

Legal Recruitment News - 3rd February 2021

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Good morning - this is the second edition of Legal Recruitment News. It includes our legal job market report, locum hourly rates, a new independent legal advice service, careers advice, an article on surviving the pandemic, using video CVs and suggested interview answers.

Legal Job Market Report - February 3rd 2021

Here is our summary of the current state of the legal job market:

Locum Recruitment - Busy

January has been incredibly busy compared with our usual caseload. New assignment numbers are up over 100%. There is still a huge disparity with locums available to assist remotely and locums willing to travel to work. We have requests from firms across the country looking for assistance solely on an office based requirement and not remote (usually not set up for it), A lot of firms seem to be continuing as normal without remote working, and although clearly not necessarily any pressure on existing staff to work in the office (as per the recent Gazette correspondence on the issue), feedback to us from locums is that most prefer not to. There are plenty of conveyancing and private client locums available for remote work still.

The locum market is not just about conveyancing and private client roles of course - we have seen an increase in commercial litigation, corporate commercial & in house, coupled with a higher than usual demand for family law. Locum assignment updates here:

<https://www.interimlawyers.co.uk/category/locum-solicitor-updates/>

Permanent Recruitment - Busy

It has picked up on the permanent front and the market is buoyant. Firms are registering property, private client and family vacancies with us mainly, although there have been a large number of requests for ad hoc flexible assistance on an ongoing basis. Vacancies can be viewed here:

<https://www.ten-percent.co.uk/vacancies/>

Law Firms for Sale - Busy

We have fielded quite a few new enquiries from partners thinking about selling. The market is busy and biggest demand at the moment appears to be for 'shell' law firms. Full list at <https://www.jonathanfagan.co.uk/law-accountancy-firms-for-sale/>. For a confidential discussion please ring 01824 780937 and speak to Jonathan Fagan or email jbfagan@ten-percent.co.uk.

Ten Percent Legal Recruitment Statistics - January 2021

General Statistics for January 2021 (comparison is with January 2020)

New permanent vacancies added: 36 (33)

New locum vacancies added: 36 (16)

New candidates registering: 72 (55)



Hourly Rates of Pay for Locum Solicitors and Legal Executives

February 2021 Locum Hourly Rates - Solicitors and Legal Executives

NB: Remote Working Role rates are about 10-20% lower.

Child Care - £35-45 per hour.

Civil Litigation – £28-35 per hour.

Commercial Contract - £35-75 per hour

Commercial Litigation – £35-75 per hour.

Company Commercial – £45-85 per hour.

Construction (non-contentious) £60-75, (contentious) £45-60 per hour

Conveyancing – £30-40 per hour.

Commercial Property – £37-£45 per hour

Employment Solicitors – £30-£45 per hour.

Family Solicitors – £32-40 per hour.

In House Counsel: 0-3 years PQE – £30-45 per hour,

In House Counsel: 3+ years PQE – £45-105 per hour

In House Interim Lawyers (SMEs) - £55-65 per hour

Insolvency - £35-60 per hour.

IP - £50-85 per hour

Local authority rates: variable.

Personal Injury and Clinical Negligence – 3+ years PQE – £25-£40 per hour.

Professional Negligence - £45-£55 per hour.

Wills & Probate – £35-£50 per hour.

NB all rates exclude agency fees. The rates are for self-employed locums billing firms directly on a weekly basis.

Charity Donations 2021 - £24,000 Fund - Suggestions

Welcome

Our charity bank account currently has over £24,000 in it, which means that it is that time in the year again when the trustees of the Ten Percent Foundation meet to discuss our donation of 10% of the annual profits of the Ten Percent Group of websites, which include Ten Percent Legal, Ten Percent Financial, Jonathan Fagan Law Firm Sales, TP Transcription and Chancery Lane.

We avoid charities with top heavy staffing & admin costs and welcome any suggestions from clients, candidates and general readers of our newsletters. We particularly like small charities with limited funds. Examples of donations made over the past 20 years can be found on our website at www.tenpercentfoundation.org. To suggest a charity please email Jonathan Fagan at cv@ten-percent.co.uk. We consider all requests very carefully.

Video CVs

This week we finally have a client who has specifically asked for anything but written CVs to be sent over for a fairly junior role. We had sifted through a number of applications and produced the shortlist of 5 CVs for the client to review. The feedback was fair enough: "These CVs look the same. How can I decide who to interview?"

We came up with the idea of putting questions to each applicant and asking them to video their response. The first list of questions the client has proposed are:

Talk about your experience in private practice, and your like and dislikes of practice life.

What specific attributes could you bring to the team, that you feel similar applicants would not bring?

