

# Introduction to Devolution



Civil Service

## When to use this Introduction

What is devolution? What does it mean in practice? How do the four governments of the UK work together? What do I need to know? If these are questions you find yourself asking, then this guide is for you!

This Introduction aims to upskill civil servants, whether working in the UK Government or one of the devolved administrations, on the governance structures of the United Kingdom and how to navigate them. This knowledge is an integral component of every civil servant's brief. If you have already read our devolution **factsheet** and **postcard overview of devolved and reserved powers** but require further information, this Introduction is an effective next step. It is particularly well suited to new starters.

It forms part of the cross-government **Devolution and You** programme which offers devolution learning and support across the civil service.

## What is in this Introduction

This Introduction will give you an overview of the current devolution landscape in the UK and how to operate within it. This will include information about the distribution of power and responsibility across the UK, as well as the formal structures in place to facilitate positive intergovernmental working. Three devolution practitioner profiles will put much of this detail and advice into context. Finally, a glossary, acronym guide, further resources and points of contact pages make up a concluding reference section.

## How to use this Introduction

This initial devolution guide will be a springboard to other resources and a reference tool, so that civil servants know who to go to when they identify particular challenges or opportunities in the devolution space. Do keep it on your desk or Desktop, refer to it regularly and make it available to colleagues.

## What is devolution?

Devolution is about the transfer of power by a central government to local or regional administrations. Devolution is not new. There have been different forms of devolution in the UK for decades and it is common in other parts of the world. Today, it means that there are distinct legislatures and governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, which have powers over a range of policy areas which had previously been the preserve of the UK Government.

Legislature	Government
UK Parliament	UK Government
Scottish Parliament	Scottish Government
National Assembly for Wales	Welsh Government
Northern Ireland Assembly	Northern Ireland Executive

Each devolved legislature has its own unique devolution settlement, which are established and expanded through Acts of UK Parliament and which set out the legislative competence of devolved bodies; in other words the policy areas for which they are responsible. The UK Government has also developed a different system of decentralisation within England, which does not involve distinct legislatures.



Northern Ireland Assembly, Belfast



Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh



National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff



UK Parliament, London

## Why do we have devolution?

Devolution has been an evolving process that has responded to public demands and transformed the United Kingdom's political and constitutional landscape.

It has brought about a democratic shift by bringing decision-making closer to people across the UK. The people of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as those represented by Metropolitan Mayors, can have an increasingly greater say in the policies that affect them.

Devolution has also resulted in more effective and tailored policy-making. Policies can be produced and delivered that better account for the needs and priorities of the individual parts of the UK. The Welsh Government can deliver agriculture policy that reflects the unique importance of livestock farming to the Welsh economy and the Scottish Government can run an education system that responds to the socio-economic landscape of Scotland.

Devolution has encouraged innovation in policy-making. Having four legislatures in the United Kingdom means that administrations can learn from policies launched elsewhere and then replicate them if they think they will be effective in their own jurisdiction. An example of this is the Scottish Government's decision to ban smoking in enclosed public spaces in 2006 which, having been deemed a success, was replicated in Wales, Northern Ireland and England.

# Devolution across the UK

## England

### History

The current phase of English devolution started with the Greater Manchester Agreement in 2014, which was the first 'devolution deal' to give powers and funding to Combined Authorities. Further deals have followed on a case-by-case bespoke basis, as opposed to a one-size-fits-all approach across the whole country.

### Remit

Each combined authority has a remit differing in size and scope. To date, typical powers for mayoral devolution deals include: additional investment funding of between £15m and £36.5m per year for 30 years; devolved multi-year transport budgets; some include strategic planning and housing powers; devolved adult education budget funding; and greater local influence on employment support.

### Mayors

Directly elected mayors, often one of the newly elected Metropolitan Mayors, represent various regions of England: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Greater Manchester, the Sheffield City Region, the Liverpool City Region, the Tees Valley, the West of England and the West Midlands.

### London Assembly

The London Assembly predates the current phase of English Devolution. It was established in 2000 and sits in City Hall. It is made up of 25 Assembly Members and has the ability to amend the Mayor's budget and reject their strategies, as well as make proposals on a number of issues such as transport and environment.

### History

Northern Ireland was self-governing, with its own Parliament, between 1921 and 1972 when Direct Rule was introduced. The Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement of 1998 provided for a Northern Ireland Assembly and a power-sharing Executive. The Northern Ireland Executive has its own Civil Service which is separate to that of the other governments of the UK.

