

Job Description

Job Title: CAJ Senior Legal and Policy Officer (legacy)

Responsible to: CAJ Senior Solicitor

Background

The Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ) is an independent non-governmental organisation that seeks to secure the highest standards in the administration of justice in Northern Ireland by ensuring that government complies with its responsibilities in international human rights law. In particular, the organisation works in the areas of safeguarding the peace process, combatting impunity, policing and justice, racism and migrant rights, promoting equality and tackling prejudice. CAJ takes no position on the constitutional status of Northern Ireland and is firmly opposed to the use of political violence. CAJ currently employs 7 full time staff and has a cross-community membership.

Job Purpose

The post-holder will focus on legal and policy work relating to the legacy of the Northern Ireland conflict, in line with the CAJ strategic objectives of combatting impunity and safeguarding the peace process. The post will focus on legacy interventions along with research and policy work and supporting litigation. The post holder will run and develop a Legacy Practitioner Group of NGOs, lawyers and academics. The post will also have a focus on contemporary policing and justice issues relating to the present day application of 'emergency' type laws and policies and respond to inquiries. The post is line managed by the CAJ Senior Solicitor. The work includes the delivery of agreed objectives further to funding secured from OAK through the Northern Ireland Human Rights Fund.

Main Duties:

Casework and Litigation, the post-holder will:

1. Support CAJ solicitors in litigation undertaken by the organisation in the area of legacy, including maintaining case files, communications, client care, and assisting with applications for legal aid or other funding and support where appropriate.
2. Support the Senior Solicitor in reviewing and responding to human rights inquiries from individuals, and groups or others representing individuals to CAJ and maintain appropriate records.
3. Assist Senior Solicitor with maintaining legal case files and legal administrative work.
4. Participate in the Legal Interventions Subgroup of the Equality Coalition.

Policy and advocacy work, the post-holder will:

5. Undertake research and policy responses and interventions in the areas of legacy policy, including seeking that mechanisms to address the legacy of the past in NI are compliant with the ECHR and broader relevant human rights standards relating to combatting impunity.

6. Undertake research and policy responses in relation to contemporary policing and justice issues relating to the present day application of 'emergency' type laws and policies.
7. Collaborate with other CAJ staff to pursue non-legal strategic interventions in the areas of legacy and contemporary policing and justice issues, where appropriate
8. Run and develop the CAJ-convened Legacy Practitioners Group with NGOs, (including Amnesty NI, the Pat Finucane Centre, Relatives for Justice and Public Interest Litigation Service, PILS NI), lawyers and academics to coordinate sectorial interventions and advocacy.
9. Engage with UN and Council of Europe human rights mechanisms on legacy policy and assist with the dissemination of the International Expert Panel report on Impunity and the Northern Ireland conflict.

Finucane Inquiry

10. Assist in an advisory and monitoring capacity in relation to the public inquiry into the murder of Pat Finucane, bench marking against ECHR Article 2 and broader human rights standards.
11. Establish, with PILS, an observer hub to facilitate through student and other volunteers, an observer team at hearings the inquiry, to develop narrative records.

Organisational, the post-holder will:

12. Represent CAJ as and when appropriate.
13. Supervise interns as appropriate.
14. Undertake such administrative duties as may be appropriate, and support CAJ in work within the Human Rights Partnership and Human Rights Trust.
15. Undertake on request media work related to their areas of work and expertise.

Other duties

The Senior Legal and Policy Officer (Legacy) be required to carry out any other reasonable duties as are required by the CAJ Senior Solicitor.

Terms and Conditions

This post is a three year contract, with a potential extension subject to funding.

Hours of working

The postholder will be required to work 35 hours per week and will be based at the CAJ office in Belfast.

Salary

The salary scale for the Senior Legal and Policy Officer (Legacy) is at NJC Scale PO3 starting at Point 33, £44,075 pa plus 8% employer pension contribution.

Holiday entitlement

The postholder will be entitled to 30 days' holiday in addition to statutory holidays.

Person Specification

	<i>Essential</i>	<i>Desirable</i>
Education and Qualifications:	Primary degree in law, social sciences or another relevant discipline (or 3 years' relevant experience).	Post graduate qualification in a relevant area Professional qualification in a relevant area, including as a solicitor or barrister.
Knowledge and Experience	At least two years experience of high level research, analysis or policy work in a relevant area OR At least two years year experience as a lawyer or legal advisor in a relevant area. Experience of writing policy related submissions and/or research and making representations on/or challenging policy decisions. Excellent knowledge of international & domestic human rights instruments. Good knowledge of combatting impunity and policing and justice issues.	Experience of inquest proceedings. Experience of lobbying and advocacy. Experience of media engagement and/or public presentations.
Skills/ Aptitude:	Excellent (oral and written) communication skills, interpersonal skills and administrative and organisational ability Able to work on own initiative and as part of a team, and demonstrate diplomacy, good judgement and discretion.	Social research skills Ability to empathise with and engage with vulnerable persons.
Commitment:	Strong commitment to equality and human rights (as provided for in international human rights standards).	
Circumstances	Available for occasional evening and weekend work	