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# AGM 2024: Practising Certificate fee for 2024/25

The Law Society’s Council has proposed a 7.75% rise of £56.75 to the Practising Certificate fee for 2024/25 and a £11.25 increase to the Roll fee. You can read more below about why this increase has been proposed and how we will use it.

**Our commitment to members and the public interest** - we have a statutory obligation to carry out core regulatory work, such as setting entry requirements and standards of practice, investigating conduct complaints and carrying our financial compliance inspections, in addition to critical AML work to protect our members and their clients. This work is essential to ensuring the profession meets the high standards expected, and that members of the public are protected and continue to have high levels of trust in Scottish solicitors.

In addition, we know that our members also value and expect a range of services from the Society. This includes our high quality CPD offering, our professional practice helpline, negotiating the Master Policy which covers the entire Scottish solicitor profession, as well as support to help solicitors earn and promote specialist expertise and accreditation. Through this vital work we are sustaining the professional standards that people expect from solicitors and sit alongside a wide range of additional support services.

Our annual income from the practicing certificate enables us to do the work that our members demand in areas such as trainee and career support, social mobility and inclusion, technology and cybersecurity and our policy work to ensure we have good law. This work supports individual members and enhances the reputation of the profession among key stakeholders and members of the public.

**This is a critical time for the Law Society and the profession -** with planned reforms to judicial factors, new legislation to radically change our criminal justice system, and reforming regulation of the legal profession, we need the resources to speak out strongly on behalf of our members on issues that affect them as well as plan for new responsibilities.

The Regulation of Legal Services (Scotland) Bill in particular will see new demands placed on the Society as it introduces additional responsibilities once enacted, including changes to improve complaints handling. All of our current duties and the new responsibilities we anticipate as a result of the Bill, must be properly resourced.

**Operating during a period of high inflation** – while dropping from the peak highs in 2022, inflation has remained high, affecting office costs such as energy and supplier bills, as well as pressure on salaries. Like other organisations and businesses, we need to ensure that we have resources to carry out the full range of our work.

# The proposed Practising Certificate fee and how we will use it

Our proposed core PC and roll fee rise of £68 in total (PC: +£56.75, Roll: +£11.25) will maintain and improve all areas of our work.

The proposed fee ensures that we can carry out our essential regulatory and public interest duties and continue to provide key services for members while remaining lower in real terms than over a decade ago. The proposal means:

**We will ensure high standards and delivery of key services and member support** - in addition to our statutory duties in setting and enforcing standards for the profession to protect clients and ensure trust in the Scottish solicitor profession, we are committed to ensuring that we offer the support and services that our members tell us they want and rely on throughout their careers. This includes delivering a range of key equality and diversity work, wellbeing, trainee support, accreditations, career development, and so much more.

We are also committed to speaking out on fundamental principles such as the rule of law and access to justice. We will work to ensure our important law reform work has impact and results in good law. This year is particularly critical as we continue our work on important new Bills on regulation and criminal justice reform, which have a direct impact on the profession.

**We will ensure the Society remains on a sound financial footing over the long term** – the proposed fee for 2024-25 will ensure the organisation is equipped to withstand the kind of volatility we have seen in recent years.

**We will recruit new talent and invest in our people** – the current job market remains highly competitive and we need to be able to attract and retain talented people who bring expert knowledge and skills to ensure we meet our statutory regulatory obligations and can deliver high quality member services and speak out on issues that are important to our members.

**We will invest in the Society to drive modernisation, efficiency and innovation –** we will continue our investment programme to upgrade our IT systems and resources to deliver service improvements, increased efficiency and enhanced security to better serve our members

# Practising Certificate fees since 2003

The graph below illustrates that the PC fee is lower in real terms than over a decade ago.

