

**CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE**



Assessment Report
Customer Service Excellence

Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service

Successful
3 December 2024

Assessment Summary

Overview

Overall Self-assessment	Satisfactory
Overall outcome	Successful

Rolling Programme 3 2024 (RP3 2024) The Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service (SCTS) is an independent body corporate established by the Judiciary and Courts (Scotland) Act 2008. Its function is to provide administrative support to Scottish Courts and Tribunals and to the judiciary of courts, including the High Court of Judiciary, Court of Session, Sheriff Courts and Justice of the Peace Courts, and to the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) and Accountant of Court.

Visits were made this year virtually to Education & Learning Unit, Operations Delivery Business Unit, Fines Business Unit, Supreme Courts & High Court of Judiciary, Banff & Peterhead Sheriff Courts. On-site visits were made to the Sheriff and Justice of the Peace Courts in Falkirk, Stirling, Glasgow, Selkirk, Jedburgh, Kilmarnock, Dumfries & Ayr. Visits were also made to the Change & Digital Innovation Unit, Tribunals (Glasgow) and Office of the Public Guardian (OPG)

Lessons from the pandemic have been taken forward, particularly in the fast development of digital and virtual platforms, Evidence by Commission and Civil On-line, with considerable support by Change & Digital Innovation Unit (CDI), to facilitate these enhancements. Consultation and engagement is very strong at all levels and the commitment of staff, throughout customer journeys, to support and outreach to customers is outstanding. There is very proactive work in use of best practice, particularly at the Tribunal Service. Interaction with customers at the first point of contact through all access channels is completely customer focused. Consequently, three new Compliance Plus ratings are awarded to 4.1.3, 4.2.4 and 5.2.2. However, the processes for ensuring that appropriate questions are asked for key areas customer areas and insight are well embedded and Compliance Plus is no longer appropriate at 1.3.3. Overall SCTS is a first class organisation.

The Assessors are delighted to recommend continued accreditation to the Customer Service Excellence Standard, particularly in the light of continued full compliance.

1: Customer Insight

Criterion 1 self-assessment	Strong
Criterion 1 outcome	Successful

RP3 2024 Criterion 1 is about customer insight, consultation, engagement and customer satisfaction.

There is complete commitment throughout in reaching out to people to support those in most need. Victim and Vulnerable support in Courts, engagement with children at Tribunals and outreach at OPG are all exemplary, which merits retention of Compliance Plus at 1.1.3.

Policies and processes, although well embedded, are regularly reviewed across all parts of your business. The Trauma Strategy and Implementation is excellent.

Customer insight research is an on-going process and the procedure for asking the appropriate question in surveys and for customer insight issues is well embedded. Consequently 1.3.3 reverts to fully compliant. Although not fully reviewed at RP3, the issue of identifying trends on customer satisfaction at the RP2 visit to Tribunals was discussed. Although survey data is limited, considerable effort has been made to identify trends in the handling of complaints. This was a very thorough piece of work which justifies the retention of full compliance.

Criterion 1 remains fully compliant, and although not fully reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise at 1.1.2 and 1.3.5.

2: The Culture of the Organisation

Criterion 2 self-assessment	Strong
Criterion 2 outcome	Successful

RP3 2024 Criterion 2 is about the culture of the organisation.

Policies to support customers' expectations are embedded and outlined in documents such as Customer Charters. This manifests into good complaint handling, supporting victims and vulnerable witnesses, which is delivered sincerely and compassionately.

Empowerment of staff is a very strong feature in SCTS. Staff are self-motivated and will take initiative. The Trauma Informed Training allowed staff to identify situations and respond confidently. Staff throughout SCTS have a shared goal to improve service delivery, with ideas discussed at working groups, team meetings and staff engagement days. Good suggestions are acknowledged and recognised through Instant Rewards. Where required, suggestions are referred to systems experts, such as CDi, for development. Compliance Plus is retained at 2.1.6.

Evaluation and recognition of a motivated workforce is promoted by all senior leaders through the Talent, AO Development and Direct Entrant programmes, equipping people to deliver top class service.

Criterion 2 remains fully compliant and although not fully reviewed Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise at 2.1.2, 2.1.5, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.4 and 2.2.5

3: Information and Access

Criterion 3 self-assessment	Strong
Criterion 3 outcome	Successful

RP3 2024 Criterion 3 is about the range and quality of information, access to services and working with partners and other providers.

The quality of information provided verbally, through publications and on the website is reviewed regularly and fit for purpose. It is clear, precise and in formats that suits users of the CSTS service. Face-to-face engagement is excellent.

There is also a very strong commitment to providing information which is both accurate and complete at the first point of contact. However, where that is not possible sound procedures are in place to ensure customers received a prompt and full response. Case management and quality checks are well embedded, ensuring accuracy and completeness.

All premises visited are clean and comfortable and a lot of effort is made to ensure the services provided are fit for purpose.

SCTS continues to interact with the wider community in many positive ways, meriting retention of Compliance Plus at 3.4.3.

Criterion 3 remains fully compliant and although not fully reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained at 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

4: Delivery

Criterion 4 self-assessment	Strong
Criterion 4 outcome	Successful

RP3 2024 Criterion 4 is about service delivery, benchmarking and complaint handling.

Reviewing of local standards of service is taken very seriously through very inclusive dialogue with Court Liaison Groups on victim and vulnerable support and development of the sensory floor at Tribunals. The care and attention provided merits Compliance Plus at 4.1.3.

Benchmarking comparisons across Sheriffdoms is effective. Also notable comparison achievements are demonstrated by the Gold awards for Talent Inclusion & Diversity Evaluation across SCTS and People Development Programme at Education and Learning Unit (ELU)

The commitment to learning from best practice is outstanding in areas such as child abuse, trauma and victim/witness training and support, development of virtual hearings at CDi and continuous improvement teams at Tribunals. The extensive work merits Compliance Plus at 4.2.4.

Staff throughout SCTS are fully trained and committed to handling complaints with dedication and resolve. The efforts at Tribunals to review complaint handling and identify trends is commendable.

Criterion 4 remains fully compliant and although not fully reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained at 4.1.2 as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

5: Timeliness and Quality of Service

Criterion 5 self-assessment	Satisfactory
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Criterion 5 outcome

Successful

RP3 2024 Criterion 5 is about timeliness and the quality of customer service delivery.

Customer needs at the first point of contact are consistently identified across all entry points, with professionalism and approachability of staff. Support provided by agencies, including Victim Support Scotland, is positive and appreciated. Co-operation by all within the Sheriff Courts structure is admirable, which was observed in all court sites visited, which merits Compliance Plus at 5.2.2.

Relevant information is shared regularly, professionally and carefully across the service but also externally.

There is balance between being open and discreet, particularly with delicate information and data.

Compliance Plus is retained at 5.2.3.

Staff are skilled, empowered and committed to reaching out to customers at the first point of contact.

However, where issues are not resolved sound procedures are in place to ensure next steps are clearly indicated with appropriate time scales provided.

Performance comparisons on timeliness and the quality of customer service are drawn from engagement across Sherifdoms, with the Pensions Appeal Tribunal and at the Child Poverty Action Group.

Criterion 5 remains fully compliant.

1: Customer Insight

1.1: Customer Identification

1.1.1: We have an in-depth understanding of the characteristics of our current and potential customer groups based on recent and reliable information.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS01: Court User Satisfaction Survey 2019 v 2021/22	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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In a change to the way SCTS survey court users, prior to fieldwork commencing the questions within each survey were tailored to court users experience of each individual business type allowing for more robust and specific questioning. This was supported by Operational colleagues.

SCTS02: Staff Survey Results 2021	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The SCTS staff survey results are reported by units, each of which is tasked with reviewing its own results and taking forward areas for improvement. Question coverage includes staff views on line managers, senior managers and specific roles, such as learning & development.

SCTS03: Lord Justice Clark Report on Management of Sexual Offence Cases	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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A judicially led review group supported by members of SCTS staff was set up to improve the experience of complainers in sexual offence cases. This review was evidence based and made a number of recommendations based on the evidence, work to implement these recommendations is ongoing.

SCTS04: OPG EPOAR Survey Analysis Results and Recommendations	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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OPG's online submission service, EPOAR, offers benefits for end-users and OPG. We needed to understand why some PoA submitting solicitor firms were not using EPOAR. An online survey was issued to a sample of solicitor firms from all over Scotland, representing small and larger organisations.

SCTS40: Equality Action Plan 2019-2023 via Equality Progress Report	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The Equality Action Plan has 13 underlying supporting outcomes and associated actions. A progress report is provided to the Equality Steering group each quarter on progress. The plan includes engagement with internal and external customers.

1.1.1.1: We have an in-depth understanding of the characteristics of our current

RP1 2022 SCTS has an in-depth understanding of the characteristics of current customer groups. A wealth of data is available, which facilitates sound customer segmentation. The 2019 Court User Satisfaction Survey clearly details the wide range of customer groups who use the service, both professional and non-professional court users. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.1.1.2: and potential customer groups

RP1 2022 SCTS has an in-depth understanding of the characteristics of potential customer groups, which may include Open Day visitors, work experience students and school children coming on visits. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.1.1.3: based on recent and reliable information.

RP1 2022 The analysis of customer groups is based on comprehensive and regularly updated survey information and is supplemented by wider research. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.1.2: We have developed customer insight about our customer groups to better understand their needs and preferences.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS116: Housing Property Chamber - User Surveys Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Housing Property Chamber issued a survey to it's users to capture information in relation to the service it provides. This information was then analysed and compared with previous information.

SCTS51: Remote Provision of Evidence (RPE) Assessor Acceptance: Yes

RPE allows police witnesses to give evidence virtually instead of travelling to court. Working in collaboration with Police Scotland and COPFS, SCTS gained insight into the needs of both organisations allowing for a process to be developed that works best for our justice partners.

SCTS53: Web Accessibility / Internet Redevelopment Project Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS carried out user research via a third party who conducted a multitude of interviews and surveys with both internal and external users. This gathered user data and outlined users opinions on use of the site, access, and navigation as well as usefulness of the information presented.

SCTS60: 2021-2023 Court User Satisfaction Survey Phase 3 Report (Summary Criminal) Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The survey covered a range of customer groups who attended the Sheriff and Justice of the Peace Courts in relation to Summary Criminal business. The survey captured user needs information including accessibility, improvement suggestions and the overall customer experience in relation to this area.

SCTS61: Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Information from third party witness support services and feedback from court colleagues was used to make changes to the Standards of Service for 2023-2024. The new standards can be found on pages 16 and 17 of the report. The changes provide greater clarity for victims and witnesses.

SCTS62: Mainstreaming Equality Report and Equality Outcomes 2023-2027 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The report provides progress in relation to previous actions and establishes future outcomes for SCTS to make equality integral to its functions. SCTS works with an external Equality Advisory Group who provide advice and help ensure SCTS proposals align with the diverse population.

1.1.2.1: We have developed customer insight about our customer groups

RP2 2023 SCTS is good at developing insight about and from its customers. The Management Information Analysis Team (MIAT) has a wealth of data, used to support business cases for change. This data and research feeds through your Change Board and down into your Civil and Criminal Labs which you use to develop policy initiatives and working practices. Jury and Criminal Surveys provided you with detailed information about what customers think about your services. This corporate insight is supplemented by feedback from the local Court Liaison Groups made up from representatives across your users and partners in the justice system. Your Judges and Sheriffs also provide insight that impacts on change, as do your front line Court staff, across SCTS. The level of insight, used to improve and develop services across all aspects of SCTS merits continued Compliance Plus.

RP3 2024 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.1.2.2: to better understand their needs and preferences.

RP2 2023 Many changes stem from these insights, including the introduction of Remote Provision of Evidence (RPE) which allows professional witnesses, for example, Police and Medical experts to give evidence virtually instead of travelling to court, making valuable efficiency and time savings, particularly in the more rural areas. Another is the introduction of Pre Intermediate Diet Meetings (PIDMs), which is aimed at identifying the likelihood of a case going straight to a trial, without a Diet hearing. Information from the third party Witness Support Services and feedback from court colleagues was used to make changes to the Standards of Service for 2023-2024. Your regular Court Liaison Group meetings provides you with insight into how courts are used and where staff can develop improvements on how local courts work within the overall judicial framework and guidance.

RP3 2024 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.1.3: We make particular efforts to identify hard to reach and disadvantaged groups and individuals and have developed our services in response to their specific needs.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS120: Evidence by Commission Suites Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Evidence by Commission Suites are used by child and vulnerable adult witnesses to give their best quality of evidence as early possible while minimising further trauma. Evidence is pre-recorded and played to the court at a trial preventing the witness from having to attend in person.

SCTS121: Video Conference and Teleconference Hearings Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Video conference and teleconference hearings are utilised across SCTS including tribunals to allow customers to attend hearings without attending physical buildings. This allows more flexibility for these hearings. Views of those due to attend are sought to determine the best hearing mechanism.

SCTS122: Mental Health First Aiders Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Mental Health First Aiders (MHFAs) are trained members of SCTS staff who can assist other members of staff who require mental health support. The MHFAs can provide support and signpost to appropriate professional help. Since April 2024 there have been 7 logged contacts with the support available.

SCTS123: Domestic Abuse Pilot Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Pilot courts for domestic abuse cases have taken place in Dundee, Hamilton, Paisley, Glasgow and Perth. The pilots allow cases to be dealt with in a more streamlined manner allowing for quicker resolution. Which benefits witnesses both civilian and police personnel they don't have to attend court.

SCTS124: Civil Online Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Civil Online is a continually developing computer system used to process civil case information. A number of improvements have been made to the system to benefit users including those who are disadvantaged or difficult to reach. Surveys of users and Equality Impact Assessments have been undertaken

SCTS125: Trauma Informed Strategy and Implementation Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS is in the process of implementing the Knowledge and Skills Framework for Trauma Informed Justice developed by the Scottish Government, members of the Victims Taskforce (SCTS is a member) and the NHS Education for Scotland National Trauma Training Programme.

1.1.3.1: We make particular efforts to identify hard to reach

RP3 2024 The SCTS continues to make considerable effort to identify hard to reach groups and individuals. Evidence by Commission has enabled vulnerable and anxious customers to engage with the Court service in a non-threatening and safe environment. This is augmented by a very dedicated team of volunteers providing extremely valuable support to victims and vulnerable witnesses. The Civil on-line and 'Simple Procedures' enhanced digital facilities have improved customer journeys substantially

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.1.3.2: and disadvantaged groups and individuals

RP3 2024 Engaging with the SCTS can be daunting for certain areas of society, including those in the disadvantaged category. Protocols and procedures are in place to identify needs and provide a consistent approach but on occasion a very bespoke service, particularly in relation to children. This was clearly demonstrated during visits to Sheriff Courts and the Tribunal Service, with specific emphasis on the welfare of young people. The development of the sensory rooms at Tribunals, taking on board users' feedback, including children, is highly commendable.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.1.3.3: and have developed our services in response to their specific needs.

RP3 2024 All in SCTS take a very keen interest in the welfare of customers that are harder to reach and or are disadvantaged and vulnerable. There is a clear desire to identify needy customers, engage with them, listen intently and modify procedures and deliver service to suit. This is embedded in a culture of compassion. As indicated above, a number of protocols and processes have been adapted, or even created, to allow users to experience the best possible customer service. Consequently, this element merits the retention of Compliance Plus.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.2: Engagement and Consultation

1.2.1: We have a strategy for engaging and involving customers using a range of methods appropriate to the needs of identified customer groups.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS05: RMO MHO Forum Agenda and Minutes 9th May 2022 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

A forum for responsible medical officers (RMOs) and mental health officers (MHOs) is held by the Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland this allows open discussion to engage and involve customers in topics which directly involve them. The event has been changed to a virtual event run twice per year.

SCTS41: SCTS British Sign Language Plan 2018-2024 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS BSL Plan supports commitments in the British Sign Language (BSL) National Plan and sets out the actions we intend to take to promote BSL and support BSL users (including tactile BSL) over the period covering 2018 to 2024. SCTS is a member of the BSL Justice Advisory Group.

SCTS42: Equality Advisory Group Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The main purpose of the Equality Advisory Group is to act as a 'critical friend' to SCTS by giving advice on new and existing policies, procedures and providing fresh insight about developments in the equality sector. Ten organisations are represented on the group.

SCTS50: Virtual Summary Trials Assessor Acceptance: Yes

A national Project Board was established where all interested groups were represented. The project considered the viability of virtual summary trials for domestic abuse cases and the use of a remote facility for witnesses was tested under the supervision of Victim Support Scotland.

SCTS58: Court Liaison Group Minutes - best seen at visit Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Includes Sheriffs, SCTS, COPFS, the local Faculty, GeoAmey, Witness Service and Criminal Justice Social Work. Chaired by Sheriffs supported by Sheriff Clerks and the purpose is to discuss local issues on the operation of the court with local partners. The group links to the Criminal Justice Board.

1.2.1.1: We have a strategy for engaging and involving customers

RP1 2022 SCTS has a clear strategic approach to engagement and consultation with customers, and actively canvasses for feedback from all relevant parties. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed.
RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.2.1.2: using a range of methods

RP1 2022 A wide variety of mechanisms are used to engage with customers, ranging from large-scale consultations using independent research teams who canvass the views of court users, through to the extensive use of local Court Liaison meetings where law professionals can express their views. The Court User Satisfaction Survey, carried out on an annual to two yearly basis since 2005, providing detailed and comprehensive feedback from both professional and non-professional court users, was last carried out in 2019. A new approach is now being introduced, with a three-phase survey of firstly Jury Trials, secondly Civil Business only and thirdly Summary Criminal Business only. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed.
RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.2.1.3: appropriate to the needs of identified customer groups.

RP1 2022 The range of methods employed by the Service is appropriate to the needs of identified customer groups. For instance, the Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland holds a twice-yearly forum (currently virtual) for responsible medical officers (RMOs) and mental health officers (MHOs), which allows open discussion to engage and involve customers in topics which directly involve them. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed.
RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.2.2: We have made the consultation of customers integral to continually improving our service and we advise customers of the results and action taken.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS05: RMO MHO Forum Agenda and Minutes 9th May 2022 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

A forum for responsible medical officers (RMOs) and mental health officers (MHOs) is held by the Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland this allows open discussion to engage and involve customers in topics which directly involve them. The event is held as a virtual event twice per year.

SCTS53: Web Accessibility / Internet Redevelopment Project Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS carried out user research via a third party who conducted a multitude of interviews and surveys with both internal and external users. This gathered user data and outlined users opinions, this information informed the future of the project and was incorporated into development changes.

SCTS58: Court Liaison Group Minutes - best seen at visit Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Examples of these would be best seen at local court level. The group includes Sheriffs, SCTS, COPFS, local faculty, GeoAmey, Victim Support and Criminal Justice Social work. The purpose is to discuss local issues on the operation of the court with local partners. Linked to Criminal Justice Board.

