

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Trainee Solicitor		
Directorate	Resources, Strategy and Transformation		
Reporting to	Training Principal		
Grade	12		
Evaluation ref:	TR0282	Job Family ref:	
Role Purpose			
<p>Required to participate in a comprehensive, structured training programme designed to lead to a qualification as a solicitor. The postholder will undertake a variety of work across various legal practice areas within the Council, gaining hands-on experience and developing a broad understanding of the law, especially public law and practice.</p> <p>Throughout the training period, the trainee will be expected to provide high-quality legal support to the authority, contributing to the effective delivery of legal services. This includes assisting with legal research, advice, drafting documents, attending meetings and supporting casework, all under the supervision of qualified lawyers.</p> <p>The role is intended to build the trainee's competence, confidence, and professional judgement, ensuring they are well-prepared for qualification and future practice as a solicitor within the public sector.</p>			
Accountabilities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of Legal Advice and Services: Under the supervision of qualified lawyers, the trainee is responsible for providing timely and accurate legal advice and support to the Council and its departments. This includes researching legal issues, preparing draft documents, reviewing contracts, and assisting with the preparation and presentation of cases in court or tribunals. As the trainee progresses, the complexity and responsibility of tasks will increase in line with Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA requirements). Diligent Performance of Duties: The trainee must carry out all duties as directed by the line manager or supervising lawyer with diligence, professionalism, and attention to detail. This involves following instructions carefully, seeking clarification when needed, and demonstrating a proactive approach to learning and development. 			

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- **Proactive Learning and Development**

Trainees are expected to take responsibility for their own progress, actively seeking opportunities to gain experience in different areas of law and practice. This proactive attitude is essential for building a broad and practical understanding of local government law.

- **Development of Professional Skills**

The role requires the acquisition and demonstration of practical experience, knowledge, and skills necessary for qualification as a solicitor. This includes developing the ability to identify and analyse legal issues, apply relevant law, communicate effectively with clients and colleagues, and manage a varied workload.

- **Competence and Efficiency**

Trainees should aim to handle matters competently and efficiently, ensuring that the interests of the client department and the Council are protected at all times. This means delivering high-quality legal support and maintaining high standards in all work undertaken.

- **Compliance with Regulatory Requirements**

The trainee must comply fully with all requirements set by the Solicitors Regulation Authority. This includes maintaining an up-to-date training record, attending required training sessions, and completing the Professional Skills Course.

- **Maintaining Professional Standards**

All work undertaken must meet the standards expected of a solicitor in training. The trainee must be able to demonstrate competence in all required areas by the end of the training contract, ensuring readiness for qualification.

- **Undertaking Additional Tasks**

The trainee is expected to undertake any other tasks or responsibilities as may reasonably be assigned by the Training Principal, Head of Legal, or their representatives. This may include participating in departmental projects, supporting corporate initiatives, or assisting with administrative duties.

- **Supporting the Legal Team**

Supporting the effective operation of the legal team is a key accountability. This may involve contributing to team projects, sharing knowledge, and assisting colleagues as needed to ensure the smooth delivery of legal services.

- **Upholding Council Values and Objectives**

Throughout all activities, the trainee is expected to uphold the values and objectives of Somerset Council, acting with integrity, professionalism, and a commitment to public service.

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Knowledge / Experience / Skills		
	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge		
Sound knowledge of core legal principles, including public law and administrative law, with the ability to apply these in a local government context.	X	
Familiarity with the statutory and regulatory framework governing local authorities, including data protection, freedom of information, and equalities legislation.	X	
Awareness of the Solicitors Regulation Authority's Code of Conduct and the importance of confidentiality, integrity, and ethical practice in legal work.	X	
Willingness and ability to keep up to date with changes in legislation, case law, and best practice relevant to local government.	X	
Experience		
Experience (academic or practical) in researching legal issues, analysing complex information, and drafting clear, concise advice or documents.	X	
Ability to work with clients or stakeholders, understanding their needs, and delivering high-quality service, ideally in a legal or public sector environment.	X	
Working effectively as part of a team, contributing to shared goals, and supporting colleagues.	X	
Evidence of managing competing priorities, meeting deadlines, and adapting to changing demands.	X	
Ability to identify problems, considering options, and proposing practical solutions.	X	
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications		
LPC or SQE qualifications.	X	
Commitment to continuous learning and development, including completion of the Professional Skills Course and participation in relevant training.	X	

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Skills		
Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to explain complex legal concepts in plain English to non-specialists.	X	
Strong analytical skills, able to break down complex issues, identify key facts, and draw logical conclusions.	X	
High level of accuracy in reviewing documents, preparing advice, and maintaining records.	X	
Ability to organise own workload, set priorities, and work independently under supervision.	X	
Competent in using standard office software (e.g., Word, Outlook, Excel) and legal research tools.	X	
Ability to build positive working relationships, demonstrate tact and diplomacy, and handle sensitive or challenging situations professionally.	X	
Ability to remain calm and focused under pressure, respond constructively to feedback, and learn from experience.	X	
Working Conditions		
Dimensions of the role		
Working Arrangements		
Somerset Council's Dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.		
Corporate Accountabilities		
Understand, uphold, and promote the aims of the council's equality, diversity, and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do. Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.		

Date: 12/12/2025