

## Job Description

---

|                        |                                |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Job Title:</b>      | Legal Counsel                  |
| <b>Department:</b>     | Legal and Immigration Services |
| <b>Reports To:</b>     | General Counsel                |
| <b>Jobs Reporting:</b> | None                           |
| <b>Salary Grade:</b>   | USG 14                         |
| <b>Effective Date:</b> | March 2021                     |

---

### **Primary Purpose**

The Legal Counsel will provide a full range of legal services and strategic legal guidance to senior leaders, faculties, schools and administrative units, in order to manage legal risks and enhance the University of Waterloo's (University) mission. Assesses legal risks and ensures the University's reputation and interests are protected.

### **Key Accountabilities**

#### **Client Services**

- Researches, identifies and provides updates on case law, legislative requirements and legal trends affecting the University in all areas, and assists with developing strategies and controls to mitigate legal risks
- Drafts and negotiates contracts, affiliation, and placement agreements between the University and external entities related to a complex range of University activities (e.g. student placement agreements and student practicums, etc.)
- Provides legal expertise related to commercial law, including contract negotiation, drafting, and review
- Ensures compliance with administrative law principles
- Assists with litigation matters, including drafting legal documents, and working in collaboration with the General Counsel and senior leaders on strategy development
- Offers consultation related to intellectual property law to a variety of academic and administrative stakeholders regarding non-disclosure agreements licensing agreements, information technology, and trademark issues
- Provides legal advice on employment matters at the University
- Explains legal agreements and other related documentation to a variety of stakeholders, ensuring that all parties understand their obligations
- Ensures legal best practices are leveraged across a range of University activities
- Strategic, legal expertise provided on a variety of complex issues to senior leaders, faculties, schools and administrative units
- Decisions are made with a full understanding of the legal issues and risks
- Assists the General Counsel in providing proactive strategic legal advice to further the University's goals and objectives and to protect the University's legal and reputational interests in planning, developing and implementing strategic objectives and priorities.
- Proactively manages, monitors, and reports files to the General Counsel
- Proactively identifies legal issues, risks and makes strategic recommendations to a diverse range of internal clients

## Job Description



- Legal Counsel consults with other University stakeholders and/or external sources, to make recommendations to resolve legal issues
- Provides strategic legal advice and legal risk management on corporate issues related to all University legal issues
- Provides legal advice and legal risk analysis with the view of seeking a resolution in the best interests of the University in advance of the matter reaching the litigation stage
- Provides and arranges seminars and education-oriented initiatives regarding legal issues affecting the University
- Participates as an active partner with LIS by assisting with managing legal matters at the University

### **Problem Solving**

- The University's legal, operational, and financial risk is mitigated and monitored
- Agreements, documents, and contracts are effectively negotiated and drafted
- Sound decisions based on a mixture of analysis, experience, and judgment
- Decisions and recommendations are aligned to the University's mission, strategies, and objectives
- Research into resolutions to newly presented issues, identifying and recommending legal solutions
- Decision-making for politically sensitive or precedent setting situations as appropriate
- Investigating and responding to a variety of complex legal issues and inquiries, in consultation with the General Counsel
- Collaborating with the General Counsel and stakeholders on strategy development related to litigation
- Negotiated settlements must be approved by the General Counsel

### **File Management**

- Superior analysis, negotiation, and legal presentation skills
- Legal counsel leads complex and/or legal issues relating to various matters from inception to the conclusion of the file
- Maintains independent carriage of files and independent clients within the University, with the oversight of the General Counsel with regular and ongoing briefings for her information and/or to seek her instructions
- Legal Counsel assesses and advises on the legal risks including the financial and public relations risks to the University on complex legal issues
- Provides legal counsel on a variety of high profile issues that have media attention
- Ensures legal best practices and legal file management
- Legal Counsel negotiates, reviews and revises a range of general corporate and commercial documents during the lifetime of various transactions
- Legal Counsel develops processes, templates, and other tools to increase efficiencies and improve effectiveness of the services provided by LIS