SCTS63: You Said / We Did Poster Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The posters demonstrate the responses to and changes from (where applicable) feedback received by customers either directly through surveys, formal complaints, informal complaints and comment/suggestion boxes. These are updated regularly to inform customers of changes that affect them.

SCTS64: Recover, Renew, Transform - Recovery Programme Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The programme was launched after extensive consultation with key stakeholders. The programme is supported by £50 million cross-justice funding announced by the Scottish Government to provide the necessary resources for the courts, COPFS, Legal Aid, Police, Community Justice, prisons and third sector

SCTS65: Civil Online - Caveats Assessor Acceptance: Yes

A change was made to Civil Online (the civil case management system) to allow Caveats to be uploaded directly to the system by legal firms allowing greater control by them in relation to this process. Legal firms have been consulted and involved with the process of this change.

1.2.2.1: We have made the consultation of customers integral to continually improving our service

RP2 2023 The SCTS seeks feedback from customers through a range of national general customer surveys, and through a number of smaller, more specific surveys, for example, those being developed by the Tribunal Service. Assessors met local Court officials and users, providing good evidence about how they engaged locally with customers to discuss the operation of local courts and, where appropriate, improve how those local courts operated. The Mental Health Tribunal engages biannually with Responsible Medical Officers and Mental Health Officers open discussion to engage and involve customers in topics which directly involve them. You are using third party providers to improve and develop your website and they have engaged with customers and users to understand their needs, and to test the new web site. Internally, your Secretariat engaged with users to identify lessons that could be learned from the Covid pandemic and your recovery programme.

RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.2.2.2: and we advise customers of the results and action taken.

RP2 2023 You provide feedback to customers through Court Liaison Group minutes, e.g., where there is new guidance or new procedures, such as the PIDMs, which are available at Court sites, sent to users, and user representatives and disseminated by them to their colleagues. All Courts visited display 'You Said...We Did' posters setting out actions which had been taken following feedback from customers. At a corporate level, following consultations with users, you made changes to Civil Online to allow Caveats to be uploaded directly to the system by legal firms allowing greater control by them in relation to this process. Internally, your MIAT has developed training courses to help customers better understand data management and analysis. The outcomes of the Covid lessons learnt are being incorporated into your resilience planning processes. Your Annual Report is a good document for setting out how services have changed and how you listen to your customers.

RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.2.3: We regularly review our strategies and opportunities for consulting and engaging with customers to ensure that the methods used are effective and provide reliable and representative results.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS126: Trauma Informed Strategy and Implementation Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS is in the process of implementing the Knowledge and Skills Framework for Trauma Informed Justice. The Framework was developed by Scottish Government, members of the Victims Taskforce (SCTS is a member) and the NHS Education for Scotland National Trauma Training Programme.

SCTS127: Court Liaison Groups Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Local court operation have regular meetings with key stakeholders to discuss local issues. This allows for resolution at the earliest opportunity. Due to the local nature of these this is best observed during local court visits.

SCTS128: Sensory Room Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Additional Support Needs Jurisdiction based within Tribunals created a sensory room within the Glasgow Tribunals Centre to assist child participants to feel comfortable and able to express their views and give evidence in a supported way. Consultation with children took place during design.

SCTS129: Mental Health Users Group Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland (MHTS) run a forum for responsible medical officers and mental health officers to attend and discuss issues they may have or allow them to ask questions that may help improve their working relationship with MHTS as well as allowing MHTS to provide updates.

SCTS130: Equality Advisory Group Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Equality Advisory Group (EAG) contribute to mainstreaming equality in SCTS. The group allows SCTS to access objective advice from a number of external organisations who act as a critical friend to the organisation giving advice on new and existing policies and procedures and providing insight.

SCTS131: Jury Review Project Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Criminal Change Lab based within the Change and Digital Innovation Unit commenced a project looking at various aspects of the jury process. As part of the process consultation and insight was gained from internal staff and external sources.

1.2.3.1: We regularly review our strategies and opportunities for consulting

RP3 2024 Consultation is high on the agenda throughout SCTS and there is equal commitment to the review of strategies and opportunities for consulting and engaging with customers. This is done at all levels, from a high strategic position, departmental level and at the forefront of service delivery. Review, change and deliver is a focus that is prominent throughout. Consultation is constructive and very inclusive, with appropriate parties invited to contribute, both internally and externally. Such activity was clearly demonstrated at all sites visited, through well embedded forums such Court Liaison Groups, Sheriffdom wide forums, Tribunals forums and the Outreach policy at the Office of Public Guardian.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.2.3.2: and engaging with customers to ensure that the methods used are effective and provide reliable and representative results.

RP3 2024 The activities undertaken include the need to engage with customers including those internal departments which play a very important role in the quality of service delivery. The purpose of the reviews is not only to gauge the reliability of results, but to map and identify areas for improvement. Some reviews are carried out annually, to identify trends and encompass changes in legislation and the development of process changes. The support of departments such as the Change and Digital Innovation and Education and Learning Unit provide valuable professional insight. Full compliance is maintained.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.3: Customer Satisfaction

1.3.1: We use reliable and accurate methods to measure customer satisfaction on a regular basis.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS02: Staff Survey Results 2021 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Since 2010 the SCTS has taken part in a civil service wide staff survey. Results are reported by units as well as compared to other public sector organisations who were asked the same questions. Action plans for each area are developed, in addition in 2021 two corporate themes were taken forward.

SCTS06: 2021-2022 Court User Satisfaction Survey Results Phase 1 Jury Trials Assessor Acceptance: Yes

In a change to the way SCTS survey court users, prior to fieldwork commencing the questions were tailored to court users experience of jury trials allowing for more robust and specific questioning. Overall satisfaction achieved its highest rating since surveys began in 2005.

SCTS07: Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses workshop Assessor Acceptance: Yes

In 2021 SCTS along with other justice partners attended a workshop to discuss the Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses where feedback was given on the standards by victims and third sector organisations to allow for these to be reviewed by SCTS.

SCTS08: Complaints Handling Report 2021-2022 Q2 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS has adopted the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman model complaints handling procedure. As part of that process there is recording of all complaints and active learning from complaints through reporting and publicising complaints information.

SCTS43: SCTS Mainstreaming Equality Report 2021 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Mainstreaming Equality Report 2021 reports on the progress of SCTS to make equality integral to its functions. Included are the key projects and achievements SCTS has made since the last report in 2019.

1.3.1.1: We use reliable and accurate methods to measure customer satisfaction on a regular basis.

RP1 2022 Reliable and accurate methods are used to measure customer satisfaction on a regular basis. Up until 2019, the main evidence was the SCTS Court User Satisfaction Survey, carried out by an independent third party. The quality demonstrated in these surveys, and in the subsequent analysis, gave a very high degree of confidence as to their accuracy and reliability. However, a new approach was introduced during the pandemic, whereby, instead of surveying customers all at the same time, a phased approach is used. Phase 1 Jury Trials has been completed, with 95% overall satisfaction levels. Phase 2 Civil Business only has been completed, but results are not yet publicly available. Phase 3 Summary Criminal Business only will commence in January 2023. Therefore, this Element reverts from Compliance Plus to Full Compliance because the three-phase survey is in the early stages of implementation and yet to demonstrate its robustness. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed.

RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.3.2: We analyse and publicise satisfaction levels for the full range of customers for all main areas of our service and we have improved services as a result.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS118: OPG Pulse Survey Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The OPG conducted a pulse survey with its service users. The analysis has assisted OPG in monitoring its service provision and has allowed customers to provide feedback. During the analysis process areas of improvement are recognised and acted upon.

SCTS60: 2021-2023 Court User Satisfaction Survey Phase 3 Report (Summary Criminal) Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The survey covered a range of customers who attended the Sheriff and Justice of the Peace Courts in relation to Summary Criminal business. Overall satisfaction levels for the survey can be found on page 51, this is an improvement on the Phase 2 (Civil) levels. Action plans will be created locally

SCTS61: Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The report provides an annual review of performance against the specified standards, as well as exploring the ongoing efforts being made to improve the experience for victims and witnesses who attend court.

SCTS63: You Said / We Did Poster Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The posters demonstrate the responses to and changes from (where applicable) feedback received by customers either directly through surveys, formal complaints, informal complaints and comment/suggestion boxes. These are updated regularly to inform customers of changes that affect them.

SCTS66: People Survey Results 2022 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Since 2010 the SCTS has taken part in a civil service wide people survey. Results are reported by units as well as compared to other public sector organisations who were asked the same questions. Action plans for each area are developed, in addition corporate themes are taken forward.

SCTS67: Tribunals Operations Quality Working Group Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The group review Tribunals Operations quality assurance framework, information assets, data security and data retention. Ensure consistency in approach, adherence to legislation and SCTS policies ensuring a high level of service for stakeholders.

1.3.2.1: We analyse and publicise satisfaction levels for the full range of customers

RP2 2023 Your national Pulse Surveys have covered three core areas of your service delivery, for Civil and Criminal Courts and the Jury Service. These contain a mass of data, which has been micro analysed and publicised through your web pages. This provides the feedback broken down by individual Court area, so for example, the local court in Elgin was displaying the feedback from users of its Court. SCTS also has more specific surveys, such as that run by the Office for Public Guardianship, and the Tribunal Courts are now developing surveys across their user groups and range of Tribunals, all of which are analysed. SCTS is very open about what it does, and is good at publicising the outcomes of these surveys on its website and at local Court sites, and is a good example for other public services to follow. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.3.2.2: for all main areas of our service

RP2 2023 As mentioned above, you gather feedback from across the full range of your customer groups, within the Court Services, through your Civil Court, Criminal Court, and Jurors surveys as well as for customers using the Office of Public Guardianship, and the various Tribunals. There is scope however, internally, to seek feedback on how those services are delivered to your internal customers through your internal professional services. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.3.2.3: and we have improved services as a result.

RP2 2023 Feedback from the national surveys is fed back into the judicial system and is used by Executive Team members, where appropriate, to develop and inform service initiatives, through the Change Boards and Criminal and Civil Labs and informs policy, for example, updated Jury Guidance. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.3.3: We include in our measurement of satisfaction specific questions relating to key areas including those on delivery, timeliness, information, access, and the quality of customer service, as well as specific questions which are informed by customer insight.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS132: Court User Satisfaction Survey 2021 - 2023 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Court User Satisfaction Survey looked at customer satisfaction across business types (Jury Trials, Civil and Summary Criminal), by business area (Sheriffdoms) and by customer group. All include questions in relation to delivery, timeliness, information, access and quality of customer service.

SCTS133: SCTS People Survey 2023 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The People Survey is a civil service wide survey conducted every year which allows SCTS to benchmark itself against other similar civil service organisations. There was a positive increase in all of the scores for the core themes in 2023 compared to 2022.

SCTS134: Health and Education Chamber Evaluations and Feedback Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Departments within the Tribunals jurisdiction use a variety of forms to gather feedback. For instance they have a Webex survey and member feedback forms in the Health and Education Chamber jurisdiction which allows them to obtain and analyse feedback on hearings both from customers and members.

SCTS135: Training Feedback Forms Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Internal training teams based in the Education and Learning Unit and Tribunals issue feedback forms to participants following every training session. Questions are asked in relation to delivery and the responses are used to inform future training events.

SCTS136: OPG Customer Satisfaction Survey Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Office of the Public Guardian regularly undertake customer satisfaction surveys and include in those questions on delivery, timeliness, information, access and quality of customer service. In October 2023 customer satisfaction was up 3% from 92% to 95%.

SCTS137: Performance Posters and You Said We Did Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS publishes a range of information in relation to customer satisfaction and these cover areas of information on delivery, timeliness, information, access, and the quality of customer service. Due to the nature of these publications these are best observed during local visits.

1.3.3.1: We include in our measurement of satisfaction specific questions relating to key areas including those on delivery, timeliness, information, access, and the quality of customer service,

RP3 2024 The questions asked in the Court User Satisfaction Survey continue to seek customer feedback on satisfaction relating to service delivery, timeliness, information, access and the quality of customer service.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.3.3.2: as well as specific questions which are informed by customer insight.

RP3 2024 The Court User Satisfaction Survey also continues to include specific questions which are informed by customer insight. Additionally, a range of other surveys are carried out, including the Tribunal User Surveys and the Office of Public Guardian customer survey. The whole of SCTS relies on the support of internal customer and business units and there is scope to widen customer insight feedback. Consequently, and, as the processes currently in place for customer research and feedback are well embedded, there is less evidence to retain the previously awarded Compliance Plus rating.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.3.4: We set challenging and stretching targets for customer satisfaction and our levels are improving.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS06: 2021-2022 Court User Satisfaction Survey Results Phase 1 Jury Trials Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Overall satisfaction achieved its highest rating since surveys began in 2005 with a rating of 95% an increase of 3% from the 2019 results. Staff helpfulness also increased by 1% to 97% from the 2019 results.

SCTS09: Board Scorecard Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Board Scorecard was approved by the SCTS Board and provides detailed indicators on satisfaction and key drivers such as waiting times for court dates and staff engagement. The Board determined the target range for achievement and uses a traffic light system to monitor progress.

SCTS10: Service Delivery Targets - separate email due to file size Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Service Delivery Targets for Sheriff Courts are published on court notice boards and are reported monthly on a report generated on the SCTS intranet. The report tracks trends in service levels.

SCTS11: Supreme Courts and Sheriff Appeal Court Framework Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Supreme Court and Sheriff Appeal Court Performance Frameworks provide service delivery targets. These track trends in service levels.

SCTS12: Corporate Plan 2020-2023 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Plan sets out a range of strategic priorities supported by specific milestones published in annual Business Plans. Priorities are aligned with specific strategic objectives which support the delivery of excellent services despite challenging stakeholder expectations and reducing budgets.

SCTS40: Equality Action Plan 2019-2023 via Equality Progress Report Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Equality Action Plan has 13 underlying supporting outcomes and associated actions. A progress report is provided to the Equality Steering group each quarter on progress against the plan.

1.3.4.1: We set challenging and stretching targets for customer satisfaction

RP1 2022 The overall Court User Satisfaction target is 78%, which, given current performance levels, is not challenging. This target was set many years ago and would benefit from review. RP2 2023 Since the previous Assessment your Executive has agreed to increase the target satisfaction to 90%. This is much more in line with, but above, existing satisfaction levels, but remains a challenging target for the Courts to aspire to. This theme moves to Full Compliance. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.3.4.2: and our levels are improving.

RP2 2023 Satisfaction levels have risen to the 92% for the Criminal Courts and 95% for the Jury Service, but are low (54%) for the Civil Courts, which was based on a low response rate. Satisfaction levels in the various Tribunal surveys is high, above 90%. Although, these show very good levels of satisfaction, as yet there is limited evidence to show a pattern for the Tribunals. This theme reverts to Full Compliance, but will be reviewed as part of RP3 in relation to satisfaction with the Tribunals.

RP3 2024 Although there is limited survey data to draw trend conclusions, the Tribunal Service has carried out considerable analysis on customer feedback on complaints and complaint handling. Trends have been identified with persistent use of alternative channels such as Freedom of Information requests and System Access Reports, where customers remained dissatisfied. Considerable effort was also made to review the complaint handling process. This justified retention of full compliance.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

1.3.5: We have made positive changes to services as a result of analysing customer experience, including improved customer journeys.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS04: OPG EPOAR Survey Analysis Results and Recommendations Assessor Acceptance: Yes

OPG's online submission service, EPOAR, offers benefits for end-users and OPG. OPG needed to understand why some PoA submitting solicitors firms were not using EPOAR. An online survey was issued to a sample of solicitor firms from all over Scotland, representing small and larger organisations.

SCTS33: Digital Expenses Payment System Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Digital Expenses Payment System was introduced to allow jurors and tribunal appellants to claim expenses online. SCTS worked in partnership with NatWest, the Post Office and the system developer StormID. The system is currently used across the estate and improves the customer experience.

SCTS51: Remote Provision of Evidence (RPE) Assessor Acceptance: Yes

RPE allows police witnesses to give evidence virtually instead of travelling to court. Working in collaboration with Police Scotland and COPFS, SCTS gained insight into the needs of both organisations allowing for a process to be developed that works best for our justice partners.

SCTS59: 2021-2023 Court User Satisfaction Survey Phase 2 Report (Civil) Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The results of this survey have been considered by the Civil Lab and were used to inform research in relation to the introduction of virtual hearings in civil cases. The survey results provide information on customer experience, suggestions for improvement and wider customer experience information.

SCTS61: Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Information from third party witness support services and feedback from court colleagues was used to make changes to the Standards of Service for 2023-2024. The new standards can be found on pages 16 and 17 of the report. The changes provide greater clarity for victims and witnesses.

SCTS68: Jury Citations - Introduction of QR Codes Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The project improved the system for potential jurors to register their details on SCTS systems once a jury citation has been received. A 83% increase in jurors completing details was noted within the first few weeks of the launch.

1.3.5.1: We have made positive changes to services as a result of analysing customer experience,

RP2 2023 Introduction of the Remote Provision of Evidence allows police and professional witnesses to give evidence virtually instead of travelling to court, is a significant improvement, saving police time, increasing efficiency and providing evidence timely. The introduction of your Digital Expenses Payment System, where jurors and tribunal appellants claim expenses online has vastly improved their customer journeys. Results of the Civil Court user survey were used by your Civil Lab to inform research on the introduction of virtual hearings in civil cases. Local Court Liaison Groups discuss issues raised by the Procurator Fiscal, Sheriffs, Agents and partners to the judicial system and make changes within the frameworks set to improve how local Courts work. The web site contains a summary of the Case Management Pilot published in November and the benefits that has brought. RP3 2024 Although not fully reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value:

Fully Met

1.3.5.2: including improved customer journeys.

RP2 2023 There were numerous examples of improved customer journeys, including the introduction of five Evidence by Commission Suites across Scotland providing significantly improvements for vulnerable people giving evidence. Others are the introduction of the Justice Centre in Inverness housing all of the organisations involved, improving co-ordination and services and the very successful Plea Surgery in Glasgow, the PIDMs which improve the journey where it is clear from discussions between parties at an early stage that a case will go direct to trial and the introduction of Virtual Custody. Another example is the use of technology in improving customer journeys. The extent of improved journeys is the result of an organisational culture which is aimed at modernising and improving the way the justice system delivers its services. It is now an embedded process and merits C+. RP3 2024 Although not fully reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value:

Fully Met

2: The Culture of the Organisation

2.1: Leadership, Policy and Culture

2.1.1: There is corporate commitment to putting the customer at the heart of service delivery and leaders in our organisation actively support this and advocate for customers.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS12: Corporate Plan 2020-2023	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The Plan sets out a range of strategic priorities supported by specific milestones published in annual Business Plans. Priorities are aligned with specific strategic objectives which support the delivery of excellent services despite challenging stakeholder expectations and reducing budgets.

SCTS13: SCTS Customer Charters	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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These Charters set out service standards and commitments to people attending courts, tribunals or the office of the public guardian in person, or making written or telephone enquiries. They include opening times and contact details for complaints and feedback.

