

VACANCY NOTICE

LAWYERS

GOVERNMENT LEGAL DEPARTMENT

AUGUST 2017

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HEADLINE INFORMATION

JOB TITLE:	Qualified Lawyers
DEPARTMENT:	Government Legal Department
DIVISION:	All GLD divisions
LOCATION:	London
APPOINTMENT TERM:	Permanent
NUMBER OF POSTS:	c. 50
SALARY RANGE:	Grade 7 - £48,400 (London), Legal Officer - £42,000 (up to 3 years PQE)
PATTERNS:	Full time / Part time / Job share.

The Government Legal Department (GLD) has a wide variety of exciting opportunities across its divisions. These include posts in our specialist Litigation Group, where successful candidates will manage a broad range of varied case work as well as posts in our client-facing advisory divisions co-located in central government departments.

TIMING

Candidates will be assessed in three phases and each phase will consist of three stages.

Candidates will move onto the next stage if they pass the previous stage.

The deadline is 12 noon on each date stated except for the deadlines for the Legal Professional Skills test which are at 10am on each date stated.

	Stage 1A	Stage 1B	Stage 2	Stage 3
Phase	<i>Written application deadline</i>	<i>Critical Reasoning test deadline</i>	<i>Legal Professional Skills test deadline</i>	<i>Will be interviewed</i>
1	23 August	29 August	18 September	w/c 25 September
2	20 September	26 September	16 October	w/c 23 October
3	25 October	31 October	20 November	w/c 27 November

Candidates should note that if the first or second phases fill all vacancies, then GLD may close subsequent phases.

The final closing date for applications in this recruitment round is **25 October 2017**, bearing the above caveat in mind.

FLEXIBLE WORKING

GLD is committed to flexible working, but business needs for some roles may limit the scope for particular working patterns. For those working full-time, you will be expected to work a five-day week of 37 hours (excluding lunch breaks). Applications from those wanting to work as a job share will also be considered.

The annual leave allowance is 25 days, and then 30 days after 5 years' total service.

FURTHER GRADING & SALARY INFORMATION

The vacancies on offer are at Grade 7 with a starting salary of £48,400 (London), but appointments to Legal Officer will be made where successful candidates have less than three years post qualification experience. Candidates appointed as a Legal Officer will re-grade to Grade 7 when they reach one year's service or three years PQE which ever comes sooner (subject to satisfactory performance).

Please note salary is non-negotiable.

TRAVEL REQUIRED:	Sometimes
CRB REQUIRED:	Yes
GUARANTEED INTERVIEW SCHEME:	Yes
RESERVED/NON-RESERVED:	Non-reserved

WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT

The Government Legal Department (GLD) is the largest provider of legal services across government, working with all the main Whitehall Departments. From roads to rivers, and health to human rights, our work touches on most aspects of public life.

The department has more than 14 client-facing advisory teams who provide legal advice on the development, design and implementation of government policies and decisions, draft secondary legislation and work with Parliamentary Counsel on primary legislation. Our cross-cutting expert service groups for Litigation, Employment and Commercial Law provide specialist legal services to a wide range of government departments and public bodies.

We are a non-ministerial government department with more than 2,200 employees, around 1,600 of who are solicitors or barristers. The department is based primarily in London but has teams in Bristol and Leeds.

As an organisation our vision is to be trusted by government to provide consistently excellent and value for money services so government departments want to come to us to meet their legal needs, to be known throughout the legal profession for the quality of our legal work, and to be the best employer for our people.

VACANCY DESCRIPTION

We welcome applications from both experienced and newly qualified lawyers who are interested in working in our varied divisions.

While previous experience or knowledge may be relevant to some vacancies, Government work is likely to involve a rapid learning curve to acquire legal skills and knowledge not required in private practice. Strong intellectual and analytical skills are important. We will provide support to help you acquire the necessary expertise and have a thriving CPD-accredited in-house training programme.

The GLD encourages its people to develop their skills and provides opportunities to move between advisory, litigation, employment and commercial law services during their careers. For Newly Qualified lawyers with under one year's experience, GLD has recently introduced a scheme so that lawyers under one year qualified, spend two years each in a contentious and non-contentious post in order to develop their experience of the range of government legal work.

