, and empowering the workforce across the four divisions (Legal Secretariat, Advisory and Legislation, HMRC, and Litigation).

You will foster an inclusive culture, manage a high-performing senior leadership team, drive continuous improvement reflecting the Future Civil Service and ensure the department delivers effective and efficient legal advice.

Key Responsibilities

1. **Senior leadership:**
   Provide visible, strategic leadership to a team of 50 FTEs. Direct line management of 4 SCS1 Division Heads.

   Take corporate responsibility for the collective leadership of the department, building an inclusive culture, fostering high engagement, and maintaining strong organisational capability.

2. **Support to the Law Officer and statutory functions:**
   Maintain overall accountability for supporting the Advocate General in exercising Law Officer functions under the Scotland Act 1998 and delivering on ministerial objectives.

   Ensure seamless departmental alignment with the AGS, providing high-integrity, rapid, and authoritative legal advice on sensitive constitutional and policy matters.

3. **Strategic delivery and governance:**
   Translate overarching organisational strategy into actionable business plans. Manage operational performance, risk, and continuous improvement across a complex directorate.

4. **Financial accountability:**
   Oversee departmental financial management and resource allocation. While the Principal Accounting Officer is the Director of the Scotland Office (SCS2), this role maintains direct budget responsibility and financial management accountability for the Office of the Advocate General, ensuring value for money and sound risk management at the senior executive level.

5. **Overarching strategic advisory and devolution leadership:**
   Lead the strategic provision of legal advice on Scots Law across all UK Government departments concerning policy and legislation impacting Scotland.

   Provide visible and strategic legal leadership on key areas of devolution.

6. **Litigation Oversight:**
   Maintain overarching responsibility and strategic oversight for any legal action raised by or against a UK government department in Scotland.

   Ensure reputational and legal risks to the UK Government are effectively managed.

7. **Corporate leadership and UKG presence:**
   Maintain strong connections with Government Legal Service for Scotland (GLSS) as member of the management board.

In addition, with the Government Legal Profession (GLP) and Directors of the Offices of the Nations (OfNs) providing visible leadership across the UK Government to champion and embed Scots law elements across wider government priorities.

Person Specification

Throughout the selection process, you should provide clear evidence and examples that demonstrate how you meet the essential criteria for the role.

Later in this pack, you will find details of which elements will be assessed at each stage of the process, helping you focus your application and prepare effectively.

Essential skills and experience:

- Proven senior leadership experience (in public or private sector context), with a track record of setting strategic direction in a complex environment, leading and developing specialist and/or multidisciplinary teams, and building an inclusive, high-performing culture, including through ambiguity and change.
- Significant leadership experience within a specialist legal environment, with responsibility for people and resources, and a track record of exercising sound judgement in managing complex, sensitive or high-profile legal and reputational risks.
- Exceptional influencing and stakeholder-management skills, with the credibility and judgement to advise, challenge and build trusted relationships with senior decision-makers, such as CEOs / Board level, General Counsel, Ministers, or equivalent, including on sensitive or contested issues.
- A strong understanding of, or interest in, devolution and Scotland's legal, political and constitutional landscape, with the ability to apply sophisticated legal judgement in complex and politically sensitive environments.

Essential qualifications:

- The successful candidate will need to be qualified to practise as a Solicitor or Advocate in Scotland or must be willing to obtain such qualification (see below).
- We welcome lawyers who meet the essential criteria and are currently outside central government and/or those who are not Scots-Law qualified, including England and Wales and overseas qualified candidates.
- If the successful candidate is not Scots-Law qualified they **must** dual qualify following appointment. Costs will be covered for this training. During this period the title of the role would be “Director of the Office of the Advocate General”.
- If you wish to discuss in further detail please contact: belinda.beck@saxbam.com

Civil Service Leadership Statement:

All leaders within the Civil Service are expected to demonstrate the qualities within the Civil Service Leadership Statement during their Staff Engagement Exercise.

Recruitment Process

The Selection Panel	
Elizabeth Hambley CB, Civil Service Commissioner (Panel Chair)	
	Until 2023, she served as Director General for Commercial, Trade and International in the Government Legal Department. Previously she held legal leadership roles in five different government departments and secondment to the private sector. She was appointed as a Civil Service Commissioner on 26 February 2024 and is a member of the Joint Operations Committee. Elizabeth is also a member of the Business Appointment Rules panel.
Juliet Chua CB, Director General Economic and Domestic Affairs Secretariat, Cabinet Office	
	Juliet Chua CB is the Director General for the Economic and Domestic Secretariat (EDS) at the Cabinet Office since January 2026. Her previous roles include: DG for Schools Group at the Department for Education (DfE), DG Finance and Corporate at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), DG Finance and Corporate Performance at the Department for International Development (DFID), DG for Education Standards at the Department for Education (DfE). Juliet has been a civil servant since 2004 and has also worked at HM Treasury and the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit.

