

**University of Derby Job Description**

# **Job Summary**

## **Job Title**

Senior Legal Counsel

## **College/Department**

Legal, Governance & Assurance Services

## **Location**

Kedleston Road, Derby

## **Job Reference Number**

0075-25

## **Salary**

£58,863 - £73,579 per annum (For exceptional performers, there is scope for further progression up to £84,616 per annum)

## **Reports To**

Director of Legal, Governance & Assurance Services

## **Line Management Responsibility**

Yes

# **Job Description and Person Specification**

## **Role Summary**

The successful applicant will be a leader within the University’s Legal Services team and a key advisor who provides timely, high quality, pragmatic and commercially focused legal advice to the University on high value and/or complex matters. They will work closely with the Director of Legal, Governance & Assurance Services to manage the day-to-day operations of the Legal Services team, which includes the line management of two solicitors and support staff. They will also manage the University’s panel of external legal advisers, including oversight of matters on which panel members are instructed and management of all billing.

In addition, the successful applicant will negotiate, draft and advise on a wide range of high value and/or complex legal and transactional issues, including a broad spectrum of agreements of variable nature (including supply and purchase agreements, licences, confidentiality agreements, research and other collaboration agreements, memoranda of understanding, corporate documentation and consultancy agreements), regulatory issues and intellectual property issues.

## **Principal Accountabilities**

### **Legal Advice and Support**

1. Provide timely, high quality and pragmatic and commercially focused legal advice and guidance on a wide range of high value and/or complex legal, commercial, contractual and transactional issues.
2. Draft, review and negotiate complex legal agreements.
3. Manage and develop the University’s contracting processes and procedures.
4. Support regulatory matters relevant to the University and the associated risk mitigation measures.
5. Benchmark Legal Services’ processes against comparable teams at other similar organisations to ensure fitness for purpose.
6. Advise on the management of the University’s intellectual property portfolio.
7. Manage the panel of external legal advisors and undertake legal work directly where possible.

**Contract Advice & Co-ordination**

1. Provide advice and guidance to colleagues on high value and/or complex contracts to be entered into by the University or its subsidiaries, including drafting and negotiating contract terms and conditions.
2. Provide professional advice/guidance, review and risk assessment of a wide range of contractual documents.
3. To manage, develop and monitor commercial contracting policies and procedures across the University.
4. Maintain a standard suite of precedent agreements.
5. Provide training to colleagues on a wide range of legal issues.
6. Manage Legal Services’ matter management system.
7. Coordinate guidance and support from external legal advisors where necessary.
8. Manage and assess legal risk with respect to commercial contracts.
9. Advise insurers where required of contractual/commercial risk and liaise with the same on a wide range of matters.
10. Advise on litigation risk and provide procurement law advice.

**Governance**

1. Provide legal advice to the University’s Governance Services team.

**Litigation**

1. Student disputes – advise the University in respect of complex and/or high value disputes with current or former students.
2. Manage other material or complex litigious matters as and when they arise.

**General**

1. Leases/Licences – review and negotiate real estate leases/licences and offer advice and guidance on related legal issues.
2. Contractual disputes with supplier/customers.
3. Work with colleagues across the University, including the Executive and Leadership Team, to prepare, negotiate and manage a wide variety of agreements and advise on material and/or complex matters.
4. Management of the day-to-day operation of the Legal Services team.
5. Organise regular staff clinics to train and educate staff with the essential legal know-how/knowledge and to also develop understanding of the processes and procedures in place.

## **Person Specification**

### **Essential Criteria**

#### **Qualifications**

* Qualified to practise as a solicitor or barrister in England and Wales.

#### **Experience**

* Demonstrable experience practising as a solicitor or barrister in England and Wales.
* Proven track record of successfully leading and managing a team.
* Extensive experience in commercial law, including drafting, negotiating and managing contracts.

#### **Skills, Knowledge & Abilities**

* The ability to work autonomously.
* Significant knowledge of contract law and commercial practice.
* Strong communication skills.
* Strong organisational, presentation and training skills.
* Ability to manage administrative systems and complex databases.
* Well-developed IT skills (including experience of spreadsheet, word processing and presentation software packages).
* Excellent time management and flexibility to respond to urgent deadlines.

### **Desirable Criteria**

#### **Experience**

* Significant experience of HE sector IP commercialisation and research contracting.
* Significant experience of the educational sector.
* Experience of public sector procurement.

# **Benefits**

The University of Derby believes in providing choice to our people suited to their needs or life stages. Offering a number of salary sacrifice options, including a generous holiday entitlement of 30 days plus bank holidays and 4 concessionary days, in addition to our Holiday Purchase Scheme. We also offer a host of family friendly policies, including access to our employer-funded Private Health Insurance, meaning that splitting your time and finances can be easier. For those with prospective students in the household, we also offer tuition fee support to partners and children and, not forgetting you, we offer financial support for accredited learning.

Our competitive 'total reward' offering has something for everyone and looks to reward and recognise people in different ways.

Core to the package is a competitive pay structure and generous public-sector pension schemes. Our pay structure allows for stepped progression in role and is reviewed against the market and, where applicable, awarding national pay awards annually. Further financial support is offered through our generous pension contributions in support of your retirement fund with those within our Teachers’ Pension Scheme receiving an employer contribution of 28.6% of salary and those within the Local Government Pension Scheme at 23%.

Wellbeing at Derby features within our benefits options from our Employee Assistance programme through to our eyecare voucher scheme, not to mention the discounted membership for our on-site gym at our Kedleston Road campus. With our Inclusion and Wellbeing Networks, there really is support for everyone.

We also facilitate ‘Give as You Earn’ options to donate to your preferred charities straight from your pay which enhances the amount your charity receives for your donation.

At the University of Derby, we celebrate loyalty and achievements through our Staff Excellence Framework be it financially, or non-financially. We aim to foster a culture of boldness and brilliance in our people, and from a simple thank you through to a local awards ceremony, we recognise and celebrate notable achievements of our colleagues.

For more information on the benefits of working at the University of Derby go to the [Benefit pages of our website](https://www.derby.ac.uk/jobs/life-at-derby/rewards-and-benefits/).

# **Our People**

The University of Derby is committed to promoting equity, diversity and inclusion, regardless of age, disability, trans status, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (or none), sex and sexual orientation.

We are Disability Confident Employers, demonstrating our commitment to disability inclusion, and invite applicants to highlight adjustments they may require to ensure equitable participation in our recruitment processes.

Further, we are committed to ensuring an environment which is trans and non-binary-inclusive for all our staff, students, partners, and visitors, and continuously review our policies, guidance and training.

When applying to join the University, you can choose your preferred title, including the gender-neutral title 'Mx'. We also ask our candidates if they would like to share their preferred pronouns. This is voluntary but demonstrates our commitment to inclusivity for trans and non-binary candidates. Once employed, you can add pronouns and preferred names onto our system.

The University of Derby undertakes anonymised shortlisting during the staff recruitment process. This means that, when shortlisting, panel members will not be able to see an applicant’s name and will see an applicant number instead. This demonstrates the practical steps we are taking to remove barriers to recruitment by minimising the possible impact of our unconscious bias.

However you identify, we actively celebrate the knowledge, experience and talents each person brings. Our students come from a wide range of backgrounds; therefore we are particularly interested to hear from applicants who will help our leaders and teams be more reflective of our student population.

For more information on equity, diversity and inclusion at the University of Derby, please visit our [website](https://www.derby.ac.uk/about/equality-and-diversity/).