

Job description

Job Title: Solicitor

Crime, Fraud and Regulatory Team

Reporting to: Head of Department & Supervising Partner

Qualifications:

Solicitor

The role

- To undertake fee earning work
- To make a positive contribution to the work of the Team and to the firm

Key responsibilities

The fee earner is responsible to the Partners and Head of the Crime Team, and to the firm as a whole, for the effective and efficient conduct of cases on behalf of clients in accordance with the overall policies and objectives of the firm. The fee earner is also responsible for pro-active development and promotion of the firm's high standards and reputation.

All the firm's qualified fee earners are specialists and although they may have some opportunity to work outside their field of specialism, it is anticipated that the specialist area will account for the majority of their fee earning work.

For fee earning and case management purposes, the fee earner is responsible to the Partners and Head of the Department. For other purposes, e.g. in relation to issues relating to equipment or accommodation the fee earner may be responsible to the Partner with the responsibility for that specific issue.

The post primarily involves the following:

- Dealing effectively with enquiries from referrers and prospective new clients so as to assess the nature of the matter and whether it falls within the firm's area of practice, and in a case where the firm is unable to act, offering alternative advice where appropriate.
- Accepting instructions from new clients and advising them on costs and funding and the firm's terms of business and confirming that advice in writing in accordance with practice requirements of the Solicitors Regulation Authority.
- Providing an estimate of fees and obtaining a realistic sum of money on account of costs and disbursements and VAT and providing regular updates on costs; In insurance funded cases, gaining agreement that our fees will be met by the client's insurer or in legally aided cases taking all necessary steps to obtain public funding for the client.
- Notifying where appropriate the Court, or other body and any other party and/or their solicitors of the firm's interest, and maintaining all necessary correspondence.
- Undertaking all necessary preparation of the case or matter, including consideration of served evidence and material, taking instructions, preparing the client's proof(s) of evidence and other documents containing instructions, preparing witness statements and obtaining, preserving and perusing of all necessary documents, preparing and delivering instructions to experts and/or counsel, briefing counsel and attending or arranging attendance at conferences, consultations, or hearings.
- Ensuring clients are kept fully informed of developments with their case, confirmation letters are sent after appointments and court hearings and all instructions and advice are recorded.
- Representing clients at the police station and at court.
- Maintaining a full and orderly file with comprehensive attendance notes of all meetings, attendances and telephone calls.
- Complying with the requirements of the LAA contract and Lexcel.

- Record all chargeable and non-chargeable time on the firm's time recording system in accordance with the time recording policy.
- When appropriate, invoicing the client or insurer by delivery of a detailed narrative bill, reviewing and revising estimates and applying for further private funds on account; alternatively, applying for legal aid funds on account of disbursements, where necessary making interim claims for costs; ensuring the prompt payment of disbursements; and at the conclusion of a matter delivering papers to a costs draftsman and expediting the taxation process and applying for a defence costs order and enhancement of fees where appropriate.
- At the conclusion of any matter, giving the client all advice necessary at that stage, including advice as to the firm's policy as to retention and destruction of papers.
- At all times, having strict regard to any constraint or requirement of the LAA Public Funding scheme or limitation imposed by a privately paying client.
- Complying with the Solicitors Regulation Authority's standards of professional conduct and ethics and, in particular, with the strict requirement of confidentiality of client's affairs, at all times.
- Liaison within the firm with other fee earners engaged in similar and / or related cases matters or clients with a view both to maximising efficiency and avoiding conflicts of interest.
- Maintaining such financial records and supplying such financial information as may be required by the Law Society, SRA or the firm, including providing calculations of work in progress.
- Becoming familiar with and observing the internal requirements of the firm for file opening and closure, accounting procedures, and maintenance of all necessary records and other administrative requirements.
- Working effectively and efficiently with the non-fee earning staff including the administrative staff within the Crime team.
- Becoming familiar with and make the most effective use of the firm's equipment and IT;
- Attending meetings within the Team or the firm to review case work or for the purposes of supervision. Complying with the firm's supervision policies, and with the Legal Aid Agency's and Lexcel requirements as regards supervision. Also undertaking supervision of other team members as required.
- Becoming a LAA supervisor and meeting LAA requirements when required.
- Complying with LAA peer review and ensuring files are compliant with standards set under the peer review.
- Attending such training as may be approved by the firm as will be necessary to fulfil the Solicitors Regulation Authority and professional requirements and to maintain (and to supply to the Head of Department) a record of all training undertaken and points earned;
- To complete and maintain as necessary any professional documentation or records (such as a Practising Certificate) as the Solicitors Regulation Authority or any other professional body may require.
- Adhering so far as possible to annual billing and performance targets (which would be calculated after consultation with the fee earner) and with performance measures and quarterly reviews.
- Contributing to the practice development responsibilities for the team and your own practice, including contributing to the team's overall practice development strategy and its implementation during the year and actively taking part in marketing initiatives and promotion of the team and own practice.

Person specification

It is essential that you are able to satisfy the specification set out below.

Qualification:

Admittance to the Solicitors' Roll

Essential:

- A thorough understanding of the law and practice relating to all areas of Criminal law
- Around four years post qualification experience of Criminal law, including representing client at the police station and at court and preparing defence cases
- LAA Supervisor or able to meet eligibility requirements
- Excellent advocacy and negotiating skills
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Efficient and cost effective work practices

Preferable:

- Some experience of promotion of solicitor's work

Skills

- Communication - convey information clearly and accurately, both orally and in writing
- Organisational - strong administrative and document management skills, time management and workload planning
- Research (legal)
- Good IT skills and familiarity with Case Management Systems

Knowledge

- A thorough understanding of the obligations, including ethical obligations of working as a solicitor
- An understanding of the Lexcel Quality Mark requirements

Ability

- Analytical - complex legal and factual materials
- Attention to detail and speedy deliverer without compromising quality
- Self-service - complete own admin tasks
- Flexible - change direction and modify
- To advise a wide range of clients both orally and in writing on complex legal issues including the ability to adopt a style appropriate to the needs of different clients including those for whom English is not their first language
- To work methodically and efficiently and to deal with private, insurance and legal aid billing procedures
- To contribute to the development of the Crime team's practice through attending external meetings, writing articles, training courses, liaising with the media, etc.
- To bill private clients in a timely and efficient manner
- To draft advice, applications, statements, court pleadings etc.
- To keep up to date on developments in criminal law by attending appropriate courses and meetings of organisations, attending in-house training sessions and reading legal journals
- Strong knowledge of MS Office, including Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook
- Knowledge and use of time recording systems

Qualities

- Tenacity
- Personal integrity
- Resilient
- Self-motivator
- Initiative
- Team oriented
- Builds strong professional relationships with clients colleagues and professional