

**Candidate Information**

**Legal Officers**

**LO-03-23**

**March 2023**

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Thank you for your interest in joining Law Centre (NI). Thanks to the generous support of funders, we are now looking to add to our legal team.

Legal jobs at the Law Centre give you the opportunity to develop deep subject expertise and to use your legal expertise to shape policy change that makes real and lasting change. We promise you a deeply rewarding job with the opportunity for continuous learning and to be a part of a dedicated and creative team that makes change happen.

If you share our commitment to use the law to make a difference to people and are committed to using your experience and legal skills to achieve social justice across all communities, we’d love to hear from you.

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**Background info**

Law Centre NI is a regional not for profit. In 2021, the Law Centre was the winner of the Regional Legal Aid Firm/Not for Profit category in the *Annual Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year Awards*. Last year Law Centre NI celebrated its 45th anniversary.

Our clients are amongst the most disadvantaged in our society. We’re committed to working across all communities, using the law to transform peoples’ lives. We have a strong track record of strategic litigation that brings about wider change and you can read more about this in our last [Impact Report](https://lawcentreni.s3.amazonaws.com/Law-Centre-Report-20-21.pdf).

Our legal work is the foundation of all our policy work and we draw on our direct legal experience to make sure that decision-makers and policy-makers know and understand the impact of how law and policy is working on the ground. Our work is cross-cutting and dynamic, and you will have an opportunity to make a real and lasting change.

As well as being a legal support to the public, we are also a regional second-tier referral agency for the advice sector right across NI. This means we are a resource to colleagues in the sector in their day-to-day frontline advice work.

We give free, independent legal advice, casework and representation before the tribunals and courts, including in the higher courts. We also provide extensive training and information support to the advice network across NI through training and webinars, Adviser Network Meetings, conferences, and legal information resources. We also make public legal information resources available so that everyone understands their legal rights.

At LCNI, you will also be part of a wider network of law centres as LCNI is a member of the Law Centres Network.

LCNI is Lexcel-accredited and regulated by the OISC. The legal work of LCNI is led by the Director of Legal and Senior Solicitor.

As a charity, LCNI is registered with the Charity Commission NI and is governed by a Board, all of whom give their time and expertise freely in support of LCNI’s mission.

Thank you for your interest in joining us to support our work and we look forward to hearing from you.

**Ursula O’Hare**

**Director**

**About the job**

To expand our services, we are seeking new lawyers to join our team. These are permanent posts, subject to ongoing funding. Legal work at LCNI is cutting-edge, challenging and deeply rewarding.

Your work will span initial legal advice and outreach and you will have responsibility for managing your own caseload, including pursuing cases and providing representation before the first-tier tribunals and higher courts. Working with the team you will help to identify and pursue strategic litigation that seeks to achieve wider change. You will have the opportunity to be part of our policy advocacy which is grounded in the direct experience of our legal work, and you will produce legal information resources that help people to understand their rights.

Currently there are three specialist legal units within the Law Centre:

* social security law,
* immigration, asylum & anti-trafficking law, and
* employment law and labour exploitation.

You will work under the direct supervision of the senior lawyer in one of these units and you will benefit from excellent training and development opportunities.

We’re looking for committed, enthusiastic and skilled legal professionals who share our values and our commitment to use law to transform lives. If that sounds like you and you’re self-motivated with the passion, skill and resilience to stand for some of the most disadvantaged in our communities, we’d love to hear from you.

For more information and details of how to apply, please visit <https://www.lawcentreni.org/careers>

**General Candidate Information**

These posts may be filled by secondment of the successful candidate from their current post for a duration to be agreed by all parties and on LCNI terms.

LCNI has a hybrid working policy and this post is available for hybrid working, subject to application.

A reserve list may be drawn up from this competition for a period of up to one year.

Holiday entitlement is 24 days annually, building to a maximum of 30 days. This is in addition to 14 statutory and other days. The leave year runs from April – March. The successful candidate will be subject to a probationary period of six months which may be extended in accordance with LCNI policy.

As this post may involve working with children and/or vulnerable adults, this post will be offered subject to Access NI vetting.

If you would like to have an informal chat to find out more about LCNI or these posts, please drop us a line at [humanresources@lawcentreni.org](mailto:humanresources@lawcentreni.org) and we’ll give you a call.

**Application Process**

* **Recruitment launched: Thursday 02 March 2023**
* **Closing date for receipt of applications: Monday 20 March 2023 at 4pm**
* **Anticipated interview dates: w/c 27 March 2023**

Please note the following important information about the application process:

* Please complete the application form **in full**. You should ensure that you give examples that **demonstrate** how you satisfy the relevant criteria, including relevant dates;
* Please ensure that you remain within the word limit specified. Any excess will be disregarded by the panel;
* Please return your application form as a Word document by email to the email address specified in the application form. Please also return a completed monitoring form as directed;
* Applications received after the closing date will not be considered.