## Northern Ireland

### Legislative Competence

The Northern Irish devolution settlement differs in some respects from those of the other devolved administrations. The Assembly can in principle also legislate in respect of 'reserved' matters subject to various consents, but cannot legislate on 'excepted' matters. The settlement includes powers over justice, social security and energy, although nuclear energy remains a UK Government matter.

### Northern Ireland Assembly

The Assembly sits in Parliament Buildings, Stormont, and consists of 90 Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs). Five MLAs are elected from each of 18 constituencies using the single transferable vote system.

### Northern Ireland Executive

The Northern Ireland Executive is a mandatory coalition of parties which is chaired jointly by the First Minister and deputy First Minister. Currently, the First Minister, deputy First Minister and eight Executive Ministers are nominated by the political parties in the Assembly in accordance with procedures set out in the Northern Ireland Act. The composition of the Executive will reflect the relative strength of each party in the Assembly.

# Scotland

## History

The 1707 Acts of Union, which dissolved the Parliaments of England and Scotland and established a Parliament of Great Britain, made provision for the protection and retention of distinct legal and social institutions in Scotland – namely Scots Law and the Church of Scotland.

Administrative devolution has existed in Scotland from the 1800s, leading to further distinctions in areas such as education, agriculture and health. In 1979 74% of the electorate in Scotland voted to establish a Scottish Parliament with a range of devolved powers.

## Scottish Government

The Scottish Government is led by a First Minister who may, with the approval of the Scottish Parliament, appoint Cabinet Secretaries (Senior Ministers), Ministers (Junior Ministers) and Law Officers to lead on devolved portfolios. The Scottish Government has its headquarters in Edinburgh, with a further 11500 staff working in other bodies across Scotland and at key International Hubs around the world. Civil Servants working for the Scottish Government and its agencies are members of the UK Civil Service, who are headed by a single Permanent Secretary and are bound to serve Scottish Ministers.

## Scottish Parliament

The Scottish Parliament sits in Holyrood, Edinburgh and is made up of a single chamber with 129 Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs). They are elected on four-yearly-terms through mixed-member proportional representation.

## Legislative Competence

Since the Scotland Act 1998, the Scottish devolution settlement has functioned using a reserved powers model. The Scotland Act 2016 devolved further significant powers to the Scottish Government, including over elements of tax and welfare.

# Wales

## History

In 1997 50.3% of Wales voted for the creation of a devolved National Assembly for Wales, brought about by the Government of Wales Act 1998. Following the Government of Wales Act 2006, the assembly gained the ability to pass primary legislation. The Wales Act 2017 changed the model of Welsh devolution and devolved more powers to the Assembly and the Welsh Government.

## Legislative Competence

The Wales Act 2017 devolved further legislative competence and new executive powers over a number of policy areas. In addition, as a result of the Wales Act 2014 and 2017, the Welsh Government and the Assembly took on tax raising powers in April 2018 and the Welsh Government will take on new powers over income tax in 2019.

## National Assembly for Wales

The National Assembly for Wales is made up of a single chamber with 60 Assembly Members (AMs). These are elected on five-year terms, through mixed-member proportional representation. There has to be a two-thirds majority within the Assembly for any changes to the electoral system.

## Welsh Government

The Government of Wales Acts provide for the Welsh Government to consist of a First Minister, up to twelve other Ministers and a Counsel General. The Government is based principally in Cardiff but has offices across Wales and a civil service of around 5,000, led by a Permanent Secretary.

# How devolution works: devolved and reserved powers

The central distinction within the devolution space is between **devolved** and **reserved** powers. Devolved powers are those which have been passed from the UK Parliament to one of the devolved legislatures. Reserved powers are those that remain at a UK Parliament level.

Some policy areas are devolved to one devolved legislature but reserved elsewhere. For example, policing is devolved in Northern Ireland and Scotland but reserved in Wales. Devolution in the UK is therefore characterised by **asymmetry** that continues to evolve, which means each of the three devolution settlements involve varying areas and levels of power. This is due to the underlying history and respective political influences of the four nations of the UK.

In Northern Ireland the term **transferred** is used instead of devolved. The Northern Ireland Assembly can in principle also legislate in respect of **reserved** matters subject to various consents, but has not yet done so to any significant degree. **Excepted** matters are those retained by the UK Parliament indefinitely and apply solely to Northern Ireland.

Below is a high level summary of which powers are **devolved** in each part of the UK. Remember that the devolution settlements are unique and the distinction between devolved and reserved powers can sometimes be complex. This what makes engagement between officials across the administrations so important.

