

Litigation Associate (3-5 Years PQE) Reading

EVERSHEDS
SUTHERLAND

About Eversheds Sutherland

Eversheds Sutherland represents the combination of two firms with a shared culture, values and commitment to client service excellence. We are each known for our commercial awareness and industry knowledge and for providing innovative and tailored solutions for every client.

As a full service law practice, we act for the public and private sector across the UK, Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia and the US providing legal advice to clients across the Company Commercial, Employment, Labour & Pensions, Litigation and Dispute Management, and Real Estate practices.

With over **70 offices** in over **30 countries** worldwide, we have become one of the largest law practices in the world and a great place to work and develop your career.

Eversheds Sutherland Managed Legal Service ('MLS')

MLS is a novel and pretty unique arrangement for the provision of legal services. In April 2018, Eversheds Sutherland won, via a competitive tender process, a multi-year managed legal services contract with a utilities client and took over the existing legal services team (On-Site Team) from the client's former managed legal service provider. The team is involved in advising the client on a very wide range of day-to-day legal matters including competition, projects and planning, regulation, construction, real estate, commercial contracts, tax, disputes, energy, employment and health and safety.

The MLS On-Site Team

The On-Site Team currently consists of around 19 Solicitors and Paralegals and a small management team. The team is embedded within the client, sitting in the client's head office in Reading alongside the client's retained legal function. The On-Site Team is split into 6 practice teams:

- Property
- Commercial
- Litigation
- Construction
- Operations and Regulatory
- Competition

The Role

The Litigation team currently consists of 2 lawyers and a paralegal. We have a vacancy within the team due to the imminent retirement of the Principal Lawyer and the anticipated promotion of an existing team member into that role. We are looking to recruit a Litigation lawyer to fill that vacancy. The role will report to the Principal Lawyer within the Litigation team. The team works 2-3 days in the office per week and the rest of the time remotely.

Key Responsibilities

- Managing own caseload of criminal regulatory and civil/commercial disputes and co-ordinating work allocation with wider offsite ES colleagues and external service partners.
- Drafting, reviewing and negotiating legal documents (including letters, court papers and settlement agreements).
- Providing clear and concise legal advice and support to the client, having regard to the client's business objectives, and delivering practical, creative and commercial solutions and value within budget and time constraints, whilst ensuring that risks are understood and mitigated.
- Taking instructions from the client and advising on the law and legal issues.
- Attending Court, mediation/other ADR processes, conferences with Counsel, meetings with the client, meetings and negotiations as legal advisor with opposing parties and representing the client as legal advisor at interviews under caution.
- Assisting other members of the MLS and wider ES teams with tactical or strategic advice with regard to actual or potential disputes, including (without limitation) with respect to the interpretation of commercial contracts and/or licensing arrangements.
- Assisting with providing training to the client whenever necessary on Court procedure or any other relevant litigation/ADR related issues or developments.

- Deputising for the Principal Solicitor when required.
- Supervising the paralegal and any other junior members of the team who may form part of the team in future.
- Identifying ways to add value and improve internal efficiencies, including process improvements.
- Liaising with experts, professionals and other operatives in both the client's business and externally.
- Assisting with reporting requirements to the client and with the review of wording to be included in the client's prospectus updates with regard to the status of disputes, litigation or other ADR proceedings.
- Ensuring, as far as possible, that the client's governance processes are observed as regards litigation, ADR or settlement matters with which the postholder deals.
- Complying with all Service Level Agreements and all KPIs, including accurately recording time and meeting reporting obligations.
- Keeping up to date with all relevant legal, legislative, regulatory and industry developments, informing and updating the team, and client.
- Undertaking a range of CPD activities ensuring efficient knowledge transfer across the litigation team.
- Obtaining regular client feedback and targeting (and achieving) continuous improvement.
- Any other duties deemed necessary.

Skills and Experience

- Capable of working independently.
- Proactive and forward thinking, with good initiative.
- Organised and good at managing time effectively, using appropriate systems and processes.
- Use of appropriate, professional and client-friendly language.
- Ability to work alone with confidence and self-discipline, taking ownership of tasks and able to demonstrate sound judgment and decision making skills.
- Ability to learn a complicated and dynamic business, understand the client, its customers and the regulatory regime in which the business operates and to proactively advise on a combination of legal and business issues.
- Flexible working "can do" attitude, adaptability to change and ability to respond to competing deadlines.
- Experience of drafting, reviewing and negotiating key legal and court documents including (without limitation) instructions to counsel.
- Good relationship builder with strong interpersonal skills and highly team-oriented.
- Good communication skills, both verbally and written.
- Wide range of appropriate IT skills.

Key Competencies

- Qualified solicitor or barrister with around 5 years' + post qualification experience (PQE) in litigation work. The PQE indicated in this job description is intended as a guide only and does not preclude applications from those with more or less PQE.
- Knowledge of the water industry and current issues affecting it would be useful but is not essential.
- Detailed knowledge and experience of regulatory criminal law enforcement (for example in the environmental or health and safety regimes), and criminal court procedure and practice;
- Detailed knowledge and experience of civil/commercial dispute resolution, ADR, and civil court procedure and practice. In-house experience useful (but not essential). We will consider candidates with experience working for public authorities or regulators, ideally with demonstrable experience of regulatory criminal enforcement but alternatively with experience of civil/commercial litigation and dispute resolution. We will consider candidates who might, to date, have focused predominantly on one of these two areas of litigation (e.g. criminal work) and who have a demonstrable aptitude and desire to quickly become proficient in the other area of litigation (e.g. civil litigation work).
- Experience of drafting, reviewing and negotiating a broad range of legal documents.
- An awareness and general understanding of some or all of the following:
 - o UK procurement regimes;
 - o the constraints and challenges of working in a regulated utility context;
 - o the UK health & safety regime;
 - o consumer law and data protection issues;
 - o intellectual property; and
 - o competition law.

Diversity and Inclusion

At Eversheds Sutherland, we recognise that having diverse talent across our business brings many benefits, and we are committed to accessing a wide range of views and thinking in all that we do. A culture of inclusion, where each person feels able to be their true self at work and reach their full potential is key. We recognise that bringing together the perspectives of individuals of all backgrounds, life experiences, preferences and beliefs is critical if we are to serve our global client base, people and communities as a leading global legal practice.

Should you require any reasonable adjustments to enable participation in the recruitment process, please contact us so that we can discuss how best to assist.

We are open to considering flexible working options for our vacancies. Whilst we are not able to offer flexible working across all of our roles, many of our people work flexibly in some way, and we would encourage you to talk to us about this during the hiring process if you would like to explore further.

We are a LGBT+ inclusive employer and are Stonewall Corporate Champions.