

Assistant / Associate Solicitor

REQ231335

As part of the University's ongoing commitment to redeployment, please note that this vacancy may be withdrawn at any stage of the recruitment process if a suitable redeployee is identified.

Legal Services, Vice-Chancellors Office

It is an exciting time to join Loughborough University. Amongst many accolades, Loughborough University is ranked 7th in the Complete University Guide, as well as the top ranked university in the Midlands and top ten for student satisfaction. Loughborough was named best university in the world for sports-related subjects in the QS World University Rankings by Subject. From both our 440-acre campus in the heart of Leicestershire and our postgraduate London campus on Queen Elizabeth Park, the University is enjoying a time of unprecedented achievement. Our distinctive approach to recruiting, retaining and developing the very best people, in a time of change and challenge within the sector, is helping to create the right team to support us to achieve even more.

Loughborough University is a member of the Race Equality Charter which aims to improve the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students. The University is a Disability Confident Employer, a Government initiative that sets out our commitment to challenge attitudes to and increase understanding of disability, as well as our commitment to removing any barriers that disabled people and people with long-term health conditions might face in the workplace. We are a Stonewall Diversity Champion – affirming our commitment to providing a supportive and inclusive environment for the LGBT+ community.

Loughborough University's ambition is to maintain its status as a world leading Higher Education institution across teaching, research and innovation activities, but that doesn't mean standing still. To support this ambition, the University's Legal Services team provides high quality, pragmatic and focussed commercial legal support.

As part of the Vice-Chancellor's Office, the Legal Services team is a key part of the University's professional support to research and innovation activities. The Legal Services team works closely with our academics and key industrial partners contributing to significant corporate projects, supporting Loughborough's sporting activities and working with our Facilities Management and Property Office colleagues across both campuses. The successful candidate will be in a position to help build the Legal Services team's reputation as a trusted and valued part of the University.

The Legal Services team is proud to have been Highly Commended in the Law Society Excellence in Law Awards 2021, a finalist in the LexisNexis Legal Awards 2022 and shortlisted for a Vice Chancellor's Award 2023.

Job Description

Job Grade: MA6 Management and Specialist Grade

Job Purpose

To provide timely, outcomes focussed and commercially astute contracts, intellectual property, property and commercial legal advice to support the breadth of activity undertaken at the University, with a particular focus on those relationships with external organisations in support of our research, innovation and teaching activities.

Working across all of Legal Services, the postholder will help secure the effective and efficient delivery of legal support to the University. They will provide concise legal advice, draft legal documents to a high standard,

communicate clearly in verbal and written mediums with everyone the team engages with and negotiate confidently and creatively on behalf of the University.

Appointment as an Assistant or Associate Solicitor is subject to meeting the relevant skills and experience set out below and ability to meet the Job Duties, at the discretion of the recruiting manager.

Job Duties

Assistant Solicitor (newly qualified) (MA6-bottom of scale)	Associate Solicitor (MA6-mid-point of scale)
Helping meet the University's known legal needs	
Managing a mixed case load of agreements, legal advice and relevant tasks, with little supervision. Cases are likely to include drafting and negotiating framework agreements, consultancy agreements, collaboration agreements and other contracts and corporate transactions.	Managing a mixed case load of more complex agreements, legal advice and relevant tasks, with minimal supervision. In addition to that at Assistant Solicitor level, advising on agreements of strategic importance and with greater complexity, including where matters are in the early stages of being contentious.
Communicating in a clear, timely and professional manner with all. Be able to select the most effective medium of communication for the particular interaction.	Communicating in a clear, timely and professional manner with all, being able to adapt communication style to different audiences at different times, to secure effective interactions.
Working with senior members of the team on large or complex cases, including corporate transactions.	Working with senior members of the team on large or complex projects, with responsibility for delivery of work streams within those projects.
Developing and maintaining productive professional relationships with colleagues across the University, in accordance with team guidelines and policies and representing Legal Services in the best possible light.	Acting as an ambassador for the service, giving colleagues confidence in the ability and professionalism of the postholder and the team.
Focussing on the best outcome for the University, communicating the University's position clearly and seeking to find a mutually agreeable solution when negotiating with external organisations.	Negotiating confidently and clearly and applying creative problem-solving skills to complex matters to achieve the best outcome for the University, while maintaining a professional and productive relationship with external organisations.
Ensuring own resources are applied in a proportionate way to any particular task, to ensure the best value can be derived from the postholder's time.	Actively considering whether involvement in matters is adding value and adopting different strategies with different internal and external stakeholders to ensure the best use of team resources.
Helping to identify and manage unmet legal need	
Engaging colleagues from other professional services at the earliest practical point to ensure all relevant issues in a matter are considered. Working constructively with them to find the best way forward for the University.	Working in partnership with other professional services and deploying project management skills, to secure the best possible outcomes for the University in complex matters and to ensure learning is shared to improve processes and user experience.
Maintaining an awareness of changes to the legal and Higher Education landscape which may impact on the work of the team. Raising issues with the team for discussion.	Identifying new or changes to existing legislation or regulatory requirements and proposing solutions for addressing those, including working with other Professional Services who may be stakeholders in such work.
Identifying areas where improvements to existing processes could generate efficiencies for the Legal Services team.	Identifying areas where improvements to existing processes could generate efficiencies for the Legal Services team or the University generally.
Identifying any early signs of a matter becoming contentious and raising that with the team. Handling simple contentious matters through early attempts to resolve disputes. Promptly raising complaints with line manager.	Seeking to resolve any contentious issues as early as possible, drawing on the support of internal and external experts. Handling straightforward contentious correspondence through pre-litigation stages. Promptly raising complaints with line manager.
Using problem solving skills to identify the most effective and pragmatic solution to legal challenges in projects and negotiations.	Identifying creative solutions to issues as they arise in case work, leveraging the resources available to the team and the University to secure the best outcome.