	<b>Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales</b>	<b>Also devolved in Northern Ireland</b>	<b>Also devolved in Scotland</b>	<b>Also devolved in Wales</b>
<b>Devolved</b>	Health and social services	Justice and policing	Justice and policing	Welsh language
	Education, training and skills	Charity law	Charity law	Some income tax (due April 2019)
	Local government	Energy	Stamp duty land tax	Stamp duty land tax
	Housing	Employment law	Licensing of onshore oil and gas extraction	Landfill tax
	Economic development	Social security, child support, pensions	Some income tax (incl. ability to set rates and thresholds)	Road signs and speed limits
	Agriculture, forestry and fisheries	NI Civil Service	Equal Opportunities in relation to public bodies in Scotland	Equal Opportunities in relation to public bodies in Wales
	Environment and planning	Equal opportunities	Tax on carriage of passengers by air (date TBC)	Licensing of onshore oil and gas extraction
	Transport	Time	Abortion	Assembly and local government elections
	Tourism, sport, culture and heritage	Long haul rates of Air Passenger Duty	Landfill tax	
	Fire and rescue services		Some social security elements	
	Water and flood defence		Consumer advocacy and advice	
			Scottish Parliament and local government elections	

Below is a high level summary of which powers are **reserved** in each part of the UK. Remember that the devolution settlements are unique and can sometimes be complex.

**Reserved**

<b>Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales</b>	<b>Also reserved in Northern Ireland</b>	<b>Also reserved in Scotland</b>	<b>Also reserved in Wales</b>
The constitution	Nuclear energy	Employment law	Employment law
Foreign affairs	Prohibited weapons	Cross-border rail	Cross-border rail
Defence and national security		Energy	Energy
Nationality, immigration and asylum		Social security*	Social security
Macroeconomic and fiscal matters		Genetics, surrogacy, medicines, embryology	Abortion, genetics, surrogacy, medicines, embryology
Financial services and pensions regulation		Equal opportunities*	Equal opportunities*
International trade and financial markets		The Civil Service	The Civil Service
International development			Postal services
Elections to UK and European Parliaments			Justice and policing
National Minimum Wage			Charity law
Competition			
Intellectual property		*except elements devolved by Scotland Act 2016	*except elements devolved by Wales Act 2017

Understanding the detail of the devolution settlements and how they function in practice is made all the more important since elements of one policy area can be reserved while others are devolved, or a policy area may be reserved, but aspects of how it is delivered are devolved. Moreover, **concurrent** powers are those which see a shared responsibility between the UK Government and a devolved administration, meaning they can both pass secondary legislation in a certain policy area.

## **Navigating the Devolution Landscape**

### **The One Civil Service and Northern Ireland Civil Service**

Officials working for the governments of the UK, Scotland and Wales are part of the same One Civil Service organisation and share the same culture and values as set out in the Civil Service Codes. The **Northern Ireland Civil Service** is a separate organisation but shares the same culture and values as the One Civil Service, as set out in their own Civil Service Code. These common values make it easier for civil servants from across administrations to work together, and regular contact will improve your understanding of devolution and how it affects your work area

## Working with the devolved administrations

The most immediate difference between the UK Government and the devolved administrations is size. Each devolved administration employs fewer civil servants than the UK Government. This often means that individual civil servants in the devolved administrations, especially in the policy-making space, will cover larger and more varied portfolios. It is important to bear this in mind when collaborating across administrations. Furthermore, the responsibilities of directorates in each administration will not necessarily correspond directly to similar directorates in the other administrations. Designated **intergovernmental relations teams** in each administration are the first point of contact for civil servants looking for points of contact or administration-specific information.

## The Sewel Convention and Legislative Consent Motions (LCMs)

The Sewel Convention applies when the UK Parliament legislates on a matter within the devolved competence of the Scottish Parliament, National Assembly for Wales or Northern Ireland Assembly. Under the terms of the Convention, the UK Parliament will “not normally” do so without the relevant devolved institution having passed a legislative consent motion. The elected members of devolved legislatures indicate whether they are collectively content for the UK Parliament to pass a law on devolved matters by voting either for, or against, an associated legislative consent motion.

## Working with the UK Government

Since the UK Government functions through separate departments, internal processes can take a long time. This applies particularly to the collective agreement process which stipulates that new legislation, policies and consultations must have approval from all members of Cabinet subcommittees, but also applies more generally to clearance, information sharing and agreement processes.

Each UK Government department has a **devolution coordinator**, often supported by larger **devolution teams**, who provide good advice on how devolution affects a UK Government department’s work, support intergovernmental collaboration and build devolution understanding internally. They are extremely useful sources of information and guidance both for UK Government and devolved administration civil servants.