Litigation Group

The actions and decisions of government are under increasing scrutiny and challenge. Military action overseas, Brexit, immigration policy, welfare reform, climate change and energy policy are just a few of the issues that generate legal challenges that can hit the headlines. GLD litigation lawyers conduct a wide range of often high profile cases, frequently involving questions of constitutional importance. Our public law litigation practice covers the full range of judicial review challenges in areas such as immigration, planning and national security as well as the Government's wide ranging reform agenda. We also have a substantial private law practice representing large Government Departments such as the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Defence in personal injury, clinical negligence, misfeasance in public office, false imprisonment, and other claims. Litigation lawyers also provide expert representation in relation to inquests and public inquiries. We regularly litigate through the higher courts to the Supreme Court and offer the opportunity to handle cases at the forefront of the developing law.

Our litigators gain early responsibility for their own caseload within a supportive team environment, working alongside counsel from the Attorney General's Panels. They also play an important co-ordination role when litigation involves several Government Departments.

Litigation lawyers work closely with policy colleagues and advisory legal colleagues in client Departments to reduce the exposure to litigation risk and to develop realistic contingency plans when the litigation risk materialises.

Advisory Divisions

Government Departments need to draw on the skills of advisory lawyers to bring to life policies for which Ministers are accountable to Parliament and the electorate. The legal issues are often complex, novel and politically sensitive. The legal approach may be scrutinised by Parliament, the media, courts, and other institutions, domestic, European and International projects are often fast moving and the problems brought to lawyers are often both urgent and unpredictable. Our advisory lawyers work closely with policy officials and other professionals in the Department to find legally sound solutions to deliver Ministers' priorities, even where these change overnight. Ministers want to reform and improve the area they are responsible for. They are likely to be brimming with ideas about how to change things – more affordable childcare, planning regulations which support the growth agenda, limiting bankers' bonuses are some recent examples. Advisory lawyers think through all the legal implications of a policy, for instance human rights, EU and International law, equality and data protection issues, as well as core public law principles. They need to anticipate possible legal challenges and provide officials and Ministers with clear legal risk assessments. If a challenge is made they will instruct colleagues from Litigation Group and provide the interface with Departmental officials and Ministers.

Where new primary legislation is required, advisory lawyers work with Parliamentary Counsel on the draft Bill and support policy colleagues and Ministers at all stages of the parliamentary process. EU legislation is another strand of work, where our lawyers may need to advise on negotiations, including the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

Advisory lawyers also implement policy reforms and Acts of Parliament by drafting a huge volume of secondary legislation. To write a new law is a special privilege, requiring both precision of expression and creativity. It is a team effort involving multiple checks, but the drafter will always have a special sense of pride and ownership.

Employment Group

The Employment Group acts as a shared service centre for advice and litigation across all government departments. The Group covers the full spectrum of employment work ranging from

day to a day advice to HR staff to advice on large scale employment policies affecting every civil servant. It deals with employment litigation against the Government from single unfair dismissal cases to multi-party equal pay and pensions cases. It also advises on the employment aspects of large scale commercial insourcing and outsourcing contracts

Commercial Law Group

The Commercial Law Group (CLGp) was launched on 2 June 2014, enabling the start of the journey towards a unified expert commercial law service for government. CLGp was created by drawing together the existing commercial lawyers in several government departments and consists of seven teams (Litigation and Dispute Resolution Team plus six commercial transactional teams). A number of teams are based in the main government buildings for the client department which they advise or one of the other client departments in CLGp. They provide non-contentious commercial legal services a number of Whitehall Departments.

If you apply, please note that your application will be for a generalist G7 role at the Government Legal Department. If you have a developed a specialism in a particular area of law (e.g. employment law, trade law, commercial law) then you should reflect that in the CV section of the application form, however please bear in mind that you will be offered a role in order of merit and not necessarily within your specialism.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS

We are serious about getting people with the right motivation and skills to be successful in our business. Candidates meeting the advertised minimum eligibility criteria will be asked to complete an online Critical Reasoning Test before selection for interview.

We will email those applicants who meet the advertised minimum eligibility criteria a link to the Critical Reasoning test on receipt of their application which may be before the closing date, and will be before the interview. Applicants will be asked to complete this before a deadline – please ensure you check your email inboxes carefully, including junk folders as some systems filter the link as ‘spam’ or ‘junk’. If concerned please contact the Recruitment Team for advice (see contact details below).

Applications will then be sifted.

