

Job title	Solicitor
Department	Charities
Location	Bristol
Reports to	Partner / Team Leader

Overall objective

To work with colleagues to help our clients in the charity and wider voluntary sector to succeed in realising their objectives, through the efficient delivery of appropriate legal advice and assistance.

Background to role

We are offering an opportunity for a lawyer to join our rapidly growing charities and education practice. Building on our recognised position in the education sector, we have over the last few years succeeded in expanding our general charity sector work. Around 35% of the firm's turnover is in the charity and education sectors, making it a core part of our work.

Our clients include charities from a variety of sectors: from smaller charities working in local communities through to much larger organisations working nationally and internationally; education sector clients such as independent schools, academies, colleges and universities; public sector spin-outs; social care and religious organisations, and social enterprises. We are nationally recognised for the work we do with charities by the leading legal directories and Charity Finance ranks us as leading adviser to the Top 350 Charities.

The successful candidate will become an integral member of the charities team, accepting responsibility at an early stage to lead and manage your own, smaller, matters under appropriate supervision, and providing support for other team members on larger matters.

The role will involve providing a wide range of advice on charity governance, regulatory and other matters. The successful candidate would be involved in charity formations, mergers, collaborations and other transactions. With state sector schools forming a substantial part of our work, there will also be involvement in academy conversions and transfers.

Required skills, knowledge and experience

Admitted solicitor with current Practising Certificate and a developing expertise in a specialist area of law. Must demonstrate an ability to work to the SRA Skills Standards and to provide accurate, focussed advice to clients.

What skills and qualities are we looking for?

We are, first and foremost, looking for a lawyer who has a real interest in advising charity clients and an ability to do so in a commercial manner. Charity law is a highly specialised area, and we do not expect all applicants to have extensive experience of advising charities; we are more interested in finding someone who has the intellect, legal skills and enthusiasm to get involved in this sector.

Applicants will be selected for interview on the basis they have the following essential qualities:

- Excellent academics
- An ability to grasp a broad range of legal concepts, translating them into practical legal advice for highly articulate clients
- Ability to draft legal documents that are clear and concise
- An aptitude for developing strong client relationships
- A commitment to team work and collaboration with colleagues
- The ability to operate effectively demonstrating Lexcel compliance, sound transactional and financial management
- The ability to prioritise work and meet fee earning targets

Ideally we would find a candidate who has an interest in and flair for getting involved in marketing activities, including assistance with presentations for seminars, writing articles for sector journals, helping with the preparation of tender documents, attending networking events and supporting Partner-led business development initiatives.

Key tasks

Legal advice and action

- Take and record clear instructions
- Investigate evidence
- Research matters of fact and law
- Provide concise analysis of research applied to facts
- Provide concise letters and reports for clients, written in plain language
- Undertake negotiation and/or advocacy when appropriate
- Draft concise documents in plain language

Leadership

- Demonstrate awareness through action of the Firm's core values
- Develop personal profile and recognition throughout the Firm

Business generation

- Contribute to appropriate business development activities of the team and the Firm
- Wherever the opportunity arises, promote the services of teams from across the Firm to the client for whom you are acting
- Introduce new clients to the Firm
- Achieve agreed business development targets (if any)
- Identify and attend appropriate networking opportunities

Collaboration/people processes

- Work collaboratively across all offices
- Play an active role within the current team

- Supervise where required and take responsibility for performance management for those whom you supervise
- Involve the secretaries and other support staff in an effective way
- Take responsibility for delegated work, ask for guidance in respect of matters which are unclear and report errors which need to be resolved
- Prepare and conduct Performance Development Reviews and where appropriate take responsibility for the development of staff under your supervision
- Conduct recruitment interviews (where necessary) for secretarial/assistant support

Knowledge sharing

- Participate in Veale Wasbrough's knowledge networks and systems to share ideas, know-how, expertise, documents and precedents

Financial management

Under the supervision of a Partner:

- Provide accurate cost estimates for clients
- Update clients at regular intervals (at least 6 monthly)
- Bill clients accurately and at agreed times
- Achieve agreed targets, including hours and billing
- Comply with the Solicitors' Accounts Rules
- Deal promptly with any working capital exercises
- Ensure that any changes relating to the file are notified to the lawyer in charge of the file, (who should take the appropriate action as set out on the Accounts Intranet site)

Fee earning

- Achieve targets as set out in business plan and/or budget

Quality standards

- Demonstrate compliance with the Firm's quality standards and procedures

Learning and development

- Attend the Management Course Stage 1 within the first three years of qualification
- Comply with CPD requirements and identify specific training needs
- Attend appropriate departmental training sessions
- Attend appropriate internal courses (for example management and IT skills)
- Provide informal and formal training as appropriate (e.g. induction, mentoring and internal team presentations)