What is the best advice you could give to a property landlord at this current time who is suffering from the consequences of Section 24?

Do you view this position as a stepping stone, or are you seeking to settle with us for a long term career? Please give your reasons.

The procedure of videoing responses is very simple - the candidates can use their smart phones and then upload the videos for us to forward across to clients. You can do this as a firm in any event - OneDrive, Google Drive or Dropbox will all suffice (video files tend to be huge and not emailable). If you are one of our clients we can set you up on our SSL secure upload service (we also operate high security [transcription services](#) hence the system).

Pros?

Instant decisions can be made without needing to spend time interviewing.

CVs that may look weaker may appear stronger once you have made a personal connection to the candidate from seeing them.

Weeds out the candidates who are not particularly bothered as it takes some effort to go through this procedure.

Cons?

A person's appearance in a video could influence you in the wrong direction.

Senior candidates very unlikely to acquiesce to this and take-up by solicitors for example would be extremely low.

You have to watch the videos rather than spend ten seconds reviewing a CV.

Our thoughts

We suspect this may be a good addition for recruiting for junior roles, where CVs can look very similar due to lack of life experience to date. However we very much doubt its usefulness recruiting senior staff, who may well resent being put on the spot!

New Independent Legal Advice Service

We are always happy to include a mention for new services set up by our clients and candidates

and Joe Phelan from Phelan Independent Limited has been in touch.

Phelan Independent Limited offer independent legal advice (on matters such as personal guarantees, gift letters and occupiers consent forms) guaranteed within 48 hours of instruction. Advice is given by a fully qualified solicitor, with a fixed fee of £295 inc VAT for the first person and £150 inc VAT for any additional person requiring advice on the same matter. Travel included in the price.

For details please email joe@phelanindependent.co.uk or call 07845707515.

Should I go back and re-sit my A levels (DDD) - I want to join a Magic Circle law firm.

A sad question from someone who clearly has their eye on the riches of central London and the hugely disproportionate salaries advertised in most glossy training contract guides.

The quick answer is definitely not, move on with your life and make decisions based on your current position. The longer answer is below..

Why Corporate Law?

Firstly work out why you are contemplating the action you are planning. Is it based on any evidence that going down the corporate law route is for you? What experience do you have of corporate law in practice, and if you do not have any experience why are you trying to make a decision without backing it up without any evidence that this is the future for you?

Your A Levels are real

I suspect that regardless of what you do now in terms of your grades, the DDD you got at A level will always count against you and it does not matter what HR managers and recruiters tell you, certain law firms will never let you forget the poor A level results.

We have been asked this question numerous times before and quite a number of students have considered a similar action. I am yet to come across anyone who has completed their degree and then gone back to do A levels and then managed to get the job they set off to get in the first place.

Academic Consistency

The difficulty is that law firms are looking for consistency, whether this is academic consistency or consistency in your life to date. Someone who has got DDD at A level, gone off to do a degree and then gone back to do more A levels is going to stand out a little bit from the norm, and not necessarily for the right reasons.

GCSEs

You have not said in your question what you got for GCSE, because this again is another example of academic consistency, and if you did not get straight As or A*s (or 9s as they now are), will you then go back and re-sit all your GCSEs to try and get the perfect results?

University Grades

More interestingly in your question, you have not indicated what degree class you are likely to be getting. You are attending a university with a reasonably good reputation, and a high 2:1 or first class degree from this institution will drastically improve your chances of success as you make your

way through the legal profession. A lower level degree is going to impact on your future prospects.

Extenuating Circumstances - do they matter?

You mention in your email that you had extenuating circumstances which resulted in the DDD, but I'm afraid in most cases law firms simply shrug their shoulders. If they have 3500 applications for 40 training contracts and they are picking between 400 of those applications with perfect academic grades, then someone with potential extenuating circumstances is not really going to stand much of a chance. This does not mean that you do not have a future in the law; you simply need to look beyond the perceived top institutions where all the money is and look further down the food chain at the other firms, where you stand just as much chance of getting a training contract and progressing your career as everyone else.

Advice

Personally I think you are probably worrying about the wrong thing. Someone who has got DDD at A level needs to prove during their degree that they are not struggling with the academic constructs of law and the legal system, so the degree is the key for you. Yes there are going to be certain firms you are not going to be successful applying to because of your A level grades, but you must have known this when you started your law degree, because presumably you researched the future career prospects of law students before committing to £27,000 worth of tuition fees.

If you have managed to show future employers that you fully understand law through your high academic results on your degree and academic consistency, then I see no reason why you would even contemplate returning to do A levels, which are really an entrance way into doing your degree. Your future legal career is very likely to be restricted by decisions and actions you took some years ago, and it is important to be looking in the right places for jobs, and to have realistic expectations in the outcomes.

