

## Candidate Information

**Position:** Head of Legal Operations  
**School/Department:** Chancellery  
**Reference:** 25/112949  
**Closing Date:** Monday 3 November 2025  
**Salary:** £64,570 - £74,823 per annum.  
**Anticipated Interview Date:** Thursday 20 November 2025

### JOB PURPOSE:

The Head of Legal Operations will play a key leadership role in the delivery of high-quality, timely, and solution-focused legal support across the University. Reporting to the General Counsel, the postholder will be responsible for the management of the Legal Services team, ensuring legal advice is aligned with institutional priorities and delivered efficiently across a broad range of areas including contracts, employment, governance, student matters, and commercial activity.

The role will provide high-level and broad-ranging support to the General Counsel in implementing legal strategy, managing legal risk, and ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and regulatory frameworks. The Head of Legal Operations will also lead on the development of legal policies, frameworks, and training programmes, and will work closely with colleagues at a senior level across the University to embed legal best practice.

### MAJOR DUTIES:

1. Effectively lead, manage and develop the Legal Services team, ensuring the delivery of high-quality legal advice and support across the University.
2. Proactively manage and allocate legal resources effectively to meet institutional needs, including oversight of external legal advice where appropriate. Responsibility for monitoring the performance, engagement and value for money of the University's external legal advisers.
3. Provide expert legal advice on a wide range of matters including contracts, employment law, student issues, information governance, property law, procurement law, litigation matters, intellectual property law and commercial arrangements.
4. Provide high-level support to the General Counsel in identifying and managing legal risk across the University, including contributing to risk mitigation strategies and compliance frameworks.
5. Undertake project management University- wide as required and provide legal input on strategic projects and initiatives, including commercialisation, innovation, partnerships, and institutional development. Ensure projects are delivered on time and to budget.
6. Develop and maintain legal policies, templates, and guidance materials to support consistent and efficient legal practice.
7. Lead with specialist knowledge/ expertise on contract management processes, including review, negotiation, and approval of key agreements. Identify opportunities and solutions.
8. Collaborate with colleagues in areas such as Research Contracts, Information Compliance, Intellectual Property and Internal Audit to ensure legal alignment and support.
9. Proactively lead on the review and development of key policies and procedures of the University taking account of legislative changes and any relevant agreements and regulations.
10. Responsibility for training and capacity-building initiatives delivered by the team in accordance with best practice and to improve legal awareness and compliance across the University.
11. Monitor legal developments and proactively advise existing and forthcoming legislation and its implications for University policy and practice.
12. Advise on matters of corporate governance and company secretarial management of University subsidiaries.
13. Support the General Counsel in the implementation and management of the University's formal risk management processes.
14. Assist the General Counsel in the management of the University's internal audit function.

15. Oversee and ensure compliance in the University's arrangements for safeguarding adults and children at risk.
16. Responsible for management of the Legal Services budget.
17. Foster a culture of professionalism, collaboration, and continuous improvement within the Legal Services team enabling them to perform at their best.
18. Deputise for the General Counsel on operational matters as required.
19. Undertake any other duties as may be necessary from time to time in accordance with the needs of the University and the grade of the role.

**ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:**

1. Qualified solicitor or employed barrister (prior to taking up the post must be registered and authorised to currently practice in Northern Ireland).
2. Proven track record (including recent experience within the last 4 years) with significant post qualification experience relevant to the role, particularly in commercial law, with proven experience of exercising sound, independent judgement on complex legal matters and provision of timely and accurate solution-orientated advice at a senior level.
3. Substantial proven experience to include recent and relevant experience of providing legal advice within a complex and changing statutory, regulatory, and legislative environment, interpreting legislation into practical application and the adaptation of policies and procedures to comply with changing requirements.
4. Proven experience and demonstrable ability to effectively manage legal teams and deliver legal services in a complex organisational environment.
5. Experience of managing legal risk and ensuring compliance with statutory and regulatory obligations.
6. Experience of providing legal advice across a range of activities to managers in a large complex organisation and experience of managing litigation caseload.
7. Experience of drafting, advising on and negotiating contracts.
8. Experience of working with and influencing senior management.
9. Strong demonstrable knowledge of contract law, employment law, and corporate governance frameworks.
10. Demonstrable knowledge of legislation in the context of higher education and related fields and current best practice in the area.
11. Strong organisational and leadership skills, with a commitment to continuous improvement.
12. High level of integrity, discretion, and professionalism.
13. Resilient with demonstrable ability to manage a varied and time-pressured workload.
14. Experience of developing innovative solutions and contributing to strategic planning. Ability to think, operate and contribute at a strategic level.
15. High quality drafting and IT skills producing documents and emails and using effective document management.
16. Excellent communication skills. Ability to communicate clearly and authoritatively to staff at all levels through a range of mediums appropriate for the message.
17. Ability to establish effective and efficient policies and procedures.
18. Excellent effective negotiation and interpersonal skills. Ability to work effectively as part of a team and to motivate a team.
19. Ability to exercise clearly, informed judgement and to be decisive. Ability to work in a consultative and collegiate way.
20. Commitment to a high quality and customer-focused service.

**DESIRABLE CRITERIA:**

1. Experience working in relevant environment e.g including higher education, public sector, or commercial in-house environment.
2. In addition to being registered to practice in Northern Ireland, hold certification to practice in Great Britain and/or the Republic of Ireland.
3. Experience of Charity Law.
4. Experience of providing training on legal issues to a wide range of staff.
5. Demonstrable experience working collaboratively with senior stakeholders and across multidisciplinary teams.
6. Company secretarial experience.
7. Demonstrable understanding of and commitment to QUB's mission, values, vision, and strategic goals.
8. Financial management experience.