

## Job title: Investigator

<b>Team / department:</b>	Operations
<b>Reports to:</b>	Team Leader
<b>Salary / Grade:</b>	£28,815 (with potential to go up to £31,321 pa after 9 months dependent on performance)
<b>Location:</b>	Edward House, Birmingham
<b>Working Hours:</b>	37.5 hours per week. Applications are welcome for full-time and part-time working
<b>Work Pattern:</b>	The organisation's hours of operation are 07.30 – 19.00 Monday to Friday. The telephones are currently open between 08:30 – 17:30
<b>Checks:</b>	All staff will be expected to undergo a basic criminal records check

### Job description

#### Background

The Legal Ombudsman (LeO) is an independent service that helps to resolve issues between the public and lawyers through impartial investigation and balanced reasoning. When we look into a complaint, we look at the facts and weigh-up both sides of the story.

Last year we helped to resolve over 6,500 legal services issues between members of the public and their lawyers. We also helped to resolve over 2,500 complaints against claims management companies. We not only help to get resolutions to complaints from the public; we also help providers improve their communications, service levels and complaint handling processes to prevent the need for complaints in the first place.

Our aim is to provide a complaint handling service that is fair, accessible, easy to use and which focuses on resolving complaints informally and quickly.

## **Job summary**

The Legal Ombudsman has a statutory mandate to resolve disputes with minimum formality. We receive complaints covering any legal area, with varying degrees of complexity and from a diverse range of people. Being able to analyse detailed information, get to the heart of the matter and explain to people with differing degrees of understanding is key.

An investigator's role is to act as the first point of contact for members of the public who have a complaint. If a complaint is accepted in for further investigation, an investigator will then attempt to resolve the complaint, informally or through a written report. It is essential to have excellent communication skills both verbal and written.

An Investigator will use a range of skills to assess if a complaint is in jurisdiction and facilitate a fair resolution. These include negotiating and agreeing appropriate outcomes and remedies with the parties. Investigators will also need to use their judgement to decide on the approach in order to reach an appropriate conclusion to the complaint.

Investigators are expected to effectively manage a caseload of complaints at various stages of the complaints process, working with stretching targets and competing demands. They work independently, but are part of a team managed by a Team Leader. Each team also contains a number of Ombudsmen who supports the Investigators by providing advice and guidance on cases where required.

## **Key responsibilities (core)**

- Accurately gather and record appropriate information about complaints received by various communication methods (telephone, letter, email).
- When not initially addressed by the GET, give accurate, good quality information and guidance to people who contact us to help them make a complaint to their lawyer, to us or to signpost them elsewhere when we cannot help
- Identify and make adjustments for individual communication needs.
- Decide whether complaints lie within the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman and write reasoned recommendations for this.
- Summarising appeals to an Ombudsman to review a decision that a complaint is out of jurisdiction.
- Manage complainants' expectations about the process, timeframes, and what will be needed from them. Plan proportionate investigations on low complexity cases, identifying what information is needed and gather evidence needed to investigate the complaint,
- Analyse and evaluate evidence and comments from the parties to reach a proportionate and fair view of the quality of service provided and identify opportunities to achieve informal resolution.
- Recognise cases where resolution is unlikely to be achieved or is not appropriate and make recommendations to both parties, and ultimately to the Ombudsman for decision
- Write clear, accurate and concise letters and preliminary decisions
- Manage a portfolio of cases at Assessment and Resolution stages and manage workload to meet performance targets on answering telephones, responding to enquiries and progressing complaints, whilst working as part of a team to deliver organisational performance.

Investigator JD May 2017

## **Main working relationships:**

### **Internal**

- Investigators
- General Enquiry Team
- Resolution Team Leaders
- Operations Managers
- Ombudsmen
- Corporate Staff

### **External**

- Complainants and their representatives
- Lawyers and others providing legal services
- Voluntary sector and advocacy organisations
- Staff of the Approved Regulators
- Staff of other Ombudsmen schemes
- Other external entities (e.g. court clerks; Land Registry, Criminal Cases Review Commission, Home Office)
- Translators & interpreters

### **General**

Observe the requirements of the Ombudsman's policies including the Health and Safety, Data Protection, and the Equality and Diversity Policies.

There will be opportunities for personal and professional development.

## **Person specification**

### **Qualifications:**

#### **Essential**

- Five GCSE Grades A - C or GCSE O Level passes (or equivalent), ideally English Language.

### **Experience:**

#### **Essential:**

- Experience working in a customer service environment requiring engagement and negotiation
- Experience of managing and effectively progressing multiple priorities
- Experience of using negotiation and persuasion skills to achieve a desired outcome
- Experience of problem solving to resolve disputes
- Experience of assessing and analysing information and making decisions based on evidence
- Experience of dealing with people in challenging and sensitive situations.
- Experience of providing a service to a diverse range of people over the telephone, and in writing
- Experience of delivering to objectives in a performance driven organisation
- IT literate (MS Office)

#### **Desirable:**

- Experience of complaint handling
- Experience of working in CMC or legal services
- Experience of making and communicating decisions
- Experience of working in a fast moving performance driven organisation
- Experience of working as part of a team to deliver organisational objectives

## Behaviour Framework Indicators

We have five core behaviours at LeO and each of them is described below, showing the relevant indicators for success in the role. For each one of the five themes we've described what sort of things we'd expect to see people do. Under each behaviour theme we've described indicators of the positive behaviours. These indicators are a guide and not an exhaustive list of rules.

### Outcome Focus

Takes responsibility for helping to improve the effective performance of themselves and their teams

- Takes personal ownership, showing drive and commitment for achieving results
- Makes sound decisions on issues following current policies and guidelines and knows when to seek advice or input from others
- Understands the importance that their performance contributes to their team and to the wider organisation

### Communication and Influencing

Communicates in ways that enable people to engage easily with even the most complex content. Builds trust and credibility across diverse interest groups.

- Identifies the underlying causes of conflicts and uses their insight and influence to achieve a resolution that is agreeable to all parties
- Adapts their style of communication to suit the message and the audience and enable people to reach agreement on critical issues

### Continuous Improvement

Identifies opportunities to improve day to day working practices, acquire new skills and share ideas with others

- Regularly look for ways to update their own personal skills and knowledge
- Share their ideas with colleagues in order to develop new and intelligent solutions

## Leadership

Takes responsibility for their personal impact – their results, behaviours, interactions and their own self-development.

- Takes responsibility for the work they do and the results they deliver addressing issues as soon as they notice them
- Self-motivated and consistently demonstrates and promotes LeO's core values in their actions and behaviour

## Audience Focus

Takes responsibility for ensuring that people (both internal and external customers) are completely satisfied with the service they get

- Takes trouble to understand their customer's needs and manage their expectations – setting out their proposed actions and timescales clearly
- Delivers a quality service to customers following all the organisation's current procedures

Note: The Legal Ombudsman recognises that it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for candidates who cannot meet these requirements because they are disabled under the terms of the Equality Act 2010.