

# Guidelines on Applying For a Job with the Scottish Court Service

Scottish  
Court Service



## Important advice before completing your application form

These guidelines have been developed to assist you with filling in your online application as fully as possible.

For applicants with a disability, the Scottish Court Service will make details of all posts available, on request, in Braille, in large print, or on tape, and you may submit applications in an alternative format. If you require this service, then please e-mail [recruitment@scotcourts.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@scotcourts.gov.uk) or telephone 0131-444-3433 or 0131-444-3432

## Contents

### 1. The Selection Process

### 2. Your Application- General Information

### 3. The On-line Application Form:

- Registration
- STEP 1 - Personal Details, Disabilities
- STEP 2 - Right to Work in the UK
- STEP 3 - Personal Character
- STEP 4 – Your Education and Qualifications
- STEP 5 – Employment History
- STEP 6 – How do you meet the requirements of the post?
- STEP 7 – References
- STEP 8 – Key Employment Information
- STEP 9 – Why have you applied for this position?

### 4. Equal Opportunities Monitoring

- STAGE A – Ethnic Origin, Age
- STAGE B - Gender, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Religion or Belief

### 5. What you can expect if you are selected for interview

### 6. A Few Things to Remember

### 7. Handling Questions

## 1. The Selection Process

Due to the volume of applications we receive, the Scottish Court Service cannot normally invite everyone who applies for a job to an interview. The people who are interviewing you (the Selection Board) for the job will draw up a shortlist of people to interview based on the information provided on the application forms. It is important therefore that you fully complete the application form, providing specific examples when asked and ensuring that your answers are of a high quality.

**Please note that all recruitment correspondence will be made via email. Please therefore ensure that you check your spam/junk mail folders for any correspondence relating to your application as some emails may have been identified as spam.**

If you are selected for an interview, you will be assessed against the Person Specification for the job, which can be found at the bottom of the Job Details page under the header 'Further Information'. You must meet all the essential parts of the specification in order to be considered for the post.

The Scottish Court Service must comply with the HMG Baseline Personnel Security Standard outlined by the Cabinet Office. You should therefore expect that the Scottish Court Service will seek to verify all four elements below for all new staff:

- **Identity** - For this purpose you will be asked to provide evidence of your identity if invited to interview and potentially again on your first day. A list of acceptable forms of identification will be set out in your invite to interview letter.
  
- **Nationality and Immigration Status (including an entitlement to undertake the work in question)** - You will be asked to provide proof of your eligibility to work and remain in the UK and the Civil Service. This, along with your identity will be checked at interview. The forms of acceptable documentation will again be noted in your invite to interview letter.

- **Employment History (Past 3 Years)** – If you are successful, at least 2 references will be undertaken to verify your employment history and suitability for appointment. For those that have not been in employment for this period, alternative reference checks will be completed e.g. Educational. Prospective employees are additionally required to give a reasonable account of any significant periods (6 months or more in the past 3 years) of time spent abroad.
- **Criminal Records Check-** For this purpose a ‘standard’ Disclosure Scotland Check will be completed for all new starters. The Scottish Court Service is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, so all convictions whether they are spent or not will be considered.

Additional to the Baseline Security checks detailed above, the Scottish Court Service will also undertake the following:

- **Occupational Health Checks** – To assess if a candidate is fit for employment and if adjustments need to be made for the successful candidate.

Only after all these checks have been completed and the results found to be satisfactory will the successful candidate be able eligible to commence work with the Scottish Court Service. Refusal to provide any of the information stated above will be taken into account when making the employment decision and employment may be refused.

You can find more information on the Scottish Court Service at

<http://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/introduction.asp>

## **2. Your Application- General Information**

You must fully complete the on-line application form for each vacancy you apply for in the Scottish Court Service. Curriculum Vitaes (CVs) are only accepted for some posts, but are in addition to the completed on-line application form.

Before completing the application form you should read any information provided about

the job, particularly the Person Specification and Job Description.

The Job Description is found alongside the Person Specification at the bottom of the `Job Detail` page.

It is possible to save and exit your application part of the way through. You can then complete it later, but please do remain aware of the closing date. As we do not consider late applications, any applications which have not been submitted are not retained within the system.

