



Legal Research Assistant – 1 year fixed term
Start date August/September 2018

Ref: 607719

Salary: £25,626

Location: Holyrood, Edinburgh

Closing date: 4 June 2018

About the role

The post is a fixed term appointment of one year within the Legal Services team at the Scottish Parliament – and it'll be a busy, interesting and fulfilling year with us.

Our work is varied in nature and subject area, covering the full range of devolved matters and it involves a mix of legal research and writing, policy analysis, and administrative work.

Primarily working with the teams supporting parliamentary business - and in particular the team supporting scrutiny of legislation relating to the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU – you'll conduct research into areas of current EU law, commenting on the impact of proposed changes to that law. Your analysis and reports will inform briefing to Committees of the Parliament in their scrutiny of those changes, therefore you'll be adept at summarising the relevant aspects of your research and analysis both orally and in writing.

Reporting to an appointed qualified member of the team, you may also work directly with a number of different solicitors or other support staff. You'll thrive in a fast paced environment and won't be phased by changing demands and priorities.

Duties

The key tasks you will undertake include:

- Research areas of current EU law and proposed changes to that law.
- Research areas of law which are the subject of anticipated Government or Members' Bills.
- Assist analysis and scrutiny of legislation relating to EU withdrawal, including Bills and statutory instruments, for example by monitoring amendments to UK and Scottish Bills.
- Attend committee meetings as an observer and report back to office on evidence given / issues discussed.
- Help solicitors keep up to date with developments in the legal and constitutional implications of EU withdrawal by filtering media, parliamentary and academic reports.
- Present updates on those developments to other lawyers at office meetings.

- Work with researchers in the Scottish Parliament Information Service to plan relevant training for lawyers on the law relating to EU withdrawal and new competences transferred to the Scottish Parliament following Brexit.
- Brief committee members (in the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee) on the purpose, effect and quality of particular Scottish statutory instruments.

About Legal Services

Legal Services sits within the Parliament's Legal Services, Procurement and Audit Group led by Judith Morrison, Solicitor to the Scottish Parliament. There are 18 qualified lawyers and 3 members of the support team. Between September and February we also have a trainee solicitor on secondment from the Government Legal Service for Scotland.

We have two teams supporting a broad range of parliamentary business including: advice on legislative competence of Bills, supporting scrutiny of primary and secondary legislation (including legislative consent to Westminster Bills), assisting Members with developing policy proposals into Bills and advising on parliamentary procedure. We have a third team that provides advice to the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body to enable it to fulfil its role in ensuring the Parliament has the staff, services and facilities it requires to operate effectively. Some examples of the range of this work include employment law, contract, IP, procurement, data protection and FOI. The office also provides advice on constitutional matters and the Parliament's functions within the devolution settlement.

All of this takes place against the backdrop of a fast developing political landscape where issues of the day are debated under the spotlight of media and public scrutiny. There's always plenty going on – the work is high profile and it is rewarding to contribute to the Parliament's vision of making a positive difference to the lives of the people of Scotland.

Skills Knowledge and Experience Required

You'll have, or expect to have by summer 2018, a First or Upper Second Class Honours Degree in Scots law, or other similar academic qualification, at the same level, which provides evidence of relevant knowledge and understanding of Scots public law. A knowledge of EU law is desirable but not essential.

You'll also be able to provide evidence to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and experience:

- Highly developed analytical and research skills: you can accurately identify key elements to legal issues and present clear, logical arguments. You know how to conduct thorough legal research and make appropriate decisions or deductions from information presented.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills. You express thoughts clearly, effectively and succinctly, using appropriate style and language that meets the needs of the audience (which may be comprised of solicitors, clerking colleagues or committee Members).
- Aptitude for independent thinking. You use your own initiative and express your own views and ideas in relation to research tasks, information-sharing and training.

- Ability to prioritise and manage workloads. You demonstrate independent planning, organisation and good time management when working under pressure and the ability to work on tasks alone.
- Strong interpersonal skills to facilitate team working. You create and maintain positive, professional and trusting working relationships with a wide range of people and can adapt communication style to different circumstances.

A knowledge of the legislative process and Parliamentary procedures is useful, although not essential. We will offer you training and support appropriate to the needs of your role.

Application process

The first stage of the recruitment process will be an application form and a covering statement on why you have applied and what interests you. The covering statement should be no more than 300 words and is part of the application form. To apply please complete the application form and send it to jobs@parliament.scot by 5pm, **4 June 2018**. Remember to provide evidence of the skills, knowledge and experience detailed above. The next stage will be an interview examining how you demonstrate the skills, knowledge and experience required for the post.

To start the interview we'll ask you to demonstrate your legal analysis skills by giving a short presentation about what you think was the most significant public law case in Scotland in recent years and why.

Please note that interviews will take place week commencing **25 June 2018**.

Benefits

We offer a great range of benefits including 41.5 days' leave (including public holidays), the opportunity to join the Civil Service pension arrangement and flexible working arrangements and family-friendly policies.

Salary

The salary for this post is £25,626.

You will be paid monthly in arrears by Bank Credit Transfer directly into your bank or building society account on the last banking day of the month.