Finally, the **Territorial Offices** are UK Government departments which are invaluable in helping the UK Government to understand the detail of the devolution settlements, and how to take forward policies with another administration. They are the **Office for the Secretary of State for Scotland**, **Office of the Secretary of State for Wales** and the **Northern Ireland Office**. They represent the UK Government in the devolved nations and the devolved nations in the UK Government. **The Office of the Advocate General for Scotland** provides legal advice to the UK Government in relation to Scotland and Scots Law.

*“Within the UK Government, the Secretaries of State for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are responsible for ensuring that the interests of those parts of the UK in non-devolved matters are properly represented and considered.” (Memorandum of Understanding – see page 12)*

## Structural differences between each administration

The structure of each of the four administrations differs substantially and has implications for how civil servants work together across administrations. Here are some of the key differences:

	UK Government	Scottish Government	Welsh Government	Northern Ireland Executive
<b>Head of Government</b>	Prime Minister	First Minister	First Minister	First Minister and deputy First Minister
<b>Cabinet</b>	PM, 22 Cabinet Ministers and 6 other Ministers who also attend	FM and 11 Cabinet Secretaries	FM, 6 Cabinet Secretaries and 2 other Ministers who also attend	FM, dFM and 8 other Ministers who also attend
<b>Permanent Secretaries</b>	30+ Permanent Secretaries	1 Permanent Secretary	1 Permanent Secretary	9 Permanent Secretaries
<b>Departments</b>	25 ministerial departments, 20 non-ministerial departments	6 Directors General, 40+ Directorates	Divided into 4 Groups	9 Departments
<b>No. Civil Servants</b>	c. 400,000	c. 17,000	c. 5,000	c. 23,500

## Serving multiple governments

It is important to remember that civil servants in each of the four governments of the UK will be working to different ministerial priorities. These can be aligned or substantially different, depending on the issues involved and the governments of the day. This political context can therefore add an additional layer of complexity to the devolution landscape but it also makes working with multiple administrations and understanding their priorities particularly interesting.

To achieve policy objectives and to work as effective governments providing high quality services to the people who need them, officials and politicians in each administration often need to work together. This intergovernmental working takes place on a range of issues, in a range of formats and to achieve a range of outcomes. There are a number of mutually agreed structures that are not legally binding but facilitate and guide intergovernmental **communication, collaboration and coordination**.

*“All four administrations are committed to the principle of good communication with each other, and especially where one administration’s work may have some bearing upon the responsibilities of another administration.” (Memorandum of Understanding)*

## Taking account of devolution in your day-to-day work

You need to be aware of how devolution affects the policies you work on or the public services you manage. First and foremost, it is vital to be aware of the **territorial extent** of your work, in other words in which parts of the UK it will apply. To understand this you will need to take into account legal jurisdiction, as well as whether a subject is devolved or reserved. For example, you may be working on a policy that has an effect in England only, England and Wales, across Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland) or UK-wide. Other territorial extents are possible.

Having clarified territorial extent, you will then need to understand implications for your policy on parts of the UK where the policy does not directly apply and whether communication or coordination with other administrations will be necessary going forward.



*“The administrations recognise the importance of co-operation across a range of areas.” (Memorandum of Understanding)*

## Policy making

**Communication, collaboration and coordination** are particularly important if you are designing new policy. If you are working on a policy-area that is devolved, you have a good opportunity to learn from different approaches taken in other parts of the UK and can share learning about common problems. The Devolution and You **policy toolkit** is an indispensable aide for policy professionals who come into contact with devolution as part of their work.

## Policy delivery

Even if the policy itself sits in a devolved or reserved area, its implementation may be carried out by the UK Government, devolved administrations or both. You may need to work with one or more of the other administrations of the UK to successfully implement your policy or deliver your service. Even if policies diverge, it may make sense to engage with the other governments of the UK for advice and support in their implementation.

*“The administrations will aim to provide each other with as full and open as possible access to scientific, technical and policy information including statistics and research .” (Memorandum of Understanding)*

# Working together

## Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

The MoU between the UK Government and the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland was first agreed in 2001 and most recently updated in October 2013. It sets out the principles which support relations between these administrations. The MoU puts emphasis on the principles of good **communication, consultation and cooperation**.

The MoU also has a number of Concordats between the UK Government and the devolved administrations. These recognise the interests of the latter in international and European Union relations (matters which remain the responsibility of UK Government), and set out working arrangements.

The UK Government and devolved administrations are currently undertaking a review of the intergovernmental relations, including this MoU, in light of the UK's exit from the EU.

## Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC)

The MoU makes provision for the JMC, a committee structure for intergovernmental relations. Its purpose is to enable Ministers from the UK Government and the devolved administrations to engage effectively with each other. The terms of reference are:

- to consider non-devolved matters which impact on devolved responsibilities, and devolved matters which impact on non-devolved responsibilities;
- where the UK Government and the devolved administrations agree, to consider devolved matters if it is beneficial to discuss their respective treatment in different parts of the UK;
- to keep intergovernmental arrangements under review;
- to consider disputes between the administrations.

The JMC meet in different formats. It currently meets in the following formats:

- **JMC(Plenary)** – chaired by the Prime Minister with the First Ministers of the devolved administrations, including the deputy First Minister of Ireland. It should meet at least annually.
- **JMC(Europe)** – chaired by the Minister of State at the Department for Exiting the EU. It meets quarterly ahead of the European Council to discuss ongoing EU business.
- **JMC(EU Negotiations)** – chaired by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. It meets at regular intervals to facilitate political engagement and collaboration between the UK Government and the devolved administrations on EU Exit.
- **Ministerial Forum (EU Negotiations)** – joint chaired by the Minister for the Constitution and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Department for Exiting the EU. This additional forum was established in 2018 to further discuss EU negotiation positions.
- **JMC(Officials)** – sees officials from the four administrations shadow the JMC and prepare for its meetings.

## British-Irish Council (BIC)

BIC was established as part of the multi-party agreement reached in Belfast on 10th April 1998. Its membership comprises representatives from the Irish Government; UK Government; Scottish Government; Northern Ireland Executive; Welsh Government; Isle of Man Government; Government of Jersey; and Government of Guernsey. The Council meets biannually and focuses on policy cooperation and collaboration in eleven different work sectors, from digital inclusion to transport. You can find out more about the Council at [www.britishirishcouncil.org](http://www.britishirishcouncil.org)



## Working together overseas

As set out in the Memorandum of Understanding, international relations remain the responsibility of the UK Government and the UK Parliament. However, the UK Government recognises that the devolved administrations will have an interest in international policy making in relation to devolved matters and particularly when the devolved administrations may need to implement agreements.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office therefore makes sure to brief devolved administration Ministers and officials when necessary and reflect their priorities and concerns overseas. The Department for International Development acts similarly and collaborates particularly with the Scottish Government on their own international development programme.

Trade represents a complex intersection of legislative competences since trade promotion is a concurrent matter, whereas trade policy is a reserved matter, though trade agreements cover areas which intersect with devolved policy-areas such as agriculture. There is an increasing amount of collaboration overseas as the devolved administrations set up Trade and Investment Hubs, often in UK Government posts, and joint Trade Missions encourage inward investment to all parts of the UK. The Department for International Trade (DIT) engages with companies across the UK and, either directly or via the appropriate devolved administration body, provides access to DIT led events and trade mission and support schemes

*“The UK Government will involve the devolved administrations as fully as possible in discussions about the formulation of the UK’s policy position on all EU and international issues which touch on devolved matters.” (Memorandum of Understanding)*

# Where to find out more

## Devolution and You

The Devolution and You programme began in 2015 and is designed to improve devolution capability across the One Civil Service.

## Learning

We provide a wide range of training for civil servants. There is an **online module**, available through CS Learning called **Devolution and Intergovernmental Working**. It is an ideal place to start if you are new to the civil service or to devolution roles. We also have a high-level devolution **factsheet** and **postcard overview of devolved and reserved powers**, as well as an in-depth **policy toolkit** for policy professionals. There is information on devolution on [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) including **Devolution Guidance Notes**, technical notes on topics such as ministerial accountability and handling correspondence.

## Interchange

There is also a cross-administration **Interchange** scheme which gives civil servants from the One Civil Service and Northern Ireland Civil Service the opportunity to shadow colleagues in other administrations, meet counterparts and share best practice. The main scheme takes place during three weeks each year: the UK Government, the Welsh Government and the Scottish Government all host a week each. Additionally, informal or specialist interchange schemes are being developed across the One Civil Service. If you are interested in applying to take part in one of these weeks please email one of the Interchange Managers:

UK Government - [ukginterchange@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:ukginterchange@cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

Scottish Government - [john.petrie@gov.scot](mailto:john.petrie@gov.scot)

Welsh Government: [sian.bryant@gov.wales](mailto:sian.bryant@gov.wales)

Northern Ireland Civil Service: [paul.mcveigh@finance-ni.gov.uk](mailto:paul.mcveigh@finance-ni.gov.uk)

## Links

**Devolution, GOV.UK** <https://www.gov.uk/topic/government/devolution>

## Devolution: Guidance for all Civil Servants

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/devolution-guidance-for-civil-servants/devolution-guidance-for-civil-servants>