Sarah Goom, Director General, Government Legal Department	
	Sarah is the Director General for GLD's Commercial with Trade and International Group. Her previous Civil Service roles include: Legal Director, Home Office Legal Advisers, May 2022 to September 2023, Legal Director Personal Tax, Benefits, Criminal and Corporate Services, October 2019 to May 2022, Director of Litigation, HMRC, July 2017 to October 2019. Sarah joined the Civil Service in 1999 and has advised key central departments. Sarah has advised on a number of issues including the Iraq Inquiry, HMRC's response to COVID-19 and criminal justice policy.
Tristan Pedelty, No10 Delivery Unit	
	Tristan is currently a Director in No10 Delivery Unit. Previously he was a Director, Propriety & Ethics in the Cabinet Office from June 2018 during which time he had responsibilities for Public Bodies and appointments policy. He was seconded from the Cabinet Office in July 2022 to set up a new team that will establish the new Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR) introduced by the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill. He has also spent time at HM Treasury, the Prime Minister's Implementation Unit and the Department for Transport. He was Head of Policy at the BBC Trust during the last BBC Royal Charter renewal. He has served as a private secretary to Prime Minister, David Cameron, and as Principal Private Secretary to the Health Secretary.

Support during the selection process

If you would like a confidential discussion to learn more about the appointment and the organisation before applying or require an adjustment to support you through the recruitment process, please contact Belinda Beck at belinda.beck@saxbam.com.

Any conversation at this stage will be separate from the assessed process and is intended to help you make an informed decision about applying.

How to apply

To apply, please submit:

• a comprehensive CV; and

• a Statement of Suitability of no more than 1,000 words, this should be a concise statement focused on how you meet the essential criteria on page 8 and evidence for the appointment.

All applications will be acknowledged. Your CV and Statement of Suitability will be considered together in assessing your suitability for the role.

Please provide sufficient detail about the context, scale and complexity of your experience, your personal contribution and the outcomes achieved.

Applications that do not include both documents may not be considered.

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as employment agency adviser on this appointment.

Candidates should apply through the Saxton Bampfylde website at **roles.saxbam.com**, using reference **GCBUA**.

The closing date for applications is **23:55 on Thursday 26 November 2026.**

Candidates will also be asked to complete an online equal opportunity monitoring form. This information will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing applications.

Candidates wishing to be considered under the Disability Confident Scheme should select the relevant option on the equal opportunities monitoring form.

Find out more information and guidance on our application process here. After the Application Stage, you will be informed whether your application has been shortlisted for the next stage.

Due to the anticipated volume of applications, we are unable to provide feedback to candidates who are not shortlisted.

Candidates who are shortlisted and attend interview will be offered verbal feedback from a member of the panel.

Informal Conversation with the Advocate General

Candidates selected for interview will be invited to a short informal conversation with the Advocate General via Teams. This is non-assessed and an opportunity for the Minister to set out areas or topics which they would like the panel to test at interview.

The Civil Service Commissioner will join the conversation.

In addition, Shortlisted candidates may be offered opportunities to find out more about the role from informal conversations with senior stakeholders.

Assessments

Staff Engagement Exercise

The Staff Engagement Exercise (SEE) gives you the opportunity to lead a two-way discussion with a group of staff on a topic that will be shared with you in advance. This will take place in person or via Teams.

An Occupational Psychologist will brief you beforehand, observe the discussion and facilitate feedback from participants. Their observations, together with participant feedback, will inform the panel's overall assessment.

What is being assessed?

The Civil Service Leadership Statement.

Panel Interview and Presentation/Scenario

You will be invited to attend an interview with the selection panel. In person in London.

You may be asked to prepare a verbal 5-minute presentation and/or undertake an exercise immediately before the interview for discussion with the interview panel. Further details will be provided in advance. The interview and presentation/scenario will last approximately 45 minutes.

After the Panel Interview

Following the interview stage, the panel will consider all evidence using the essential criteria and identify the appointable candidate. Candidates will be notified of the outcome as soon as possible after interviews conclude.

If you are not appointed but meet the required standard, you may be invited to have your details retained on a merit list for future SCS opportunities.

