



SHERIFFDOM OF SOUTH STRATHCLYDE, DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

PRACTICE NOTE

NO 1 OF 2019

DIGITAL RECORDING OF PROCEEDINGS AND SOUND ENHANCEMENT SYSTEMS

I, IAN R. ABERCROMBIE Q.C., Sheriff Principal of South Strathclyde, Dumfries and Galloway by virtue of the power conferred upon me by section 27(2) of the Courts Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 hereby direct that as follows:-

1. This practice note has effect from 15th January 2020.
2. The purpose of this practice note is to provide guidance to sheriffs, practitioners and other court users on the proper use of equipment installed in the courtrooms of the Sheriffdom of South Strathclyde, Dumfries and Galloway to support digital recording of proceedings, and (where installed) sound enhancement and hearing impaired systems.

Approval of digital recording equipment

3. The digital recording equipment installed in the courtrooms of the Sheriffdom of South Strathclyde, Dumfries and Galloway is approved for the purposes of Rules 29.18 and 36B.11 of the Ordinary Cause Rules. It will therefore be available for the recording of evidence in a proof or jury trial without the need to seek the prior approval of the court and without the need to ascertain the availability of a shorthand writer.

Operation of digital recording and sound enhancement equipment

4. The digital recording and sound enhancement systems are designed to facilitate the administration of justice by improving the quality of recording and of audibility in court.
5. Where there is no requirement to record proceedings, the sound enhancement and hearing impaired systems (where installed) will still be in operation.
6. On occasion, practitioners engage in private conversations at the court well table. It is important that practitioners and other court users are aware that even softly spoken conversations in the vicinity of microphones can be picked up by either of the recording or sound enhancement systems.
7. It is important that court users remain in close proximity to a microphone when addressing the court.
8. Most of the microphones installed in the courtrooms can be moved to a certain extent, but apart from this, practitioners and other court users should not move or interfere with the microphones or obscure them with books or files as this is likely to adversely affect the recording of court proceedings.
9. All court users should speak audibly, clearly and insofar as it is practicable, in the direction of microphones to facilitate clarity of recording.
10. If a transcript is required under OCR 29.18(11) or 36B.11(8), details of available transcribers can be provided by the sheriff clerk.

I APPOINT this Practice Note to be inserted in the Act Books of all the Sheriff Courts in the Sheriffdom of South Strathclyde, Dumfries and Galloway and to be posted on the notice boards in said Sheriff Courts for publication.



Sheriff Principal Ian R Abercrombie Q.C.
Sheriff Principal of South Strathclyde Dumfries and Galloway
Airdrie, 27 December 2019