



HMIPS
HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland
INSPECTING AND MONITORING

Press Release

HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland publishes full inspection report on Court Custody Provision at The Supreme Court of Scotland

Date of publication: 14 April 2026

HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland (HMIPS) has today published its inspection report on the Court Custody Unit (CCU) at The Supreme Court of Scotland, following an announced inspection on 23 October 2025. The inspection forms part of HMIPS's ongoing programme of scrutiny of court custody arrangements across Scotland, contributing to the UK's responsibilities under the UN Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT).

The Supreme Court, located within Parliament House in Edinburgh, encompasses the Court of Session and the High Court of Justiciary, the highest civil and criminal courts in Scotland.

Inspectors found the CCU to be a **clean, well-maintained and well-managed facility**, with **knowledgeable and motivated staff** who demonstrated strong awareness of their responsibilities

The inspection noted:

- **No recommendations, advisories or areas of good practice were issued**, reflecting a high standard of performance across all assessable areas.
- The CCU consisted of **three operational cells** and **one interview room**, all found to be in excellent condition.
- Due to the building's historic structure, **the CCU lacked accessible facilities** and could not safely accommodate disabled individuals, who were instead held in appropriate witness rooms within the main court building.
- Staff appropriately separated individuals based on age, prison origin and gender, and managed risk through established assessment procedures.
- Inspectors reiterated an ongoing national concern: GEOAmeys practice of routinely handcuffing custodies without clear recorded rationale on the Personal Escort Record. HMIPS is addressing this issue in national discussions with the service provider.

Quote from HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland

"The Court Custody Unit at the Supreme Courts of Scotland provides a safe, respectful and well-run environment for those held in custody. Staff showed clear commitment to human rights-based practice, and the facility was maintained to a high standard. While we will continue to address national issues such as the

recording of Handcuff Risk Assessments, the performance of this CCU is commendable.”

Next Steps

The findings from the inspection will inform ongoing national scrutiny of court custody provision across Scotland, and HMIPS will continue to work with partner agencies to support continuous improvement.

The full report is available on the HMIPS website:

www.prisonsinspectoratescotland.gov.uk

Notes for editors

- HMIPS is an independent scrutiny body with a statutory duty to inspect and monitor the treatment and conditions of people in Scotland’s prisons and court custody units.
- For further information please contact Kerry Love at Kerry.Love@gov.scot or on 07939 980452.

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