It is important to note that the system has been designed so that, if you leave the application form on the screen without moving from one screen to another or clicking on the save button for more than 30 minutes, it will time out. This is to help protect your privacy if you are using a shared PC to apply for the vacancy. Therefore, if you need to enter a lot of information, for example in the value and behaviour section, it is worthwhile clicking on the 'Save' button every 15 minutes or so to ensure the system does not time out.

**TIP:** Alternatively you can compile your responses within a word document and copy and paste the information across to the online system. In doing this you will also have a record of your application.

If your time on the system expires you will see the following message:

*"Sorry! Your session on the SCS Recruitment server has timed out. You can access the system again using the link on the SCS website."*

When the system times out, you will lose any new information that you have entered or amended on the current page only. If you log back in using your email address and password you will be able to access your application with all the information that you have entered apart from the most recent information on the screen that was active when the time out occurred.

***Please note: Once your application has been submitted, you can no longer gain access to it. Therefore, if you would like to retain a copy, please copy and paste***

**any relevant details into a word document which you can retain locally.**

### **3. The On-line Application Form**

#### **Registration**

Please enter your e-mail address twice. This allows us to confirm that we have the correct contact details for you. Please also enter and confirm a password. This allows you to save your application and to access it again later to complete. Please note that the email address you supply will be used to update you on the progress of your application.

Please ensure you complete this section in full so that we can process your application correctly. The post you are applying for will be listed at the head of this page as `POST APPLIED FOR`.

Please note that if your application is not submitted by the closing date it will not be retained in the system. Once you have submitted your application, then you cannot access it again to make any amendments.

#### **STEP 1 - Personal Details, Disabilities**

##### Personal Details

Please ensure you complete this section in full so that we can contact you when necessary.

##### Disability

Please use this part of the form to indicate if you consider yourself to have a disability, and also of any special provisions you may require at interview, for example, a sign language interpreter.

*Please select from the drop down menu, whether you consider yourself to have a disability as defined by the [Disability Discrimination Act 1995](#). This act defines a disability as “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day to day activities”.*

As an organisation with the Disability symbol (Guaranteed Interview Scheme), the

Scottish Court Service is committed to interviewing any candidate who has a disability **and** who meets the minimum criteria for the post.

The Person Specification for the post you are interested in sets out the essential and desirable criteria. These are the corporate values and illustrative behaviours required to be demonstrated by the applicant on the application form and at interview (if selected). To ensure applicants know what the values and behaviours mean we illustrate the requirements by detailing the Corporate Value and Illustrative Behaviours e.g. *`recognise and be responsive to customers/visitors and their individual needs` would be an indicative behaviour for the value and behaviour of `Providing a High Quality Service`.*

The minimum criteria for the post are the 'essential' criteria for the post. In order to demonstrate that you have met the minimum/essential criteria for the post please provide specific examples of how you meet each value and behaviour in the section entitled "How do you meet the requirements of the post?"

It is important that you provide specific examples of when you have done something to support the value and behaviour and that your answers are comprehensive. This information is used to short-list applicants for interview, so it is important that you spend time to complete this section fully. Failure to provide specific examples will result in your application being rejected. If you are disabled and you have provided specific examples of how you meet the essential values and behaviours and those specific examples meet our required standard we will invite you interview. **However please bear in mind that Disabled applicants must still meet all other criteria outlined in the sections on `Right to Work` and `Personal Character`.**

If you wish to be considered under guaranteed interview scheme, then please select this option from the drop down menu on the first page.

Finally, if you have a disability and require special provisions for attending the interview then please provide details of your requirements in the space provided on page 1.

## **STEP 2 - Right to Work in the UK**

### [Right to Work](#)

- Please enter your Nationality at birth and also your present Nationality.
- Please use the drop down menu to indicate if you have ever possessed any other nationality or citizenship. If you have answered yes to this question, then please specify the other nationality or citizenship in the space below.
- Please use the drop down menu to indicate whether you are subject to immigration control. If you have answered yes to this question, then please specify the details in the space below.
- Please use the drop down menu to indicate whether there any restrictions on your continued residence or employment in the United Kingdom. Again, if you have answered yes to this question, then please specify these restrictions in the space below.
- Please use the drop down menu to indicate whether you lawfully resident in the United Kingdom
- Please use the drop down menu to indicate whether you are free to remain and take up Civil Service employment in the United Kingdom?

Under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 and the Immigration (Restrictions on Employment) Order 2004, the Scottish Court Service has a legal obligation to ensure that any successful applicant is legally entitled to work in the UK. All successful applicants will be required to provide particular **original** documentation before beginning employment.

