Head of Legal Services
Planning and Risk

Closing date: 7 December 2021
Interview date: 11 January 2022
Vacancy reference: 10070
INTRODUCTION

The Head of Legal Services will provide overall leadership and guidance for legal, information governance and insurance matters for the University.

Reporting into the Director of Planning & Risk, you will be responsible for developing the University’s legal services department. You will play a significant role in identifying legal risk and providing pragmatic advice to key stakeholders in the institution including the Vice-Chancellor, Chief Operating Officer and members of University Executive Board (UEB), Council and Senate (amongst others).

This is a high-profile position in an area of critical importance to the University. The role holder will play a key part in developing and executing the University’s legal strategy and developing internal provision with the aim of reducing the engagement of external expertise.

The role will work across professional services and academic departments on project-based work. Through your team, you will also oversee the provision of the University’s information governance oversight and ensuring the University is compliant and up to date with the latest legal changes, as well as managing the University’s insurance portfolio.

We very much look forward to your application.

Rebekah Desport
Director of Planning and Risk
JOB DESCRIPTION

Main purpose of role

• Leading the legal strategy and supporting policies for the University, ensuring it operates in a legal, professional and ethical manner. Provide pragmatic solutions-based legal services, taking a risk-based approach to legal challenges.

• Develop and maintain a toolkit of guidance and resources to enable colleagues to address legal issues.

• Maintain accurate records and work closely with colleagues in Finance on the completion of relevant records to regulatory bodies such as HMRC, Companies House etc.

• Manage relationships with the University’s external legal advisors, to ensure the University has access to high quality legal advice as required. Oversee and advise on the engagement and interpretation of specialist legal advice as required.

• Lead or contribute to new policy development ensuring the University is legally compliant and operating within corporate responsibility guidelines.

• Maintain oversight of institutional contractual terms and support the legal/contractual needs of large-scale projects and initiatives.

• Undertake the legal aspects of due diligence reviews on institutional collaboration and policy/framework development.

• Take the lead role in managing any litigation relating to the University, and advise and assist in dispute resolution.

Key Responsibilities

Leadership, staff management and culture

Analysis and Reporting

• Identify trends, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in Legal Services that may have an impact on the University to enable appropriate and timely action to be administered.

Planning & Organising

• Shape strategic direction of Legal Services, planning and organising activities of others over many months, considering the implications now and in the longer term, to support service objectives.

• Participate in the annual operational planning process, to support the service’s strategic direction.

• Oversee projects, to ensure each project is managed and delivered to time and budget.

Finance/Resource Management

• Utilise/manage allocated budget/resources effectively and flexibly and control all related expenditure to ensure delivery of targets/objectives within budget.

• Contribute to planning and budgetary statements and delivery of service within budgetary constraints.

Customer Service & Liaison

• Apply broad and/or deep knowledge and experience of Legal Services to provide advice/guidance to others or to address significant problems or unresolved issues, some of which will be multidisciplinary in nature.

• Pre-empt customer needs/requests, identifying opportunities and facilitating change management.

• Evaluate existing service provision, keeping abreast of feedback and broader developments in the external market place, to ensure appropriate developments and innovative solutions are proposed that consistently enhance and maximise service quality, efficiency and continuity.

• Answerable for the delivery of legal services in respect of compliance with current and future objectives, service level agreements, regulations and national codes of practice.

At a glance

Salary £57,000 - £78,000

Hours of work 37 per week (flexibility available)

Contract type Open

Based at Heslington Campus

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**JOB DESCRIPTION**

- Interact at senior levels within the university and network with fellow professionals in the wider community and represent and promote legal services on internal and external platforms.

- Liaise with service users to establish service requirements and priorities.

**People Management**

- Manage professional staff across Legal Services, to ensure all relevant annual targets and goals are delivered within any allocated budgetary/resource constraints.

- Develop/improve the capability of staff within Legal Services, motivating and mentoring them to better meet the current and future requirements of the service.

**Continuous Improvement**

- Implement proposed changes to current work processes and develop and define proposals for changes in and the formulation of university policy, to consistently improve quality and effectiveness of Legal Service provided and take account of legislative changes.

- Keep up to date with developments in Legal Services and with university developments.

**Performance Criteria**

- Delivery of targets/objectives to agreed specification, time, cost and quality standards.

- Quality of planning and link to strategy.

- Quality and timeliness of advice and recommendations.

- Proposals for policy and procedure meet both internal and external requirements.

- Effective utilisation of finances and resources.

- Effective transfer of skills and knowledge to colleagues and "customers".

- Feedback on effectiveness.

- Generation of new ideas and approaches.

- Quality of innovative contribution.

- Performance of teams/teams against objectives.

