



3. Criminal legal assistance

Appendix notes

- 1. Figures for grants and refusals do not necessarily equal numbers received, since decisions on applications received towards the end of one year may not be reached until the following year.
- 2. Unless otherwise stated, the figures for accounts paid include VAT and were prepared on a cash basis.
- 3. Outlays include all non-fee payments to solicitors and advocates - for example the cost of expert witnesses.
- 4. Prior approvals were previously called sanctions.

3.1 Intimations of criminal advice and assistance

Subject matter	2024-2025	2023-2024
Appeals	91	130
Assault	791	815
Bail (including breach of bail)	118	113
Breach proceedings	169	157
Contempt of court	15	17
Criminal Law (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act	37	41
Drugs	228	273
Embezzlement/fraud	48	67
Extradition	1	5
Means enquiries/fines	116	74
Murder/attempted murder/culpable homicide	24	22
Offensive behaviour	581	624
Road traffic	758	684
Robbery	50	34
Sexual offences	300	262
Theft/housebreaking	268	272
Other	2,051	2,164
Total	5,646	5,754

3.2 Intimations of criminal ABWOR

Subject matter	2024-2025	2023-2024
Assault	3,136	2,679
Bail (including breach of bail)	3,795	3,604
Breach proceedings	7,337	6,941
Criminal Law (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act	206	208
Drugs	834	943
Embezzlement/fraud	151	149
Offensive behaviour	3,039	3,180
Road traffic	2,358	2,096
Robbery	23	7
Sexual offences	324	289
Theft/housebreaking	3,415	2,916
Other	2,351	2,296
Total	26,969	25,308

3.3 Intimations of advice and assistance under Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act

Offence	Domestic	Non-Domestic	Total	
			2024-2025	2023-2024
Assault	834	1,426	2,260	2,561
Bail (including breach of bail)	331	1,513	1,844	2,001
Communications Act	60	135	195	256
Drugs	-	571	571	603
Embezzlement/fraud	-	107	107	113
Murder/attempted murder/culpable homicide	-	197	197	224
Offensive behaviour	310	1,278	1,588	1,977
Road traffic	-	356	356	347
Robbery	-	197	197	231
Sexual offences	-	1,377	1,377	1,578
Theft/housebreaking	-	557	557	646
Other	-	1,916	1,916	1,954
Sub Total	1,535	9,630	11,165	12,491
SCL	-	-	4,705	4,776
Total	1,535	9,630	15,870	17,267

Note: The 2023-24 figures have been restated.

3.4 Intimations of ABWOR under Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act

	2024-2025	2023-2024
CJA ABWOR	105	115

3.5 Applications to SLAB for summary criminal legal aid

Offence	JP court		Sheriff court		Total	
	2024-2025	2023-2024	2024-2025	2023-2024	2024-2025	2023-2024
Assault	352	534	12,183	13,217	12,535	13,751
Bail (including breach of bail)	3	5	2,333	2,213	2,336	2,218
Drugs	115	160	2,125	2,472	2,240	2,632
Embezzlement/fraud	46	39	442	498	488	537
Extradition	0	0	52	52	52	52
Offensive behaviour	518	783	7,904	9,068	8,422	9,851
Road traffic	1,907	2,029	3,605	3,595	5,512	5,624
Robbery	0	0	103	119	103	119
Sexual offences	0	0	955	877	955	877
Theft/housebreaking	465	662	4,129	3,971	4,594	4,633
Other	194	227	2,823	2,927	3,017	3,154
Total	3,600	4,439	36,654	39,009	40,254	43,448



3.6 Grants by SLAB of summary criminal legal aid

Offence	JP court		Sheriff court		Total	
	2024-2025	2023-2024	2024-2025	2023-2024	2024-2025	2023-2024
Assault	316	464	10,926	11,858	11,242	12,322
Bail (including breach of bail)	3	2	2,151	2,059	2,154	2,061
Drugs	108	150	1,884	2,266	1,992	2,416
Embezzlement/fraud	46	38	392	438	438	476
Extradition	0	0	46	49	46	49
Offensive behaviour	498	721	7,235	8,214	7,733	8,935
Road traffic	1,587	1,688	2,993	2,952	4,580	4,640
Robbery	0	0	96	111	96	111
Sexual offences	0	0	800	757	800	757
Theft/housebreaking	461	624	3,879	3,717	4,340	4,341
Other	183	196	2,588	2,669	2,771	2,865
Total	3,202	3,883	32,990	35,090	36,192	38,973

Note
1. Grants include granted at first instance, granted on review and granted after being initially not considered.