If you are selected for interview we prefer that you bring with you a combination of documents for us to check: an original birth certificate and an original document with your National Insurance Number (for example, a P45, P60 or National Insurance Card). If possible please also bring photocopies of these to be retained by the Selection Board), although if you do not have access to a photocopier, copies can usually be made if you attend for interview.

We prefer this combination of documents as we also require your original Birth Certificate, and a copy, for your Disclosure Scotland check (see the Personal Character section – Screen 3). However you may bring any of the required documents listed in the

document below:

<http://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/recruitmentInfo/idForExternalRecruitment.doc>

More information can be found in the Home Office guidance on the Prevention of Illegal Working. This can be found on the Home Office website

[www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk).

**Please note that the SCS as a Civil Service Agency must comply with the Nationality Rules specified by the Cabinet Office.**

These rules restrict employment in the UK Civil Service to certain categories of citizen, although not solely to its own nationals. It prohibits the employment of aliens (anyone who is not a British or Commonwealth citizen, a British protected person or a citizen of the Republic of Ireland) to Civil Service posts except if the person is a member of the European Economic Area (EEA).

In summary, only nationals from the following countries (or associations of countries) are eligible for employment in the Civil Service:

- ◆ UK nationals
- ◆ The Republic of Ireland
- ◆ The Commonwealth
- ◆ The EEA
- ◆ Switzerland
- ◆ Turkey (Turkish nationals are not automatically eligible for employment with the Civil Service.)

*There are some countries (including those that have recently joined the EEA) whose citizens may need to satisfy further criteria in order to work for the Civil Service.*

Please refer to the website below for a list of the relevant countries and the criteria they need to satisfy:

<http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/about/resources/nationality.aspx>

**If you fail to meet the nationality eligibility criteria, your application will unfortunately be rejected.**

### **STEP 3 - Personal Character**

All posts in the Scottish Court Service are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and you must disclose **all** previous convictions. Successful applicants will be security checked through a Standard Disclosure by Disclosure Scotland and if you withhold information in your application you risk losing any appointment. You should include motoring, but not parking, offences. ***Please note that answering YES to any of the questions will not necessarily bar you from appointment, however these details will be taken into account and your application may be rejected after further consideration.***

Using the drop down menu please confirm if you have at any time been convicted or found guilty of an offence by any Court in the United Kingdom or abroad, or by any Court Martial, or you have been put on probation or admonished or conditionally discharged or bound over after being charged with any offence.

If you have answered `yes`, then click on the "Add Conviction" button and complete the form. Repeat the process to record all convictions. Please click on any conviction you've entered if you wish to change its details.

Next, use the drop down menu to confirm if any charge in respect of any offence has been brought against you and not yet disposed of. If you have answered `yes`, then please give details in the space provided.

Last of all; please use the drop down menu to confirm if you are:

- Insolvent
- A person in respect of whose property a Receiving Order is in effect?
- An undischarged bankrupt?

If you have answered `yes` to any of these questions then please give details in the space provided. Please note that by answering YES to any of these questions it will not automatically bar you, however these details will be considered further and your

application may be rejected.

If you are selected for interview you must bring your original birth certificate and a photocopy so we can process your Disclosure Scotland check if you are eventually selected for the post.

[Disclosure Scotland](#) is part of the Scottish Criminal Record Office ([SCRO](#)) which is an executive agency of the [Scottish Government](#). Disclosure Scotland is a service designed to enhance public safety by providing potential employers and organisations with criminal history information on individuals applying for posts. Disclosure Scotland issue certificates - known as "Disclosures" - which give details of an individual's criminal convictions or state that they have none. The Scottish Court Service requires a 'standard' Disclosure, which is the intermediate level. This includes convictions held on central records and records of both spent and unspent convictions. This means that even minor

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Type of Qualification</b>	<b>Band of Pass</b>	<b>Year</b>
French	Advanced Higher	Grade B	2006

convictions, perhaps dating from years ago, are included on the Disclosure.

#### **STEP 4 – Your Education and Qualifications**

You should detail any qualifications or certification required or relevant for the post as detailed in the job advert. These may include, but are not limited to, Standard Grades, Highers, SVQs, HNDs and Degrees.