### **Advising and Guidance**

- Providing strategic, legal advice and guidance related to legislative compliance, corporate, and commercial matters
- Managing legal risk related to contractual and compliance issues
- Legal Counsel responds to legal claims and legal inquiries directed to the University
- Persuasive in writing and presenting legal opinions in a neutral manner
- Legal Counsel reaches and makes decisions on legal interpretations and applicability of statutes and case law to a particular fact situation

### **Leadership Management**

- Collaborates with the General Counsel, internal stakeholders, and external stakeholders to mitigate legal risk on behalf of the University

*\*All employees of the University are expected to follow University and departmental health and safety policy, procedures and work practices at all times. Employees are also responsible for the completion of all health and safety training, as assigned. Employees with staff supervision and/or management responsibilities will ensure that assigned staff abide by the above, and actively identify, assess and correct health and safety hazards, as required.*

### **Required Qualifications**

#### **Education**

- Bachelor of Laws (L.L.B) or Juris Doctor (J.D.) or equivalent law degree is required from an accredited law school in Canada

#### **Professional Qualifications and Licenses**

- Active membership with the Law Society of Ontario
- Licensed to practice law in Ontario and in good standing

#### **Experience**

- Minimum three (3) to five (5) years of experience, practicing law and providing legal advice to complex organizations

#### **Knowledge/Skills/Abilities**

- Knowledge of a broad range of legal matters and of statutory law affecting universities
- Knowledge of specific areas of law (including but not limited to: civil litigation, employment law, general corporate and commercial law, information technology, intellectual property, including: copyright, trademark; and privacy law)
- Significant breadth of knowledge related to university operations
- Clear and critical thinking, superior writing and reasoning skills, persuasiveness
- High ethical standards, with a strong commitment to legal ethics, which is exhibited in knowledge and practice, and professional responsibility
- Ability to effectively drive and manage change initiatives that align with organizational strategies, support legal risk mitigation and enhance operational legal efficiencies
- Exceptional communication, analytical, writing, research and interpersonal skills
- Conflict resolution skills with an ability to proactively identify potential conflicts and support actions to facilitate its resolution
- Ability to provide guidance to assist others in solving complex situations affecting the University's business
- Ability to collaborate across internal and external boundaries to meet common objectives, improve outcomes and support work beyond the unit
- Verbal communication skills to translate information into easily understood terms, summarize information, and provide a rationale for action
- Ability to understand University guidelines, policies, and practices
- Competency to maintain confidentiality and treat sensitive information with discretion
- Ability to evaluate future implications of strategies, and consider the outcomes of situations that could develop from decisions
- Problem solving skills and excellent professional judgment
- Negotiation and influencing skills to effectively advocate needs and maintain relationships
- Ability to demonstrate a high level of professionalism and to work effectively and efficiently with internal and external clients at all levels of the organization
- Ability to make decisions and recommendations that are clearly linked to the

## Job Description



organization's strategy and goals

- Intermediate computer skills in Microsoft Office Suite
- Familiarity with University policies and procedures preferred
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and resourcefully
- Demonstrated flexibility to participate in any file at various stages of the file
- Inclusive relationship style that enables individual to build on successful relationship with peers, other departments, stakeholders, executive partners, and external parties

### Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Acts as legal advisor to senior administrative leaders, Deans, Chairs/Directors, and external legal counsel
- **Level of Responsibility:** Responsible for providing advice to colleagues at all levels that they must consider carefully before making a decision (i.e. providing legal advice; providing an interpretation of existing legislation and its corresponding implications)
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Legal Counsel has full decision-making authority for all matters within the scope of this job description and collaborates with and seeks input and instructions from the General Counsel regularly.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** This position requires regular mental and visual concentration while working on the computer, writing and reviewing documents for details and accuracy. Listening concentration is often required to respond to requests for information from individuals and when interacting with telephone callers, resolving problems, communicating with senior management, university administrators, external partners, and outside agencies, and institutions.
- **Working Environment:** This position is primarily office based. This position requires some travel for court and other administrative tribunal appearances, continuing professional development, and professional activities, nationally and internationally.