



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe)

**Senior Researcher,
Criminal Justice**

Application Pack



Welcome from Shona Skakle, Head of Research, Library and Knowledge Exchange

Hello and welcome to SPICe. The Scottish Parliament Information Centre, an office of about 50 staff, is responsible for providing impartial research to the Parliament.

As part of my role as one of the three joint office heads in SPICe, I manage the Justice and Social Affairs Research Unit, a team of 12. We lead SPICe work on civil and criminal justice (including family law, property law, criminal law, the civil and criminal courts,

the police, prisons, and access to justice and legal aid), housing; social security; children's services; education and lifelong learning; culture; and equalities and human rights. It's a supportive team and we work closely together across all our subject areas.

This Senior Researcher role is focused on criminal justice and you will work closely with Frazer, our other criminal justice researcher. You will support the Criminal Justice Committee in its scrutiny of the Scottish Government, write briefings and blogs, and respond to MSP enquiries. The Committee has a busy legislative programme and we are here to ensure MSPs and parliamentary committees are well supported with excellent expert advice and analysis - that's where you come in.

You will be working with a creative and experienced team in SPICe, including researchers, analysts and information specialists - and you can also expect to work closely with MSPs, committee clerks and others across the organisation. The Scottish Parliament is a great place to work and there will be opportunities to grow and develop in your role.

If you're interested in developing your career and playing a key role in supporting scrutiny of criminal justice policy in Scotland, we'd love for you to apply, or please feel free to get in touch with me for a chat.



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Working in the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe)

Frazer McCallum, Senior Criminal Justice Researcher, explains what it's like to work here.

I joined SPICe in the summer of 2000, a little over a year after the first meeting of the Parliament. It was from the start, and still is, an incredibly interesting and rewarding place to work.

For me, I guess the attraction of working in SPICe flows from both the work itself and the people we get to work with. The nature of the job means that we get to explore important issues from a range of perspectives, seeking to reflect different points of view and understand the available evidence. The work can be fast moving (for example, responding to questions about issues in the headlines), but is also about building up expertise in an area. Becoming a trusted source of advice for MSPs, parliamentary committees and colleagues.

As someone focusing on criminal justice, I have been involved in helping MSPs to understand and scrutinise policy in areas such as crime reduction, support for victims and rehabilitation of offenders. I have also worked with parliamentary committees looking in detail at proposals for new laws.

As for the people, SPICe has a great group, with our different areas of expertise connected by a clear desire to support each other in our work. And a shared appreciation of the challenges of the job.

Our work also brings us in contact with people who have an amazingly wide range of experience and knowledge. As well as working alongside politicians, we connect with frontline organisations, academia, and other parliaments.



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Permanent Senior Researcher, Criminal Justice, Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe), Grade 5

Salary range: £48,426 to £59,572

Want to make a difference in one of the most influential places in Scotland? Now is your chance!

This is a great opportunity to join the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) as a Senior Researcher.

SPICe comprises a research and information service and supports the scrutiny and legislative functions of the Parliament. We provide impartial, accurate and timely research, information and briefings to Members of the Scottish Parliament, their staff, and Parliamentary staff.

Working within the Justice and Social Affairs Research Unit, a team of 12, you'll share responsibility with one other researcher for the Parliament's work on criminal justice. You'll be involved in answering enquiries on a wide range of subjects, including police, prisons, courts, prosecution, criminal law and the justice budget; and other relevant topics as required. You'll prepare committee briefings and analysis to help MSPs scrutinise the related policies of the Scottish Government, and you'll publish briefings and blog articles on relevant issues.

We're looking for an experienced researcher with detailed knowledge of the criminal justice policy area. You'll be an excellent communicator who is able to produce comprehensive briefings with brevity, accuracy and impartiality, and have a commitment to producing high quality research and analysis.

For full information about the role and to apply, please click [here](#)



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This is a full time post but we are happy to talk Flexible Working

Delivering for Excellence Senior Researcher, Criminal Justice, Grade 5

The Scottish Parliament is a values-led organisation which means our values (Stewardship, Excellence, Inclusiveness, and Respect) are at the centre of everything we do. These values are embedded in this role. Please visit our [values pages in our Staff Handbook](#).

Stewardship

Focusing on the longer term to ensure we are leaving things better than we found them and putting our shared interests ahead of any individual or team.

Your main responsibilities will involve:

- Contributing to the continuous improvement of the policy, research and information services that SPICe provides to Members, parliamentary committees and to the staff of the Parliament
- Using your research skills, working to help the Parliament achieve its corporate objectives, including improving the quality and effectiveness of scrutiny
- Providing high quality written and oral briefing material, including detailed briefings and blog articles in anticipation of parliamentary business, and in dialogue with MSPs and parliamentary committees

And in delivering these you will have:

- A commitment to continuous improvement and positively contributing to and participating in organisation-wide projects and initiatives
- The ability to produce high quality research and policy analysis, communicating complex issues with brevity, accuracy and impartiality, including the ability to produce comprehensive and clearly written briefings in an accessible format
- A commitment to further developing your own knowledge and skills to better provide research and analytical support in relevant subject areas



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Excellence

Taking care to enhance our reputation in everything we do. Using our skills and resources efficiently and effectively to deliver high-quality sustainable results.