Helping to manage the University's legal risk environment	
Attending meetings, as a legal advisor, to provide support and advice on an ad-hoc basis; agreeing clear action plans and timescales and ensuring such are captured promptly.	Attending key meetings, as a legal expert, to provide support and advice on an ad-hoc basis; agreeing clear action plans and timescales, documenting such accordingly and liaising with colleagues to ensure follow up.
Managing own workload in accordance with office procedures and ensuring all files maintained regularly and matters are regularly reviewed. Prioritising work according to business need. Delegating and appropriately supervising work where appropriate.	Managing own workload in accordance with office procedures and ensuring all files maintained regularly and matters are regularly reviewed. Prioritising work according to business need. Delegating and appropriately supervising work where appropriate.
Escalating emerging risks or legal issues with case work within the Legal Services team at an early stage to secure early resolution or mitigation. Promptly seeking guidance where needed.	Identifying risks within case load and proposing to line manager solutions or action plan to mitigate the risks, including escalation within Legal Services or to senior managers.
Providing clear summaries of current position on case work to senior members of the team and contributing to any reports on the team's work.	Providing clear summaries of current position on case work to senior members of the team and contributing to any reports on the team's work.
Considering the practical, financial, reputational and legal issues arising in case work and identify mitigations to the risks. Escalate where issues are not mitigated or managed down.	Actively supporting the management of the practical, financial and reputational issues, in addition to the legal and compliance issues, that arise in case work. Identify and deploy appropriate mitigations, escalating where appropriate.
Ensuring the University's obligations to its staff, students and external organisations are reflected in case work and that advice is provided within the wider context of the University.	Considering the University's strategic objectives when advising on matters which could have an impact beyond the specific case. Striving to secure consistency in approach and that appropriate protections are secured in the University's best interests.
Identifying issues of non-compliance with legal or institutional policies, procedures or requirements and escalating within the team.	Ensuring compliance with legal and institutional policies where supporting a project. Discreetly discussing concerns with relevant Heads of Professional Services for projects in their areas.
Taking responsibility for key tasks within departmental project work and projects which cross professional services.	Representing Legal Services in cross departmental project work and leading appropriate projects within the team.
Building an effective relationship with external lawyers, ensuring the effective use of their resource in supporting the in-house team and the University more broadly.	Working in partnership with external lawyers to leverage the relationship to generate the best value for the University. Using external instructions as an opportunity to learn and develop.
Sharing our knowledge with colleagues	
Designing and delivering training courses and self-help materials to support non-legal colleagues to self-serve on common legal issues.	Lead the design and delivery of training courses and self-help resources to support non-legal colleagues to understand and manage complex legal issues in their roles.
Ensuring self-help resources provided by the Legal Services team are current and arrange for updating as appropriate.	Pro-actively identifying areas of work where Legal Services could equip colleagues to self-serve to secure the effective use of team resources.
Working with non-legal colleagues to identify issues which Legal Services can support on and take forward. Signposting to or engaging with (as appropriate) colleagues from other professional services where they should be part of the solution.	Using mentoring and coaching techniques to support legal and non-legal colleagues to identify the solution to their queries where possible or in the alternative to use instructing Legal Services as a learning experience.
Learning and Development	
Maintaining continuing competence in accordance with Solicitor's Regulation Authority requirements. Taking ownership for own development and working with line manager to identify training and development needs.	Maintaining continuing competence in accordance with the Solicitor's Regulation Authority requirements. Taking ownership for own development and identifying training and development needs to support development into a more senior role.
Open and manage case files in accordance with office procedures and comply with University and team policies.	
Attend any mandatory training as part of induction and on an ongoing basis as may be required.	
Undertake any other duties of a similar nature that may be assigned from time-to-time, to ensure the continuity of an effective legal service as provided by the Legal Services team.	

