

LEGAL OFFICER
LEGAL SERVICES UNIT
REF: ORD/37

JOB DESCRIPTION

Grade: 3

Hours: 35 per week

Location: 130 Euston Road, London, NW1 2AY

Reports to: Head of Legal Services

Overall Summary

- To provide strategic legal services to the union and its members under the direction of the Head of Legal Services.
- To maintain confidentiality in relation to all aspects of the post.

Key Tasks and Responsibilities

Specialist/Technical

- To provide legal advice at all levels of the Union.
- To conduct multiple litigation of strategic importance to the Union.
- To manage defined areas of the Unit's work in conjunction with the Head of Legal Services.
- To prepare regular written briefings on issues of employment law.
- To assist the Head of Legal Services with the day to day running of the Unit's legal and other work.

Financial

- To conduct litigation within the Unit's financial constraints.
- To negotiate fees and disbursements with Counsel and other experts in connection with cases being conducted.

Administrative

- To assist with operation of the Unit's administrative procedures.
- To requisition cheques for settlement of expenditure on cases and ensuring fee notes and invoices are correct.

Communications/Co-ordination (Internal)

- To communicate with colleagues in Legal Services, other head office sections and units, service group officers, regional officers and members.

Communications/Co-ordination (External)

- To communicate with Counsel, witnesses, press and media, outside firms of solicitors.

Development/Strategic

- To develop awareness of legal issues with significance for the union and its members. Promotion of these issues and cases in internal meetings and in contact with head office sections and units, regions and service groups.
- To develop trade union legal services.

General/Other

- Any other duties relevant to the overall responsibilities of the post.

Terms and Conditions

- UNISON terms and conditions will apply in respect of this appointment.

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PERSON SPECIFICATION

UNISON is an equal opportunities employer, committed to providing equal opportunities regardless of race, marital status, gender, sexuality, disablement or age. This Person Specification is designed to help members of Interviewing Panels judge the qualities of the interviewees in a systematic and consistent way and in accordance with UNISON's equal opportunities policy. It is given to all job applicants for information.

Assessment code

A – Application form

PI – Panel interview

Heading	Selection criteria	Assessment
1. Managerial	1.1. Ability to manage casework papers and files.	A & PI
	1.2. Ability to manage defined areas of the Unit's work in conjunction with the Head of Legal Services.	A & PI
2. Special / Technical	2.1 Qualification as solicitor essential.	A & PI
	2.2 Post qualification experience of practice as a solicitor of at least five years in employment law essential.	A & PI
	2.3 Demonstrate intellectual capacity to deal with cutting edge areas of employment law for example in the fields of equal pay, TUPE, discrimination and an aptitude for litigation.	A & PI
	2.4 IT literacy.	A & PI
3. Finance	3.1 Awareness of need to work within a given budget.	A & PI

	3.2 Ability to analyse and check fee notes and invoices and negotiate acceptable rates of charge.	A & PI
4. Administrative	4.1 Ability to control casework papers and files in connection with casework.	A & PI
	4.2 Ability to use correct forms and cost codes for requisitioning of cheques for payment.	A & PI
5. Communications/ Co-ordination	5.1 Ability to communicate effectively with members and colleagues both orally and in writing on complex employment law issues.	A & PI
	5.2 Ability to discuss issues of importance and to work with the unit as part of a team.	A & PI
	5.3 Ability to speak in public on legal matters to members and officers.	A & PI
	5.4 Ability to communicate effectively with distressed members.	A & PI
	5.5 Ability to advise non-legal colleagues on legal aspects relevant to their work and to appreciate the climate within which they operate.	A & PI
6. Development / Strategic	6.1 Ability to develop awareness of legal issues of strategic importance to the union and its members and to advise on appropriate methods of promoting these.	A & PI

	<p>6.2 Ability to contribute to the effective development of the Legal Services Unit.</p> <p>6.3 Ability to develop UNISON policy on legal issues and draft policy materials.</p>	<p>A & PI</p> <p>A & PI</p>
7. Other	<p>7.1 Empathy with trade unions generally and with UNISON's aims and values in particular.</p> <p>7.2 Ability to prioritise conflicting pressures and to operate in a flexible and positive manner.</p> <p>7.3 Ability to observe strict confidentiality.</p>	<p>A & PI</p> <p>A & PI</p> <p>A & PI</p>