Guidance for writing your Statement and CV

As part of your application, you will be asked to submit a CV and Statement of Suitability.

Together, these should provide clear evidence that you meet the essential criteria set out in the Person Specification.

Read the role information carefully and address each essential criterion with relevant evidence. Focus on your most significant and recent achievements, making clear the context, scale of your contribution and the impact you delivered. When preparing your Statement of Suitability, it may help to:

- Present your evidence clearly so the panel can see how your experience aligns to the essential criteria.
- Use recent, relevant examples that show the scale of your responsibilities, the complexity you handled and the outcomes you achieved.

Using AI in your application

Artificial Intelligence may help you shape or refine your application, but everything you submit must be accurate, authentic and based on your own experience. Examples should reflect your personal contribution and judgement.

Applications may be withdrawn where content is misleading, plagiarised or not the candidate's own work. Internal candidates may also be subject to disciplinary action. Please see our candidate guidance for more information on appropriate and inappropriate use.

Expected Timeline

We will aim to offer as much flexibility as possible; however, it may not always be feasible to provide alternative dates for assessments or interviews. We therefore encourage candidates to review the timetable carefully and keep the relevant dates available where possible. Please note that the timetable may be subject to change.

The anticipated timetable is as follows:

Advert Closing Date	26 November 23:55
Outcome of CV and Statement of Suitability	Expected week commencing 14 December 2026
Staff engagement exercise and informal conversation with Advocate General for Scotland	Expected week commencing 21 December 2026
Panel Interview and presentation/scenario	Expected week commencing 4 January 2027

Working in the Office of the Advocate General for Scotland

Office of the Advocate General for Scotland

The Civil Service Code

The Civil Service Code sets out the values and standards expected of all civil servants. Issued by the Prime Minister as Minister for the Civil Service, it is founded on four core principles—integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality—and forms part of the contractual relationship between civil servants and their employer.

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing

We are committed to a diverse, high-performing workplace that reflects the society we serve, where different perspectives, wellbeing, belonging and sustainable leadership matter.

Benefits

You will benefit from a competitive package that supports your wellbeing, flexibility and longer-term career development, including:

Pension

You will have access to the alpha pension scheme, which includes a 28.97% employer contribution and comparatively low member contributions by public sector standards. The Civil Service Pension Scheme is a significant part of the overall reward package, offering long-term security and valuable benefits for you and your family. Further details are available at www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk.

Generous Annual Leave and Bank Holiday Allowance

You will receive 25 days' annual leave on entry, rising to 30 days after five years' service, in addition to 8 public holidays and a day of paid privilege leave to mark the King's Birthday.

Flexible Working

We support flexible and hybrid working where this aligns with the needs of the role and the business, helping leaders balance impact, collaboration and personal wellbeing.

Further information on benefits, including pension, leave and Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing support, is available on our Senior Civil Service web page.

Disability Support

Do you offer a Disability Confident Scheme for Disabled Persons?

As a Disability Confident employer, the Ministry of Justice is committed to creating a recruitment process that is fair, accessible and inclusive. In most campaigns, disabled candidates who meet the minimum selection criteria will be offered an interview. You will be able to indicate on the application form whether you would like to be considered under this scheme.

What reasonable adjustments can be made if I have a disability?

We want every candidate to be able to take part in the selection process on a fair and equitable basis. For senior roles, that means giving you the opportunity to demonstrate your experience, judgement and leadership capability fully, with reasonable adjustments in place where needed.

If you would like to request support or discuss an adjustment in confidence, please indicate this on your application form by selecting ‘yes’ to reasonable adjustments and responding to the Reasonable Adjustments Scheme team by email. We encourage you to raise any requirements as early as possible so that arrangements can be put in place in good time.

How we can support you

A range of reasonable adjustments can be considered across the selection process, depending on your circumstances and the nature of the assessment. Our aim is to work with you to identify support that enables you to take part with confidence and on an equal footing. Examples may include:

- Extra time to complete assessments.
- Providing a break within an assessment.
- Providing interview questions in a written format at the interview as well as orally.
- An interview at a certain time of day.

These examples are illustrative rather than exhaustive. Appropriate support will depend on your individual circumstances, and each request will be considered thoughtfully and on its own merits.

We will make every reasonable effort to provide the adjustments requested. Where a particular adjustment is not possible, we will explain this clearly and work with you to explore appropriate alternatives wherever we can.

Help with your application

If you think you may need an adjustment, we encourage you to contact us as early as possible so arrangements can be made with sufficient notice and support can be tailored to your needs.

