

IN THEIR HANDS: Q&A

What's it like to be a Judge? The Lord President, Lord Carloway, helps us find out.

HAVE YOU EVER TRIED A CELEBRITY?

Fortunately, few celebrities get themselves into serious trouble. The odd television or film star, sportsperson or musician can find themselves in a minor brawl or a driving offence, but these will be dealt with by the local sheriff. I have been involved in many cases that have become high profile. There was the appeal of the Lockerbie bomber or the prosecution of the gas supply company for causing an explosion which killed a whole family in a town near Glasgow.

Then there was an appeal by environmental campaigners who were disrupting flights out of Aberdeen airport. I am afraid that we were not very sympathetic.

And I have been involved in a number of cases involving the financial troubles and takeover of Rangers Football Club. The takeover was over a decade ago, but the fall out is not yet settled.

Finally, I was involved in the so-called Brexit cases, when we had to decide upon the legality of the actions of the former prime minister, Boris Johnson.

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE YOU SENT TO PRISON?

Tragically a very great number. I presided over many murder trials and some very serious robberies and assaults. I now preside over appeals by people who have been convicted of serious crimes. It is inevitable that I have been involved in sentencing several hundred people to prison.

WAS THERE ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR THAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO WORK IN THE LAW?

I was fortunate that I had a couple of relatives who were lawyers. They had a big part to play in introducing me to the law. The most important factor was that, when I was at school, my fellow students quite often asked me to intervene in their disputes so I thought that I might give problem solving a go as a career.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE THING ABOUT YOUR JOB?

The friendship of professional colleagues and everyone, well nearly everyone, in the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service. Especially in the days of the COVID lockdown, their resilience and good humour was invaluable in keeping me sane.



DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR SOMEONE THINKING ABOUT A CAREER IN LAW?

Look to see what qualifications you need in terms of Highers to get onto a university's Bachelor of Law course and work hard to achieve that. If you don't get the right qualifications, don't despair. Look for another route to get onto the course, by doing something else first and then transferring to a law school for a conversion course.

Thanks to Ali, Ben, Peter, Rosy and Stuart for these questions.
And thank you to Lord Carloway for the answers!

CAREERS IN LAW...

Did you know, over 250,000 people work in the legal profession in the UK? There are a whole range of roles. If you're inspired to pursue a career in the legal profession, there are lots of different jobs and specialisms, including as a:

Solicitor, Arbitrator, Barrister, Clerk, Company secretary, Coroner, Judge, Legal secretary, Mediator, Paralegal, Patent attorney, Trademark attorney