**Scotland Act 2016** - legislation setting out amendments to the Scotland Act.

[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/11/pdfs/ukpga\\_20160011\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/11/pdfs/ukpga_20160011_en.pdf)

**Wales Act 2017** - legislation setting out amendments to the Government of Wales Act 2006. [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/4/pdfs/ukpga\\_20170004\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/4/pdfs/ukpga_20170004_en.pdf)

**Northern Ireland Act 1998** – legislation which built on the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement of 1998. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/47/contents>

## Devolution Memorandum of Understanding and Supplementary Agreement, September 2012

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/devolution-memorandum-of-understanding-and-supplementary-agreement>

# Points of contact

## Scottish Government

Constitution and UK Relations Division  
Alison Morris –  
[alison.morris@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:alison.morris@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

## Welsh Government

Constitutional Affairs and Inter-Governmental Relations  
Owen Davies –  
[owen.davies003@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:owen.davies003@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

## Northern Ireland Executive

The Executive Office  
Conor McParland -  
[Conor.McParland@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Conor.McParland@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk)

## UK Government

Northern Ireland Office  
Karen McNeill - [karen.mcneill@nio.gov.uk](mailto:karen.mcneill@nio.gov.uk)

UK Governance Group  
Constitution Group, Cabinet Office  
[devolution@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:devolution@cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland  
[somps@scotlandoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:somps@scotlandoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

Office of the Secretary of State for Wales  
Jeff Lloyd - [jeff.lloyd@walesoffice.gov.uk](mailto:jeff.lloyd@walesoffice.gov.uk)

Office of the Advocate General for Scotland  
[enquiries@advocategeneral.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@advocategeneral.gsi.gov.uk)

## UK Government Departmental Devolution Coordinators

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	Jeremy Martin	<a href="mailto:jeremy.martin@beis.gov.uk">jeremy.martin@beis.gov.uk</a>
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	Siobhan Smyth	<a href="mailto:siobhan.smyth@communities.gsi.gov.uk">siobhan.smyth@communities.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Department For International Development	Steven Roddie	<a href="mailto:s-roddie@dfid.gsx.gov.uk">s-roddie@dfid.gsx.gov.uk</a>
Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs	Ruth Cox	<a href="mailto:ruth.cox@defra.gsi.gov.uk">ruth.cox@defra.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Department for Exiting the European Union	Siân Parkinson	<a href="mailto:sian.parkinson@dexeu.gov.uk">sian.parkinson@dexeu.gov.uk</a>
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport		<a href="mailto:devolution@culture.gov.uk">devolution@culture.gov.uk</a>
Department for Transport	Andy Robinson	<a href="mailto:andy.robinson@dft.gsi.gov.uk">andy.robinson@dft.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Department of Health and Social Care	Alison Raw	<a href="mailto:alison.raw@dh.gsi.gov.uk">alison.raw@dh.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Department for Work & Pensions	Richard Poureshagh	<a href="mailto:richard.poureshagh@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">richard.poureshagh@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Department for Education	Richard Hoy	<a href="mailto:Richard.HOY@education.gov.uk">Richard.HOY@education.gov.uk</a>
Foreign and Commonwealth Office		<a href="mailto:devolution.unit@fco.gsi.gov.uk">devolution.unit@fco.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs	Paul Stansfield	<a href="mailto:paul.stansfield@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk">paul.stansfield@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Her Majesty's Treasury	Claire Brook	<a href="mailto:claire.brook@hmtreasury.gsi.gov.uk">claire.brook@hmtreasury.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Home Office	Grant Oliver	<a href="mailto:grant.oliver@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk">grant.oliver@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Ministry of Defence	Carolyn Kemp	<a href="mailto:DSP-Devolution-AH2@mod.uk">DSP-Devolution-AH2@mod.uk</a>
Ministry of Justice	Geraint Davies	<a href="mailto:geraint.davies@justice.gsi.gov.uk">geraint.davies@justice.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Attorney General's Office	Francesca Debenham	<a href="mailto:francesca.debenham@attorneygeneral.gsi.gov.uk">francesca.debenham@attorneygeneral.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Department for International Trade	Saffy Hussain	<a href="mailto:Saffy.Hussain@trade.gov.uk">Saffy.Hussain@trade.gov.uk</a>
Cabinet Office	UK Devolution Strategy	<a href="mailto:devolution@cabinetoffice.gov.uk">devolution@cabinetoffice.gov.uk</a>

# Glossary and Acronym Guide

**Concordats:** agreements for joint working arrangements between UK Government departments and the devolved administrations.

**Devolved administrations:** collective term for the executive bodies in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales: the Northern Ireland Executive, the Scottish Government and the Welsh Government.

