



FACULTY OF ADVOCATES

Scholarships for Devilling in 2027

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 six years, over 80 scholarships have been awarded, with over £750,000 worth of support provided to devils.

Available scholarships

The Lord Reid Scholarship

The Lord Reid Scholarship is awarded in honour of the late Lord Reid of Drem from a bequest provided by him. One Lord Reid Scholarship is usually awarded annually, to the most outstanding candidate. In recent years, the Lord Reid Scholarship award has been in the region of £15,000.

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 £10,000.

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. It is for a fixed sum (currently £6,000) and is awarded to one applicant. Its criteria are similar to those of the Lord Hope fund.

The Lord Hope fund

The Lord Hope fund is contributed to by existing members of Faculty. The principal focus of the Lord Hope fund is to provide assistance to candidates who may be prevented from devilling if they do not have access to financial support. Awards from the Lord Hope funds may be given by themselves or in conjunction with one of the scholarships outlined above, where a candidate demonstrates both particular merit and particular need.

The size and number of Lord Hope awards will depend on the need and number of eligible applicants but, often, around eight to ten awards have been made for amounts ranging between £5,000 and £10,000.

Applicants must demonstrate sufficient ability to merit the award, but greater weighting is given to those in financial need and/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 and/ or an award from the Lord Hope funds are invited in the Spring before the Autumn deadline for matriculation as an Intransit. This is in the calendar year before the year in which a candidate intends to start devilling.

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 each of the following headings:

1. Motivation: your reasons for wishing to call as an Advocate.
2. Attributes: the key attributes that you think will help you succeed in practice.
3. Referees: the names of two referees should be given, being persons qualified to attest to your suitability for an award having regard to the criteria.
4. Financial information: please outline:

- a. your annual household income (including you and your partner if applicable), over the last three years;
- b. your anticipated annual household income for the year commencing October 2027 – June 2028;
- c. your monthly fixed liabilities and commitments (such as housing and childcare);
- d. any allowance you are making for costs associated with devilling (for instance, travel to Edinburgh);
- e. what support, other sources of funding or savings you have available to support you during devilling; and
- f. the minimum size of award you anticipate you would require to devil by reference to your resources and anticipated commitments over the period of devilling.

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) criteria apply may discuss matters in confidence with the Admissions Coordinator before submitting their application.

When considering 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 covering letter.

Any information you provide as part of your application for a scholarship and/ or an award from the Lord Hope funds will not be shared outwith the Scholarship Committee and will not be used for any other purpose than deciding your application for a Scholarship and/ or an award from the Lord Hope funds.

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 and/ or an award from the Lord Hope funds will be made in good time for candidates to know whether they have been awarded a scholarship and/ or an award from the Lord Hope funds and how much that scholarship/award is before they commit to matriculation as an Intrans. However, the final scholarship/ award will be conditional on a 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 and/ or an award from the Lord Hope funds 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 and/ or an award from the Lord Hope funds 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 and/ or an award from the Lord Hope funds for those intending to commence devilling in 2027 is as follows:

8 May 2026 Your application should comprise (a) CV and (b) covering letter, addressing the matters specified above.

May/June 2026 All 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.

June/July 2026 Candidates are called for interview, where necessary. Interviews 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 in their absence.

Decisions on awards are made as soon as possible following the interviews and candidates notified accordingly.

mid-October 2026	Deadline for matriculation
June 2027	Deadline for notification of commencement of devilling.
October 2027	Devilling commences. Payment of the first instalment of the scholarship and/ or an award from the Lord Hope funds.
February 2028	Payment of the second instalment of the scholarship and/ or an award from the Lord Hope funds.

Further information and online webinar

Further information and answers to questions concerning Scholarships should be sought from the Admissions Coordinator, Gillian Myers (gillian.myers@advocates.org.uk)

An online webinar, hosted by the Faculty Scholarships Committee, will be held at 8pm on the evening of Wednesday 29 April 2026, to offer prospective applicants further information about life at Faculty and the Scholarships available. Attendance is anonymous and is treated in strict confidence. To register for the webinar, please email the Admissions Coordinator, Gillian Myers (gillian.myers@advocates.org.uk)

The deadline for applications for those intending to commence devilling in 2027 is Friday 8 May 2026.

With our best wishes,

The Faculty of Advocates' Scholarships Committee
Advocates Library
Parliament House, Edinburgh
April 2026