

Job description

Job Title: Residential Property Lawyer

Reporting to: Head of Conveyancing Department

Key responsibilities

The role

- To undertake fee earning work and business development
- To make a positive contribution to the work of the Department and to the firm

Key responsibilities

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

All the firm's qualified lawyers are specialists, and although they may have some opportunity to work outside their field of specialism, it will account for the very great majority of their fee earning work. In this position the fee earner will need to be aware of relevant law in the area of libel, privacy and data protection.

For fee earning and case management purposes the manager to whom the fee earner is responsible is the partner who heads the department in which the fee earner works. For other purposes (e.g. in relation to issues relating to equipment or accommodation) the manager may be the partner with responsibility for the issue in question.

The post primarily involves (with the support and assistance where necessary and available of other staff including the partners) the following:

1. dealing effectively with enquiries from referral agencies and direct from 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, identifying alternative sources of advice where appropriate;
2. accepting instructions from new clients, and in so doing advising them (a) of the likely costs and means of funding the advice, (b) of the firm's terms of business and (c) confirming all such advice in writing in accordance with the professional requirements of the Solicitors Regulation Authority;
3. obtaining a realistic sum of money on account of costs and disbursements or, subject to approval, entering into a standard private retainer with the client;
4. notifying where appropriate any other party and/or their solicitors of the firm's interest, and maintaining all necessary correspondence;
5. undertaking such legal and factual research as is necessary for the case;
6. undertaking all necessary preparation of the case or matter, assisting with the preparation and drafting of documents where appropriate, obtaining and perusal of all necessary documents, preparing and delivering instructions to experts where appropriate, conforming with the requirements of the CQS or other applicable rules of procedure;
7. maintaining a full and orderly file with comprehensive attendance notes of all meetings and telephone calls, and, where appropriate, following the firm's system of time recording;
8. when appropriate, invoicing the client by delivery of a detailed narrative bill and applying for further private funds on account; ensuring the prompt payment of disbursements;

9. 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;
10. at all times, having strict regard to the Solicitors Regulation Authority's Standards of Professional Conduct and Ethics, and in particular to the strict requirement of confidentiality of clients' affairs;
11. 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;
12. maintaining such financial records and supplying such financial information as may be required by the Solicitors Regulation Authority or the firm, including providing calculations of work in progress from time to time; and adhering so far as possible to the billing target which will be calculated from time to time after consultation with the fee earner;
13. becoming familiar with and observing the internal requirements of the firm as to file opening and closure, accounting procedures, and the maintenance of all necessary records and any other administrative requirement;
14. working effectively and efficiently with the non fee earning staff,
15. becoming familiar with and making best and most effective use of the firm's equipment;
16. attending at meetings as required within departments or otherwise to review case work or for the purposes of supervision;
17. To maintain and develop good quality referral sources so as to ensure the continuing profitability of the department and firm;
18. To work in liaison with the department head and/or Marketing and/or independently to promote the department and firm;
19. attending such training as may be approved by the firm as will be necessary to fulfil the Solicitors Regulation Authority's requirements and to maintain a record of all training undertaken and points earned; and
20. 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.

Person specification

The successful applicant will be responsible for developing an active and interesting caseload dealing with Residential Property Law.

Essential qualities for this role are:-

Knowledge

- a solid understanding of the key principles of relevant law and legal procedures and a desire to excel when using them as a lawyer;
- knowledge of and commitment to the professional duties of a solicitor

Ability

- an understanding of, and ability to advise, clients from a wide range of backgrounds both orally and in writing on complex legal issues (including the ability to adapt styles appropriate to the needs of different types of clients);
- the ability to draft persuasive representations and letters before claim, statements of case (when appropriate), witness statements and other documents;
- the ability to make sound strategic decisions when advising to achieve the best results for clients whether in settlements or at trial;
- a good understanding of the Civil Procedure Rules
- willingness to keep up to date with developments in the law by reading relevant publications and attending appropriate courses and meetings;
- ability to research, analyse and evaluate complex fact patterns, legal concepts and related issues;
- a personal client base which is expanding and which will sustain a commercially viable practise in the future;
- interest in and ability to develop links with potential referral organisations (as our work is largely dependent on referrals from satisfied clients and organisations);
- an interest in developing the practice areas by writing, lecturing and networking through a variety of forums is necessary;
- strong financial management skills in managing clients, cases and internally to develop and sustain their practice
- effective, capable advocate with strong, appropriate communication skills - instilling confidence in clients, adaptive and persuasive;
- ability to think creatively to accomplish clients objectives
- the ability to work as part of a team and attend and contribute to and organise regular departmental meetings;
- a positive role model, actively developing junior members of the team, provide guidance and supervision;