

Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 — Criminalising Coercive Control as a Course of Behaviour

Gender Equality · Good practice · United Kingdom

Quality score: 96/100

Evidence strength: Observational / pre–post

Summary

Scotland's 2018 Act created the UK's first "course of behaviour" offence, criminalising coercive control as domestic abuse. Since April 2019: 93% of charges proceeded to court, conviction rates of 84–91%, and child-aggravation convictions doubled year-on-year.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Transferability / replicability	2/3
Impact on gender equality	1/1
Effectiveness	1/1
Efficiency	1/1
Evaluated outcomes	1/1
Sustainability	1/1
Achievement / evidence	1/1
Gender-mainstreaming embedding	1/1
Curator validation	1/1

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

[C-NAPSE web research](#) — accessed 2026-06-21

[Scottish Government / Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service \(COPFS\)](#) — accessed 2026-06-21

[Scottish Government: Domestic Abuse \(Scotland\) Act 2018 — Final Reporting Requirement](#) — accessed 2026-06-21

[Legislation.gov.uk: Domestic Abuse \(Scotland\) Act 2018 \(primary text\)](#) — accessed 2026-06-21

[Cairns \(2020\): The Moorov doctrine and coercive control — Sage Journals / International Journal of Evidence & Proof](#) — accessed 2026-06-21

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