SCTS14: Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses Report 2021-2022	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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SCTS with justice partner organisation contribute to the completion of the report. The annual report focuses on the steps taken to help victims and witnesses feel supported, safe and informed at every stage of their journey. Ensuring the standards are met, challenged and reviewed is recognised.

SCTS43: SCTS Mainstreaming Equality Report 2021	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The SCTS Mainstreaming Equality Report 2021 reports on the progress of SCTS to make equality integral to its functions. Included are the key projects and achievements SCTS has made since the last report in 2019. The Chief Executive of SCTS provides the foreword to the report.

SCTS44: SCTS Board Minutes	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The SCTS Board is chaired by the Lord President. The Chief Executive sits on the board along with representatives from the judiciary, members of the legal community and independent members outwith the legal community. The board is informed of ongoing projects and service delivery outputs.

SCTS51: Remote Provision of Evidence (RPE)	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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RPE allowing police witnesses to give evidence virtually instead of travelling to court. This is collaborative with Police Scotland and COPFS. Weekly working group meetings are held as well as monthly National Working Group meetings to monitor and evaluate the process.

2.1.1.1: There is corporate commitment to putting the customer at the heart of service delivery

RP1 2022 There is strong corporate commitment to putting the customer at the heart of service delivery. This is well exemplified on the web site and in Corporate policy documents, such as the Corporate Plan 2020-2023 and the Business Plan 2022-2023. There is now a new Change and Digital Innovation Unit (CDI) with 160 staff, using agile load testing methodology and Change Labs to prioritise virtual work studies, leading to changes in procedure and streamlining of workflows, thus offering a responsive experience from the customer's perspective, where their needs are listened to, boosting customer satisfaction. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

2.1.1.2: and leaders in our organisation actively support this and advocate for customers.

RP1 2022 Across the Service, from leaders, managers and front-line staff, the commitment to the delivery of customer focussed services was clear and consistently well explained. Staff, customers and partners all confirmed that the importance of customer service is emphasised by leaders at all times. The culture of the Service is customer-focused with a strong emphasis on team working and the use of customer insight to improve service delivery. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

2.1.2: We use customer insight to inform policy and strategy and to prioritise service improvement activity.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS61: Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Information from third party witness support services and feedback from court colleagues was used to make changes to the Standards of Service for 2023-2024. The new standards can be found on pages 16 and 17 of the report. The changes provide greater clarity for victims and witnesses.

SCTS62: Mainstreaming Equality Report and Equality Outcomes 2023-2027 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The report provides progress in relation to previous actions and establishes future outcomes for SCTS to make equality integral to its functions. SCTS works with an external Equality Advisory Group who provide advice and help ensure SCTS proposals align with the diverse population.

SCTS64: Recover, Renew, Transform - Recovery Programme Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The programme was launched after extensive consultation with key stakeholders. The programme is supported by £50 million cross-justice funding announced by the Scottish Government to provide the necessary resources for the courts, COPFS, Legal Aid, Police, Community Justice, prisons and third sector

SCTS66: People Survey Results 2022 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Since 2010 the SCTS has taken part in a civil service wide people survey. Results are reported by units as well as compared to other public sector organisations who were asked the same questions. Action plans for each area are developed, in addition corporate themes are taken forward.

SCTS69: Covid-19 Lessons Learned Review Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The review sought input from various justice partner organisations and SCTS staff to review the SCTS response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The review aimed to identify ways the organisation can enhance its response to future disruptions, improve overall resilience and identify successful changes.

SCTS70: SCTS Executive Change Boards - Change Labs Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The executive change boards are the overarching change authority for the SCTS portfolio for change and is responsible for 1) Direction; 2) Resource; 3) Initiatives; 4) Value; 5) Engagement and Risk. The board review the change landscape within SCTS and approve actions for future development.

2.1.2.1: We use customer insight to inform policy and strategy

RP2 2023 Customer insight is used extensively to inform policy and strategy. What was impressive was how senior members of the Judiciary were engaged in seeking to improve customer journeys. One member having visited each of the Tribunals since being appointed was seeking to identify ways in which 'spaces' could be changed to improve the experience of engagement with the justice system, whilst another spoke about improving customer journeys, as well as praising staff for their ideas. SCTS has looked at lessons learnt from the Covid pandemic and identified things to do differently. For example, the development of Evidence by Commission digital suites for hearing evidence from vulnerable witnesses, is particularly noteworthy on how you have used insight to develop better access. The extent to which you use insight continues to merit Compliance Plus for this theme. RP3 2024 Although not fully reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value:

Fully Met

2.1.2.2: and to prioritise service improvement activity.

RP2 2023 Your Executive Change Boards, which link into your Annual Business Plan, three year Corporate Plan and longer five term vision which are aligned to your strategic priorities. You also engage with key justice groups, such as the Criminal Justice Board, to identify change and unblock barriers to progress. Your 'Front Door' process is your mechanism for developing business cases and according priorities for change through your Change Boards and Criminal and Civil Labs. The Board and Executive are committed to using the Change Boards to improve and modernise the Court Service for users. Your new Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses arose from third party witness support services and feedback from court colleagues. The extent to which you use insight and involvement with partners to make improvements merits continued Compliance Plus for this theme. RP3 2024 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value:

Fully Met

2.1.3: We have policies and procedures which support the right of all customers to expect excellent levels of service.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS138: Complaints Information Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS has a robust complaints procedure available to customer which explains how they can make a complaint, support available to them and escalation routes should they remain dissatisfied. The procedure also details timescales for responses and generally explains how SCTS will deal with a complaint.

SCTS139: Pay a Fine Webpage Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Pay a Fine webpage provides information on how to pay a fine and support available to them. Contact details for the Fines Enforcement Unit and information on enforcement action which can be taken are also available. Any changes to fines payment are also detailed here.

SCTS140: Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The standards agree a minimum expectation for those attending as victims and witnesses when accessing SCTS services. These standards are published in local court buildings and on the SCTS website. A yearly report on progress and compliance with the standards is produced and published.

SCTS141: SCTS Equality Outcomes 2023-2027 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS has Equality Outcomes which is publishes and reports on annually. The outcomes relate to areas of equality work that SCTS wishes to achieve.

SCTS142: Joint Protocol for Victims and Witnesses Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The protocol is a joint document between SCTS, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscals Service, Victim Support Scotland and Police Scotland. The protocol sets out how the relevant organisations will share information, make arrangements for witnesses and accommodate any needs they have.

SCTS226: Customer Charters Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Customer Charters are available for a number of jurisdictions across the organisation such as Sheriff and JP Courts, Supreme Courts, Scottish Land Court and Lands Tribunal, Tribunals and OPG. The charters set out the minimum levels of service customers can expect.

2.1.3.1: We have policies and procedures which support the right of all customers to expect excellent levels of service.

RP3 2024 The right of all customers to expect excellent levels of service remains central to the values and commitments outlined in a wide variety of policies and procedures. These include handling complaints, paying a fine and support to victims and vulnerable witnesses. A full range of Customer Charters are in place for all business streams and are readily available for customers, particularly in digital format. It was clear from observation of service delivery that the commitments are a living reality and delivered in a sincere and compassionate manner. Comments from customers and partners met confirmed wholeheartedly that customer expectations are well publicised and delivered. Full compliance is maintained.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

2.1.4: We ensure that all customers and customer groups are treated fairly and this is confirmed by feedback and the measurement of customer experience.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS02: Staff Survey Results 2021 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Since 2010 the SCTS has taken part in a civil service wide staff survey. Results are reported by units as well as compared to other public sector organisations who were asked the same questions. Action plans for each area are developed, in addition in 2021 two corporate themes were taken forward.

SCTS06: 2021-2022 Court User Satisfaction Survey Results Phase 1 Jury Trials Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Satisfaction ratings for staff politeness and helpfulness were again high in 2021-2022. We did not ask questions about 'fairness'; although users may have been treated fairly they may have thought the outcome of their case was unfair. No concerns about fairness were raised in the open questions.

SCTS14: Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses Report 2021-2022 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

To allow for completion of the report feedback is obtained from Sheriff Clerks and senior managers in Supreme Courts on their ability to meet the standards and issues encountered over the period. Honest feedback is provided by them where they have been unable to meet any standard and reasons why.

SCTS15: SCTS Coronavirus Workplace Guidance Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Coronavirus Workplace guidance was developed at an early stage of the pandemic and regularly updated to ensure fair and consistent working practices for all staff. The guidance included directions on working arrangements, recording of sick absence and arrangements put in place to protect staff.

SCTS16: SCTS Complaints Procedure Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Complaints Procedure sets out what a customer can expect when making a complaint to SCTS. This includes contact details, response deadlines and escalation routes. In addition to the complaints procedure complaints are recorded and learned from across SCTS.

SCTS17: Recruitment & Resourcing Strategy Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The strategy sets out a plan for recruitment and resourcing over the period 2020-2023. This includes regular analysis and review of recruitment campaigns to undertake learning and also feedback from those involved in the process. Additionally exit interviews of posts are undertaken.

2.1.4.1: We ensure that all customers and customer groups are treated fairly

RP1 2022 There are policies and procedures in place to ensure that all customers are treated equally- SCTS's Values of Respect, Service and Excellence guide the Service. As a judicial service, there are clear guidelines to ensure that no particular groups of customers are disadvantaged or treated unfairly. The SCTS Mainstreaming Equality Report 2021 reports on the progress of SCTS to make equality integral to its functions. Included are the key projects and achievements SCTS has made since the last report in 2019, including the Wellbeing Initiative and training in Mental Health Awareness. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

2.1.4.2: and this is confirmed by feedback and the measurement of customer experience.

RP1 2022 An independent judiciary is one of the cornerstones of the UK constitution, which means that the judiciary is not influenced by external pressures. It is clear from discussions with staff and customers that service users do feel that they are treated fairly. However, there is still scope to measure customer opinion quantitatively on whether they feel they are treated with respect. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

2.1.5: We protect customers’ privacy both in face-to-face discussions and in the transfer and storage of customer information.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS71: Yearly Data Protection E-Learning Assessor Acceptance: Yes

All members of SCTS undertake yearly data protection e-learning. The learning covers staff responsibilities in relation to data protection, GDPR, FOI and Subject Access Requests. Completion rates are monitored by senior managers.

SCTS72: Data Protection Information on SCTS Webpage Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS webpage provides information to customers on their entitlements in terms of data protection, contact details and complaints information. The Data Protection Officer based within the Information Governance and Correspondence Team is the main point of contact in relation to this area.

SCTS73: SCTS Privacy Notice Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Privacy Notice provides customers with information in relation to how SCTS will handle their information. The notice has specific sections in relation to different areas of SCTS including information on the use of data for research purposes.

SCTS74: SCTS Cyber Security Policy 2023 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Policy assists SCTS delivering fit for purpose cyber security and managing cyber related risk through secure design, secure operations, security governance, security assurance and identity and access management.

SCTS75: Data Breach Guidance and Information Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The data breach guidance and information provides SCTS staff with correct and proper guidance to deal with any data breach situation which arises to minimise the inconvenience to customers and to rectify the situation as quickly as possible.

SCTS76: Data Protection Impact Assessment Guidance Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The data protection impact assessment (DPIA) guidance assist staff in preparation of assessments. A DPIA is completed prior to any new technology use, prior to any high risk or large scale processing situation. The DPIA can help analyse, identify and reduce data protection risk.

2.1.5.1: We protect customers' privacy both in face-to-face discussions

RP2 2023 For obvious reasons the SCTS takes data protection very seriously and all staff undertake annual data protection e-learning which covers their responsibilities in relation to data protection, GDPR, FOI and Subject Access Requests. There is a requirement to undertake data protection impact assessments, which are completed prior to any new technology use, prior to any high risk or large scale processing situations with the aim of reducing data protection risks. The Court process is open to the public, but within this there are occasions where conversations take place in closed court. Court officials and those involved in the justice system have rooms where private conversations can take place with customers. Where there are data protection breaches, these are recorded and reported to the Information Commissioner. RP3 2024 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

2.1.5.2: and in the transfer and storage of customer information.

RP2 2023 To facilitate hybrid working, you have in place good systems to ensure the integrity of personal data. You introduced five digital Evidence by Commission suites, used to take evidence from vulnerable customers. These evidence discs are encrypted and password protected before they are sent to other Courts. The IGCT has put in place data access agreements with justice partners allowing for easy sharing of information in a data compliant manner. Courts also deal with requests from third parties to access personal information held by SCTS. The IGCT has also been active in developing a template for such requests to help ensure those requesting the information provide the appropriate evidence and ensure consistency of approach across Courts in dealing with such information. This active approach merits Compliance Plus for this theme. RP3 2024 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

2.1.6: We empower and encourage all employees to actively promote and participate in the customer focused culture of our organisation.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS143: Trauma Informed Training Assessor Acceptance: Yes

As part of becoming a more trauma informed organisation SCTS is rolling out training to members of staff to upskill them in dealing with those affected by trauma. All staff will have a minimum level of training with further training delivered to those most directly involved with customers.

SCTS144: Staff Engagement Days Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Staff Engagement Days are events held across the SCTS estate to provide opportunities for staff to be motivated and informed of events occurring across SCTS. These events are planned by each individual area. Due to the nature of this these are best discussed during local visits.

SCTS145: Working Groups Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS which constantly faces change. As part of the change process a working group will be formed which will comprise the business area leading the change as well as key stakeholders (both internal and external) and operational staff who are experts. This is best discussed at local visits.

SCTS146: Community Events Assessor Acceptance: Yes

A number of community events take place across the SCTS estate each year. These range by type but generally allow potential customers an opportunity to view SCTS environments and make them more accessible. Due to the nature of these events they are best discussed at local visits.

SCTS147: Instant Rewards Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Instant Rewards are issued to staff who have gone the extra mile. These are issued at a local level and best discussed during local visits however a table is included which shows the number issued since 2018-19 to 2022-23.

SCTS148: Team Meetings Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Team meetings are held across the estate and are a useful vehicle for communication of information and encouraging discussion on local matters. Each location has a different model and frequency for these so this is a matter best observed during local visits.

2.1.6.1: We empower and encourage all employees to actively promote

RP3 2024 Empowerment of staff is actively encouraged and promoted and completely embedded in a culture of customer focus. Staff take the responsibility seriously and on many occasions are self-motivated and spot opportunities to take ownership. The element of taking ownership is a quality that was obvious to the assessors at all sites. The Trauma Informed Training has been extremely valuable in raising awareness of issues facing customers, thereby helping staff to identify situations quickly and deal with them with confidence.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

2.1.6.2: and participate in the customer focused culture of our organisation.

RP3 2024 Staff are also empowered to identify areas for improvement and put forward suggestions for service changes. These suggestions are fully supported and discussed at team meetings and where appropriate referred for consideration and ultimate implementation. Staff engagement days are a further opportunity to explore ideas and share together. Many suggestions have been acknowledged and recognised through Instant Rewards. There are also a wide range of working groups at various levels, across Sheriffdoms, Tribunals, OPG and the High Courts. Many of the suggestions are digitally related and the valuable work of the teams at CDi is crucial in final design and implementation. This level of dedication and effort merits the retention of Compliance Plus.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

2.2: Staff Professionalism and Attitude

2.2.1: We can demonstrate our commitment to developing and delivering customer focused services through our recruitment, training and development policies for staff.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS17: Recruitment & Resourcing Strategy Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The strategy sets out a plan for recruitment and resourcing over the period 2020-2023. This includes regular analysis and review of recruitment campaigns to undertake learning and also feedback from those involved in the process to develop and review policies.

SCTS18: 2021 TIDE Talent Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation Report Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS achieved a score of 81% and were awarded the silver standard, when evaluated showing the work the organisation has done to incorporate equality and diversity into the organisation. This has included equality and diversity training.

SCTS19: Delta - web application best seen at visit Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The DELTA application is an online resource which holds e-learning courses, including mandatory H&S learning, access to virtual learning and the ability to book in person training for staff. The learning varies between technical training, leadership skills and soft skills.

SCTS20: SCTS Digital Content Style Guide Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Digital Content Style Guide was developed to assist staff in preparing content for use in an increasing digital format. This guide ensures that it conforms to SCTS guidelines and assists staff who are not traditionally involved in preparing this content.

SCTS21: Finance and Procurement Newsletters Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The newsletters contained various updates in relation to the FPU team including how they are working with partners both internally and externally. The development of teams within the unit and training organised both to further understanding of the unit and to enhance skills.

SCTS22: Tribunals and OPG Leadership Development Programme Assessor Acceptance: Yes

A programme to support people looking to or who have been successful in moving into managerial roles to provide a foundation for leaders of the future in the organisation has been developed in conjunction with ELU. The programme runs for 12 months and covers key leaderships skills and behaviours.

2.2.1.1: We can demonstrate our commitment to developing and delivering customer focused services through our recruitment,

RP1 2022 A significant number of staff left the Service during the pandemic, including many more experienced staff, which has led to an increased need for recruitment, induction and training. The Recruitment and Resourcing Strategy for the period 2020-2023 includes regular analysis and review of recruitment campaigns in order to learn from the process, also including feedback from those involved in order to develop and review policies. Recruitment policies clearly show SCTS’s commitment to delivering customer focused services. Recruitment selection criteria include customer care skills and aptitude. All managers involved in selection are appropriately trained.

RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

2.2.1.2: training and development policies for staff.

RP1 2022 Training and development policies for staff show commitment to delivering customer focused services. During the pandemic the online DELTA application was used as a resource, providing e-learning courses, including Health and Safety, and Equality and Diversity training. A hybrid approach to training is now in use. In order to address the loss of experienced staff, the Direct Entrant programme has been successfully introduced, with new staff trained for six months on a fast-track programme to become Clerks of Court. Rotation of staff is widely used, including between Civil and Criminal Departments, in order to train staff to be multi-skilled. The Tribunals and OPG Leadership Development Programme runs for 12 months and supports staff looking to move into managerial roles, to provide a foundation for future leaders.

RP2 2023 Compliance Plus is retained. RP3 2024 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

2.2.2: Our staff are polite and friendly to customers and have an understanding of customer needs.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS60: 2021-2023 Court User Satisfaction Survey Phase 3 Report (Summary Criminal) Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The survey covered a range of customers who attended the Sheriff and Justice of the Peace Courts in relation to Summary Criminal business. Pages 44-47 show levels of satisfaction with helpfulness and politeness of SCTS staff.

SCTS77: Customer Service Training - partnership Glasgow City College Assessor Acceptance: Yes

In partnership with Glasgow City College, SCTS is now able to offer Customer Service Training for staff. The course covers, 1) the principles of customer care; 2) assessing and anticipating customer needs and expectations; 3) interpersonal skills and knowing your customer; 4) handling complaints.

SCTS78: SCTS Strategy Map 2022-2023 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Strategy Map shows the SCTS Values and Behaviours, 1) Respect; 2) Service; 3) Excellence. It shows the SCTS Strategic Priorities and how SCTS support Scotland's National Performance Framework. The Values and Behaviours are applicable to all SCTS staff and are monitored by 1-1's and appraisals.