- Development of Legal Services team to meet individual and university requirements.

- Image/view of the team.

- Team morale.
# PERSON SPECIFICATION

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Essential/Desirable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educated to degree level or equivalent</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional qualification in a legal practice (e.g. qualified solicitor or barrister)</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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**Knowledge**

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Excellent understanding of the current and changing HE sector</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Up to date knowledge of relevant UK legislation, the regulatory and legal framework within Higher Education and the potential impact of legislative changes</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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**Skills, Abilities and Competencies**

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<th>Essential</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to develop and lead an effective and motivated team</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Ability to develop and sustain positive relationships and work collaboratively with key internal and external stakeholders.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Excellent communication skills, with the ability to able to communicate well in all forms and to a variety of audiences</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Ability to deliver against agreed expectations, making efficient use of resources</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Ability to exercise discretion, diplomacy and judgement, with the skills required to operate in complex political environments</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Ability to analyse complex issues and provide clear, concise, pragmatic legal advice</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Ability to make risk-based decisions in a timely manner</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Ability to react to a fast paced, goal driven environment</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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**Experience**

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<td>A successful track record of leading service improvement and organisational development</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Experience of working in a large complex organisation at both a strategic and operational level</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Experience of working with and influencing senior management including at Board level</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Experience in interpreting legislation and putting it into practical application</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qualified admitted solicitor or employed barrister with a minimum of 6 years’ post qualification experience</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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## PERSON SPECIFICATION

<table>
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<th>Personal attributes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Motivational leadership style with strong team building skills</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Enthusiasm, initiative, drive and patience</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Personal credibility and integrity</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>High motivation towards service excellence and quality</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Sensitivity and empathy with users, colleagues and staff</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates integrity, openness and honesty with a strong commitment to equality and diversity</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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ABOUT LEGAL SERVICES

The Legal Services team supports the University to effectively identify and manage legal risk. The team works collaboratively with both professional services and academic departments to provide pragmatic advice to colleagues and to embed compliance into day-to-day business practices. The team has three key areas of activity:

The Legal team provides legal advice across a range of operational issues, manages the work of our external law firms and oversees the University’s legal spend. The team provides input across a diverse range of matters, including strategic partnerships, international collaborations, dispute management and regulatory compliance, as well as delivering training and guidance materials to staff.

Information Governance provides operational support for data compliance matters, including oversight of subject access and freedom of information requests, the development of training and the provision of technical advice on complex data protection matters. The team works closely with other data-led teams in the University, including IT, Records Management and Business Intelligence.

The Insurance Office arranges and manages all classes of insurance across the University. It is responsible for the management and handling of claims made against the University as well as the business travel insurance registration and authorisation process.
Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

Founded on the principles of excellence, equality and opportunity for all, the University is proud to create an environment that attracts staff and students from all over the world. What we gain from diversity is immeasurable.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, which was developed in partnership with our staff and student communities, describes our commitment to create a culture where everyone can contribute to university life, knowledge and growth.

We want to create a working, learning, social and living environment that will enable all staff and students to achieve their full potential. Our strategy sets out an ambitious set of objectives to succeed in our commitment, but we have a challenging journey ahead. We recognise that we are not truly representative of our communities locally, nationally and internationally. We would like to pay particular focus to gender parity across all levels, particularly in senior roles; the recruitment, retention and success of a more ethnically diverse staff and student community; an accessible and inclusive campus and ensuring that the values and behaviours we expect from everyone embrace inclusive responsibility and leadership.

Opportunity for all
Our outreach programmes and widening participation work have made us one of the most socially diverse universities among our peers. The York Students in Schools (YSIS) programme has been providing a helping hand in the city's classrooms for 25 years, placing around 700 students with local schools every year. It recently introduced a new English and Mathematics tutoring scheme.

A report by The Reform Research Trust in September 2017 ranked York second out of 29 high-tariff institutions for our track record in increasing access for disadvantaged students from 2011/12 to 2015/16.

Wellbeing and support
Students are encouraged to balance their studies with activities and interests to give them a healthier and more rounded student experience. We have invested heavily in support of physical health with new and improved sports facilities, and in mental health through our Open Door counselling and crisis team which now opens in the evenings during term time. We have also developed a support network of staff trained in Mental Health First Aid. University staff have access to wellbeing help and support, and can access advice through our site. Further information on our health and wellbeing support can be found at https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/support/.
THE UNIVERSITY OF YORK

We are a world-class institution, focused on creating an environment of excellence in which all our students, staff and researchers can thrive. Our Research Strategy encompasses our vision that York should provide a home for some of the best research in the world. ([https://www.york.ac.uk/research/](https://www.york.ac.uk/research/))

We are a high-performing member of the Russell Group, ranked 16th in the Guardian's Best University UK Universities 2021 League Table, and 30th in the Complete University Guide 2020. We have been awarded TEF Gold for our research-led teaching which provides "consistently outstanding outcomes for students from all backgrounds".

