Obituary: Remembering Lord Mackay

Briefings

August 2026



22 July 2026

We were saddened to learn of the death of Lord Mackay of Clashfern in July at the age of 99.

Lord Mackay was a distinguished advocate, serving, among other roles, as standing junior counsel to the Inland Revenue in Scotland in the 1960s. He went on to serve as Lord Advocate and Lord Chancellor in the governments of Margaret Thatcher and John Major.

CIOT's links with Lord Mackay date back more than four decades. He was made an Honorary Fellow in 1981, one of the earliest recipients of the Institute's highest honorary recognition. Later, as Lord Chancellor, he formally presented CIOT with its Royal Charter at Lincoln's Inn Hall in December 1994.

Lord Mackay continued to attend CIOT events into his eighties and nineties, including the 2020 President's Luncheon, where he saw his former cabinet colleague Kenneth Clarke (Lord Clarke of Nottingham) accept an Honorary Fellowship from the Institute.