SCTS79: Unconscious Bias E-Learning Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS has a yearly e-learning module in relation to unconscious bias. This is a mandatory training course for all SCTS staff and completion rates are monitored by senior managers. The course is designed to make staff think about their own unconscious bias and to work to actively counter them.

SCTS80: Complaints Handling Guidance Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Complaints Handling Guidance includes information on how complaints will be dealt with by SCTS should the need arise. The guidance also includes expected behaviours of SCTS staff which can be found on pages 8 and 9.

SCTS81: Local Customer Feedback/Comment Boxes - best seen at visit Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Local locations have customer feedback forms, comment boxes and will also collect feedback, compliments, and complaints from customers as they arise. At a local level these are then analysed and action taken where appropriate. Examples of these would be best seen at local visits.

2.2.2.1: Our staff are polite and friendly to customers

RP2 2023 Service is one of your core Values and Behaviours. There is a clear culture of customer focused service delivery, noted by the assessors at all of the sites visited, whether front facing services or internal professional services. You have carried out a series of Court User Surveys annually. The results for Phase 3, the Criminal Justice system, showed that 93% of customers found staff to be helpful and 96% polite. This is a very high figure. The phased nature of the surveys across different parts of the Court Service across different years, makes it difficult to give an overall figure for current levels of satisfaction with helpfulness and politeness, but the Jury survey provided levels of 94% and 95%, and for the newly introduced Tribunal Service surveys was 94% & 96%, but lower for the Civil Court survey (58% & 68%) reducing the average to 82% & 86% respectively. Survey outcomes mirror the assessors' on-site observations and feedback from customers. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value:

Fully Met

2.2.2.2: and have an understanding of customer needs.

RP2 2023 Across the services there is very good understanding of customers needs, particularly in the development of RPE online, resulting in saving an estimated 300 Police shifts since introduction. The Guidance on the new Sheriffs' Appeal Courts was written, by the Sheriffs in more simple language to aid customers' understanding. The demanding work of court officials in balancing workflow shows a very good understanding of the pressures on the system and different groups of customers to ensure that Court targets are met. Minutes of the Court Liaison Groups show an understanding of the needs of the justice system users and making effective use of all partners working to the same end. Staff are also very aware of the needs of those waiting for hearings on busy court days, working to maximise court time. This means that Compliance Plus is maintained for this theme. RP3 2024 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value:

Fully Met

2.2.3: We prioritise customer focus at all levels of our organisation and evaluate individual and team commitment through the performance management system.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS148: Team Meetings Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Team meetings are held across the SCTS estate and provide an opportunity for staff to be informed about changes and contribute to discussions. These are held at varying intervals and via various methods so this is an item best observed during local visits.

SCTS149: MyCareer Assessor Acceptance: Yes

MyCareer was introduced as a new performance management process in 2023. The process allows employees to take more ownership for their own careers within SCTS. The process ensures there are regular, open and honest conversations taking place between employees and their managers.

SCTS150: Business Plans and Updates Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Business Plan is a document created yearly which sets out the climate SCTS will be operating in that business year as well as creating individual business outcomes with aligned strategic priorities. The wider plan filters down into individual unit business plans then to employee objectives

SCTS151: Talent Programme Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Talent Programme was developed to allow the workforce to develop their talent and potential in relation to leadership and become more agile, strategic leaders who are able to set a clear vision and direction. The programme is just concluding its second year and about to commence its third.

SCTS152: ADOP and DEEODP Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The AODP and DEEODP are development programmes for those in the AO and EO roles to upskill staff in technical areas of work. The programmes have run for a number of years.

SCTS153: Board/Local Scorecard and KPI's Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The board scorecard reports on a number of key performance indicators in relation to the 8 strategic priorities. There are also a number of local scorecards including one held by tribunals and local performance indicators such as the Sheriff Court Performance Poster displayed on local noticeboards.

2.2.3.1: We prioritise customer focus at all levels of our organisation

RP3 2024 Customer focus remains a key part of the staff appraisal system for staff at all levels. This commitment is clearly outlined in the Business Plans and updates. The value of a motivated and supported workforce is recognised by senior leaders throughout the organisation. Policies such as the Talent Programme, AO Development Programme and Direct Entrant at EO level are now well embedded and create a culture of equipping people to deliver top class service delivery.

ELU is justifiably very proud to have won the prestigious Gold Award for People Development Programme of the Year (Public Sector/Not-for-Profit) at the Learning Awards Ceremony 2024 for the design and delivery of the Direct Entrant EO Programme (DEEOP), competing against organisations such as HMRC, The Football Association and the World Health Organisation.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

2.2.3.2: and evaluate individual and team commitment through the performance management system.

RP3 2024 The value placed on a motivated and supported workforce is a clear focus by senior leaders throughout the organisation. This was made very clear during discussion with the assessors. Appraisal systems are in place to evaluate commitment. The introduction of the 'check ins' has been highly appreciated and very positive comments were also made to the assessors. Throughout SCTS there is an atmosphere of taking responsibility and ownership at all levels, which is appreciated and acknowledged through, for example, Instant Rewards. Full compliance is retained.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

2.2.4: We can demonstrate how customer-facing staffs’ insight and experience is incorporated into internal processes, policy development and service planning.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS23: Review of Work Practices Assessor Acceptance: Yes

As part of the Operations Delivery Business Plan a review of current work practices has been undertaken particularly with those adopted as a result of the pandemic. As part of that process operational staff have been consulted to provide input to form the evidence for the review.

SCTS24: Covid-19 Lessons Learned Survey Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS staff were invited to participate in a survey to review how well the SCTS responded to the Covid 19 pandemic. The results of the survey will be used to review internal processes, policies and service development to enhance the SCTS response to similar events.

SCTS45: Sheriff Officers Procurement Contract Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Prior to undertaking a procurement exercise to appoint a Sheriff Officers firm to provide services across the SCTS and in Courts in particular, key operational staff were involved to provide technical knowledge and support. Key operational staff are also involved in the ongoing contract management.

SCTS52: Simple Procedure Working Group - Change and Digital Innovation Unit Working with Staff Assessor Acceptance: Yes

CDI attends a Simple Procedure working group each quarter. As part of that group the members discuss enhancements to the computer application that deals with this business. The suggestions were recorded and incorporated into the requirements documentation as a plan for overall improvement.

2.2.4.1: We can demonstrate how customer-facing staffs’ insight and experience is incorporated into internal processes, policy development and service planning.

RP1 2022 SCTS can demonstrate that customer-facing staffs’ insight and experience are incorporated into internal processes, policy development and service planning by means of the way staff are encouraged to give their views, through regular meetings (virtual during the pandemic), Staff Engagement Days, training sessions and surveys. As part of the Operations Delivery Business Plan, a review of current work practices has been undertaken, particularly with those adopted as a result of the pandemic, with staff consulted to provide evidence for the review. The Engagement Index in the Civil Service People Survey 2021 stands at 64%, with a score of 76% for My Team. Compliance Plus is retained. RP2 2023 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise. RP3 2024 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

2.2.5: We value the contribution our staff make to delivering customer focused services, and leaders, managers and staff demonstrate these behaviours.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS09: Board Scorecard Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Board Scorecard monitors SCTS performance against the strategic priorities. Strategic Priority 3 is in relation to Skilled and Motivated People and is split into two parts 3a - Employee Engagement and 3b - Delivery of development activities. The SCTS executive team and board monitor these.

SCTS82: SCTS My Career Assessor Acceptance: Yes

In 2023 the SCTS appraisal system was redeveloped. The appraisal system MyCareer is people focused and is a holistic approach to contribution and performance management. It covers 1) probation; 2) supporting contribution and performance; 4) appraisal; 5) talent management and succession planning.

SCTS83: Instant Reward Scheme Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Staff who go the extra mile to deliver a particular piece of work can be rewarded by their line manager with an instant reward. Senior managers monitor the number of instant rewards awarded across SCTS and the locations of these.

SCTS84: Staff Engagement Days Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Staff Engagement days are an opportunity for staff to undertake activities or discussions to increase engagement with SCTS. Examples of activities corporate updates for the executive team, a Q&A session with the executive team, staff wellbeing activities, MyCareer discussions, local interests.

SCTS85: SCTS Talent Programme Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Talent Programme was launched in 2022 and is a year long programme to identify and develop SCTS leaders who have the potential, aspiration and capacity to progress from their current role to a more senior position. The programme has candidates from across SCTS who are EO level - Grade 7.

SCTS86: Wellbeing Hour Pilot Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The wellbeing pilot was introduced as part of the 2023-2023 pay deal for one year initially. SCTS staff have 1 hour per week (pro-rated for part time staff) to use to support their wellbeing. The wellbeing hour is recorded on the so this can be monitored by senior managers.

2.2.5.1: We value the contribution our staff make to delivering customer focused services,

RP2 2023 From visiting a number of Courts and meeting a number of internal professional services, it is clear that the customer focused culture is strongly embedded at all levels of the organisation, and with internal services as much as front-line facing services. Local managers clearly value the contribution staff make through being visible and through regular engagement with them, supporting career development, through MyCareer reviews, and through the development of their new Talent Programme. Most recently, managers have been introducing Trauma support to some front line staff, given some of the particularly harrowing cases that have been experienced in some of the Courts. This is in addition to providing regular weekly wellbeing time for staff, and ensuring that they make use of that time in the way it is intended. RP3 2024 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

2.2.5.2: and leaders, managers and staff demonstrate these behaviours.

RP2 2023 Assessors spoke to managers and staff and a number of whom had been nominated and received Instant Rewards, recognition for having worked 'over and above'. Managers locally were seen as visible and accessible and positive about recognising staff achievements. A number of occasions were mentioned when members of the judiciary were noted as having thanked staff for their support and this seemed a common occurrence across the front line in Courts. The Board, Committees and Senior Executives have a programme of visits to Courts which is greatly regarded by staff. The openness of management, and the support offered by management in relation to development of wellbeing and staff support generally, merits continued Compliance Plus for this theme. RP3 2024 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3: Information and Access

3.1: Range of Information

3.1.1: We make information about the full range of services we provide available to our customers and potential customers, including how and when people can contact us, how our services are run and who is in charge.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS14: Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses Report 2021-2022 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The annual report provides customers with information on the current standards, what we have done and how we have performed against those standards in the current year and what we will do in the coming year. The report also indicates additional victim and witness related items SCTS have worked on.

SCTS25: SCTS Websites Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS websites including those for the Scottish Land Court and the Office of the Public Guardian include a range of useful information for customers. This includes contact information, information about how to access services, what to expect and organisation charts.

SCTS26: SCTS Intranet - Sharepoint best seen at visit Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Intranet pages which are being moved to sharepoint include significant information about operational and corporate teams, technical manuals and other support information for staff, links to specialist 'hubs' and applications, including links to online training and development.

SCTS27: Updated Jury Guidance Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Updated jury guidance is available on the SCTS website. This was updated to include information on attendance at jury centres and now includes both attendance at jury centres and at court. Expenses information was also updated to incorporate the introduction of digital expenses applications.

SCTS28: SCTS Annual Report and Accounts 2020-21 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Annual Report & Accounts describes SCTS performance against Corporate Plan commitments, has forewords by both the Chair of the SCTS Board and the Chief Executive, and names members of the SCTS Board and the Executive Team.

SCTS29: SCTS Business Plan 2022-2023 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Business Plan sets out the key business outcomes and environment in which the SCTS will operate. It sets out the strategic priorities, values and behaviours of the SCTS.

3.1.1.1: We make information about the full range of services we provide available to our customers and potential customers,

RP1 2022 The amount of information available to your customers is impressive. For potential customers, information about all of your services is readily available on the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service (SCTS) web site. The information is detailed, easy to read and provides a full account of what your Services do. In addition to the main web site, there are also web sites for specific aspects of your services such as the Scottish Land Court and the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG). For customers attending your Courts, all the Courts visited were seen to have public noticeboards in key places around the Courts displaying a wide range of information about the SCTS. Some of the information on the noticeboards provided information links to relevant web pages. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.1.1.2: including how and when people can contact us,

RP1 2022 The Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service web site allows customers to search information about all of your locations across Scotland, where they could be found, including a picture of the Court and telephone, email and DX contact details, opening hours, directions and available means of travel for each location. The web site also contained updated information about dates when particular Courts would be closed. Your other Court web sites contain similar information. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.1.1.3: how our services are run and who is in charge.

RP1 2022 The main SCTS web site contains information on how services are run. This information is also available in your publications, such as the SCTS Annual Report. The web based site location information also provides the name of the Sheriff's Clerk. Sites visited had local information about how services are run, who was in charge and brief information about the local management structure. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.1.2: Where there is a charge for services, we tell our customers how much they will have to pay.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS38: SCTS Research Access Guidance for Researchers Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Research Access Guidance informs researchers that a fee may be charged for access to data/records. Researchers are informed of any costs once initial enquiries have been made to SCTS so they can decide whether they wish to proceed.

SCTS55: Civil Online Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Case applicants can lodge new cases directly onto Civil Online (the case management system). When lodging the case the system automatically calculates the correct fee that is payable and takes payment at the time of lodging. Guidance on these case types also informs customers of these charges.

SCTS87: SCTS Court Fees on website Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS publish the court fees on the SCTS website, as well as on local noticeboards. The fees are updated regularly via legislation. The fees are split into different sections to allow for ease of reading. The Legislation Implementation Team ensure these fees are updated as they change.

SCTS88: Fine Payment Information Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Information is provided to customers on the different ways they can pay a fine given by the court, the police or COPFS. Information is displayed on court notice boards as well as being available on the SCTS website. Recent changes include customers no longer requiring to present a driving licence.

SCTS89: OPG Fees Information Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) has their own separate fees applicable to their area of the business. These are displayed on the OPG webpage and updated as they change via legislation.

SCTS90: Lands Tribunal for Scotland Fees Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Lands Tribunal for Scotland have their own separate fees applicable to their area of the business. These are displayed on the Lands Tribunals webpage and updated as they change via legislation.

3.1.2.1: Where there is a charge for services, we tell our customers how much they will have to pay.

RP2 2023 There is clear evidence in all areas of your service that you tell customers about the costs of engaging with different parts of the justice system. These charges can be found both in notices displayed at the individual Courts as well as through the SCTS web pages. The Office of Public Guardianship and the Lands Tribunal for Scotland have their own fees that are displayed on their web pages. Although not a charge for services, there is clear information on how to pay fines. Your Research Access Guidance advises of fees which may be charged for access to data or records. Your Civil Online system automatically calculates the correct charge payable so customers are aware of costs before lodging claims. Your Legislative Implementation Team (LIT) ensure fee payment information is updated as it changes. One of the assessors witnessed a Party Litigant being advised in Court of the cost implications of any additional action which they might consider taking.

RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.2: Quality of Information

3.2.1: We provide our customers with the information they need in ways which meet their needs and preferences, using a variety of appropriate channels.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS13: SCTS Customer Charters	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The Charters set out service standards and commitments to people attending courts, tribunals or the OPG in person, or making written or telephone enquiries. They include opening times and contact details for complaints and feedback. Charters are available in alternate languages/formats on request.

SCTS20: SCTS Digital Content Style Guide	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The SCTS Digital Content Style Guide was developed to assist staff in preparing content for use in an increasing digital format. This guide ensures that it conforms to SCTS guidelines and has best quality for customers when digital content is prepared.

SCTS30: Specialist Telephone Services - separate email due to file size	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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SCTS offers the text relay service for customers who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired to contact the organisation. An interpreting telephone service is also available to customers who's first language is not English. A video remote interpreting service is available for BSL customers.

SCTS31: Generic Email Inboxes - best seen at visit	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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A selection of sample generic email addresses has been included. In addition every court location has at least one generic email address which is available on the SCTS website. HQ units also have generic email addresses either available to internal, external or both sets of customers.

SCTS53: Web Accessibility / Internet Redevelopment Project	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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SCTS carried out user research via a third party who conducted a multitude of interviews and surveys with both internal and external users. This gathered user data and outlined users opinions on use of the site, access, and navigation as well as usefulness of the information presented.

3.2.1.1: We provide our customers with the information they need in ways which meet their needs and preferences,

RP1 2022 Over the last two years there has been a considerable move towards providing information electronically, not only as a response to the pandemic and the need for information to be available to customers when they were unable to access the Court Service in person, but also as a continuation of the move towards online services which had begun before the pandemic. All jurors receive an information pack for the case they are hearing including details of the indictment. The Court Service does provide information in other formats, where appropriate, including the use of Interpreters in Court Hearings and BSL. The Service has a Twitter Account. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.2.1.2: using a variety of appropriate channels.

RP1 2022 The SCTS and associated web sites provide a wide range of Information. The Service has a project to improve web content making it more accessible and agile for users. A small number of videos are available on the web site to aid customers' understanding of your services, in particular, demystifying what happens in the courtroom. Information is also set out within Customer Charters available on the public noticeboards within the sites visited and online. Court lists were readily available at all Courts, and in some cases online. Whilst there is a good range of information available on the web sites, it was good to hear that accessibility and user friendliness is being improved. By the same token, it was good to see information available in all of the Courts, although there is still scope to review how information on your noticeboards is displayed, to make it more attractive for users to want to read. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.2.2: We take reasonable steps to make sure our customers have received and understood the information we provide.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS27: Updated Jury Guidance Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Juror information is regularly updated on the SCTS webpage to inform jurors of their responsibilities and to provide guidance on attending for jury service. Recent changes include changes to the way jurors claim expenses, which are now submitted via a digital platform.

SCTS60: 2021-2023 Court User Satisfaction Survey Phase 3 Report (Summary Criminal) Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The survey covered a range of customers who attended the Sheriff and Justice of the Peace Courts in relation to Summary Criminal business. At various stages customers are asked to provide ratings on the ease of accessing and finding information as well as ease of the court process as a whole.

SCTS91: Fines Enforcement Officers Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Fines enforcement officer (FEO) have responsibilities to enforce fines however they are also responsible for giving advice and assisting fines payers. FEOs engage with fine paying customers regularly to ensure that fines are paid in a timeous manner.

SCTS92: Plain English Training undertaken by ODBU/LIT Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Members of the Operations Delivery Business Unit and Legislation Implementation Team undertook training offered by Plain English. This assisted members to think about the communications they have with customers and making these easier to understand.

SCTS93: Work with Scottish Government and First Word Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Operations Delivery Business Unit worked with Scottish Government and First Word in relation to communications with Victims and Witnesses. This involved providing feedback and sample communications. A guide has been developed by First Word for use in communicating with victims and witnesses.

SCTS94: Provision of Alternative Formats Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS webpage advises customers that alternative formats for communication can be provided by contacting the equality team. This can be communications in different languages or in large print etc. This enables customers to access information in a way that works best for them.

3.2.2.1: We take reasonable steps to make sure our customers have received

RP2 2023 You make every effort to ensure that customers receive information about your services. Visits to a number of courts showed that key information about court procedures and what to expect as well as customer charters were on readily accessible on site. Information about court hearing times for each court was available on the internet the day prior to the hearings, as well as being on display in each court. Court officials were on hand during the day to update customers about any changes to case hearings and delays. You have developed the system for contacting potential jurors so there is clarity about their attendance. Fines Enforcement Officers engage with fine paying customers regularly to ensure that fines are paid in a timely manner. Court Liaison meetings are used to advise justice system customers and partners about new legislation and practices and guidance.

RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.2.2.2: and understood the information we provide.

RP2 2023 Feedback through surveys shows that information on the web site was understandable as was information provided to jurors. Your Communications Team ensure that information in the public domain is relevant and understandable. Internally, the MIAT have provided training to aid the understanding of the management information service. Feedback through surveys shows that information on the web site was understandable as was information provided to jurors. The Court Clerks are very clear when delivering the outcomes of decisions made by Sheriffs. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.2.3: We have improved the range, content and quality of verbal, published and web based information we provide to ensure it is relevant and meets the needs of customers.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS154: Recruitment Information Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Recruitment Team based within HRU have worked with Skills Development Scotland to develop information videos to help those persons seeking to apply for positions within SCTS.

SCTS155: SCTS External Website Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Communications Team alongside the Corporate Lab based within the Change and Digital Innovation Unit have worked on a project to revamp the SCTS website. The design is in response to feedback and research and makes the website more accessible and easier to navigate.

SCTS156: Endorsable Fine Payments Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Criminal Lab based with the Change and Digital Innovation Unit worked with external partners to expand the number of fines which can be paid online including those where a driving licence requires to be endorsed with penalty points.

SCTS157: Complaints Handling Procedure Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Tribunals utilised the SCTS complaints procedure however have also make improvements to the process in that they have a centralised complaints register for the whole of Tribunals, this allows a holistic overview to be taken and actions to be deployed across a number of jurisdictions.

SCTS158: Local Taxation Chamber Webpage Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Local Taxation Chamber is a newly formed chamber as of 1st April 2023. In creating the webpage customers were consulted to ensure the website provided appropriate information in an easy to access manner.

SCTS159: Pay a Fine Webpage Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The webpage has been updated to include additional information to assist customers in paying their fines. This includes more information on enforcement actions, frequently asked questions and contact details for local courts and the fines enforcement team.

3.2.3.1: We have improved the range, content and quality of verbal,

RP3 2024 The provision of verbal information continues to be important to staff at reception areas which can be quite congested at times, at public counters for example, to pay fines, in public areas within Courthouses, and on the telephone. Recruitment of staff requires good communication skills and training courses help staff in developing awareness and approaches for different customer groups, including those that are more vulnerable. The assessors observed many of these interactions and were impressed with quality of dialogue.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.2.3.2: published

RP3 2024 The wide variety of published reports, throughout SCTS, are well prepared with all relevant detail, and made available through appropriate channels. Many such reports are available on the website, which is very regularly updated. A lot of support has been provided by CDi to improve communications on fine payments, with the publication of a news article. Tribunals have dedicated a substantial amount of time reviewing and improving communications on complaints handling procedures, particularly in relation to trends that have developed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.2.3.3: and web based information we provide to ensure it is relevant and meets the needs of customers.

RP3 2024 The website is continually updated to ensure the content relevance and accuracy of information. Ease of access and navigation is found to be very good, with excellent reviews and positive feedback reported to the assessors. Support in providing appropriate information, particularly in relation to change, is provided very professionally by CDi. It is also noteworthy that in developing a new website for the Local Taxation Chamber at Tribunals, considerable customer consultation was carried out. This element remains fully compliant.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.2.4: We can demonstrate that information we provide to our customers is accurate and complete, and that when this is not the case we advise customers when they will receive the information they requested.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS160: Jury Guidance Updates Assessor Acceptance: Yes

There have been a number of updates to the jury guidance some of these updates have been as a result of feedback obtained from jurors and others as part of improvements to the process.

SCTS161: FOI / Correspondence Responses Assessor Acceptance: Yes

High level correspondence is handled centrally by the Information Governance and Correspondence Team. Requests can come from a number of different sources from parliamentary researchers, MP's or members of the public.

SCTS162: You Said / We Did Posters Assessor Acceptance: Yes

These posters are displayed on local noticeboards and provide information on feedback received and responses in relation to that. Due to the nature of this evidence it is best observed during local visits.

SCTS163: Wi-Fi Improvements Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Change and Digital Innovation Unit are responsible for taking forward IT related matters. Over recent months improvements have been and continue to be made to WiFi available in SCTS premises to justice partners.

SCTS164: Centralised Complaints Register Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Tribunals have created a centralised complaints register which allows complaints across the varied jurisdictions to be looked at holistically and for actions to be implemented across various chambers when actions from complaints are identified. This allows for a more accurate service overall.

SCTS227: Customer Charters Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS has a number of customer charters these are the Sheriff and JP Courts, Supreme Courts, Scottish Land Court and Lands Tribunal, Tribunal, and OPG these set out the minimum standards customers can expect .

3.2.4.1: We can demonstrate that information we provide to our customers is accurate and complete,

RP3 2024 There remains a strong commitment to ensuring that information is accurate and complete, with sound procedures in place to monitor performance. Information provided on the website and in the range of Charters is regularly reviewed and updated, with consequential commitment made to promises stated. Responses to complaints, freedom of information and system access requests are thoroughly checked prior to issue. Following feedback from jurors fresh guidance has been prepared, checked and issued. Case management audits show a very high rate of accuracy in the provision of information.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.2.4.2: and that when this is not the case we advise customers when they will receive the information they requested.

RP3 2024 Feedback from a wide variety of customers, including victims, witnesses, court users and appellants at Tribunals indicate that, where follow up information is required, they are notified of appropriate time scales.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.3: Access

3.3.1: We make our services easily accessible to all customers through provision of a range of alternative channels.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory
 Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS30: Specialist Telephone Services - separate email due to file size Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS offers the text relay service for customers who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired to contact the organisation. An interpreting telephone service is also available to customers who's first language is not English. A video remote interpreting service is available for BSL customers.

SCTS31: Generic Email Inboxes - best seen at visit Assessor Acceptance: Yes

A selection of sample generic email addresses has been included. In addition every court location has at least one generic email address which is available on the SCTS website. HQ units also have generic email addresses either available to internal, external or both sets of customers.

SCTS32: Range of Fine Payment Methods Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Fine payers can pay at a public counter in person, by cheque in person or by post, by credit or debit card in person or by phone, or on-line. The range of payment methods is included in any written correspondence, published on line and given as verbal advice to those attending court.

SCTS54: Virtual Methods of Business Assessor Acceptance: Yes

With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic a number of virtual methods of conducting business were piloted, implemented or expanded across SCTS this included use of remote provision of evidence, conduct of domestic abuse trials, evidence by commission and virtual custodies.

SCTS55: Civil Online Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Customers are able to submit Civil documents to courts through Civil Online with file size increased to 50mb. Customers upload documents to Civil Online via the Civil Online Portal.

3.3.1.1: We make our services easily accessible to all customers through provision of a range of alternative channels.

RP1 2022 Since the last assessment, the Service has, in some areas, moved substantially to online access. Particularly within the Civil Courts where cases in the 'Simple' Courts are now primarily virtual, with evidence submitted electronically. Whilst other Civil cases provide for the submission of evidence electronically, they still require 'in person' hearings. The OPG is currently accessible using traditional routes, but will be moving to a new Case Management system, moving to a digital service. The Criminal system still requires 'in person' attendance, although, for Vulnerable Witnesses, this can be via Video Link which is also used where a witness may live many miles from the Court or other special reasons. Some services, such as the Commissary Service, still have to be accessed in person, where original documents have to be produced. Another example is payment of Court Fines - paid in person, by phone or online.

RP2 2023 Not reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.3.2: We evaluate how customers interact with the organisation through access channels and we use this information to identify possible service improvements, and offer better choices

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS119: Webpage Analytics - Court of Session Live Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Communications Team regularly monitor webpage analytics. As an example of this when Court of Session Live was introduced the team monitored customer engagement both via the website and also twitter. This has allowed the team to monitor the level of interaction with this new service.

SCTS55: Civil Online Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Civil Online is the case management system for civil case by parties in actions. Regular monitoring of use of the system is undertaken by the Civil Lab. Continuous improvements to the system are also made including adding the ability to lodge caveats.

SCTS68: Jury Citations - Introduction of QR Codes Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The project improved the system for potential jurors to register their details on SCTS systems once a jury citation has been received. A 83% increase in jurors completing details was noted within the first few weeks of the launch.

SCTS95: Social Media Channels Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Communications Team monitor the SCTS Social Media Channels. This also includes uploading new information. Customers have the opportunity to comment on social media posts and where appropriate the communications team will respond.

SCTS96: Method of Attendance recording ICMS Assessor Acceptance: Yes

In a change to ICMS (the integrated case management system) for civil cases, SCTS staff are able to record the method of attendance by parties in a case whether in person or by virtual means (telephone or video). This statistical information is available to inform any potential future changes.

SCTS97: Finance System Portal Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Finance team have introduced a finance system portal. This is a digital tracking system for lodging and responding to queries to the finance systems team. By introducing this portal the team are better able to track and respond to queries.

3.3.2.1: We evaluate how customers interact with the organisation through access channels

RP2 2023 You have good information on how your service is used. Your Integrated Case Management System now records how customers attend Court, whether it is a virtual Civil case hearing, in-person Court attendance or a hybrid. You have developed five digital Evidence by Commission suites across Scotland enabling a more compassionate approach to hearing evidence from vulnerable customers. You have built on evidence from Covid to develop how you hold virtual courts, SCTS has also moved away from using virtual Webinex to holding some ‘in person’ hearings to provide a more personal service for cases involving vulnerable customers. You have very good analytics on how your web site is being used. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.3.2.2: and we use this information to identify possible service improvements,

RP2 2023 Since this theme was last reviewed, because of the pandemic, there has been a considerable shift in how the Courts are accessed, with an emphasis in Civil Cases to online access and the development of Webinex virtual Courts. There has been some limited roll-back from this with some Civil Courts reverting to ‘in-person’ hearings, at the same time as developing the online system, for example, being able to lodge Caveats on line. You are also developing Online Custody hearings. Discussion with the Secretariat, highlighted that very many of the Change Board initiatives involved improving virtual access and systems. Other pilots including the Early Resolution Plea pilot are being developed electronically. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.3.2.3: and offer better choices

RP2 2023 The development of the new Evidence by Commission Suite has provided an additional, and very well utilised, option for vulnerable customers to provide evidence. The development of virtual Courts, whilst retaining in person Courts, provides options for specific types of Civil Court hearings. In other areas, whilst hearing such as those involving Child Recorders have reverted to in-person hearings there is still the option of virtual hearings. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.3.3: We ensure that where customers can visit our premises in person facilities are as clean and comfortable as possible.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS165: Court Familiarisation Visits	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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As part of the Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses SCTS has committed to responding to requests for visits by witnesses within 3 working days of receipt. The visits are usually undertaken by Victims Support Scotland however they consult with SCTS to arrange.

SCTS166: Dundee Justice Hub	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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On 2nd August 2024 the newly created Dundee Justice Hub was opened. In creating the new facility particular attention was paid to ensuring it met the specific needs of court users.

SCTS167: Victim Support Scotland 360 Photos and Virtual Tour	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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In 2023 Victim Support Scotland (VSS) launched a virtual court experience where victims and witnesses use virtual reality headsets to familiarise themselves with giving evidence in court. SCTS is working collaboratively with VSS to film court rooms. This is in addition to the 360 photos in 2021/2

SCTS168: Local Venue Audits	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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Where tribunal users have to attend in person hearings local venue audits are undertaken at a number of venues which are not SCTS premises are utilised. The audits ensure the venues are appropriate and provide the most suitable and safe locations to host hearings.

SCTS169: Health and Safety Returns	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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Areas of SCTS are required to undertake minimum quarterly site inspections which are then reported to the Health and Safety Team. The inspections cover a variety of questions to test the health and safety and security of each site and allows issues to be identified and rectified as soon as possible

SCTS170: PSU Led Improvements	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The Property Services Unit (PSU) are responsible for ensuring any building works, repairs or upgrades are undertaken across SCTS premises. These can range from small minor repairs or upgrades such as changing lightbulbs to larger scale works such as removing RAAC.

3.3.3.1: We ensure that where customers can visit our premises in person facilities are as clean and comfortable as possible.

RP3 2024 With regard to the comments, at the RP2 visit to the Inverness Hub, on the lack of customer consultation, the assessor found that at the development of the Dundee Hub considerable consultation was carried out. In designing the facility the main objective was meeting the specific needs of court users, including Victim Support Scotland who would share the building. Views were also sought from the Office of Procurators Fiscal, High and Sheriff Court officials and customers including witnesses, particularly on the look and feel for the project.

It was found that at all sites visited this year, sound procedures are in place, with valuable commitment from OCS, to ensure premises are clean, comfortable and fit for purpose. This was particularly demonstrated in the provision of facilities for vulnerable witnesses in Sheriff Courts and at Tribunals. Full compliance is maintained.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.4: Co-operative working with other providers, partners and communities

3.4.1: We have made arrangements with other providers and partners to offer and supply co-ordinated services, and these arrangements have demonstrable benefits for our customers

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS33: Digital Expenses Payment System Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Digital Expenses Payment System was introduced to allow jurors and tribunal appellants to claim expenses online. We worked in partnership with NatWest, the Post Office and the system developer StormID. The system is currently being rolled out across the court estate.

SCTS34: Interpreting Translation and Transcription Contract 2021 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS are the largest user of the services provided via this Scottish Government framework. As such, we were a key partner in the procurement process and agreed a call-off contract which commenced in Nov 2021, whereby three suppliers provide a range of services to SCTS.

SCTS51: Remote Provision of Evidence (RPE) Assessor Acceptance: Yes

RPE allowing police witnesses to give evidence virtually instead of travelling to court. This is collaborative with Police Scotland and COPFS. Weekly working group meetings are held as well as monthly National Working Group meetings to monitor and evaluate the process.

SCTS56: Virtual Custody Courts and Video Link Appearance from Secure Care - Amendment to Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS worked with justice partners and contractors to establish virtual custody courts where the accused appeared from police stations. Legislation was created for this. Arrangements were made for under 18s to appear by video link from secure care units. Both obtained approval from the Lord President

SCTS57: Remote Provision of Evidence Joint Protocol Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS worked closely with Police Scotland and COPFS to introduce the remote provision of evidence including producing a joint protocol.

3.4.1.1: We have made arrangements with other providers and partners to offer and supply co-ordinated services,

RP1 2022 A key role of the Court Service is to enable access to, and the dispensation of, justice, across the range of court services. The Sheriff Clerks and their staff coordinate a wide range of partners to ensure that accused are in Court at the appropriate time, that their agents are present, that the Court is properly staffed, witnesses are present and, where appropriate, supported by third parties, that evidence is available and, where appropriate, the Court has juries in place. To do this they work with the Police, Solicitors, Advocates, Witness Service, Procurator Fiscal, Victim Support, the Prison Service, and others, as well as voluntary support services, such as Listening Support in Edinburgh, as well as property maintenance and security firms.

RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.4.1.2: and these arrangements have demonstrable benefits for our customers

RP1 2022 Without effective partnership working the Court Service would not work effectively. What is impressive about the partnership working seen in every Court visited is that it is fully embedded and is happening across virtually every interaction the Court has with its customers, particularly within the Criminal Courts where staff interact with the Fiscal's office, the Police, Agents, the Sheriff, Social Workers, witnesses, and many others, to ensure that cases can come to court and proceed smoothly, or can be dealt with prior to court appearances through agreed settlements or guilty pleas. That this happens seamlessly on a well managed and timely basis and with the minimum of inconvenience for all parties clearly merits Compliance Plus for this theme.

RP2 2023 Although not formally reviewed this year, C+ continues as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

RP3 2024 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.4.2: We have developed co-ordinated working arrangements with our partners that ensure customers have clear lines of accountability for quality of service.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS100: Joint Protocol for Victims and Witnesses Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The protocol is a joint document produced by SCTS, COPFS, Police Scotland and Victim Support Scotland. The protocol has been agreed to identify best practice and obtain consistency of approach to improve victim and witness engagement and support.

SCTS101: Data Access Agreements - Justice Partners Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Information Governance and Correspondence Team have put in place data access agreements with various justice partners. This allows for the easy sharing of information in a data compliant manner.

SCTS61: Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses is a yearly report published in conjunction with other justice partners. Both in the standards themselves and in the work during each year SCTS works closely with justice partners to deliver services for victims and witnesses.

SCTS80: Complaints Handling Guidance Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The complaints handling guidance provides information on SCTS responsibilities specifically in relation to complaints. The document also signposts to other organisations that either may be of assistance to the customer or where they can escalate complaints to the SPSO.

SCTS98: Prisoner Escort Contract - service review forms Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The contract is one which is managed by the Scottish Prison Service but which the SCTS provide feedback and are involved with as a high user of prisoner escort services. As part of that process where there are any issues with the service SCTS staff are asked to submit a service review forms.

SCTS99: Translation and Interpreter Contracts Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The contract is one which is managed by the Scottish Government but which the SCTS provide feedback and are involved with as a regular user of the contract. Monitoring forms are available which can be completed by SCTS staff where issues arise. These are submitted to the Procurement team.

3.4.2.1: We have developed co-ordinated working arrangements with our partners that ensure customers have clear lines of accountability for quality of service.

RP2 2023 Ensuring that the justice system works well is a complex business involving interaction between the judiciary, court officials, advocates and agents, the Crown, Police, Witness and Victim support, prisoner movement, facilities management, security providers, the Prison Service, Scottish Government...and others. Whilst there are clear roles and responsibilities of each partner agency, strong partnership working on the ground is essential to ensuring the smooth running of the system. That customers notice so few problems, and it seems to non-judicial users to be a seamless service, is down to SCTS staff working behind the scenes with all of the partners, pre-empting issues, flexing hearings, juggling court lists to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of all parties involved. This clearly merits continued Compliance Plus for this Element. RP3 2024 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as nothing has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

3.4.3: We interact within wider communities and we can demonstrate the ways in which we support those communities.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS171: Community Impact Return Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Across SCTS a number of community events are held and these are reported in a quarterly return so the overall SCTS position can be gleaned. In 2023-24 there were 216 community events recorded across SCTS. Due to the nature of these events these are best observed at local visits.

SCTS172: Doors Open Day Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Doors Open Day events are held at a number of locations across the SCTS estate. These events allow members of the public and prospective customer to gain a better understanding of the courts, tribunals and public guardian processes.

SCTS173: Charity Collections Assessor Acceptance: Yes

There are a number of charity collections and donations made by SCTS which are to both local and national charities. Due to the nature of these this is a matter which can be best observed at local visits.

SCTS174: Keep Safe Initiative Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS participates in the Keep Safe Initiative which is a Police Scotland led initiative developed in partnership with I am Me Scotland. The initiative is a network of businesses and organisations which creates safe places for vulnerable people to seek assistance.