Our Values

All members of Legal Services must demonstrate alignment with the team's values through appropriate professional behaviours and conduct. Our shared values are:

- We act in the University's best interests – we are focussed on securing the right outcome for the University
- We are open, honest and transparent – we will be clear with others why we are advising a particular course of action and why we cannot take other courses of action
- We are clear, collegiate and supportive – we will foster good working relationships with colleagues, support the University's objectives, contribute to the development needs of others and support colleagues to understand sometimes complex legal issues
- We conduct ourselves with integrity – we will be consistent in our dealings with colleagues, embrace our position as legal experts without pride or arrogance. We recognise we represent not only the University, but the Legal profession as a whole.
- We believe in the value of inclusivity – we believe everyone has a right to live free of discrimination and abuse. We understand our responsibilities as colleagues in the University's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.
- We believe in supporting people to achieve their potential – we rigorously recruit and focus on the development of our team members, to help them be the best they can be. We also support other colleagues to learn and develop through the resources we provide.

Points to Note

The purpose of this job description is to indicate the general level of duties and responsibility of the post. The detailed duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character or level of responsibility entailed.

The university is committed to allowing its employees to work dynamically with a combination of working on campus and remotely, where possible. This role has been identified as a role that could work dynamically and if successful your manager will discuss these informal arrangements with you. Legal Services attends on campus as required by business need, but it is expected that the post holder will spend more time working in person with colleagues at the beginning of their apprenticeship programme, than as they progress.

Special Conditions

All staff have a statutory responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves, others and the environment and to prevent harm by their acts or omissions. All staff are therefore required to adhere to the University's Health, Safety and Environmental Policy & Procedures.

All staff should hold a duty and commitment to observing the University's Equity & Diversity policy and procedures at all times. Duties must be carried out in accordance with relevant Equity & Diversity legislation and University policies/procedures.

Successful completion of probation will be dependent on attendance at the University's mandatory courses which include Respecting Diversity and, where appropriate, Recruitment and Selection.

Organisational Responsibility

Reports to the Senior Contracts and IP Advisor.

Person Specification

Your application will be reviewed against the essential and desirable criteria listed below. Applicants are strongly advised to explicitly state and evidence how they meet each of the essential (and desirable) criteria in their application. Stages of assessment are as follows:

- 1 – Application
- 2 – Test / Presentation (incorporated in the interview stage)
- 3 – Interview

Essential Criteria

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Experience of contracts negotiation and drafting	1, 2, 3
	Ability to provide practical, pragmatic and outcomes focussed legal advice	1, 2, 3
Skills and Abilities	Evidence of working under pressure, with clear experience of self-motivation and workload prioritisation	1, 2, 3
	Strong communication skills to deal effectively with a variety of stakeholders. The ability to constructively challenge colleagues, present and disseminate legal information effectively to non-legal staff and to present both verbal and written information to members of staff clearly and effectively	1, 2, 3
	Excellent analytical and problem-solving skills and the ability to pro-actively respond to issues as they arise.	2, 3
Training	Willingness to undertake training as appropriate	1, 3
Qualifications	Qualified Solicitor holding current practising certificate	1
Other	Willingness to travel occasionally where appropriate	1

Desirable Criteria

Experience	Post qualification experience of at least c.3 years, in a relevant discipline	1, 3
	Several years specific knowledge and experience of advising on any of the following: contracts, intellectual property, company, commercial property (including landlord and tenant) or commercial law	1, 3
	Experience of working within a large and complex organisation would be advantageous	1, 2, 3
Skills and Abilities	Advanced communication skills to deal effectively with a variety of potential stakeholders. A willingness to constructively challenge colleagues and managers, to present and disseminate legal information effectively to non-legal staff and to present both verbal and written information clearly and effectively to senior members of staff	1, 2, 3
	Demonstrable focus on own development, beyond technical legal knowledge. Self-awareness as to strengths and weaknesses in professional skills and a willingness to improve.	1, 3

Conditions of Service

The position is full time and open ended. Requests for job share and part time working may be considered in exceptional circumstances. Salary will be on Management and Specialist Grade MA6 (£33,966 to £44,263, plus a Market Supplement of £7,200 per annum, reviewed annually). Starting salary to be confirmed on offer of appointment. The appointment will be subject to the University's normal Terms and Conditions of Employment for Academic and Related staff/Operational and Administrative staff, details of which can be found [here](#).

The University is committed to enabling staff to maintain a healthy work-home balance and has a number of family-friendly policies which can be found [here](#).

The University offers a wide range of employee benefits which can be found [here](#).

We also offer an on-campus nursery with subsidised places, subsidised places at local holiday clubs and a childcare voucher scheme (further details are available at: <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/benefits/family/>)

In addition, the University is supportive, wherever possible, of flexible working arrangements.

We also strive to create a culture that supports equality and celebrates diversity throughout the campus. The University holds a Bronze Athena SWAN award which recognises the importance of support for women at all stages of their academic career. For further information on Athena SWAN see:

<http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/athena-swan/>