**Devolution Guidance Notes:** written documents, providing guidance to civil servants on devolution matters.

**Devolved legislatures:** collective term for the law-making bodies in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland: National Assembly for Wales (Senedd), the Northern Ireland Assembly (Stormont) and the Scottish Parliament (Holyrood).

**Devolution settlements:** the statutory agreements between the UK Parliament and each devolved legislature, which set out how powers and responsibilities are distributed, as well as documents such as concordats that provide a guide for intergovernmental relations.

**Great Britain:** the island consisting of England, Scotland, and Wales.

**Memorandum of Understanding (MoU):** agreed in 1999 and last updated in October 2013, it sets out the principles which support relations between the UK Government and the devolved administrations.

**Legislative competence:** legal powers of each devolved legislature to make legislation. A devolved legislature can only pass legislation where it has the legislative competence to do so.

**Legislative Consent Motion (LCM):** the means by which a devolved legislature indicates that it is content for the UK Parliament to pass a law on a devolved matter. They arise out of the Sewel Convention's assertion that the UK Parliament will not normally legislate on a devolved matter without the consent of the relevant devolved legislature.

**'Transferred' powers model:** a category of devolution settlement which specifies "excepted matters" which the devolved legislature cannot legislate on, "reserved matters" which it can with the consent of the relevant Secretary of State and leaves unspecified all "transferred matters" that it can legislate on freely.

**Territorial Offices (TOs):** part of the UK Government, they represent the views of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in the UK Government and the UK Government in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. They are the Northern Ireland Office, the Office of the Advocate General for Scotland, the Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland and the Office of the Secretary of State for Wales.

**United Kingdom:** the official name of the sovereign state comprising England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

## Devolution

AM - Assembly Member (Wales)  
BIC - British-Irish Council  
CDs - Crown Dependencies  
CG - Constitution Group (part of CO)  
DA – Devolved administration  
dFM - deputy First Minister (Northern Ireland)  
FM - First Minister  
JMC - Joint Ministerial Committee (P - Plenary, EN - EU Negotiations, O - Officials, E - Europe)  
LCM - Legislative Consent Motion  
MLA - Member of the Legislative Assembly (Northern Ireland)  
MOU - Memorandum of Understanding  
MSP - Member of Scottish Parliament  
NICS - Northern Ireland Civil Service  
NIE - Northern Ireland Executive  
NSMC - North-South Ministerial Council (between Northern Ireland and Ireland)  
OTs - Overseas Territories  
TOs - Territorial Offices  
SG - Scottish Government  
UKGG - UK Governance Group (CG, SO, WO and OAG but not NIO)  
WG - Welsh Government

## UK Government Departments

BEIS - Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy  
CO - Cabinet Office  
DCMS - Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport  
DfE – Department for Education  
Defra - Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
DExEU - Department for Exiting the EU  
DfID - Department for International Development  
DIT - Department for International Trade  
DfT – Department for Transport  
DHSC – Department of Health and Social Care  
DWP – Department for Work and Pensions  
FCO - Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
HMRC – Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs  
HMT – Her Majesty's Treasury  
HO - Home Office  
MHCLG - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government  
MoJ - Ministry of Justice  
MoD - Ministry of Defence  
NIO - Northern Ireland Office  
OAG - Office of the Advocate General  
OGDs - Other Government departments

# Devolution Practitioner Profile

Director: Office for the Secretary of State for Scotland

Gillian McGregor



Scotland Office

## What does your day-to-day work involve?

I divide my working week between our two offices in Edinburgh and London. Most days involve meetings on corporate issues such as finance, staffing and business planning. When in London I can expect to spend a fair bit of time with Ministers and colleagues in other departments. EU Exit is our main focus and how that impacts on Scotland, but we have other important work to deliver, for example on City Deals. I spend as much time as I can engaging with stakeholders in Scotland and colleagues in the Scottish Government. No two days are the same!

## What role do devolution and intergovernmental relations play in your day-to-day work?

These are absolutely central to my day to day work. Our Department has an absolute commitment to ensuring that the devolution settlement is respected across Whitehall and we have an important role to play in ensuring that Whitehall departments engage with the Scottish Government on policies and legislation, including as we navigate the complexities of EU Exit. It's vitally important that we maintain strong intergovernmental relationships and really understand the devolved dimensions of UK Government policy even when (or perhaps especially when) it is not immediately obvious.