SCTS175: ELU Learning Award Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Education and Learning Unit won a gold award for People Development Programme of the Year at the Learning Awards for their Direct Entrant Executive Officer Programme. The programme is an advanced learning programme to allow people to become summary criminal clerks of court.

SCTS221: Four Nations Guardianship Conference Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Office of the Public Guardian attend a four nations conference every 18 months with the other UK jurisdictions. In 2024 the Office of the Public Guardian will host the event in November in Edinburgh.

3.4.3.1: We interact within wider communities and we can demonstrate the ways in which we support those communities.

RP3 2024 SCTS continues to interact with the wider community in many positive ways. The Doors Open Day events are highly appreciated and feedback is extremely complimentary. A variety of other creative events are held including mock trials, tours around the buildings and cell areas, with staff at all levels involved, including Sheriffs. These events are made available to all in the community, including youth groups. More formal events are offered such as, Work Experience to schools and universities and the take up is considerable, particularly at Glasgow Sheriff Court. Considerable effort is also made to support local charities across all locations. Although SCTS is a national organisation it provides a very local service and presence, which is highly commendable, justifying the retention of Compliance Plus.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4: Delivery

4.1: Delivery standards

4.1.1: We have challenging standards for our main services, which take account of our responsibility for delivering national and statutory standards and targets.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS09: Board Scorecard	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The SCTS Board Scorecard was approved by the SCTS Board and provides detailed indicators on satisfaction and key drivers such as waiting times for court dates and staff engagement. The Board determined the target range for achievement and uses a traffic light system to monitor progress.

SCTS10: Service Delivery Targets - separate email due to file size	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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Service Delivery Targets for Sheriff Courts are published on court notice boards and are reported monthly with a report generated on the SCTS intranet. The report tracks trends in service levels.

SCTS12: Corporate Plan 2020-2023	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The Plan sets out a range of strategic priorities supported by specific milestones published in annual Business Plans. Priorities are aligned with specific strategic objectives which support the delivery of excellent services despite challenging stakeholder expectations and reducing budgets.

SCTS28: SCTS Annual Report and Accounts 2020-21	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The SCTS Annual Report & Accounts 2020-2021 is published on the SCTS website. It highlights the standards of service, organisational values and performance within ranges considered acceptable by the SCTS Board.

SCTS29: SCTS Business Plan 2022-2023	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The SCTS Business Plan sets out the key business outcomes and environment in which the SCTS will operate. It sets out the strategic priorities, values and behaviours of the SCTS. Annex F shows performance against Key Performance Indicators.

SCTS35: Quarterly Criminal Court Statistics and Quarterly Fines Report	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The Criminal Court Statistics is information about criminal court activity in all High, Sheriff and JP Courts. The Quarterly Fine Report is information about fines and collection rates. It covers fines imposed in Sheriff and JP Courts including PF and Police fixed penalties.

4.1.1.1: We have challenging standards for our main services,

RP1 2022 Your various Service Delivery targets are set out clearly on the noticeboards found in the public areas of all of your Courts. The Standards are challenging setting performance targets, in most instances of 95% or higher. They have been particularly challenging in relation to the last two years during the pandemic and the recovery period. In addition, to your core targets, there are additional targets for some aspects of your service delivery. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP 2024 Not Reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.1.1.2: which take account of our responsibility for delivering national and statutory standards and targets.

RP1 2022 Discussion with staff highlighted those targets which reflect statutory requirements, for example, in relation to some aspects of the dispensation of justice and Commissary Services. Other targets are set by the Scottish Government. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP 2024 Not Reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.1.2: We monitor and meet our standards, key departmental and performance targets, and we tell our customers about our performance.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS09: Board Scorecard Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Board Scorecard monitors SCTS performance against the strategic priorities. Updates are provided on a quarterly basis and the SCTS executive team and board monitor these. Each strategic priority has key indicators and these are reported on by the various SCTS teams responsible for these.

SCTS102: Service Delivery Targets - Sheriff Courts Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Sheriff Courts report on their compliance with the service delivery targets. These are published on local court noticeboards and updated at least quarterly. This provides customers with information on the SCTS compliance with the key performance indicators in relation to various areas.

SCTS103: Tribunals Operations Scorecard Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The tribunals operations scorecard monitors the tribunals performance against key performance indicators. This is updated regularly and reviewed by the tribunals strategic team.

SCTS104: OPG Quarterly Performance Data Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The office of the public guardian (OPG) monitor and publish their performance data quarterly. This is reviewed by the OPG senior management team.

SCTS35: Quarterly Criminal Court Statistics and Quarterly Fines Report Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The criminal court statistics information relates to criminal court activity in all High, Sheriff and JP courts. The quarterly fines report is information about fines collection rates across Sheriff and JP Courts including PF and Police fixed penalties.

4.1.2.1: We monitor and meet our standards, key departmental and performance targets,

RP2 2023 The SCTS’s Board Scorecard monitors SCTS performance against the strategic priorities. Updates are provided on a quarterly basis and the SCTS Executive Team and Board monitor these. Each strategic priority has key indicators and these are reported on by the various SCTS teams responsible for these. The Sheriff Courts report on their compliance with the service delivery targets. The Tribunals Operations scorecard monitors the Tribunals’ performance against their key performance indicators. Whilst there are ups and downs, service delivery has, overall, recovered well, from the pandemic. This has been achieved largely due the collaborative working of Court staff with their justice partners. This achievement continues to merit Compliance Plus for this theme.

RP3 2024 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as noting has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.1.2.2: and we tell our customers about our performance.

RP2 2023 The SCTS is positive about publishing data on its performance and explaining to customers about dips in performance. Information on Sheriffs’ Courts is readily available at each Court, and updated regularly, although there is scope for your Communications Team to develop how it is presented. Information is also reported through Court Liaison Group Meetings. The Office of the Public Guardian monitor and publish their performance data quarterly. That the SCTS is so open and positive about making performance data across its services publicly available, merits Compliance Plus for this theme also. RP3 2024 Although not formally reviewed, Compliance Plus is retained as noting has arisen to indicate otherwise.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.1.3: We consult and involve customers, citizens, partners and staff on the setting, reviewing and raising of our local standards.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS127: Court Liaison Groups Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Court Liaison Groups are meetings held at local courts with relevant key stakeholders. It allows an opportunity for those stakeholders to raise and discuss local issues resulting in early resolution.

SCTS145: Working Groups Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS is an organisation which regularly requires to undergo change. As part of that change process working groups are formed from both internal staff and key stakeholders to obtain a holistic viewpoint and to ensure that the change is one that is relevant and appropriate for all involved.

SCTS176: Local Liaison Meetings Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Across the various SCTS departments meetings take place with stakeholders to discuss local issues including local targets. Due to the nature of these discussions and meetings this is best observed during local visits.

SCTS177: Court User Satisfaction Survey Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Court User Satisfaction Survey has been in place in some form since 2005. To allow questions to be formed feedback is sought from the relevant business areas. This allows the best feedback to be obtained.

SCTS178: ELU Business Partnering Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Education and Learning Unit made changes to how they delivered their services. As part of that process they have developed business partnering where discussions are held with local units or business areas to ascertain needs. This has resulted in a more effective learning experience.

SCTS179: Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses Assessor Acceptance: Yes

In 2023 SCTS took the opportunity to review the Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses which were published in April 2023. In reviewing these feedback from victim support organisations was considered as well as input from court staff. The changes allowed for the standards to be clearer.

4.1.3.1: We consult and involve customers, citizens, partners and staff on the setting, reviewing and raising of our local standards.

RP3 2024 Although SCTS is a national body established by the Judiciary and Courts (Scotland) Act 2008, there is scope to agree local standards. Consistently, across business streams, customers, partners, staff and trade union officials are included in a wide range of consultations and liaison meetings, in order to review local standards. This is an example of inclusion at its best as it happens at all levels of the organisation. A wide range of discussions take place through Court Liaison Groups, working groups, manager/staff meetings and constant reviews, including substantial work around victim, vulnerable witness support and development of the sensory floor at Tribunals. Feedback from national and local surveys provide very useful customer insight. Working around the introduction of a 35 hour working week has been challenging, but local procedures have been reviewed and changed to maintain a high level of customer service. This extent of care and attention merits Compliance Plus.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.2: Achieved Delivery and Outcomes

4.2.1: We agree with our customers at the outset what they can expect from the service we provide.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS10: Service Delivery Targets - separate email due to file size Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Service Delivery Targets for Sheriff Courts are published on court notice boards and are reported monthly on a report generated on the SCTS intranet. The report tracks trends in service levels.

SCTS13: SCTS Customer Charters Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Charters set out service standards and commitments to people attending courts, tribunals or the OPG in person, or making written or telephone enquiries. They include opening times and contact details for complaints and feedback. Charters are available in alternate languages/formats on request.

SCTS25: SCTS Websites Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS websites including those for the Scottish Land Court and the Office of the Public Guardian include a range of useful information for customers. Regular updates are posted under the "News" section.

SCTS36: Generic Email Inboxes Automatic Responses - best seen at visit Assessor Acceptance: Yes

A small selection of sample generic email address automatic responses has been included. These can be further demonstrated at the in person assessments.

SCTS37: Sheriff Court Practice Notes Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Practice Notes for each of the 6 Sheriffdoms are regularly published by the Sheriffs Principal to provide direction on practice in the Sheriff Courts. Practice Notes and Directions for the Supreme Courts are also published.

4.2.1.1: We agree with our customers at the outset what they can expect from the service we provide.

RP1 2022 You have a number of Customer Charters which set out what customers can expect from your services. These are readily accessible through your web sites and also in the public spaces in your Courts. It was noted that some noticeboards contained three different Charters and whilst it is recognised there are some specific service requirements, for example, in respect of witnesses and victims, there is scope to look at how much of your Charters could be brought into a single Charter. It was also noted by professional customers i.e. Agents that Sheriff Court Practice Notes may vary across Courts which causes them some confusion. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Not Reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.2.2: We can demonstrate that we deliver the service we promised to individual customers and that outcomes are positive for the majority of our customers.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS04: OPG EPOAR Survey Analysis Results and Recommendations Assessor Acceptance: Yes

OPG's online submission service, EPOAR, offers benefits to end users and OPG. OPG needed to understand why some PoA submitting solicitors firms were not using EPOAR. An online survey was issued to a sample of solicitors firms from all over Scotland, representing small and larger organisations.

SCTS105: Health and Education Chamber Feedback Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The health and education chamber tribunal seeks feedback from its users via a survey. The feedback is then analysed by the tribunals team and appropriate actions taken where possible to improve service delivery. This can include the method of hearings whether in person, telephone or video.

SCTS60: 2021-2023 Court User Satisfaction Survey Phase 3 Report (Summary Criminal) Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The survey covered a range of customers who attended the Sheriff and Justice of the Peace Courts in relation to Summary Criminal business. The survey results are shared with local teams and any improvements are incorporated into an action plan and also reported on the You Said We Did posters.

SCTS66: People Survey Results 2022 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Since 2010 the SCTS has taken part in a civil service wide people survey. Results are reported by units as well as compared to other public sector organisations who were asked the same questions. Action plans for each area are developed, in addition corporate themes are taken forward.

SCTS69: Covid-19 Lessons Learned Review Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The review sought input from various justice partner organisations and SCTS staff to review the SCTS response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The review aimed to identify ways the organisation can enhance its response to future disruptions, improve overall resilience and identify successful changes.

SCTS81: Local Customer Feedback/Comment Boxes - best seen at visit Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Local locations have customer feedback forms, comment boxes and will also collect feedback, compliments, and complaints from customers as they arise. At a local level these are then analysed and action taken where appropriate. Examples of these would be best seen at local visits.

4.2.2.1: We can demonstrate that we deliver the service we promised to individual customers

RP2 2023 The SCTS has extensive guidance on how Courts are managed and run. These are supported with a large number of key performance indicators to show that, overall, you are delivering on what you promise. The Board's Scorecard also shows how you are progressing improvements to the service at a strategic level. This is supported by feedback from surveys. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed.
RP3 2024 Not Reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.2.2.2: and that outcomes are positive for the majority of our customers.

RP2 2023 Outcomes are positive for the majority of customers, as shown by the performance indicators showing that you are, overall, meeting your targets, and through the Board Scorecard, which has a predominance of Green RAG ratings, and as shown through your Annual Reports. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed.
RP3 2024 Not Reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.2.3: We can demonstrate that we benchmark our performance against that of similar or complementary organisations and have used that information to improve our service.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS133: SCTS People Survey 2023 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

This is an annual survey of all civil service departments. The report allows for comparisons between civil service departments and also between internal departments of SCTS. On page 7 of the report the leadership theme was 52% in 2023 which was 2 percentage points lower compared to 2022.

SCTS175: ELU Learning Award Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Education and Learning Unit won a gold award in the People Development Programme of the Year at the Learning Awards. The awards are open to all those working in learning and development and in this instance SCTS were competing with HMRC, the Football Association and World Health Organisation.

SCTS180: NHS Framework Trauma Informed Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Scottish Government, the Victims Taskforce (SCTS is a member) and the NHS Education for Scotland National Trauma Training Programme produced a Knowledge and Skills Framework for Trauma Informed Justice. During victims taskforce meetings progress reports on implementing this are discussed.

SCTS181: EDI Information Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS has been a member of the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion for a number of years. In 2024 SCTS obtained a gold award and was ranked 24th out of 185 organisations. This is an improvement on the silver award obtained for the previous three years.

SCTS222: Four Nations Guardianship Conference Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Office of the Public Guardian attends a four nations conference every 18 months with the other UK nations. In 2024 the Office of the Public Guardian will host the event in Edinburgh in November.

SCTS223: 35 Hour Working Week Assessor Acceptance: No

As part of the Public Sector Pay Strategy which SCTS falls under, SCTS works closely with the Scottish Government and other Scottish Public Sector organisations to ensure we are aligned. From 1st October 2024 SCTS will transition to a 35 hour working week.

4.2.3.1: We can demonstrate that we benchmark our performance against that of similar or complementary organisations

RP3 2024 It was agreed with the applicant that evidence at SCTS223 be replaced with SCTS217, which provides good comparisons across Sheriffdoms. SCTS is willing and eager to share and compare performance with other government agencies. The ELU won a gold award at the national People Development Programme, with sterling competition from HMRC, The Football Association and the World Health Organisation. At the Employers Network for Equality there was significant recognition, also against stiff opposition, for SCTS to move to Gold Award for Talent Inclusion & Diversity Evaluation, but also being ranked first in the Strategy & Plan and Leadership & Accountability categories. Other opportunities for comparisons will be taken by OPG at the Four Nations Guardianship Conference, which the Falkirk site is due to host this year.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.2.3.2: and have used that information to improve our service.

RP3 2024 SCTS are sincerely committed to and focused on continuous improvement, that includes learning from benchmarking opportunities. From the NHS Trauma Framework, SCTS have developed a Knowledge and Skills Trauma Training Programme, with the aim that victims and witnesses feel informed, safe, given choices, treated with compassion, being heard and know their rights. Customer feedback during the site visits would indicate that each of the aims are being fulfilled. The extent of commitment to benchmarking, analysing comparisons and developing improvements is commendable.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.2.4: We have developed and learned from best practice identified within and outside our organisation, and we publish our examples externally where appropriate.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS182: Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry Assessor Acceptance: Yes

As part of trauma informed practice being introduced members of ELU, HR and the Head of Lord Justice Clerks Review and Implementation sought to gain insight from the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry on how they embedded trauma informed practice into their workings.

SCTS183: Trauma Informed Practice Assessor Acceptance: Yes

As part of introducing trauma informed practice a working group made up of operational colleagues graded from SGB2 to HEO has been formed to share best practice, and assist in providing insight from an operational perspective to support the development and delivery of training and initiatives.

SCTS184: Tribunals Best Practice Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Tribunals jurisdiction have developed a best practice or continuous improvement team. As part of this they have also created a knowledge hub on the intranet and promote sharing best practice and generating of new ideas at team meetings.

SCTS185: Practice Notes Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Practice Notes are created by Sheriffs Principal and the Lord President however SCTS are involved in providing advice and guidance in relation to these, working collaboratively with the judiciary. These are then published on the SCTS website so they can easily be access by customers.

SCTS186: Sheriff Appeal Court Users Guide Assessor Acceptance: Yes

A Users Guide for the Sheriff Appeal Court was created following feedback from customers seeking information about how practices and processes worked in the Sheriff Appeal Court. The guide is published on the SCTS website.

SCTS187: CDi Change Labs Agile Methodology Assessor Acceptance: Yes

There are four change labs based within the Change and Digital Innovation Unit (CDi): Criminal, Civil, Corporate and Tribunals & OPG. The labs are cross-functional teams at the centre of delivering change. The Agile change methodology is used by then to deliver effective change.

4.2.4.1: We have developed and learned from best practice identified within

RP3 2024 SCTS continues to identify examples of best practice within the organisation through regular meetings, staff suggestions, Staff Engagement Days, the Summer Tours by the Executive Team and staff team events. The Lab Teams at CDi are cross-functional and can very easily learn from each other and have developed a common development strategy known as the LOAD framework. Tribunals have created a Continuous Improvement Team that has developed a Best Practice Guide, which is published on the SCTS Intranet Site, that includes useful tips in a Knowledge Hub.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.2.4.2: and outside our organisation,

RP3 2024 The lessons identified from external consultation and engagement have been considerable. Trauma informed strategies have been developed from the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry and a staff working group, of cross grades, has been established to take forward training needs and initiatives. The insight gained from the development of the Knowledge and Skills Trauma Training Programme has also augmented working practices in assisting victims and witnesses affected by trauma. Support from ELU in liaison with external partners such as HM Courts & Tribunal Service for England and Wales has widened the knowledge base on good practice to train and upskill staff on trauma issues. The extent of best practice development both internally and externally merits Compliance Plus.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.2.4.3: and we publish our examples externally where appropriate.

RP3 2024 SCTS continues to publish examples of best practice, where appropriate, externally at conferences, in stakeholder meetings, on the SCTS web site and in press releases. Some examples are outlined in the publicity on the awards won by ELU for the Direct Entrant EO Programme (DEEOP) and CDi for receiving the International Technology Award on developing Virtual Hearings capabilities.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.3: Deal effectively with problems

4.3.1: We identify any dips in performance against our standards and explain these to customers, together with action we are taking to put things right and prevent further recurrence.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS02: Staff Survey Results 2021	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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Since 2010 the SCTS has taken part in a civil service wide staff survey. Results are reported by units as well as compared to other public sector organisations who were asked the same questions. Action plans for each area are developed, in addition in 2021 two corporate themes were taken forward.

SCTS09: Board Scorecard	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The SCTS Board Scorecard was approved by the SCTS Board and provides detailed indicators on satisfaction and key drivers such as waiting times for court dates and staff engagement. The Board determined the target range for achievement and uses a traffic light system to monitor progress.

SCTS10: Service Delivery Targets - separate email due to file size	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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Service Delivery Targets for Sheriff Courts are published on court notice boards and are reported monthly on a report generated on the SCTS intranet. The report tracks trends in service levels.

