



Candidate Information

Position:	Contracts Associate
School/Department:	Queen's Research
Reference:	26/113196
Closing Date:	Monday 23 March 2026
Salary:	£35,136 - £40,316 per annum
Anticipated Interview Date:	Tuesday 31 March 2026
Duration:	Until 30 November 2028

JOB PURPOSE:

As a member of the Contracts Team, play a key role in preparing, negotiating and executing contracts ensuring that the interests of the University are protected in relation to intellectual property, contract research, consultancy and technical services, thereby enabling significant commercialisation outcomes to be achieved.

During the first two years of this post, the Contracts Associate will receive on the job training and development. Subject to successful achievement of performance expectations at Year 1 and Year 2 (as outlined in Additional Information) the post holder will progress to the role of Contract Officer at Grade 7.

MAJOR DUTIES:

1. Contribute to the mission and strategic priorities of the University, particularly in relation to the expansion and diversification of its income base through the protection of the University's position in contracts relating to Intellectual Property (IP), confidentiality, liability, research governance and commercialisation of research.
2. Provide specialist advice and assistance in the preparation, negotiation and execution of a range of contracts and other legal documents, including Research Contracts, Collaboration Agreements, Non-Disclosure Agreements, Material Transfer Agreements, Licence Agreements, IP Transfer Agreements. Assist in the negotiation of disputed contractual clauses and manage any disputes in relation to IP or other contract agreements. Evaluate and advise the University on risk mitigation associated with warranties and liabilities.
3. Liaise with external funding agencies including Research Councils, Government Departments, charities and commercial organisations to negotiate contractual obligations. For each research funding application and commercial funding opportunity ensure correct contract documentation is developed, executed in a timely and efficient manner, recorded and retained.
4. Work with other members of staff and the University's external legal resources to develop and maintain a portfolio of contract templates and implement policies and procedures for optimisation of the contract management process.
5. Maintain an effective register of all contract documentation associated with grants awarded, cross correlating these to the IP register. Implement policy and procedures for undertaking due diligence in relation to IP ownership through analysis of contracts relating to specific inventions, technologies and disclosures.
6. Maintain a register of all Confidentiality Agreements, Confidential Information and Material Transfer Agreements, highlighting specific requirements to be maintained and detailing implications for any IP arising from associated research.
7. Assist in the delivery of specialist contract advice, awareness and training through workshops across the University.
8. Where appropriate, represent the University on external partnerships and liaise with companies and external bodies to promote the University's regional profile and knowledge transfer activities.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

1. An honours degree, preferably in law or related discipline.
2. Relevant experience and expertise in successful contract preparation, negotiation and execution.
3. Experience of successfully building and maintaining relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
4. Well-developed analytical capabilities and ability to analyse complex information.
5. Computer literate in the use of standard Microsoft packages and the Internet.

6. Excellent oral and written communication and negotiation skills, with the ability to build effective working relationships with others.
7. Ability to manage a varied workload and work to tight deadlines.
8. Ability to work on own initiative, and as part of a team.
9. A customer orientated approach to completing tasks and achieving objectives.
10. Willingness to work flexibly.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

1. *A postgraduate or professional legal qualification.
2. *Experience of drafting bespoke agreements independently.
3. *Experience of working with or within a university, a research environment or a technology transfer environment.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

This role is a fixed term position, available until 30 November 2028. The position will commence at Grade 6.

During the first 2 years of employment, the successful candidate will receive appropriate training and development to upskill them in the role specific expectations. Performance will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, however a more formal review will occur at the end of Year 1 and Year 2. Subject to successful achievement of performance expectations outlined below, the Contracts Associate will progress to a Senior Contracts Associate at Grade 7.

Performance Expectations:

Year 1

By the end of year one, it is expected that the Contracts Associate will be able to draft, negotiate and execute standard research contracts/documentation including (amongst others) non-disclosure agreements, material transfer agreements, collaborative research agreements, award sub-contracts, licensing agreements and studentship agreements. They will also be able to effectively manage information and data, understand the applicable Data Protection legislation, be customer orientated, and support colleagues with administration and processes associated with the Contracting Team's delivery of objectives under the Research and Enterprise Delivery Plan.

1. Enhance the University's research collaborations by provision of specialist advice and assistance in preparing, negotiating and executing a range of contracts and other legal documents, including Research Contracts, Collaboration Agreements, Non-Disclosure Agreements and Material Transfer Agreements, Licence Agreements and IP Transfer Agreements.
2. Liaise with external funding agencies including Research Councils, Government Departments, charities and commercial organisations to negotiate contractual obligations.
3. Participate in exercises aimed at improving quality of and efficiencies in QUB's contracting processes.
4. Demonstrate the Core Value of Connectivity by developing positive working relationships with other areas of the University (in particular Research Finance, Research Governance, Business Collaboration, Information Compliance and academic staff) with the aim of working collaboratively to improve existing and new working processes.

Year 2

By the end of year two, it is expected that the Contracts Associate will be able to independently progress standard research contracts/documentation (as outlined above) and more complex, multi-party contractual negotiations.

1. Progress to execution (a) QUB-led, NIHR-funded multi-party Collaboration Agreement and (b) industry-led Innovate UK Collaboration Agreement.
2. Develop expertise in international research partnerships by leading by progressing Horizon Europe Consortium Agreement to execution.

3. Complete UCL training course in “Drafting “Legal” Clauses in Commercial Contracts”.
4. Develop a clear understanding of contractual requirements for medical research and clinical trials with key funders including Medical Research Council.

Informal enquiries may be directed to: Marie Devlin at m.t.devlin@qub.ac.uk.