You should provide details of the subject, the type of Qualification and Band of Pass, and the Year attained. For example:

If the job you are applying for requires you to have certain qualifications, you should bring the original copies of these with you to interview.

To complete this screen please press the Add Qualification button then enter details on the form. Repeat for each item you wish to add. Click on any qualification you've entered if you wish to change its details.

## **STEP 5 – Employment History**

You should provide information on your employment and education up to the last 10 years, beginning with your most recent. Please explain any gaps in employment or full time education. You should include periods of unemployment or voluntary work and time spent caring for relatives.

If you have spent 6 months or more over the past 3 years abroad please give a reasonable account and details of this.

Press the `Add Entry` button, and then enter the details on the form. Repeat for each item you wish to add. Click on any entry if you wish to change its details.

## **STEP 6 – How do you meet the requirements of the post?**

This section is particularly important as it is how the Selection Board will assess if you meet the requirements for the job and make decisions on your suitability.

You should refer to the Person Specification for the job you are applying for. It sets out the essential and desirable criteria which you will be assessed against to test your suitability for the job. In this section, you should provide **specific examples** of how you meet each of the criteria.

An example of a non-specific answer and a more specific answer is given at the very bottom of the screen when you enter into each value and behaviour to complete.

Remember that relevant experience is not always obtained from a formal work setting, so consider any voluntary work, courses, placements or leisure activities that you have achieved, particularly if you have never been in paid employment or have not worked for a long time.

The values and behaviours for the post and whether they are essential or desirable are detailed on this page. If you click on each entry you can enter / change details and examples against each criteria.

## STEP 7 - References

Please give details of two referees who have **given permission for their names to be used**. The first should be your most recent employer, school, college or university. The next should be an additional employer, school, college or university referee.

In order to comply with the HMG Baseline Personnel Security Standard outlined by the Cabinet Office the Scottish Court Service must verify a successful candidates employment history for the past 3 years, please ensure that the references you provide therefore cover this minimum period. If your two references do not cover a 3 year period you may be asked to supply details for additional referees.

Please indicate under each Referee if we can approach them for a reference by using the drop down menu.

## STEP 8 – Key Employment Information

As part of our continued commitment to provide an efficient service, it is important that we get your thoughts as an applicant on the Scottish Courts Services recruitment process.

Please note that the information you provide in this section will not be viewed by the selection board Members and this information will **not** be used to decide if you can be considered for the next stage of the recruitment process. It will only be used to record statistical information and respond to any difficulties people find when applying to us for employment.

To complete this, simply click on the appropriate answer. If you have answered `other` to any question, then there is room provided to add more detail.

## STEP 9 – Why have you applied for this position?

In this section we want to discover what attracted you to working with the Scottish Court Service. You are required to rank the following reasons from 1 to 6 (1 = Most Important and 6 = Least Important) in the boxes provided. ***Please not that you should not duplicate any of the numbers used.***

- I want to work in the justice sector in Scotland

- I am seeking job security
- The overall reward package is attractive
- SCS will support my learning and development
- The job will be challenging
- This will help me fulfill my public service ethic

## Media

To enable us to measure the effectiveness of our recruitment advertising we ask that you let us know where you heard about the vacancy in the space provided on screen. ***Please ensure that you state the original website name/publication that you saw the vacancy advertised e.g. 'S1Jobs' or 'Sunday Times Scotland'. By only specifying 'internet' or 'newspaper' this restricts the validity of the data we can collect, if you are able to be as specific as possible that would be a huge help to our future advertising methods.***

## Finally

It is very important for us to know how you found the application process thus far. This helps us to review and improve our recruitment services. We ask that you please tick the statement which best describes your experience of our application process

- I had no problems at all
- I had some problems
- I had major problems

If you did experience problems applying please provide more information in the space provided on this page. Likewise if you do have any suggestions to make our application process better, then please tell us here.

Please note, that all of the information you provide in STEP 8 will not be viewed by the selection board Members and this information will **not** be used to decide if you can be considered for the next stage of the recruitment process. If you have any questions/comments on the board, or your application, please contact the person named within the advert for the post.

#### 4. Equal Opportunities Monitoring

The Scottish Court Service is committed to equality of opportunity. It is committed to providing a service and following practices that are free from discrimination. Information provided in the next two Screens will be used for two purposes:

- To monitor our recruitment and selection process to ensure that there is no discrimination;
- If you are a successful applicant, to record on our payroll system and to be used for anonymised statistical and research purposes

The information you provide will not be seen by the selection panel and will remain strictly confidential.