If your circumstances change during the process, or you identify a need for support after applying, please contact Saxton Bampfylde in advance of your next assessment wherever possible. If you have any questions before applying about reasonable adjustments, please contact Isabella Williamson at isabella.williamson@saxbam.com - we will be happy to help.

Diversity and Inclusion

We believe inclusive, respectful and high-performing workplaces are essential to delivering better outcomes for the public.

We want talented people from every background to feel welcomed, valued and able to succeed here.

That commitment shapes how we recruit, develop and support our people—and helps create an environment where diverse perspectives strengthen leadership, decision-making and impact.

We know the strongest leadership teams reflect the diversity of the society they serve. That is why we are committed to building an inclusive Civil Service where talented people from all backgrounds can thrive, contribute and lead with confidence.

Our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy focuses on creating a Civil Service that:

- Draws on the broadest possible range of talent, experience and perspective
- Is visible, accessible and open to people from all backgrounds
- Supports flexible, inclusive ways of working that help people and performance flourish
- Attracts, develops and retains exceptional leaders at every stage of their career

For executive candidates, this means joining an organisation that values inclusive leadership, sees difference as a strength, and is committed to creating the conditions for diverse talent to succeed, influence and shape outcomes of national importance.

FAQs

Can I apply if I am not currently a civil servant?

Yes. This role is open to both internal and external applicants.

Is this role suitable for part-time working?

This is a full-time role and applications to work part-time cannot be considered. Applications on a job-share basis will, however, be welcomed and considered in line with the relevant Civil Service guidance. Other flexible working arrangements may be available within a full-time working pattern, subject to business need.

Can I claim back any expenses incurred during the recruitment process?

Expenses incurred during the recruitment process will not usually be reimbursed, except in exceptional circumstances.

Am I eligible to apply for this role?

For further guidance on eligibility to apply for this role, please refer to GOV.UK.

Is security clearance required?

Yes. If successful, you will be required to obtain security clearance to CTC Level prior to appointment. Further information about the vetting process can be found here.

The successful candidate should be willing to undertake Developed Vetting following the appointment.

Will this role be overseen by the Civil Service Commission?

Yes. A Civil Service Commissioner will chair the process to provide independent assurance that the appointment is made on merit, following fair and open competition. The Commission also considers appeals under the Civil Service Code, which sets out the values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality.

More detailed information can be found on the Civil Service Commission website.

What do I do if I want to make a complaint?

All appointments to the Civil Service must be made on merit, on the basis of fair and open competition, and in line with the Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles.

If you believe these principles have not been followed and wish to make a complaint, you should first contact scsrecruitment@justice.gov.uk.

If you are not satisfied with the response, you may escalate your complaint in the following order:

1. Shared Services Connected Ltd (0845 241 5358, Monday to Friday, 08:00 to 18:00, or (Moj-recruitment-vetting-enquiries@gov.sscl.com)

2. Ministry of Justice Resourcing (resourcing-services@justice.gov.uk)
3. Civil Service Commission (civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk/contact-us)

What should I do if I think that I have a conflict of interest?

If you believe you may have a conflict of interest, you must declare this before submitting your application by contacting the SCS Recruitment team at scsrecruitment@justice.gov.uk.

Terms and conditions

The Office of the Advocate General and the Scotland Office are small government departments and utilise the services of larger departments to provide key services.

The role is being offered on MoJ terms. SCS roles are governed by centrally managed pay, performance and recruitment standards.

For existing civil servants, this role can be offered through a secondment and prior agreement from the home department should be sought.

Data Sharing

We will handle your personal information with care and in line with applicable data protection law, including the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.

To administer your application, your personal data will be shared only with the Ministry of Justice SCS Recruitment Team, panel members and others directly involved in the recruitment process where necessary.

The legal basis for processing your personal data is:

- Processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. In practice, this supports the fair and effective administration of recruitment and helps the Civil Service improve candidate and employee experience.
- Sensitive personal data includes information such as racial or ethnic origin, religious beliefs, trade union membership, health data and other special category data protected by law.
- Processing may be necessary for reasons of substantial public interest, including the exercise of functions by the Crown, a Minister of the Crown or a government department, and to understand whether different groups experience the Civil Service differently so that appropriate action can be taken.
- Processing may also be necessary to identify or review equality of opportunity and treatment between groups, with a view to promoting or maintaining that equality.
- If you are successful, relevant sensitive personal data will also be used during onboarding to create your employee record.
- For further information please see the GDPR Privacy Notice.

Contact details

Should candidates wish to discuss making an application, please contact Belinda Beck at belinda.beck@saxbam.com