SCTS14: Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses Report 2021-2022	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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To allow for completion of the report feedback is obtained from Sheriff Clerks and senior managers in Supreme Courts on their ability to meet the standards and issues encountered over the period. Honest feedback is provided by them where they have been unable to meet any standard and reasons why.

SCTS28: SCTS Annual Report and Accounts 2020-21	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The SCTS Annual Report & Accounts 2020-2021 is published on the SCTS website. It highlights the standards of service, organisational values and performance within ranges considered acceptable by the SCTS Board.

4.3.1.1: We identify any dips in performance against our standards

RP1 2022 The SCTS has in place robust monitoring processes which identify how the SCTS performs as a whole, but also monitors the performance of individual Courts. Observation at each Court visited showed most Courts were meeting the core indicators with the exception of the delay in trials. Whilst in most areas the post pandemic recovery of service delivery has been achieved, this performance indicator, although improved, is still not being met. In some Courts, also, there were some indicators which were just below target, as well as many where targets were exceeded The Board Scorecard shows performance for the whole of the SCTS and highlights any dips. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Not Reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.3.1.2: and explain these to customers,

RP1 2022 At a corporate level, the SCTS has provided good evidence as to the reasons for dips in performance, highlighting across the Service the impact of the pandemic. The Office of the Public Guardian tells customers on its web pages the dates for which it is currently dealing with Power of Attorney applications, highlighting the extent of the backlog. Another Court had a backlog in relation to its Commissary work, which had been caused by a shortage of staff which was explained to customers. RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Not Reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.3.1.3: together with action we are taking to put things right and prevent further recurrence.

RP1 2022 At a corporate level, the SCTS is good at letting customers know the reasons for dips in performance where they occur, primarily because of the impact of the pandemic and staffing shortages. At a local level, the Court staff have very good working relations with their professional customers and explain the reasons for any dips in performance. Discussion with staff, customers and partners highlighted that the Court Liaison Committees were useful in this respect, but also that the informal networks that had developed with partners helped resolve any problems and potential dips from occurring. RP2 2023 Not reviewed. RP3 2024 Not Reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.3.2: We have an easy to use complaints procedure, which includes a commitment to deal with problems fully and solve them wherever possible within a reasonable time limit.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS106: Complaints Information on SCTS Website Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The complaints information on the SCTS website provides customers with the complaints handling procedure as well as directing customers to other organisations should their complaint be with that aspect of the procedure. The complaints information procedure provides more detailed information.

SCTS107: Monthly Complaints Return Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Local areas complete a monthly complaints return and submit this to the Information Governance and Correspondence Team. The return details how many complaints have been received and resolutions. This is then used to complete the complaints handling report.

SCTS108: Complaints Handling Report Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The complaints handling report is completed by the Information Governance and Correspondence Team. The report details how SCTS have handled complaints over a quarter and in turn assists in the annual complaints handling report.

SCTS109: OPG Complaints Information Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The office of the public guardian have a link to the complaints information on their webpage. This mirrors the main SCTS complaints procedure and allows for a consistent process in relation to complaints being used across the whole of the SCTS.

SCTS110: HRU Customer Charter - Section 6 (Complaints) Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The HRU customer charter provides information to internal users on the complaints process adopted by that team. This can be found in section 6 of the charter.

SCTS80: Complaints Handling Guidance Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The complaints handling guidance provides information on SCTS responsibilities specifically in relation to complaints. The document also signposts to other organisations that either may be of assistance to the customer or where they can escalate complaints to the SPSO.

4.3.2.1: We have an easy to use complaints procedure,

RP2 2023 The SCTS is required to use the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman’s (SPSO) complaints procedure. The SCTS website sets out the complaints handling procedure as well as directing customers to other organisations should their complaint be with that aspect of the wider judicial process. Complaints can be lodged through local Courts as well as on line.

Complaints are monitored centrally by the IGCT who oversee the distribution of complaints centrally to the appropriate Court or Service for the initial response. The Procedure is an easy to understand two step process and includes a Quick Guide as well as a separate Complaints Procedure in Easy Read format. It also advises how complaints can be made on behalf of an individual, from for example, a friend, relative or advocate. This is good practice. It also sets out areas that are outwith the Complaints Procedure, such as appeal against a Court or Tribunal decision. RP3 2024 Not Reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.3.2.2: which includes a commitment to deal with problems fully

RP2 2023 There is a very clear commitment to deal with complaints fully and the simple two step process is an encouragement for people not to be daunted by the process. The Complaints Procedure is very clear that ‘We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services’. The IGCT has introduced an Investigation Toolkit and template letters helping ensure that complaints are fully dealt with and consistently across the organisation. This, coupled with the central review of complaint responses, helps ensure that complaints are responded to appropriately, cover all aspects of the initial complaint, and have been fully dealt with. If a customer is unhappy with the final outcome, there is advice as to how to seek external review or, in the case of a complaint involving more than one judicial service, with details of other judicial Complaints Bodies. RP3 2024 Not Reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.3.2.3: and solve them wherever possible within a reasonable time limit.

RP2 2023 The Complaints Procedure is a simple two stage process with the initial stage providing a decision within five days. Where there is a more detailed investigation required, or the customer is unhappy with the initial response, a full response will be provided within 20 days. The IGCT monitor the timescales taken and SCTS deliver well against these targets. RP3 2024 Not Reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.3.3: We give staff training and guidance to handle complaints and to investigate them objectively, and we can demonstrate that we empower staff to put things right.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS188: Jury Guidance and System Assessor Acceptance: Yes

On occasion jurors make complaints to local courts. Where these can be resolved locally they will be but on occasion it will require a national change. There are a number of departments involved in national changes.

SCTS189: Complaints Handling Policy Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Complaints Handling Policy sets out what customers can expect when they lodge a complaint with SCTS. Staff Guidance is also available. Staff will try and resolve complaints in the first instance on the front line. Where this is not possible this will be escalated and dealt with.

SCTS190: Challenging Behaviour Training Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Fines Business Unit undertook training in 2024 to develop their skills in relation to dealing with challenging behaviours as this was a common occurrence being met by this team when dealing with customers.

SCTS191: Electronic Monitoring Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Electronic Monitoring was introduced as a condition of bail and has had some teething difficulties since its introduction. SCTS worked with Scottish Government, G4S (provider of electronic monitoring), the Crown Office and Scottish Prison Service on an exercise to resolve identified issues.

SCTS192: Call Handling Guidance Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Tribunals Operations have developed a bespoke training module and guidance for staff on call handling. This upskills staff and increases confidence in dealing with telephone enquiries.

SCTS193: IGCT Hub and Advice Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Information Governance and Correspondence Team are responsible for providing advice and assistance to staff on complaints handling. They have a dedicated webpage which staff can access and the team provide advice and guidance as required. On occasion centralised responses are issued by them.

4.3.3.1: We give staff training and guidance to handle complaints

RP3 2024 All staff are encouraged to investigate and resolve complaints at first contact, wherever possible. Training on complaints handling, forms part of the induction training for new staff. Guidance on complaints handling is published on both the web site and intranet. However additional help is available from Information Governance and Correspondence Team (IGCT). Specific guidance is produced as required, for example on challenging behaviour incidents and following a jury selection complaint.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.3.3.2: and to investigate them objectively,

RP3 2024 Staff throughout SCTS continue to investigate complaints objectively. There is a real sense of ownership displayed by staff, which was evident in discussion with staff and observation of service delivery. Difficult situations do arise occasionally, for example with Electronic Monitoring, and close liaison with G4S and the Prison Service is required for advice. Tribunals have carried out a huge exercise to raise awareness of issues around complaint handling, with the outcome of far better knowledge on what constitutes a complaint, how trends are identified and subsequent upskilling of staff.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.3.3.3: and we can demonstrate that we empower staff to put things right.

RP3 2024 Staff are actively encouraged to put things right at the first point of contact, wherever possible. The dedication and effort made by staff to take responsibility was confirmed during the visits by observation and discussions with staff. SCTS staff are encouraged to listen, stay calm then act and are trusted to make decisions and deliver good customer service.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.3.4: We learn from any mistakes we make by identifying patterns in formal and informal complaints and comments from customers and use this information to improve services and publicise action taken.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS06: 2021-2022 Court User Satisfaction Survey Results Phase 1 Jury Trials Assessor Acceptance: Yes

In a change to the way SCTS survey court users, prior to fieldwork commencing the questions were tailored to court users experience of jury trials allowing for more robust and specific questioning. Specific comments were available for areas to action as well as feedback on the procedural change.

SCTS08: Complaints Handling Report 2021-2022 Q2 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

SCTS has adopted the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman model complaints handling procedure. As part of that process there is recording of all complaints and active learning from complaints through reporting and publicising complaints information.

SCTS47: Informal Complaint - Police Scotland re Operational Processing of Review of Undertaking Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Police Scotland made contact with SCTS to request that operational staff be reminded of the target timescale for setting up hearings for review of undertaking conditions. Following on from this a circular notice was published on 25th May 2022 to remind staff and the original enquirer was advised.

SCTS48: Informal Complaint - Inappropriate Behaviour towards interpreter Assessor Acceptance: Yes

A Sheriff contacted the Operations Delivery Business Unit to highlight concerns regarding the behaviour of an accused towards an interpreter and the mechanisms in place to safeguard interpreters whilst they attended court. Following on from this a circular notice was published on 16th February 2022

SCTS49: Informal Complaint - Commencement Date on Serious Crime Prevention Orders Assessor Acceptance: Yes

COPFS contacted SCTS to raise awareness of an issue with documentation being produced from the SCTS COP II computer system and provided to the police regarding SCPOs. Following on from this a fix was applied to the system and a circular notice was published on 12th January 2022 to advise staff.

4.3.4.1: We learn from any mistakes we make by identifying patterns in formal

RP1 2022 Across services and Courts it was clear that the SCTS is good at learning from formal complaints.

RP2 2023 Not Reviewed. RP3 2024 Not Reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.3.4.2: and informal complaints and comments from customers

RP1 2022 Across Court locations and services visited, there is a culture whereby staff manage and respond to informal complaints and comments made by customers at first point of contact, whether being a Civil matter, or from customers attending the Courts in person. However, it was evident that, whilst staff on the front line responded positively to customers making informal complaints, the processes for recording these varied from court to court. There was also no evidence that they were being collated across Sheriffdoms, or the service as a whole, making it difficult to demonstrate wider learning across the SCTS. This theme therefore moves to Partial Compliance.

RP2 2023 Discussion with the IGCT indicated that Courts should log informal complaints at local Court level. Visits to a number of local Courts during the assessment showed this process was now embedded within complaints reporting at a local level. This theme moves from Partial to Full Compliance. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.3.4.3: and use this information to improve services and publicise action taken.

RP1 2022 It was pleasing to see that the 'You Said...We Did' format of feedback had been adopted across the SCTS and was seen on display at all of the locations visited. Whilst informal feedback is used to resolve individual instances where complaints have been made, and action is clearly publicised, there is little evidence of corporate learning from informal complaints. This theme also moves to Partial Compliance. RP2 2023 Discussion with the IGCT highlighted that reporting on complaints was discussed by the SCTS Executive on a quarterly basis, showing trends and actions taken. Similar discussion also takes place at local level. An Annual Report on complaints is also produced which is available on the website. This theme moves from Partial to Full Compliance. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.3.5: We regularly review and improve our complaints procedure, taking account of the views of customers, complainants and staff.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS06: 2021-2022 Court User Satisfaction Survey Results Phase 1, Jury Trials Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The survey included views of customers in relation to jury trial procedure. This has been shared with senior managers and action plans created to review processes where appropriate. The views of customers contained within this and other survey reports assists in reshaping procedures/policies.

SCTS107: Monthly Complaints Return Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Local areas complete a monthly complaints return and submit this to the Information Governance and Correspondence Team. The return details how many complaints have been received and resolutions. This is then used to complete the complaints handling report.

SCTS108: Complaints Handling Report Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The complaints handling report is completed by the Information Governance and Correspondence Team. The report details how SCTS have handled complaints over a quarter and in turn assists in the annual complaints handling report.

SCTS117: Note of Team Briefing - Complaints Procedure Assessor Acceptance: Yes

As demonstrated by the team briefing complaints and the complaints process are discussed during team meetings. This provides an opportunity to discuss individual complaints as well as the process adopted to deal with these.

SCTS59: 2021-2023 Court User Satisfaction Survey Phase 2 Report (Civil) Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The survey included views of customers in relation to civil procedure. This has been shared with senior managers and action plans created to review processes where appropriate. The views of customers contained within this and other survey reports assists in reshaping procedures/policies.

SCTS60: 2021-2023 Court User Satisfaction Survey Phase 3 Report (Summary Criminal) Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The survey included views of customers in relation to summary criminal procedure. This has been shared with senior managers and action plans created to review processes where appropriate. The views of customers contained within this and other survey reports assists in reshaping procedures/policies.

4.3.5.1: We regularly review and improve our complaints procedure,

RP2 2023 Your Complaints Procedure is aligned to the requirements of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), which is the body with responsibility for overseeing complaints handling in public bodies in Scotland. There is limited scope therefore to review the complaints procedure. You are able, however, to determine how you deal with complaints processing and your IGCT are conscious of ensuring that the processes in place are effective and efficient in meeting the needs of the SPSO in how complaints are determined, and the needs of the complainant for a speedy and appropriate resolution, and review processes accordingly. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.3.5.2: taking account of the views of customers, complainants and staff.

RP2 2023 The SPSO procedure takes account of the views of customers, complainants and staff. Your Court User surveys seek feedback from customers about their awareness of the complaints procedure and its use. Any appropriate comments are taken into account when you look at how you manage the complaints process. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

4.3.6: We ensure that the outcome of the complaint process for customers (whose complaint is upheld) is satisfactory for them.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

New Evidence

SCTS228: Local Complaints with Examples of Customer Satisfaction Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Each individual location will receive complaints which will then be dealt with in terms of the complaints procedure. There is limited evidence from customers to show their satisfaction, some examples are included, due to the nature of these this is an item best observed during local visits.

Active Evidence

SCTS194: Further Education Application Assessor Acceptance: Yes

In SCTS staff members can apply to receive further education funding subject to certain requirements and subject to approval in terms of the Further Education Policy. These applications are handled by the Education and Learning Unit.

SCTS195: Complaints Trackers Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Information Governance and Correspondence Team are the centralised team that deal with complaints handling and reporting to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. However many complaints are dealt with at a local level. The SPSO is an escalation point for complaints unresolved by SCTS.

SCTS196: Jurors Complaints Assessor Acceptance: Yes

On occasions Jurors will make complaints to local courts. Where these can be resolved locally they will be but on occasion a national change is required to resolve the complaint. A number of departments in SCTS can be involved in facilitating that change.

SCTS198: Complaints Procedure Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Complaints Procedure sets out what staff follow on receipt of a complaint. Complaints are recorded and numbers and outcomes shared with the Information Governance and Correspondence Team who collate and report on these statistics. Complaints are also discussed at all levels of SCTS.

SCTS225: Grievance Procedure Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Grievance Policy allows staff to report grievances and then have these dealt with appropriately. The policy has been revised and relaunched as of 12th September 2024. Matters are to be resolved informally in the first instance but where appropriate more formal steps are taken.

4.3.6.1: We ensure that the outcome of the complaint process for customers (whose complaint is upheld) is satisfactory for them.

RP3 2024 It is clear that complaints which are upheld are few in number compared to the number of customers dealt with who have no need to complain at all. Every effort continues to be made to ensure that the outcome of the complaint process for customers (whose complaint is upheld) is satisfactory for them. The main area of upheld complaints is around administrative arrangements and it is clear that responses are swift and include a request to establish levels of satisfaction. However if customers are still dissatisfied, they can ask the SPSO to look into the complaint.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5: Timeliness and Quality of Service

5.1: Standards for Timeliness and Quality

5.1.1: We set appropriate and measurable standards for the timeliness of response for all forms of customer contact including phone calls, letters, e-communications and personal callers.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS13: SCTS Customer Charters Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Charters set out service standards and commitments to people attending courts, tribunals or the OPG in person, or making written or telephone enquiries. They include opening times and contact details for complaints and feedback.

SCTS16: SCTS Complaints Procedure Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Complaints Procedure sets out what a customer can expect when making a complaint to SCTS. This includes contact details, response deadlines and escalation routes. In addition to the complaints procedure complaints are recorded and learned from across SCTS.

SCTS25: SCTS Websites Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS websites including those for the Scottish Land Court and the Office of the Public Guardian include a range of useful information for customers. This includes contact information, information about how to access services, what to expect and organisation charts.

SCTS36: Generic Email Inboxes Automatic Responses - best seen at visit Assessor Acceptance: Yes

A small selection of sample generic email address automatic responses has been included. These can be further demonstrated at the in person assessments.

SCTS38: SCTS Research Access Guidance for Researchers Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Research Access Guidance for Researchers was fully reviews and improved and now sets out timescales for substantive replies to research access queries and guidance in relation to access requirements.

5.1.1.1: We set appropriate and measurable standards for the timeliness of response for all forms of customer contact including phone calls, letters, e-communications and personal callers.

RP1 2022 SCTS has clear and measurable standards for the timeliness of response for customer contact, including telephone calls (within three or five rings), written correspondence and emails (five or ten working days) and visitors to the Counters and reception (no later than 10 minutes after the scheduled appointment time). There do not seem to be any timeliness standards for response to social media contacts. Although there is sufficient evidence for Compliance, the Assessors note that these standards do seem to vary across the Service and as such there remains scope to address this aspect at corporate level. RP2 2023 Not reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.1.2: We set comprehensive standards for all aspects of the quality of customer service to be expected in all dealings with our organisation.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS13: SCTS Customer Charters Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Charters set out service standards and commitments to people attending courts, tribunals or the OPG in person, or making written or telephone enquiries. They include opening times and contact details for complaints and feedback.

SCTS14: Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses Report 2021-2022 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The annual report provides customers with information on the current standards, what we have done and how we have performed against those standards in the current year and what we will do in the coming year. The report also indicates additional victim and witness related items SCTS have worked on.

SCTS27: Updated Jury Guidance Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Updated jury guidance is available on the SCTS website. This was updated to include information on attendance at jury centres and now includes both attendance at jury centres and at court. Expenses information was also updated to incorporate the introduction of digital expenses applications.

SCTS43: SCTS Mainstreaming Equality Report 2021 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Mainstreaming Equality Report 2021 reports on the progress of SCTS to make equality integral to its functions. Included are the key projects and achievements SCTS has made since the last report in 2019.

SCTS46: Covid-19 Guidance on SCTS Website Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic various guidance and information was issued to customers on the SCTS website. This updated customers on how to access SCTS services during the pandemic and the standard of service they could expect throughout the period.

5.1.2.1: We set comprehensive standards for all aspects of the quality of customer service to be expected in all dealings with our organisation.