Please complete all sections of the form by marking the box or providing information where appropriate in each section. If you wish, for whatever reason, not to complete any section, then there is a box that you can tick to indicate this.

If you feel that Equal Opportunities has not been followed then you should write to Bryan Goodfellow, Head of HR Service Delivery, Scottish Court Service Headquarters, Spur A1, Saughton House, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh, EH11 3XD or e-mail [recruitment@scotcourts.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@scotcourts.gov.uk)

**Once you have completed the 9 steps of your application you will be navigated to an additional page which captures your equal opportunities data. This is in 2 stages and explained below:**

#### **STAGE A – Ethnic Origin, Age**

Please look at all of the descriptions of race or ethnic origin listed. Please tick one box that most accurately describes your race or ethnic origin. These categories are in line with those recommended by the Commission for Equality and Human Rights.

There is a space for you to complete if your ethnic origin is not covered in the list.

We also ask you to select your age from the list provided.

## **STAGE B - Gender, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Religion or Belief**

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995), defines a person as disabled if "they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term (has lasted, or is expected to last, for at least 12-months) adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities".

If, from this description, you consider yourself to be a disabled person, then you should tick the appropriate box and provide details.

Sexual Orientation and Religion or Belief, are monitored to allow us to make sure that there is no discrimination along these lines. There is a simple tick box to choose from and, once again, the option not to answer.

**Any information provided in stages A and B is strictly private and confidential and will not be viewed by the selection board members. This is to ensure fairness and to uphold the principles of recruiting based on merit.**

### **Declaration**

You have now successfully completed the application. The final step is to carefully read the declaration on the screen and to click on the box below to accept it.

You may now either submit the application or save the application. If you submit the application it will be sent to Scottish Court Service and you will receive an email receipt shortly afterwards acknowledging that your application has been received. Once submitted you will not be able to change the application. If you wish to add to or modify the application before submitting it use the `Save` button. The application will be saved and you can return to it later by entering your email address and job reference.

However, once the closing date arrives then your application is no longer available to access.

**Please note that all recruitment correspondence relating to your application will be made via email. Please therefore ensure that you check your spam/junk mail folders for any correspondence as the email may have been identified as spam.**

## **5. What you can expect if you are selected for interview**

- There will normally be 3 Board Members – normally consisting of the line manager, an operational manager/member of staff and a representative of the Personnel & Development Unit
- The Interview will be based on the values and behaviours contained within the Person Specification. What this means is that you should provide specific examples that demonstrate your ability to deliver the required values and behaviours.
- Each Board Member will be responsible for a number of the criteria contained within the Person Specification and will ask you questions on these areas
- The interview will normally last approximately 30- 45 minutes
- The Board will be looking for specific examples to their questions
- The Board will be assessing you against the Person Specification for the job and a scoring mechanism will be used.
- At the end the interview you will get the opportunity to ask any questions and to add anything else you feel may be of relevance

## **6. A Few Things to Remember**

- Plan to arrive early, giving yourself plenty of time to get to the interview
- Try to relax – the Board wants to see you at your best; if you are nervous they will understand and make allowances
- Be prepared, having assessed yourself against the Person Specification and have thought out specific examples relating to each value and behaviour.
- Try to relax before you go in, listen to your breathing for half a minute or so

- Think and act positively; project confidence. The Board will hope to see you at your best; they will not be trying to trick you.

## **7. Handling Questions**

### **You should:**

- Think before you answer a question; take the time you need to collect your thoughts
- Ask for clarification if you do not understand a question; if you feel you need to, explain why you did not understand
- Answer the question asked, answering as fully as you can while sticking to the point
- Say if you don't know the answer
- Stop and start your answer again if you think you are on the wrong track, but don't do this too often
- Speak up at the end – but only if you have something that needs to be said, for example to change or add to any of the answers you have given

### **You should not:**

- Give just one word answers – speak up, this is your opportunity to convince the Board you meet the criteria for the job
- Try to bluff – if you don't know the answer to a question or have an opinion to express say so
- Try to evade questions – again, if you can't answer, say so
- Ramble – when you feel that you have given an adequate response, stop. The Board will ask follow up questions if it wants to know more
- Make exaggerated claims or oversell yourself

**And finally, Good Luck!**