3.7 Refusals of summary criminal legal aid at first instance by reason for refusal

Highest Ranked Reason	JP court		Sheriff court		Total	
	2024-2025	2023-2024	2024-2025	2023-2024	2024-2025	2023-2024
1. Not in the interests of justice	90	113	0	0	90	113
2. Means	140	179	1,497	1,681	1,637	1,860
3. Other rights and facilities	0	0	1	0	1	0
4. Non-timeous	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	230	292	1,498	1,681	1,728	1,973

Note
1. There can be multiple refusal reasons on a case. Here only the highest ranked reason is shown, with 1 being high.

3.8 Disposal of applications for review of decision to refuse summary criminal legal aid

	Received	Granted	Refused
Total 2024-2025	903	422	335
Total 2023-2024	935	475	332

3.9 Court granted legal aid

Type of intimation	2024-2025	2023-2024
Contempt of Court	494	732
Glasgow domestic abuse court	1,092	661
Glasgow, Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline drug courts	2	9
Granted under section 22 (1)(da-de)	302	249
Granted under section 23 (1)(b)	6	6
Total	1,896	1,657

Note

- Under section 23(1)(b) the court may grant summary criminal legal aid when considering a custodial sentence for a convicted person who has not previously been sentenced to imprisonment.

3.10 Applications to SLAB for solemn criminal legal aid

Offence	2024-2025	2023-2024
Assault	3,852	4,662
Bail (including breach of bail)	374	570
Drugs	1,516	1,440
Embezzlement/fraud	187	222
Murder/attempted murder/culpable homicide	344	360
Offensive behaviour	1,603	1,765
Road traffic	180	170
Robbery	808	708
Sexual offences	1,811	1,788
Theft/housebreaking	573	720
Other	852	808
Total	12,100	13,213

3.11 Grants of solemn criminal legal aid

Offence type	2024-2025	2023-2024
Assault	3,513	4,248
Bail (including breach of bail)	347	542
Drugs	1,351	1,314
Embezzlement/fraud	168	194
Murder/attempted murder/culpable homicide	336	341
Offensive behaviour	1,481	1,619
Road traffic	144	138
Robbery	783	685
Sexual offences	1,531	1,548
Theft/housebreaking	550	706
Other	785	720
Total	10,989	12,055

3.12 Grants under regulation 15 of the Criminal Legal Aid (Scotland) Regulations 1996 (matters of special urgency)

Type	Applications granted	
	2024-2025	2023-2024
Summary criminal	0	0
Criminal appeals	873	903
Total	873	903

3.13 Criminal appeals - full legal aid applications

Appeal Court	2024-2025			2023-2024		
	Received	Granted	Refused	Received	Granted	Refused
Sheriff Appeal Court	139	125	9	150	138	5
High Court	175	167	1	179	163	4
Total appeal applications	314	292	10	329	301	9

3.14 Applications for prior approval in criminal legal aid cases

Type	2024-2025			2023-2024		
	Received	Granted	Refused	Received	Granted	Refused
Summary criminal						
Expert witness	1,702	1,569	74	1,559	1,388	79
Unusual expenditure	79	13	58	62	5	51
Counsel	127	90	24	128	78	35
Total summary criminal	1,908	1,672	156	1,749	1,471	165
Solemn criminal and others						
Expert witness	2,069	1,903	55	1,996	1,815	73
Unusual expenditure	152	41	81	167	53	89
Counsel	4,062	3,503	367	3,410	2,928	378
Total solemn criminal and others	6,283	5,447	503	5,573	4,796	540
Criminal appeals						
Expert witness	5	3	0	9	7	0
Unusual expenditure	6	4	2	7	5	1
Counsel	35	26	6	37	27	6
Total criminal appeals	46	33	8	53	39	7
Total applications for sanctions	8,237	7,152	667	7,375	6,306	712

Note

1. Solemn figures also include numbers on these other case types: Section 23(1)(b), contempt, domestic abuse, drugs court and section 22(1)(da-de) cases.

3.15 Applications for exceptional status in summary criminal and ABWOR fixed payment cases

	Received	Granted	Refused
Total 2024-2025	178	119	54
Total 2023-2024	199	137	49

3.16 Requests for change of solicitor in criminal legal aid cases

Type	2024-2025			2023-2024		
	Received	Granted	Refused	Received	Granted	Refused
ABWOR	93	69	10	62	52	4
Summary criminal	1,045	949	36	1,009	939	39
Solemn criminal and others	1,295	1,202	56	1,311	1,236	49
Criminal appeals	2	2	0	2	2	0
Total requests	2,435	2,222	102	2,384	2,229	92

Note

1. Solemn figures also include transfers on these other case types: Section 23(1)(b), contempt, domestic abuse, drugs court and section 22(1)(da-de) cases.

