



Graduate Internship Programme 2026-2027

Background

The Law Society of Northern Ireland is seeking to recruit exceptional law graduates with the talent and desire to positively contribute to the administration of justice in Northern Ireland (NI).

The positions represent an opportunity to work at the highest levels of the justice and legal system in NI, build networks, and accelerate the careers of the successful graduates.

We are recruiting for a number of roles:

- An internship with the Law Society's Professional Conduct Department working to uphold professional standards within the solicitor profession in Northern Ireland.
- Two Judicial Assistants to work directly with the judiciary. One opportunity exists to directly support the Lady Chief Justice and the Court of Appeal, while another candidate will work to support the assigned High Court Judge with responsibility for Judicial Review. These positions are being established in conjunction with and are funded by the Office of the Lady Chief Justice (OLCJ).

The positions will run for approximately ten months from September 2026 to June 2027.

About the Law Society

The Society is the professional body for the solicitors' profession in Northern Ireland, representing c.3000 practising solicitors working in the private, public, business, community, and voluntary sectors across Northern Ireland.

Functions of the Society include acting as the regulatory authority for the solicitor profession in NI, setting and enforcing standards to ensure the provision of excellent legal services and ensure public confidence, and representing members on key issues, including advocating on their behalf. The Society also seeks to safeguard the rule of law, protect human rights, and promote access to justice.

The Society is structured into four Departments with four principal areas of responsibility:

- **The Professional Development Department** – We educate and admit solicitors to the profession and provide Continuing Professional Development for qualified solicitors.
- **The Professional Conduct Department** – We regulate the solicitor profession, maintaining the independence, ethical standards, professional competence, and quality of services offered to the public.
- **The Member Services Department** – We serve our members' by providing a range of professional services to support their needs.
- **The Policy and Engagement Department** – We represent the profession in our dealings with Government and wider society.

About the Roles

The roles provide an exciting opportunity for recent law graduates to gain experience within a challenging, varied, and dynamic environment.

Professional Conduct Intern:

Working in Law Society House within the Society's Professional Conduct Department, the successful candidates will work closely with our regulatory teams to support the oversight and enforcement of professional standards. The Society is the regulatory authority which governs the professional conduct of our members. We aim to:

- Maintain and uphold high standards of professional conduct.
- Protect clients and the public.
- Uphold public confidence in the provision of legal services.
- Apply regulatory powers in a manner guided by the public interest.

The successful intern will be offered the unique opportunity to gain experience in regulatory compliance of the solicitor profession including:

- Assisting in the investigation of complaints, reporting and presenting to Committees;
- Conducting research on regulatory subjects, analysing data and reporting to senior members of staff;
- Supporting the monitoring and inspection team in the supervision of solicitors and firms, to ensure effective compliance of the provisions of the Solicitors (NI) Order 1976 and subsequent regulations;
- Supporting the teams in administrative tasks and maintaining records; and
- Assisting with internal projects including contributing towards the formulation of policy and guidance to members.

Judicial Assistants:

Two successful applicants will have the opportunity to work directly as a 'Judicial Assistant', supporting the work of Judges of the Court of Judicature.

The roles will be based in the Royal Courts of Justice and involve carrying out the following duties:

- Attending hearings and discussing relevant legal issues with the assigned judge.
- Carrying out research in connection with particular cases and preparing reports on particular points the judge would like to see addressed.
- Proof-reading draft judgments.
- Drafting press summaries as required and in a language which non-lawyers can comprehend under the direction of the Lady Chief Justice's Office Head of Judicial Communications.
- Assisting with the assigned judge's extra-judicial, communication and educational activities as required throughout the year, including assisting with preparation for and attending events with the assigned judge.
- Liaising with staff in the Lady Chief Justice's Office and Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service as necessary with regards to cases and listings.

Person Specification

Essential Criteria

Qualification

- Candidates must, at the time of application, possess an undergraduate degree in law (minimum of 2:1 or above).

Candidates will be asked to demonstrate that they possess the following key competencies:

Research

- Strong analytical skills, including the ability to assess relevant information and summarise this into logical, clear papers which present well-reasoned, evidence-based conclusions and proposals.
- Ability to deliver work to meet specified deadlines, familiarity with online research tools, particularly legal databases.
- Strong IT skills including Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

Policy

- Working knowledge of the mechanics of government, in particular the passage of legislation from the earliest stages of draft proposals, the public consultation process, and the institutions of justice in this jurisdiction and elsewhere.
- Strong interest in the wider policy arena, including research output in important public and private sector organisations.
- Knowledge of the legal sector and justice system in Northern Ireland, including different agencies and mechanisms, and in particular, the role of solicitors, barristers, and the judiciary.

Communication

- Excellent written and oral communication skills which can match the content of a presentation to the intended audience to maximise impact and further the objectives of the Society.
- Versatility, in particular the ability to work independently and as a part of a team, to show initiative and to exercise sound judgment about priorities of workload as well as the content of material.
- Strong interpersonal skills and ability to find the most effective ways of working with others. Evidence of determination, resilience and a desire for personal development is important.

Desirable Criteria

- Possession or pending graduation from a master's degree in law.

Key Benefits

The Graduate Internship Programme provides a developmental opportunity for law graduates making the transition from study into the workplace. The successful candidates will have the opportunity to gain experience of:

- Working within a complex, dynamic environment
- Working as part of a team and working directly with senior management
- Preparing and presenting analysis and developing policy proposals
- Observing and contributing to high level meetings and decision-making processes across the Society, including Committees and Council
- Work directly with senior members and leaders of the legal profession
- Gain insight into decision-making in complex legal matters

Terms and Conditions

Salary: £23,755 per annum (pro rata for the period of the contract)

Hours: Full time, Monday to Friday

Annual leave: 25 days per annum (pro rata for the period of the contract)

The Professional Conduct and Policy and Engagement Intern will be situated in Law Society House, 96 Victoria Street, Belfast, with the potential for some homeworking, following a probationary period and subject to business need.

The Judicial Assistants will be situated in the Royal Courts of Justice, Chichester Street, Belfast. The duties of this post make it unsuitable for hybrid working.

Application

Candidates who wish to apply for the position(s) must submit a completed application form by email. Handwritten applications or CVs will not be accepted. Applications must be submitted to monitoringreturn@lawsoc-ni.org no later than 5pm on **Monday 8th June 2026**.

Selection Process

Should it be necessary to shortlist candidates who meet all the eligible and desirable criteria, candidates possessing First Class degree classification will be given priority.

If required, further shortlisting will take place based on an assessment of how well candidates meet 'Essential Criterion 2: Research'.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to a face-to-face interview. There may be additional exercises within the selection process to allow for a full assessment of skills and ability.

Due to the volume of applications received, communication will be via email. Candidates must ensure they provide an up-to-date email address and monitor appropriately.

Reasonable Adjustments

Applicants should contact Helen Claney on Tel: 028 9622 7422 to request any reasonable adjustments to the application, assessment or selection process.

Queries

All queries about this opportunity should be directed to helen.claney@lawsoc-ni.org