If you meet the Critical Reasoning test standard and pass the application sift, you will then be emailed an online written exercise which will test the competency ‘Legal Professional Skills’ – you will be advised of a clear deadline for submitting your response. This written response will be assessed ahead of your interview, you may be asked some follow up questions on it during your interview and a copy will be provided for you on the day of interview.

We will allocate successful candidates to the most suitable vacancy available at the time of our offer, taking into account your performance at interview. We may hold a reserve list if the number of successful candidates after interview exceeds the number of available vacancies.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

We are looking for highly motivated lawyers. You will need strong communication skills, good self-awareness and a commitment to using feedback to learn and develop as a professional. You must be able to demonstrate Legal Professional Skills at Legal Adviser/Grade 6/Grade 7 level.

In particular, we are looking for the following in **Professional Legal Skills**:

- Sound understanding of public law.
- Reliable legal judgement and appreciation of legal risk.
- The ability to think strategically and creatively, see legal issues in their wider context and advise accordingly.
- Sound analysis, using secure legal research to produce timely and fit for purpose advice.
- The ability to communicate advice effectively both in writing and orally. Good understanding of the role of lawyers in government.

Motivational Fit

We need to know how well our requirements and offerings match your aspirations.

Please outline why you are motivated to join the Government Legal Department and how you feel you might contribute effectively to a role with the GLD.

We are looking for intellectually capable, highly motivated lawyers with powerful communication skills. You need to have good self-awareness and a commitment to using feedback to learn and develop as a professional.

Should you be successful in being invited to Interview with GLD, your performance in key competency areas will be tested. These are summarised below:

Legal professional skills – as above

Motivational Fit – as above

Setting Direction – Making effective decisions

- Make difficult decisions by pragmatically weighing up the complexities involved against the need to act
- Analyse and evaluate data from various sources to identify pros and cons and identify risks in order to make well considered decisions
- Identify the main issues in complex problems, clarify understanding or stakeholder expectations, to seek best option

Engaging People – Collaborating and partnering

- Work as an effective team player, managing team dynamics when working across Departmental and other boundaries.
- Seek constructive outcomes in discussions, challenge assumptions but remain willing to compromise when it is beneficial
- Demonstrate genuine care for others, is approachable and build a strong interpersonal relationships

Delivering results – Managing a quality service

- Exemplify positive customer service behaviours and promote a culture focused on ensuring customer needs are met.
- Make clear, pragmatic and manageable plans for service delivery using programme and project management disciplines
- Create regular opportunities for staff and customers to help improve service quality and demonstrate a visible involvement

Delivering results – Delivering at pace

- Get the best out of people by giving enthusiastic and encouraging messages about priorities, objectives and expectations
- Review, challenge and adjust performance levels to ensure quality outcomes are delivered on time, rewarding success
- Adopt clear processes and standards for managing performance at all levels
- Maintain effective performance in difficult and challenging circumstances, encouraging others to do the same.

For this GLD campaign, only 'Legal Professional Skills', 'Motivational Fit' and 'Communication' will be assessed at the application form/short-listing stage. Should you be successful in being invited to interview, your performance in the key competency areas will be tested.

DEPARTMENTAL CONTACT POINT

If you would like to discuss this post further with someone in the department, or would like to be put in touch with a lawyer working in the team please contact:

Name: GLD Recruitment Team
Telephone: 0845 3000 793 or 0117 923 4417
Email: glsqualified@mpw.co.uk

MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Academic

Applicants **should** have a minimum of a 2:1 honours degree in their first degree (in any subject). Where an applicant holds an overseas degree qualification this should be equivalent to a 2.1 degree. However, this Department will consider applicants who do not have a 2.1 degree but only where satisfactory evidence of equivalent high level academic and/or professional achievement can be provided (e.g. via relevant experience and results achieved for the Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL)/CPE, Legal Practice Course (LPC), Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC)).

Professional Qualifications

The recruiting department has specified this as: Applicants must be (or about to become) qualified to practise as a Solicitor, Barrister or Chartered Legal Executive in England and Wales. You must have completed a training contract/pupillage/qualifying employment, or have been exempted from this by the Law Society, the Bar Council or CILEx. Applicants qualified in a jurisdiction outside England and Wales will be required to undertake the Qualified Lawyers Transfer Scheme within 24 months of appointment. GLD does not currently meet the cost.