3.17 Accounts paid and average case costs - criminal advice and assistance and ABWOR

Aid Type	Number of cases	Solicitor £000	Solicitor outlays £000	Counsel outlays £000	Total outlays £000	Total paid		Average case cost	
						2024-2025 £000	2023-2024 £000	2024-2025 £	2023-2024 £
Criminal advice and assistance	2,845	283	33	12	45	328	283	115	100
Criminal ABWOR	23,223	14,748	230	50	280	15,029	12,462	647	619
Total criminal advice and assistance and ABWOR 2024-	26,068	15,031	263	63	325	15,356	-	589	-
Total criminal advice and assistance and ABWOR 2023-24	22,966	12,372	322	52	374	-	12,746	-	555

Note

1. In this table, payments to advocates and solicitor advocates are included under counsel outlays, as regulation 17(1) of the Advice and Assistance (Scotland) Regulations 1996 only provides for payments to the solicitor, of fees and outlays.

3.18 Accounts paid criminal ABWOR - split between fixed fee and time and line

Fee Type	Number of cases	Solicitor £000	Solicitor outlays £000	Counsel outlays £000	Total outlays £000	Total paid		Average case cost	
						2024-2025 £000	2023-2024 £000	2024-2025 £	2023-2024 £
Fixed	16,517	12,136	118	2	120	12,256	9,921	742	714
Time and line	6,706	2,613	112	48	160	2,773	2,541	413	407
Total	23,223	14,748	230	50	280	15,029	12,462	647	619



3.19 Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act - advice and assistance

	Solicitor £000	Solicitor outlays £000	Total paid		Total number	Cost (£) per	
			2024-2025 £000	2023-2024 £000		2024-2025 £	2023-2024 £
Domestic							
Assault	80	2	82	95	782	105	107
Bail (including breach of bail)	27	1	27	33	319	86	88
Communications Act	7	0	8	10	59	129	127
Offensive behaviour	27	1	28	36	299	92	100
Total domestic	141	4	144	174	1,459	99	102
Non-domestic							
Assault	162	4	166	194	1,380	121	124
Bail (including breach of bail)	136	3	140	139	1,483	94	90
Communications Act	16	0	16	20	132	124	131
Drugs related matter	63	2	64	70	543	118	119
Embezzlement/fraud	14	1	15	20	92	164	186
Murder/attempted murder/culpable homicide	39	1	40	60	184	219	283
Offensive behaviour	121	3	125	156	1,217	103	100
Road traffic	32	1	33	34	338	98	104
Robbery	21	1	22	23	192	113	105
Sexual offences	227	8	235	280	1,303	181	195
Theft/housebreaking	52	1	53	68	539	99	106
Other	192	5	197	197	1,847	107	106
Total non-domestic	1,075	32	1,107	1,261	9,250	120	124
Total Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act - advice and assistan	1,216	36	1,252	1,435	10,709	117	120

3.20 Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act - ABWOR

	Solicitor £000	Solicitor outlays £000	Total paid £000	Total number	Cost (£) per per
Total 2024-2025	8	0	8	64	121
Total 2023-2024	8	0	8	80	105

3.21 Duty solicitor - accounts

Type	Solicitor £000	Advocate £000	Solicitor advocate £000	Total outlays £000	Duty solicitor appearances			PDSO
					Total paid £000	Total number	Cost (£) per	Number of appearances
Duty appearances	413	0	0	1	415	4,986	83	1,728
Total 2024-2025	413	0	0	1	415	4,986	83	1,728
Total 2023-2024	375	0	0	3	378	4,559	83	1,949

Note

1. PDSO appearances are not included in the total number and are not used in 'Cost per appearance' calculations.

3.22 Cases requiring ID/VIPER Parades

	Solicitor £000	Advocate £000	Solicitor advocate £000	Total outlays £000	ID/VIPER appearances		
					Total paid £000	Total number	Cost (£) per
Total 2024-2025	126	0	0	11	137	588	232
Total 2023-2024	142	0	0	12	154	662	233

3.23 Accounts paid and average case costs - summary criminal legal aid

Court	Number of cases	Solicitor £000	Advocate £000	Solicitor advocate £000	Total outlays £000	Total paid		Average case cost	
						2024-2025 £000	2023-2024 £000	2024-2025 £	2023-2024 £
JP Court	3,475	1,573	0	0	46	1,619	1,624	466	460
Sheriff court	33,106	25,675	118	5	1,149	26,947	23,876	814	821
Total summary criminal legal aid 2024-2025	36,581	27,248	118	5	1,194	28,565	-	781	-
Total summary criminal legal aid 2023-2024	32,601	24,255	103	5	1,137	-	25,500	-	782

