

September 2023

Public appointment: Members appointed to the Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission

Summary: Public appointments news release.

Directorate: People Directorate

The Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs today announced the appointment of Suzanne Mertes and Finlay Young as Members of the Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission.

Members

Suzanne Mertes retired in August 2023 from Police Scotland, having joined Tayside Police in 1995 after gaining degrees in Law, English and Political Science. A former Chief Superintendent, she was latterly President of the Association of Scottish Police Superintendents, a post she was elected to by her peers. Suzanne held a number of challenging roles throughout her police career, including planning and operational command roles in G8 and the Ryder Cup, in national projects, and within the Command Team in Tayside Division. She brings a wealth of experience and knowledge in policing and partnership working in the wider criminal justice system to the Commission.

Finlay Young is a journalist, researcher and access to justice specialist. He has worked on justice reform projects in partnership with governments and civil society groups in various international contexts, with a particular focus on improving justice outcomes for underserved groups. As a consultant for international organisations, he has conducted research on issues such as access to justice after sexual violence, prolonged pre-trial detention, legal aid needs, and judicial independence. He is an award-winning journalist whose longform work has included reporting on the 2014 ebola outbreak in West Africa, investigating sexual abuse in an American charity, and explanatory reporting on male suicide and maternal mortality. Currently, as a panel member for Redress Scotland, he makes independent decisions on applications for redress by those who experienced child abuse in care settings in Scotland. He brings to the Commission experience in trauma-informed research, user-centred service design, strategic planning, and performance monitoring.

Appointments

Suzanne Mertes' appointment will be for 4 years and will run from 1 October 2023 to 30 September 2027.

Finlay Young's appointment will be for 4 years and will run from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2028.

These appointments are regulated by the Ethical Standards Commissioner.

Remuneration

These appointments are part-time and attract a remuneration of £12,192 for a time commitment of 48 days per financial year.

Other ministerial appointments

Finlay Young is a Member of Redress Scotland, for which he receives remuneration of £380 per day, for a minimum time commitment of 38 days per year.

Suzanne Mertes does not hold any other public appointments.

Political activity

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for appointees' political activity within the last five years (if there is any to be declared) to be made public.

Suzanne Mertes and Finlay Young have had no political activity within the last five years.

Background

The Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission is a public body which was established in April 1999 by an Act of Parliament.

The Commission's role is to consider alleged miscarriages of justice and if, after proper investigation, it believes that i) a miscarriage of justice may have occurred and ii) that it is in the interests of justice that a reference should be made, it may refer a case to the High Court for an appeal against conviction and/or sentence.