Summary

In summary, my answer is that I don't think you should be returning to do your A levels, but similarly I think you need to make sure that you understand exactly what it is you are going forwards into, using your time and energy to getting a good degree and as much work experience as possible in order to give you evidence to make grounded decisions on which will affect your future career.

Solicitor becomes Gestalt Counsellor

One of our long standing candidates has changed career become a full time Gestalt Counsellor, specialising in bereavement and life choices. Angela Mutum is a former city lawyer who spent the majority of her legal career in the Government Legal Service before branching out into locuming. She has now moved across full time into counselling.

Here is an article Angela has written on how we live our lives in the midst of a pandemic.

"You can't see the water you're swimming in." is a phrase which comes to my mind when I think about how our lives have changed in 2020 as a result of the pandemic. There are the obvious changes such as restrictions on where we can go and who we can see but I am aware there are other, more subtle, changes in my behaviour which I confess I find it hard sometimes to understand. I just know that they exist.

I am reluctant at the moment to leave my home and have been since the lockdown was imposed in March. This reluctance has gone through a number of phases and there have been different

reasons behind each phase. I am aware that, whatever the reasons have been for my reluctance, they have had little to do with a fear of contracting the virus. The risk of contracting the virus is real but it has never been one that has concerned me unduly. In Gestalt terms, it is a phenomenon which forms part of the field. The risk of catching Covid-19 is however only one phenomenon in my subjective field when I consider going outside.

This week, I have realised that I do not like going to the shops at the moment because I find the experience somewhat overwhelming. I have become aware that, when out shopping, I am hurrying unnecessarily all the time and just can't wait to get home. When I am in a shop, I am preoccupied with whether I am following "the rules" (social distancing, one-way systems) and anxious about encountering aggression from others if I transgress "the rules". I find the rules irksome as they interfere with my ability to go about my shopping my way, for example turning back to a shelf in the greengrocers in order to look at the produce if it has caught my eye on the way past.

To an extent, my anxiety is a product of what psychotherapists call a "projection", i.e. my unconscious working assumption is that the environment in the shop is hostile and is replete with rules which I cannot avoid breaking. However, our projections are frequently based in reality and the current rules and restrictions on our daily lives are not merely a fantasy. They are real. And breaking them can have real, adverse consequences for us.

As the pandemic unfolds, the constraints on our daily lives wax and wane and the environment in which we are operating continually changes. We are faced with decisions in circumstances where we would not have previously regarded ourselves as making decisions at all: whether to visit an elderly relative, whether to travel or book a holiday, whether to give someone a lift in our car. There is, in the midst of this pandemic, a new layer of complexity in almost everything we do. And with all this comes additional anxiety, particularly for those of us for whom "following the rules", "doing the right thing" or "being good" is our default setting, if you will.

There are no easy answers. We are all balancing our own conflicting needs, and often the conflicting needs of others too, and each of us must work out what factors are really influencing our decisions, and in what measure, in order to navigate the healthiest path for ourselves through the apparent chaos brought about by Covid-19. I do not need to go shopping every day but, if I hardly go at all, I will, at best, end up with a very boring diet or, at worst, may end up with an unhealthy diet which will not best protect me during the winter to come.

To return to my question: how do we go about our lives in the midst of a pandemic? I do not have an answer - we must each find our own answer to that question - but I do have one suggestion. My suggestion is that we treat ourselves with the kindness and understanding which says: "There is no perfect answer or perfect outcome. At best, I will always make mistakes. But I will forgive myself for them and learn from them. And I will encourage others to do the same."

For further details regarding Angela's services as a Gestalt Counsellor please visit <https://www.angelamutum.com/>.

Interview Question 43 – Do you know how to motivate other people?

Advice

This is a question that again you could answer with a yes and no but by doing so you would almost certainly miss out on the opportunity to give an answer that demonstrates your management experience. Give two specific examples if at all possible but vary them. This can be in a non-work

environment if you are still at the start of your career or if you are working and have been for a number of years it is probably quite important to give work examples as opposed to social or leisure activities.

Examples of Answers

“Yes. When I worked as part of a team on a project to rebuild a community centre in a disadvantaged part of Blackpool. At times the project felt as if it was never going to finish and insurmountable problems began to arise unconnected to the work the team was doing. It was important to keep everybody motivated and usually team dynamics mean that each member of the team has different things that motivate them. Some team members need encouragement and praise to get them to perform at their best, others need extra work and targets to achieve and some people simply need financial incentives to get themselves motivated to increase the task in hand. I have always felt it is important to identify these individual motivations and to use these to drive the team forward as a whole. I think as a manager having the ability to identify what motivates individuals is key to getting the best out of any team. Without identifying individual requirements and needs it is virtually impossible to have a successful team.”