**Job Description**

**Job Title: Legal Officers** (FT & PT)

**Job Purpose:** Legal Officers at the Law Centre (LCNI) take forward LCNI’s mission of using the law to change lives by providing high quality legal advice, casework and representation across NI. Legal Officers manage their own case load and contribute to strategic litigation, policy advocacy, training, and legal information resources.

**Location:** Law Centre NI, Westgate House, 2 – 4 Queen Street, Belfast

**Salary:** NJC PO1 – PO2 (£31,346 - £35,745 + 5% employer pension contribution) commencing at £31,346 for newly qualified lawyers or £32,910 with 2+ years’ experience.

**Post:** 35 hours per week

**Report to:** Relevant head of legal unit

**Contact with:** Clients and the public

Legal professionals

Referral agencies and statutory and voluntary organisations

Northern Ireland Courts & Tribunal Service

Law Centre staff, volunteers, and members

Students

Elected representatives and policy makers

Media

**MAIN DUTIES**

**LEGAL:**

* 1. Give legal advice and specialist support to the public and other agencies including through LCNI’s advice line, outreach and community-based legal work;
  2. Advise and advocate on behalf of and represent LCNI’s clients before tribunals and other courts, instructing and working with counsel in cases in the higher courts as required;
  3. Identify strategic legal issues, initiate and conduct appropriate cases in accordance with LCNI’s Casework Strategy, and contribute to the development of the Strategy;
  4. Comply with regulations governing legal aid as required and ensure compliance with all professional standards of the Law Society of Northern Ireland and with Lexcel Quality Standard and keep records to an appropriate standard for management purposes and to comply with professional standards.

**TRAINING AND PUBLIC LEGAL EDUCATION**

* 1. Work with colleagues to identify training needs of LCNI members and others and contribute to LCNI training activity;
  2. Prepare and contribute to public legal information including briefings and legal information papers and other legal resources and written material for publication, including on the LCNI website.

**POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS**

* 1. Represent LCNI at appropriate seminars, conferences and meetings with key stakeholders as required;
  2. Identify law, policy and practice issues and appropriate responses. Work alongside LCNI’s policy specialists to progress these, including by contributing to consultation documents and policy statements;
  3. Contribute to and participate in media interviews as required.

**MEMBERSHIP AND STAKEHOLDER DEVELOPMENT**

* 1. Contribute to LCNI’s Adviser Network Meetings;
  2. Develop and maintain effective relationships with LCNI members and other external stakeholders that support the overall work of LCNI.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

* 1. Maintain and develop your professional expertise;
  2. Identify training and professional development needs, including CPD requirements, in consultation with line manager and source appropriate support;
  3. Act as ambassador for LCNI, upholding its public image in its legal work.

**OTHER DUTIES**

* 1. Be available to work outside standard business hours to meet the demands of the role;
  2. Undertake relevant administrative duties in the performance of the above.
  3. Undertake such other duties as may be required from time to time.

**As this post may involve work with children and vulnerable adults, the Law Centre NI will offer the post subject to a satisfactory vetting report from Access NI.**

\*Note: this Job Description will be subject to review from time to time in line with the changing needs of the organisation

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**March 2023**



**Person Specification - Legal Officer**

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|  | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **Qualifications, Knowledge & Experience** | **E1** A solicitor or barrister eligible to practise in NI | **D1** More than one years’ experience of complex legal advice and representation  **D2** Experience of the legal aid system  **D3** Experience of judicial review |
| **Abilities & Skills** | **E2** Excellent oral and written communication skills with proven ability to convey complex information in an accessible style and work with clients from diverse backgrounds  **E3** Administratively self-supporting, well organised and with ability to work proactively to deal with immediate challenges and meet deadlines  **E4** Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to work independently and collaboratively in a team to achieve objectives and share learning | **D3** Skilled in the representation of clients before tribunals/courts  **D4** Skilled in identifying strategic law and policy issues |
| **Aptitudes & Commitment** | **E5** Passionate and creative in using the law to bring about systemic change  **E6** Self-motivated and open to self-reflection and growth  **E7** Committed to the Law Centre’s mission and to excellent client care |  |
| **Circumstances** | **E8** Willingness to travel as required  **E9** Available for occasional evening and weekend work in accordance with the requirements of the post | **D5** Current UK driving licence with access to a car (note this will be waived where applicants can demonstrate suitable alternative arrangements or in response to disability needs) |