Note

1. These figures exclude payments for contempt of court and duty.

3.24 Accounts paid summary criminal legal aid - split between fixed fee and time and line

Fee Type	Number of cases	Solicitor £000	Advocate £000	Solicitor advocate £000	Total outlays £000	Total paid		Average case cost	
						2024-2025 £000	2023-2024 £000	2024-2025 £	2023-2024 £
Fixed	35,073	26,118	41	4	1,012	27,176	23,954	775	767
Time and line	1,508	1,130	77	1	182	1,389	1,547	921	1,115
Total summary criminal legal aid 2024-2025	36,581	27,248	118	5	1,194	28,565	-	781	-
Total summary criminal legal aid 2023-2024	32,601	24,255	103	5	1,137	-	25,500	-	782

3.25 Criminal Appeals

Type	Number of cases	Solicitor £000	Advocate £000	Solicitor advocate £000	Total outlays £000	Total paid		Average case cost	
						2024-2025 £000	2023-2024 £000	2024-2025 £	2023-2024 £
Appeals - special urgency under regulation 15	434	167	110	65	9	350	374	806	853
Appeals - full legal aid	259	172	324	79	62	636	491	2,457	2,039
Total criminal legal aid appeals 2024-2025	693	339	433	144	70	986	-	1,423	-
Total criminal legal aid appeals 2023-2024	680	275	373	179	38	-	866	-	1,273

3.26 Accounts paid and average case costs - solemn criminal legal aid

Offence	Number of cases	Current Year Cost ¹							Actual Case Cost ²				
		Solicitor £000	Advocate £000	Solicitor advocate £000	Total outlays £000	Total paid		Average case cost		Average case cost		Median case cost	
						2024-2025 £000	2023-2024 £000	2024-2025 £	2023-2024 £	2024-2025 £	2023-2024 £	2024-2025 £	2023-2024 £
Assault	4,584	10,041	634	153	447	11,275	10,768	2,460	2,237	2,403	2,182	2,153	1,763
Bail (including breach of bail)	484	519	11	5	9	543	511	1,121	886	1,086	867	956	834
Drugs	1,365	3,279	769	430	249	4,727	3,709	3,463	3,309	3,178	3,347	2,118	1,870
Embezzlement/fraud	173	563	179	21	98	860	644	4,974	4,128	3,817	4,489	2,300	2,117
Murder/attempted murder/culpable homicide	374	2,277	2,727	858	315	6,176	4,397	16,514	15,162	16,201	12,056	9,950	8,502
Offensive behaviour	1608	3,451	490	195	197	4,333	4,025	2,695	2,517	2,598	2,380	1,914	1,541
Road traffic	160	373	112	51	69	605	544	3,783	3,911	3,808	3,352	2,264	2,041
Robbery	791	1,955	120	41	59	2,174	1,752	2,749	2,607	2,739	2,510	2,329	2,101
Sexual offences	1,687	5,980	5,641	1,876	801	14,298	13,983	8,476	9,591	8,168	8,538	2,999	2,874
Theft/housebreaking	708	1,389	31	11	37	1,468	1,280	2,073	1,845	1,964	1,831	1,771	1,583
Other	796	1,954	533	322	159	2,967	2,406	3,728	3,389	3,481	3,315	2,108	1,667
Total all proceedings 2024-2025	12,730	31,781	11,245	3,962	2,439	49,428	-	3,883	-	3,731	-	2,157	-
Total all proceedings 2023-2024	12,229	27,452	10,637	3,609	2,321	-	44,019	-	3,600	-	3,351	-	1,788

Notes

1. Current Year Cost is the total cost of all payments made in the financial year.
2. Actual Case Cost statistics are based on the lifetime cost of cases (payments to 31 October 2025), for cases with a main solicitor payment in the financial year.
3. These figures exclude payments for contempt of court and duty.

3.27 Accounts paid and average case costs - court granted legal aid

Court	Number of cases	Solicitor £000	Advocate £000	Solicitor advocate £000	Total outlays £000	Total paid		Average case cost	
						2024-2025 £000	2023-2024 £000	2024-2025 £	2023-2024 £
Contempt of court (including drug courts)	499	143	5	20	3	171	200	344	319
Glasgow domestic abuse court	579	197	1	0	4	202	81	348	193
Granted under section 22 (1)(da-de) of the Legal Aid (Scotland) Act 1986	153	177	81	18	23	298	281	1,947	2,232
Total all proceedings 2024-2025	1,231	517	86	38	30	671	-	545	-
Total all proceedings 2023-2024	1,172	404	111	20	28	-	562	-	480