

Scottish Civil Justice Council

The Council was established on 28 May 2013 under the Scottish Civil Justice Council and Criminal Legal Assistance Act 2013. The Council prepares draft rules of procedure for the civil courts and advises the Lord President on the development of the civil justice system in Scotland. The Scottish Civil Justice Council replaced the Court of Session Rules Council and the Sheriff Court Rules Council, taking over the rule drafting functions of those bodies. It is this new Council body that has a wider role to advise and make recommendations about the civil justice system more generally. You can find out more about the Council's functions, powers and guiding principles on the [SCJC website](#).

The Council is comprised of a number of members that include the Lord President, senior judges, advocates and solicitors, and lay members.

The Council has established six committees to assist in its work. These are:



Changes to rules

Process wise, a proposal for new rules (or amendments) is received and considered by the Council or one of its committees.

The Committee agrees on the need for changes to rules and instructs the preparation of draft rules. Once a committee is content with the draft rules, it agrees to submit them to the Council.

The Council considers a final draft of the rules together with a recommendation to submit the draft rules to the Court of Session. If it is content, the draft rules are duly submitted to the Court of Session.

Secretariat

The Council is supported by an SCTS secretariat team based in the Judicial Office. The team is made up of a Deputy Secretary, a Business and Policy Manager and three Policy Officers, who all support the day-to-day work of the Council and its committees.

Lord President's Private Office

The Council and its committees receive legal advice and support from solicitors within the Lord President's Private Office (LPPO). They provide advice on the "care and maintenance" of rules and procedures operated by the courts and prepare draft statutory instruments to implement any recommended changes. Within the LPPO there is also a designated "Rules Rewrite Team" focusing on the implementation of the major reforms generated by the Courts Reform (Scotland) Act 2014. This team will also support the Council in a comprehensive rewrite of the court rules.