RP1 2022 SCTS has standards for all aspects of the quality of customer service. The Values of the Service are Respect, Service and Excellence. The standards include expectations that staff will be polite, friendly and treat customers with respect. The privacy of customers will be respected. The Scottish Government’s document, ‘The Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses Annual Report 2021-2022’ has a particularly good section about SCTS, where standards of service are clearly set out. RP2 2023 Not reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.2: Timely Outcomes

5.2.1: We advise our customers and potential customers about our promises on timeliness and quality of customer service.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS102: Service Delivery Targets - Sheriff Courts Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Sheriff Courts report on their compliance with the service delivery targets. These are published on local court noticeboards and updated at least quarterly. This provides customers with information on the SCTS compliance with the key performance indicators in relation to various areas.

SCTS13: SCTS Customer Charters Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Charters set out service standards and commitments to people attending courts, tribunals or the OPG in person, or making written or telephone enquiries. They include opening times and contact details for complaints and feedback. Charters are available in alternate languages/formats on request.

SCTS25: SCTS Websites Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS websites including those for the Scottish Land Court and the Office of the Public Guardian include a range of useful information for customers. This includes contact information, information about how to access services, what to expect and organisation charts.

SCTS36: Generic Email Inboxes Automatic Responses - best seen at visit Assessor Acceptance: Yes

A small selection of sample generic email address automatic responses has been included. These can be further demonstrated at local visits and show response times for customers.

SCTS38: SCTS Research Access Guidance for Researchers Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Research Access Guidance provides response times in relation to research access requests. When contacting SCTS researchers are also provided with an automatic response by email and regular updates are provided.

SCTS80: Complaints Handling Guidance Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The complaints handling guidance provides response times in relation to all levels of the complaints procedure. Whilst dealing with complaints regular updates are provided to customers.

5.2.1.1: We advise our customers and potential customers about our promises on timeliness and quality of customer service.

RP2 2023 You continue to provide a very wide range of information about promises on the timeliness and quality of services and service delivery expectations. They are delivered in a variety of ways including Charters, digitally on the websites, official documentation and on display on notice boards at strategic locations throughout all sites. Feedback and comment made during the assessment indicates that this level of communication and commitment is highly appreciated. The range of mail box access points, which are also used to provide outgoing information, is impressive. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.2.2: We identify individual customer needs at the first point of contact with us and ensure that an appropriate person who can address the reason for contact deals with the customer.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS199: Civil Online Case Tracking Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Civil Online is a case management system for our civil business which can be accessed by members of the public and legal professionals to undertake specific functions in relation to simple procedure cases and a small number of ordinary actions.

SCTS200: Corporate Website Upgrade Assessor Acceptance: Yes

A new upgraded website was released on 17th July 2024. The website has been designed with a view to making the website more accessible and easier to navigate for members of the public and professionals that use it.

SCTS201: Public Counters and Receptions Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Across the SCTS estate public counters and receptions areas are often the first place customers will come into contact with SCTS employees. Due to that nature of this item this is one best observed during local visits.

SCTS202: Trauma Informed Training Assessor Acceptance: Yes

To upskill staff in dealing with individuals impacted or experiencing trauma training is being rolled out across SCTS. A basic training course will be delivered to all employees with those most in contact with customers receiving additional training.

SCTS203: Dedicated Email Inboxes Assessor Acceptance: Yes

At local level there are various email addresses which customers can use to contact SCTS. Due to the nature of this evidence item it is one best observed during local visits.

SCTS204: Fines National Helpline Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Fines Business Unit have a dedicated telephone helpline to assist those customers having difficulties paying their fine. Information is published on the SCTS webpage to assist those customers and also provide contact details for the Fines Business Unit.

5.2.2.1: We identify individual customer needs at the first point of contact with us

RP3 2024 SCTS identifies individual customer needs at the first point of contact, consistently across all entry points, whether it is in-person, by telephone, digitally or virtually. Staff, although remaining very professional, are very welcoming and approachable. Customers have benefited from a new telephone system, which is still being rolled out in some locations. The support provided by several advice agencies, including Victim Support Scotland, is very positive and appreciated by staff and customers. The liaison with personnel within the Sheriff Courts, including the interactions with Clerk to the Court, Court Officers, Police and Geo Amy staff, is admirable and allows proceedings to function very smoothly, and was observed in all court sites visited.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.2.2.2: and ensure that an appropriate person who can address the reason for contact deals with the customer.

RP3 2024 Customers continue to be served by well trained, informed, friendly, professional and dedicated staff. The arrangements made to ensure customers know with whom they are or will be dealing with, are well embedded and efficient. Observation of activity at Reception desks, including larger sites such as Glasgow Sheriff Court and Tribunals is impressive, with specific measures such as the use of 'queue busters' at busy times. There is a professional approach to welcoming, segregating and directing different customer groups such as witnesses, jurors, those attending an appeal hearing and those wishing to pay a fine or simply make an enquiry. Overall, the reception protocols and execution of service delivery, merits Compliance Plus.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.2.3: We promptly share customer information with colleagues and partners within our organisation whenever appropriate and can demonstrate how this has reduced unnecessary contact for customers.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong
 Compliance to Standard: Compliance Plus

Active Evidence

SCTS123: Domestic Abuse Pilot	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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To allow domestic abuse cases to proceed more efficiently sharing on information between justice partners was essential to allow the pilots to be effective.

SCTS203: Dedicated Email Inboxes	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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By having dedicated email inboxes available customers are more easily to email the appropriate inbox for their query or business interaction. This reduces the channels and unnecessary contact the customer needs to go through to get to the most appropriate person/team to deal with their query.

SCTS205: Court Sheet Sharing with Partners	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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SCTS shares court sheet and the information contained within them with relevant justice partners usually the Crown and Police. This allows for a more effective and efficient running of court business.

SCTS207: Supreme Courts Newsletter	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The Supreme Courts produce a newsletter which contains information to keep customers updated on changes and contacts. This is published on the SCTS webpages.

SCTS209: Secure Data Transfer Itrent and Delta	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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The I-Trent system is the system used by HR to hold staff information. The Delta system is used by ELU to manage staff training. Between HRU and ELU a secure data transfer was set up to allow staff information to be shared between the two programmes reducing the contact staff have to make.

SCTS204: Fines National Helpline	Assessor Acceptance:	Yes
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By customers being able to access the fines enforcement team they are able to make direct contact with the team best placed to help with management of fine paying. This reduces customers having to make contact via the Sheriff Courts and then being passed over to the team.

5.2.3.1: We promptly share customer information with colleagues and partners within our organisation whenever appropriate

RP3 2024 The prompt and professional protocols of sharing customer information with colleagues and partners whenever appropriate, both internally and with other justice departments and agencies, remains outstanding. There is an openness, yet a discreet approach used in very delicate areas, such as support to vulnerable witnesses. The Assessors met many partners on the visits, including Sheriffs, Procurators Fiscal, solicitors, representatives from Police Scotland, the Witness Service, security services, Social workers and Criminal Justice partners, all of whom spoke very positively about co-operative ways of working, good communication and prompt sharing of information. Internal communications with support departments such as CDi and ELU are also professional and first class. Compliance Plus is retained.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.2.3.2: and can demonstrate how this has reduced unnecessary contact for customers.

RP3 2024 SCTS clearly demonstrates that unnecessary contact for customers is kept to a minimum. The sharing of data with justice partners and support agencies greatly improves efficiency, reduces delays for customers and helps provide an effective service. Dedicated e-mail boxes have been developed to manage referrals and the development of the Fines National Helpline has been highly appreciated. The streamlined jury citation process is now well embedded and continues to reduce unnecessary contact and with the use of the portal and dedicated telephone number encourages jurors to be more self-sufficient.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.2.4: Where service is not completed at the first point of contact we discuss with the customer the next steps and indicate the likely overall time to achieve outcomes.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS210: Complaints Process Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Complaints Process sets out what customers can expect when they lodge a complaint. This also includes timelines and next steps at whatever stage in the process they are at.

SCTS211: Fine Payers Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The information on the SCTS webpages allows customers to be kept informed of what may happen to them if they default on fines and contact details for the Fines Enforcement Team.

SCTS212: Automated Email Responses Assessor Acceptance: Yes

When a customer sends an email to a generic email inbox (not a personal SCTS email address) they will receive an automated response advising of timelines for response. Due to the nature of this item it is one best observed during local visits.

SCTS213: Tribunals Decisions Assessor Acceptance: Yes

When the Social Security Chamber based within Tribunals send out decisions they also send accompanying guidance so the party receiving the decision knows what they can do next.

SCTS214: Guidance for Unrepresented Accused Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Sheriffdom Legal Advisors in Glasgow and Strathkelvin have developed guidance for unrepresented accused in the Justice of the Peace Court so they know what to expect for the duration of their case. There are a larger number of unrepresented accused in the JP court.

SCTS215: OPG Website Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Office of the Public Guardian Website contains a weekly update on their processing times and information on an expedite service for urgent applications.

5.2.4.1: Where service is not completed at the first point of contact we discuss with the customer the next steps

RP3 2024 Staff are skilled, trained and empowered to handle the vast majority of queries at the first point of contact. On those occasions when service is not completed at the first point of contact there are excellent arrangements in place to keep customers informed. The results in a recent Court User Satisfaction Survey show that 94% found staff helpful and 96% polite with the provision of service at first point of contact. It is the assessors' opinion, based on considerable observation, that performance in relation to first point of contact delivery and explanations is top class. One assessor observed a very personal approach to a customer who was hard of hearing. Tribunals ensure that decisions from the Social Security Chamber are issued and that information is also provided on follow up appeal procedures and time scales. OPG regularly update information on the website regarding urgent applications. Full compliance is maintained.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.2.4.2: and indicate the likely overall time to achieve outcomes.

RP3 2024 Likewise when service is not completed at the first point of contact there are arrangements in place to give customers an indication of the overall time to achieve outcomes. There is commitment to supplying as much information as possible and regular updates are provided where necessary. In the most recent Court User Satisfaction Survey, 70% of respondents were satisfied with staff explanations about why they had to wait and how long.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.2.5: We respond to initial enquiries promptly, if there is a delay we advise the customer and take action to rectify the problem.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS111: Business Continuity Plans Assessor Acceptance: Yes

There are local business continuity plans which set out contingencies for a variety of situations. This includes timeframes for recommencing or undertaking certain activities.

SCTS112: Freedom of Information Requests Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Information provided on the SCTS webpages provides information to customers on response times for freedom of information requests. Regular updates are provided to customers.

SCTS113: Observation at Public Counters - best seen at visit Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Whilst undertaking local assessments, assessors will be able to view SCTS staff interacting with customers and providing responses to queries or where this is not possible advising on future interaction.

SCTS13: SCTS Customer Charters Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Charters set out service standards and commitments to people attending courts, tribunals or the OPG in person, or making written or telephone enquiries. They include opening times and contact details for complaints and feedback. Charters are available in alternate languages/formats on request.

SCTS60: 2021-2023 Court User Satisfaction Survey Phase 3 Report (Summary Criminal) Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The survey includes questions in relation to waiting times during court hearings and satisfaction with same. This also includes attempts by SCTS to provide updates and information on why customers may need to wait. Information on wait times can be found on pages 31 - 42.

SCTS80: Complaints Handling Guidance Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The complaints handling guidance provides response times in relation to all levels of the complaints procedure. Whilst dealing with complaints regular updates are provided to customers.

5.2.5.1: We respond to initial enquiries promptly,

RP2 2023 There is a clear commitment to respond to enquiries promptly and the targets and aspirations set are published in your Charters and Websites. During the visit, security and reception staff were observed to respond quickly and positively when customers were accessing buildings and services. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.2.5.2: if there is a delay we advise the customer and take action to rectify the problem.

RP2 2023 It is recognised by customers that there a number of factors that can impact on response times, particularly in relation to court hearings. However it was clear from observation of services in court rooms, at reception areas and discussion with administrative staff that there is commitment to keeping customers informed. In addition there was considerable increase in the outcome in the Court User Survey for 2022-2023, with 70% expressing satisfaction with regular updates in comparison to the previous score of 62%. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.3: Achieved Timely Delivery

5.3.1: We monitor our performance against standards for timeliness and quality of customer service and we take action if problems are identified.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory
 Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS06: 2021-2022 Court User Satisfaction Survey Results Phase 1 Jury Trials Assessor Acceptance: Yes

In a change to the way SCTS survey court users, prior to fieldwork commencing the questions were tailored to court users experience of jury trials allowing for more robust and specific questioning. Overall satisfaction achieved its highest rating since surveys began in 2005.

SCTS10: Service Delivery Targets - separate email due to file size Assessor Acceptance: Yes

Service Delivery Targets for Sheriff Courts are published on court notice boards and are reported monthly with a report generated on the SCTS intranet. The report tracks trends in service levels.

SCTS28: SCTS Annual Report and Accounts 2020-21 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The SCTS Annual Report & Accounts 2020-2021 is published on the SCTS website. It highlights the standards of service, organisational values and performance within ranges considered acceptable by the SCTS Board.

SCTS35: Quarterly Criminal Court Statistics and Quarterly Fines Report Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Criminal Court Statistics is information about criminal court activity in all High, Sheriff and JP Courts. The Quarterly Fine Report is information about fines and collection rates. It covers fines imposed in Sheriff and JP Courts including PF and Police fixed penalties

SCTS39: President of Scottish Tribunals Annual Report 2019-2022 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The President of Scottish Tribunals Annual Report 2019-2020 is published on the SCTS website. It highlights performance of the previous year and looks forward to the period ahead for the tribunals.

5.3.1.1: We monitor our performance against standards for timeliness

RP1 2022 SCTS historically monitored standards for timeliness by means of the sections of the Court User Satisfaction Survey 2019 that cover 'Waiting in Court'. The new Phase 1 Jury Trials Survey, carried out from June to November 2021 asks similar questions. RP2 2023 Not reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.3.1.2: and quality of customer service

RP1 2022 SCTS historically monitored standards for quality of customer service by means of the Court User Satisfaction Survey 2019, which covers the helpfulness and politeness of Court staff, together with the quality and accuracy of information given by the Court staff. The new Phase 1 Jury Trials Survey, carried out from June to November 2021 asks similar questions. RP2 2023 Not reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.3.1.3: and we take action if problems are identified.

RP1 2022 The ethos of the Service is to take action if problems are identified. RP2 2023 Not reviewed. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.3.2: We are meeting our current standards for timeliness and quality of customer service and we publicise our performance against these standards.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS06: 2021-2022 Court User Satisfaction Survey Results Phase 1 Jury Trials Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The survey includes information on satisfaction levels with SCTS staff as well as information on wait times and satisfaction in relation to those. The report is published on the SCTS webpage.

SCTS102: Service Delivery Targets - Sheriff Courts Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Sheriff Courts report on their compliance with the service delivery targets. These are published on local court noticeboards and updated at least quarterly. This provides customers with information on the SCTS compliance with the key performance indicators in relation to various areas.

SCTS104: OPG Quarterly Performance Data Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The office of the public guardian (OPG) monitor and publish their performance data quarterly. This is reviewed by the OPG senior management team.

SCTS114: Board Scorecard Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Board Scorecard monitors SCTS performance against the strategic priorities. Updates are provided on a quarterly basis and the SCTS executive team and board monitor these. Each strategic priority has key indicators and these are reported on by the various SCTS teams responsible for these.

SCTS115: Tribunals Scorecard Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Tribunals Scorecard monitors tribunals performance. Updates are provided regularly and these are monitored by senior managers.

SCTS60: 2021-2023 Court User Satisfaction Survey Phase 3 Report (Summary Criminal) Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The survey includes information on satisfaction levels with SCTS staff as well as information on wait times and satisfaction in relation to those. The report is published on the SCTS webpage.

5.3.2.1: We are meeting our current standards for timeliness

RP2 2023 Overall performance against standards for timeliness is improving and generally met, with genuine reason established for areas falling slightly short. Specific efforts are made to monitor performance and obtain customer feedback. The in-depth data provided through the Court Users Survey show that in relation to waiting times 76% of expectations are met, between 73 and 85% of customers are advised of court start times and 64% had to wait less than 15 minutes. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.3.2.2: and quality of customer service

RP2 2023 Likewise the performance against standards for quality of customer service is consistently good and well demonstrated in the results of the Court User Satisfaction Survey, in areas such as helpfulness and politeness of all staff, which shows scores of 93 and 96% respectively. Comment from court users during the assessment confirms this level of satisfaction. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.3.2.3: and we publicise our performance against these standards.

RP2 2023 Performance against standards for timeliness and quality of service is published via the website and on notice boards at strategic locations in all sites visited. Outcomes are also shared at stakeholder, partner and staff consultation forums on a regular basis. RP3 2024 Not reviewed.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.3.3: Our performance in relation to timeliness and quality of service compares well with that of similar organisations.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Compliance to Standard: Compliant

Active Evidence

SCTS216: SCTS People Survey 2023 Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The People Survey is a national civil service wide survey to gain understanding of staff satisfaction. The report allows SCTS to compare its results with other civil service departments.

SCTS217: Service Delivery Targets Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Service Delivery Targets are an internal target on performance by Sheriff and Justice of the Peace Courts. Whilst these cannot be compared against external organisations they are and can be used to compare Sheriff and JP Courts against each other.

SCTS218: ELU Learning Award Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Education and Learning Unit obtained a gold award in the People Development Programme of the Year at the Learning Awards for the Direct Entrant Executive Officer Programme. SCTS were competing again HMRC, the Football Association and the World Health Organisation.

SCTS219: SSC CPAG Conference Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The President of the Social Security Chamber based within Tribunals recently attend the Child Poverty Again Group Welfare Conference which is also attended by welfare rights organisations. At the conference SCTS were praised for their level of service on the phone and by email.

SCTS220: PATS National Steering Group Assessor Acceptance: Yes

The Pensions Appeal Tribunal for Scotland attends and participates in a bi-annual advisory steering group which is comprised of all interested parties in the War Pensions appeal process at a national level.

SCTS224: 35 Hour Working Week - Impact on Services Assessor Acceptance: Yes

As part of the transition to a 35 hour working week from 1st October 2024 a working group was established to consider the impact this will have on Sheriff and Justice of the Peace Court customers. The working group was formed of operational staff with proposals being put to the executive team.

5.3.3.1: Our performance in relation to timeliness

RP3 2024 It remains difficult for SCTS, as a whole, to benchmark performance in relation to timeliness with similar organisations. However comparisons can be drawn from performance across Sheriffdoms, with the Pensions Appeal Tribunal and at the Child Poverty Action Group. Overall customer feedback in Court User Satisfaction Surveys indicate that the experience of waiting times in court is acceptable, provided delays are communicated.

Evidence Value: Fully Met

5.3.3.2: and quality of service compares well with that of similar organisations.

RP3 2024 Similarly, as a national body, it is difficult for SCTS to benchmark performance in relation to quality of service with similar organisations. However, the results of the Court User Satisfaction Survey that cover the helpfulness and politeness of Court staff, show confidence and trust in the quality of service delivery. The work and attention to service delivery practices, has negated any potential issues arising out of the reduction to a 35 hour working week.

Evidence Value: Fully Met