

focus on

a career in
legal work

local government talent: careers



What is legal work?

Legal work in a local council is about ensuring that the organisation fulfils its legal duties lawfully and correctly. It also involves providing legal representation for the council, overseeing the buying and selling of land and property and dealing with contracts.

What kind of work would I be doing?

Many services in local government involve contact with the law. As part of the legal services team, you would provide advice to both elected council members and council officers across council departments. You would be involved in preparing for and representing the council at court hearings, public enquiries, tribunals or appeals covering a variety of issues: the prosecution of a rogue trader; a local developer not adhering to building or planning regulations; or non-payment of debts by individuals and organisations.

You may be required to deal with transactions relating to the buying and selling of land and property. This would involve all aspects of the process from initial instruction to completion, for example, dealing with title deeds or compulsory purchase orders.

You might also prepare orders for tree preservation, traffic regulation or housing eviction.

Where can I find out more?

local government careers information,
job vacancies and talent pool:
www.LGtalent.com

national graduate development programme:
www.ngdp.co.uk

law society careers information:
www.lawsociety.org.uk/becomingasolicitor.law

Insider view: 'I work in the commercial team and am involved in advising on tender contracts, drafting partnership and grant agreements and registering trademarks. I find the work very interesting and it's really challenging, as there are a lot of processes and regulations to follow. I like the variety and enjoy the great flexibility of working for the council.'

What kind of jobs are there?

Here are some examples of law related job roles:

- anti-social behaviour case worker
- consumer adviser
- fraud investigator
- human resources adviser
- legal assistant
- legal executive
- solicitor
- trading standards officer.

What qualifications do I need?

To become a solicitor there are three specific entry routes:

- law graduates need to complete a legal practice course and a training contract with an employer authorised as a training establishment;
- non-law graduates must take a conversion course before also completing the same training as law graduates as above;
- non-graduates can qualify via the Institute of Legal Executives.

What skills do I need?

You need to be:

- an excellent communicator,
- able to explain complex issues simply,
- a good report writer,
- a confident public speaker,
- a good researcher, with an eye for detail,
- objective and persuasive.

How much would I get paid?

Salaries vary around the country, but solicitors may earn £28-38,000 per year.

Are there any other benefits?

Working for a local council can offer a lot of additional benefits, not least, the great feeling of being able to help people in your own community and do something worthwhile and rewarding.

Local councils may also offer some or all of the following: generous annual leave, flexible working hours, pension scheme membership, reduced price public transport, gym membership, crèche facilities, employee guidance and support groups.

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