## Who do you work with, and on what issues?

Scottish Government on EU Exit issues and City Deals (where we have a joint Delivery Board). Our Office is part of the wider UK Governance Group and these relationships (with Constitution Group, Office of the Secretary of State for Wales, the Northern Ireland Office and the Office of the Advocate General) are very close. In addition I have networks across most of the major UK Government departments including Number 10, Cabinet Office, DExEU, BEIS, Defra, DIT and many others! I also work closely with stakeholders in Scotland including business, local authorities and our network of 27,000 UK Government civil servants who live and work in Scotland.

## Top tips for effective intergovernmental working:

1. Spend time cultivating relationships – when possible, face-to-face meetings build mutual trust.
2. Don't just wait for a crisis to get in touch – regular communication, even when there is nothing particular to say, pays dividends.
3. Concentrate on the outcome you want to achieve – there is always common ground between us despite the differences politically.

# Devolution Practitioner Profile

Policy Adviser, Constitutional Affairs:  
Welsh Government

Owen Davies



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## What does your day-to-day work involve?

I lead a team with responsibilities in two main areas – constitutional matters and intergovernmental relations. Constitutional matters include advising on the devolution settlement and on broader constitutional matters, including the constitutional implications of EU exit, and also overseeing the Welsh Government’s role in legislative consent for parliamentary Bills. Intergovernmental relations includes leading on the overall Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC) structures, with specific responsibility for JMC (Plenary) and JMC (Officials), leading on matters relating to the British-Irish Council, and providing day to day advice on intergovernmental matters.

## What role do devolution and intergovernmental relations play in your day-to-day work?

Devolution and intergovernmental relations are the core of the team’s day to day work, as set out above.

## Who do you work with, and on what issues?

Our main points of contact in UK Government are the Cabinet Office and the Office of the Secretary of State for Wales. The Cabinet Office is our main contact on intergovernmental matters, particularly the JMC, the Office of the Secretary of State for Wales is our contact on UK primary legislation matters, and we deal with both Cabinet Office and Office of the Secretary of State for Wales on broader constitutional issues. We also work very closely on intergovernmental relations with the Scottish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive: for example the four administrations come together to form a joint virtual Secretariat for the Joint Ministerial Committee.

## Top tips for effective intergovernmental working:

1. Relationships – if you are developing a policy or piece of legislation which may impact on or be of interest to another administration, take the time to identify the relevant officials and make contact with them.
2. Communication – having identified the relevant counterparts in other administrations, keep them informed about what you are doing, the progress you are making, and what if anything you might need from them. If you do need input from another administration, make sure you build in enough time for meaningful engagement.
3. Trust – we all work for different governments of different political colours and that can make it difficult to share information, but that doesn’t have to prevent things being shared confidentially, and doing so will usually be of mutual benefit.

# Devolution Practitioner Profile

Policy Adviser, Devolution Strategy  
Advice and Legislation Team:  
Department for Work and Pensions  
Una Wiatrek



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

## What does your day-to-day work involve?

I work in the Strategy, Advice and Legislation Team, DWP's centre of expertise on devolution matters providing guidance and handling advice to ministerial Private Offices, policy, programme and operational teams. Although I'm the Scotland lead, I also provide support advice on devolution matters for Northern Ireland and Wales when required. On a normal day I can be doing any of the following: reviewing Scottish Government legislation and policies, identifying impacts on DWP and ensuring early bilateral engagement happens, keeping an oversight of the Scottish Parliament's business agenda including its Committees with Social Security interests or raising awareness of and devolution capability within DWP through workshops, presentations and bulletins.

## What role do devolution and intergovernmental relations play in your day-to-day work?

Devolution and intergovernmental relations are weaved seamlessly into the job. Through regular liaison with the Scotland Office, I ensure they are kept abreast of the key issues facing DWP and where required seek their advice and input. Well established bilateral contacts within the Scottish Government means I can put DWP officials in touch with the right people. Acts of the Scottish Parliament often require consequential amendments, by means of a Section 104 order, to legislation reserved to the UK Government. In DWP the amendments can cut across different policy areas. In order to streamline the process, I lead on and co-ordinate all cross cutting orders, working closely with the Scotland Office and Scottish Government throughout the process.

## Who do you work with, and on what issues?

Recently I've been working with my contacts in the Scottish Government reviewing our joint Concordat. A really useful exercise to take stock of how intergovernmental working has been going and to refresh the agreement for the future. I also co-ordinate and chair cross-cutting subject meetings with policy teams in DWP and the Scottish Government to explore the impacts of Scottish Government's policy proposals on DWP, recent matters include gender recognition, further education funding and children's policy.

## Top tips for effective intergovernmental working:

1. Think inter-governmentally from the outset, early engagement pays dividends .
2. Build and maintain positive bilateral contacts.
3. If in doubt ask, never assume there won't be a intergovernmental impact when developing policy.