Career Coaching & CV Review Services - free and paid

Ten Percent Legal has been coaching lawyers and reviewing CVs for over 20 years. We have worked on CVs at all levels of experience, from law students through to senior partners.

This is a guide to our services, both free of charge and paid. [Testimonials for our careers services can be found here.](#)

CV Reviews

We provide free CV reviews, providing you are willing for us to post our review live on our website - example of a recent one is here: <https://www.ten-percent.co.uk/cv-review-commercial-paralegal-with-experience/>

We review CVs as a paid service (£64.99) and application forms for all kinds of legal work (£75). We will review your CV or form, provide full feedback and suggestions on how to improve it as well as any additional follow up advice needed. [Details here.](#)

Career Coaching

We are offering a career coaching session with one of our consultants for a fixed price. One hour consultation by Zoom, usually on a Monday morning. We are always happy to answer any questions by email at no cost (we post our answers on our blog). [To request a session please click here.](#) Feedback on our legal career coaching service (established in 2001) [can be found here.](#)

CV Guides - no charge

CV Guides - [take a look at our CV guides](#) - all available at no cost online. <https://www.ten-percent.co.uk/cv-advice/>

Articles include: CV Myth - fitting a CV onto two pages, 20 second guide to writing a CV, Adding Extra Value, CV Writing Tips for Senior Solicitors (if you don't bother reading this it basically says write a lot more!), CV Writing for NQ Solicitors, Skills Sections, 5 Common Mistakes to Avoid, CV Writing for Locum Work, Avoiding Waffly Nonsense, Lying on CVs, Applying for Jobs after 25 years in the same role and many, many more. We have been writing CV guides for almost 20 years so there are quite a few.. Full index here - <https://www.ten-percent.co.uk/cv-advice/>

Low Cost Recruitment for Solicitors - Ten Percent Unlimited

Recruit as many staff as you like over a set period of time (3 or 5 years) for a low monthly fee starting at just £65 plus VAT. We offer this service to law firms and accountancy practices. There are no restrictions on numbers and no other similar services exist in the recruitment industry. You can save £000s on your ongoing recruitment. Includes unlimited job posting on www.chancerylane.co.uk. Interested? Call Clare Fagan on 0207 127 4343 or email clare.fagan@ten-percent.co.uk. www.tenpercentunlimited.co.uk.

How to be a Locum - pdf guide

We have produced a guide on how to be a locum. This includes sections on getting work, realistic expectations, hourly rates, popular fields of law, payment, insurance, umbrella companies and much more. Available for download or to read online from www.interimlawyers.co.uk.

Outsourcing Typing

TP Transcription Limited is our subsidiary company offering outsourced typing work by legal and medical secretaries since 2003. We work on thousands of hours of recording every year for law firms, companies, the NHS, academic institutions and individuals and are preferred suppliers to a number of institutions. Try the service out - email your recording to anna@tptranscription.co.uk, upload your file using our secure systems at www.tptranscription.co.uk or call 01745 813306.

About Ten-Percent Legal Recruitment

We are a specialist legal recruiter, covering both permanent and locum roles across the whole of the UK. Over 11,000 lawyers are registered with us and we have access to a range of external and internal job boards and websites where we do not have candidates available ourselves. We also assist with recruitment advice and assistance, regularly advising partners and practice managers on suitable salary and package levels.

Our company is unique for a number of reasons, including the fact that we are not shy to publish our fee structure and also donate a chunk of our profits to charity each year. We offer unlimited permanent and locum recruitment for a fixed monthly fee or one-off fees depending on the job. We also buy and sell law firms. We donate 10% of our profits annually to charity, hence our name.

We have three recruitment consultants, Jonathan Fagan, Clare Fagan and Peter Gresty. As a team we have over 40 years of experience in the legal profession.

Ten-Percent Legal Recruitment also owns Interim Lawyers, a specialist locum service. We operate an outsourced UK based typing service as well – www.tptranscription.co.uk and are preferred suppliers to a number of institutional clients and law firms across the UK and overseas.

The Ten-Percent Group of Legal Recruitment websites gives 10% of annual profits to charity. We have maintained this tradition since we formed the company 20 years ago. So far over £125k has been donated to charities in the UK and Africa including LawCare, Unlock and Reprieve.

We hope you have enjoyed reading our newsletter and look forward to hearing from you if we can assist further.

Warm regards

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