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy speaks to the core of our values. We hold 16 awards from Athena SWAN, recognising the advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all.

This year we have been shortlisted for Times Higher Education's University of the Year Award in recognition to the University's response to the Covid pandemic. Further details on the nomination and how the University responded to one of the most unprecedented events in our history can be view on [The Year We Came Together - Our Covid-19 response](https://features.york.ac.uk/who-we-are/).

At the heart of the region

The University is deeply embedded in the local community of North Yorkshire. Our values and commitment to the public good have never been more important. We are a hub for sharing knowledge, inspiring collaboration and enriching lives.

Across the University, we are mobilising our knowledge, our people and our resources to tackle the immediate and long-term challenges created by the coronavirus crisis.

[https://features.york.ac.uk/who-we-are/](https://features.york.ac.uk/who-we-are/)
THE UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Attractive workplace

Centred around the picturesque village of Heslington on the edge of the city of York, our colleges are set in an attractive landscaped campus. York enjoys a safe, friendly atmosphere with facilities including bars, shops, theatres and concert halls all within easy walking distance.

The University has undergone an unprecedented period of expansion and renewal since 2000. We have invested in twenty new buildings on the original campus and have completed the first and second phases of a £750m campus expansion. Our investment in new colleges, teaching and learning spaces, laboratories, research facilities and a new sports village mean there has never been a better time to join us.

During this period of change we've worked hard to retain our friendly, informal and collegiate atmosphere, which is important to our core values of inclusivity and interdisciplinarity.

We have a thriving international community and are committed to providing staff moving to York with as much support as possible through our Relocation Package and Welcome Officers.

The University is committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive community - a place where we can all be ourselves and succeed on merit. We offer a range of family friendly, inclusive employment policies, flexible working arrangements, staff engagement forums, campus facilities and services to support staff from different backgrounds.

For further information please visit our employee benefit pages
THE CITY AND THE REGION

The City of York
Internationally acclaimed for its rich heritage and historic architecture, York's bustling streets are filled with visitors from all over the world. Within its medieval walls you will find the iconic gothic Minster, Clifford's Tower and the Shambles - just a few of the many attractions.

But York isn’t just a great place to visit - it’s also a great place to live and work. While nourishing a vibrant cosmopolitan atmosphere, York still maintains the friendly sense of community unique to a small city.

Visit www.visityork.org for more information on the city of York

Shopping, culture and entertainment
York boasts specialist and unique boutiques but also all the high street stores on its busy shopping streets. Alongside them you will find cinemas, theatres, an opera house, art galleries, a vast range of restaurants, live music venues and clubs. York is particularly renowned for its multitude of pubs and bars, from the modern to the medieval.

Housing and schools
Whether you choose to live close to the city, in one of the surrounding villages or further afield, you will find a wide range of housing within comfortable distance of York and the University. For families, the area has a range of excellent schools both in the state and independent sector.

Great location
York is one of Britain’s best-connected cities. Halfway between London and Edinburgh on the East Coast mainline, on intercity trains you can reach London King’s Cross in less than two hours and Edinburgh in two and a half hours. York is also well served by road links, and it is easily accessible from the A1, M1 and the M62.

For those travelling from overseas, Manchester Airport is two hours away and Heathrow Airport just three and a half. Flights from nearby Leeds Bradford Airport provide easy access to mainland Europe. By Eurostar from London St Pancras, Paris is just over six hours away.

Yorkshire
The Lonely Planet guide declared Yorkshire the third best region in the world to visit. There is something to cater to every taste, whether it be the rugged landscapes of the Moors or the Dales, the picturesque seaside towns of Scarborough and Robin Hoods Bay, the gothic architecture of Whitby or the vibrancy of cosmopolitan Leeds.
HOW TO APPLY

Apply online

• Go to [https://jobs.york.ac.uk](https://jobs.york.ac.uk)
• Find this job using reference 10070
• Complete the online application form

You will need to submit your completed application by midnight (local UK time) on 7 December 2021.

What will I need?

We will ask you for details of:

• Your CV
• a letter describing how you meet the requirements of the job and your motivation for application

You will also need details of 2 referees.

Help and assistance

Please direct informal enquiries to Paul Ellison ([paul.ellison@york.ac.uk](mailto:paul.ellison@york.ac.uk)) Recruitment Adviser.

If you have any questions about your application, contact the HR Services team:

recruitment@york.ac.uk
+44 (0)1904 324835