Other Information

Hours

The way the Parliament works means that different groups of staff work varying hours and patterns. You may have to work longer hours when Parliament is sitting and reduced hours during recess periods. For this reason we have very progressive flexible working hours (FWH) arrangements. You will be required to work within these arrangements.

Notwithstanding your individual working pattern, if you are employed on a full time basis, you will be contracted to work 1623.6 hours per year. This is the equivalent to a 37 hour week, excluding breaks, annual leave and public and privilege holidays. If

you work on a part-time basis, you will be required to work the number of hours specified in your appointment letter.

Bandwidths are the hours within which staff may work and accrue time under the FWH arrangements. The bandwidth is from 7:00am to 8:00pm for all work areas and from 7:00am to 10:00pm for Sub Editors, the Deputy Editor and the Editor in the Official Report.

Annual Leave

Your annual leave allowance will be 30 days. Our annual leave year runs from 1 September to 31 August. If you take up your appointment during the course of the leave year, your annual leave allowance will be proportional.

In addition, you will also receive 11.5 days public and privilege holidays. They are normally taken at fixed times of the year. If you are required to work on a public or privilege holiday overtime arrangements will apply.

If you work on a part-time basis, your annual leave and public and privilege holiday entitlement will be pro-rated.

As with working hours, there may be restrictions on annual leave when Parliament is sitting. In any event you may not take annual leave unless it has been agreed, normally in advance, with your line manager.

Pension

If you are currently a member of a Civil Service Pension scheme, you would normally remain in the same scheme as the one you were in with your current employer providing your break in service is less than 28 days. However, as always there are exceptions due to the recent pension changes and your personal circumstances. If you are offered this post and you would like further information about which pension scheme you will be eligible for, please complete the [Pensions Questionnaire](#) on the CSP website in advance.

Age

The SPCB does not operate a retirement age policy. This means that there is no upper age limit beyond which you would be automatically retired and you are free to continue in employment for as long as you wish subject to the normal rules concerning [Performance](#), [Attendance](#) and [Conduct](#).

Travelling and Other Expenses

We pay travelling and other expenses if you incur them whilst on official duty. However, we will not reimburse the cost of normal daily travel between home and office.

Unless we have stated otherwise in the advert, we do not reimburse travel or other expenses you incur in attending an interview or assessment with us. We are happy to explore alternative arrangements if this causes you difficulty.

Probation

You will be on probation for six months. Confirmation of your appointment is dependent on the satisfactory completion of this probation period, taking into account your job performance, conduct and attendance.

Outside and Political Activities

As an employee of the SPCB, you may not take part in any activity that would in any way conflict with the interests of the Parliament or be inconsistent with your duties and responsibilities.

You may not take part in national political activities, although you may seek permission to take part in local political activities. If permission is granted, it will be subject to the observance of general rules relating to possible conflicts between your official responsibilities and your political activities.

Health and Safety

The SPCB is committed to promoting health and safety as a priority issue. Its aim is to take appropriate and reasonable steps to ensure that it conducts its business in such a way that employees and other people who may be affected by its work are not exposed to risks to their health and safety.

Data Protection

Under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998, information provided by you will be processed and stored to provide management information for recruitment and equal opportunities monitoring purposes. We will also use this information to form the basis of your personnel record if you are successful for the job. Otherwise we will not retain this information for any longer than it is needed and we would normally dispose of paper records after 6 months. You will have the right of access to any information held about you.

Suggestions

We want all applicants to feel that they have been treated fairly, even if they are not appointed. If you have any comments or suggestions about the way in which this recruitment campaign has been handled, we would really like to hear from you.

Referees

Please do not send references or testimonials with your form. If you are successful, we will approach previous and/or current employers for a reference. We can only make a formal offer of employment once we have received these references. If you have no employment history we may approach any school, college or university you have attended.

Health Assessment and Security Clearance

If you are successful at interview you will be asked to complete a health assessment form. If necessary we may ask you to attend a medical assessment. Assessments are carried out by our occupational health supplier in the Parliament building. The reason why we carry out a health assessment is to make sure that the job you have

applied for is suitable for you. It is also to find out if we need to carry out any adjustments to help you do the job.

Security clearance is required for this post. If you are successful we will ask you to complete a security questionnaire. This form will explain our security vetting policy. We can only make a formal offer of employment once the security clearance process is complete.

Visa and Work Permits

There are no nationality restrictions on who the SPCB employs. You must however check whether there are any restrictions on your stay or your freedom to take or change employment in the United Kingdom before you apply for a post. If you are successful at interview we will make a complete enquiry into your eligibility to work in the United Kingdom.

Please note that this document is provided for information only and does not form part of the SPCB's terms and conditions of employment.

Equal Opportunities

The Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and treatment and to eliminating unfair discrimination in its employment practices. It will seek to ensure that all job applicants and staff are treated fairly, with respect and without bias. No job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment than others because of her or his: gender; gender identity; sexual orientation, marital or family status; racial group (includes colour, race, nationality, national or ethnic origin), religion, religious belief, or a similar philosophical belief (or lack of any of these); disability (unless such treatment is objectively justified); part-time or fixed-term contract status (unless such treatment is objectively justified); and trade union membership status/activities.