Professional entry criteria for Chartered Legal Executives (i.e. Fellows): Chartered Legal Executives are eligible to apply where (i) a Qualifying Law Degree (QLD) is held; or (ii) the Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL)/CPE has been completed; or (iii) where exams have been passed (i.e. a score of 50% or above achieved), at CILEx Level 6*, in all of the following seven foundation subjects in law:

1. Contract Law
2. Criminal Law
3. Equity and Trusts Law
4. European Union Law
5. Land Law
6. Public Law

7. Law of Tort

* Note: There are specific requirements relating to academic achievement in the CILEx Level 6 exams where these are being used to demonstrate 2.1 degree equivalence as set out below.

Chartered Legal Executives should note that the GLS will be willing to accept an, overall, average score of 65% or above across exams passed in the seven foundation subjects in law (where studied at CILEx Level 6) as demonstrating 2.1 degree equivalence (where a 2.1 degree is not held).

We also welcome applications from those who expect to qualify shortly.

Nationality

The GLD is part of the wider Civil Service and therefore the [Civil Service nationality rules apply](#). If a post is described as 'reserved', then only UK nationals will be eligible to be able to apply. If a post is advertised as a 'non-reserved' post, as our posts generally are, those listed below will be eligible to apply:

- UK Nationals (and British Protected Persons);
- Commonwealth citizens and nationals of the European Economic Area (EEA);
- Individuals with dual nationality where one part is British; and
- Certain family members of EEA, Swiss and Turkish nationals (as set out in the Civil Service nationality rules).

Please note that it is possible to meet the above nationality requirements and still not be legally entitled to work in the UK. [UK Visas and Immigration](#) operates a points-based immigration policy which applies to the migrants from outside the European Economic Area, Switzerland and Turkey.

It is the applicant's responsibility to check whether this policy applies to them. When applying, applicants will be asked about their nationality at birth, whether they are subject to immigration control, whether there are any restrictions on your continued residence or employment in the UK etc. Detailed document checks will be made prior to employment.

Applications will be accepted from those applicants who may require sponsorship for a work permit under the UK Border Agency's points-based immigration policy. Applications which require sponsorship will, however, only be considered if no suitable settled worker is identified for the position.

GUARANTEED INTERVIEW SCHEME

GLD has signed up to the Positive about Disabled People Commitment and will guarantee an interview to any disabled applicant who meets the minimum criteria. The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and adverse long-term effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

To meet the minimum criteria, candidates applying under the terms of the Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) must:

- Meet all aspects of the stated minimum eligibility criteria (i.e. academic, nationality, and professional criteria);

- Meet the standard set for the Critical Reasoning Test (where used); and
- Obtain a minimum score for (i) the GLS core competencies being assessed at the application stage and (ii) against any job specific criteria specified.

Candidates applying under the terms of the GIS, who meet the minimum criteria outlined above, will be invited to attend an interview.

PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

All government departments are required to ensure that any personnel employed by them comply with the Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) before they take up employment.

This standard involves verification of identity; nationality and immigration status (including an entitlement to undertake the work in question); employment history (past 3 years) and criminal record (unspent convictions).

You will be asked to produce original documents when attending interview to enable us to verify the above if you are successful. The information which you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence by the GLS and its authorised representative (TMP Worldwide).

Supplying false information or failing to disclose relevant information could be grounds for rejection of your application, or, dismissal and could amount to a criminal offence.

Your referees will not be approached until your permission has been obtained following success at interview.

Regarding criminal record checks, a basic disclosure will normally be required (covering convictions considered unspent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974). This will apply to successful candidates only and your permission will be required before checks are undertaken.

Successful candidates will also be required to be cleared to SC (security check) level.

Some posts will require clearance to a level higher than SC in view of the sensitive nature of the work. You will be told if this applies to you. Details of HM Government vetting policy can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hmg-personnel-security-controls>

DATA PROTECTION

The information which you provide will be protected and processed for the purpose of successful completion of the Baseline Personnel Security Standard, in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act (1998).

If you have any concerns about any of the questions which you are asked to complete or what we will do with the information you provide, you should discuss these with the GLD Recruitment Team.



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

GLD Departments' processes are underpinned by the principle of selection for appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition as outlined in the Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles which can be found at <http://civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk>

If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with these Principles and you wish to make a complaint, please contact Caroline Anerville either by telephone on 0207 210 3436 or by email at: caroline.anerville@governmentlegal.gov.uk in the first instance.

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive from the Department, you can contact the Civil Service Commission.