Your main responsibilities will involve:

- Delivering high quality analysis to requests from committees, or individual MSPs and their staff, and staff of the Parliament, in all areas of criminal justice
- Developing your own knowledge and skills to better provide research and analytical support in relevant subject areas.
- Taking ownership of your own workload and prioritising work appropriately, including assisting colleagues where needed

And in delivering these you will have:

- Detailed knowledge of the criminal justice policy landscape in Scotland
- The ability to collaborate when working under pressure, and to work on your own initiative to tight deadlines
- Good organisational skills including the ability to prioritise and meet competing deadlines across many different work streams, often working in situations where there is incomplete information and where an innovative and robust approach is required



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Respect

Appreciating difference, building cohesive teams and fostering the values and experiences of diversity.

Your main responsibilities will involve:

- Establishing effective relationships to enable you to work closely with colleagues to deliver high quality services
- Supporting colleagues to improve understanding of criminal justice policy and criminal justice issues more generally
- Keeping Members and committees well informed on criminal justice matters relevant to the governance of Scotland

And in delivering these you will have:

- Well-developed interpersonal skills and the ability to build relationships with colleagues at all levels through open communication and constructive feedback
- A commitment to sharing your criminal justice research expertise with colleagues to improve their understanding, as well as showing respect for colleagues' expertise, skills, experience, and knowledge and valuing their strengths and contribution
- An understanding of the needs of the end-user when developing and delivering research services



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Inclusiveness

Understanding the big picture and seeking out alternative perspectives. Every colleague feels they can make a valued contribution and deliver their best work.

Your main responsibilities will involve:

- Developing and maintaining a wide range of contacts within the external analytical and policy community and with information providers
- Representing the Parliament at external events and networks to increase the visibility and profile of SPICe and our work.
- Coaching and mentoring academic fellows and student placements as required, to reach their potential and contribute to the work of SPICe and the Parliament

And in delivering these you will have:

- A track record of working collaboratively with others, and a willingness to share knowledge and information to improve services
- An inclusive approach and the ability to develop and enhance strong external relationships, working with a diverse range of stakeholders in a manner that respects their role and promotes the strategic direction of the wider organisation
- A coaching style of leadership, with experience of empowering and developing colleagues to reach their potential



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About us

The Parliamentary Service of over 600 people is a high-achieving and professional organisation. We are public servants rather than civil servants; we serve the Parliament and its Members and not the Scottish Government.



The [Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body](#) is responsible for providing the Parliament with the property, staff and services required for the Parliament's purposes, in accordance with the Scotland Act 1998. It is made up of five Members elected by the Parliament and the Presiding Officer.

The Corporate Body delegates the day-to-day running of the Parliament to David McGill, our Clerk/Chief Executive.

David is assisted by his Leadership Group setting the strategic direction for the parliamentary service and for creating the conditions that helps to promote a positive workplace culture. You can view our Leadership Group in our [organisation chart](#) along with our different Offices.

Our vision is clear: To make a positive difference to the lives of the people of Scotland. This means putting people at the centre of everything we do.

We attach great importance to our commitments to [Diversity and Inclusion](#) and our core values of Stewardship, Excellence, Respect and Inclusiveness form a central part of our working culture.

Our performance framework helps us to communicate and implement our strategic priorities through the parliamentary service. The [strategic plan](#) sets out our aims and priorities. This provides a set of shared priorities for everyone across the parliamentary service and covers matters such as improving parliamentary scrutiny, developing and investing in our staff, aligning public engagement with parliamentary business and providing high quality support to our elected Members. Each of the aims is equally important as they are inter-related. This means that we cannot achieve one without the others and that every one of our colleagues plays an important role in delivering them.



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We are committed to providing a great working environment where people enjoy coming to work and feel valued for their contribution and excel in their chosen careers. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect and dignity and we have a zero tolerance approach to bullying, harassment or victimisation of any kind. We recognise that improving employee engagement has a positive and significant effect on organisational performance. We know that ideas generated by colleagues can help shape the future direction of our services and contribute to the successful delivery of our goals, and our inclusive leadership style guides us in this approach.

We are committed to building a workforce which reflects the diversity of the people of Scotland. We are proud to be an equal opportunities employer that values and respects the people who work for us. We seek to ensure all job applications are treated fairly, with respect and without bias. We positively encourage applications from suitably experienced candidates regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital status, or pregnancy and maternity. We particularly welcome applications from female and minority ethnic candidates who are under-represented at this level. All appointments will be made on merit.



We are committed to agile working and currently operate a wide variety of work patterns and arrangements across the parliamentary service. We will be pleased to consider applications from candidates wishing to work flexibly and all requests will be seriously considered. Please include clearly any information about your preferred working arrangements in your application.



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