



Senior Legal Officer

General Information

- Salary – BALPA pay band 4 (Current starting salary £65,268 rising to £72,728 after three years).
- Permanent contract.
- Full time but we are open to part-time and flexible working requests for this role.
- Location – BALPA, One Heathrow Boulevard, 286 Bath Road, West Drayton. BALPA's hybrid working policy applies to this role which allows working from home up to 3 days per week (pro-rata).
- Reports to the Director for Legal and Governance.
- Other benefits include a defined contribution pension scheme and 30 days of annual leave (rising to 32 days after 5 years' service) (pro rata).

About BALPA

BALPA is the trade union and professional body representing pilots and helicopter crews in the UK. We have around 10,000 members and are recognised in around 20 companies.

BALPA is currently in a period of reform and improvement, working to modernise and put members at the front and centre of our union. When our General Secretary was elected in 2024 she recommended an independent review into BALPA's culture. The culture commission was published in 2025 and we are now in the process of implementing the recommendations from the review. It is an incredibly exciting time to join our team and play a leading role in developing our Association for the better.

BALPA represents members both individually and collectively with workplace issues ranging from individual advice on disciplinary and capability issues to collective industrial bargaining on pay, terms and conditions, to professional issues around flight safety, policy and regulation.

BALPA have a thriving network of pilot workplace representatives in our Company Councils and eleven flight safety and flight policy committees of members in addition to our small team of staff.

BALPA is affiliated to the Trades Union Congress (TUC); the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF), the European Cockpits Association (ECA); and the International Federation of Airline Pilots' Associations (IFALPA).

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The Voice of UK Pilots: Safety, Strength, Unity

Job Description

Summary

BALPA's Senior Legal Officer will be responsible for delivering advice and representation services in employment and industrial law to members and their BALPA representatives.

BALPA is currently in a period of reform and modernisation. All BALPA staff are expected to show willingness to learn, change and develop and contribute to a positive, supportive and collaborative workplace culture.

Key Duties

Main responsibilities

- Working closely with BALPA's Director for Legal and Governance and wider team delivering high-quality advice and representation service to members, reps and National Officers.
- Work with the Director for Member Engagement to continue to grow BALPA's membership and increase our density of membership, with a focus on securing recognition in target organisations.
- Provide expert and specialist guidance and support to the Director for Legal and Governance on developments in the Law relevant to employment and the wider aviation industry.
- Drafting and responding to consultation documents with specific regard to the Employment Rights Act 2025.
- Under the direction of the Director, undertake initial case assessments, and advising National Officers, who apply for legal assistance on behalf of members on employment related matters.
- To prepare cases for and to represent individual members in pursuing redress in the relevant forum.
- Working with the Director to design and agree appropriate training for Workplace Representatives, undertaking research and delivering training to support the casework, policy and educational work of BALPA.
- To support the Director for Legal and Governance in respect of industrial casework and advice to SLT and National Officers.

- To work closely with the Legal Executive and provide support/assist with queries from external solicitors on employment casework.
- To assist with internal investigations, under the instruction of the Director for Legal and Governance and/or the General Secretary.
- To support the work of all BALPA on industry wide aviation matters as may be required by the Director for Legal and Governance and SLT members.

Building Relationships

- Work with the Director in identifying areas of development and growth within the Trade union movement
- Develop and maintain good working relationships with BALPA staff and representatives on the NEC, Legal Services Committee, and other Committee's and their membership.
- Develop and maintain good working relationships with all Office holders, including the Honorary President and Honorary Vice President of BALPA
- To work closely with the Legal Executive and provide support/assist with queries.
- To work closely with our external lawyers in progressing cases and reviewing advice.
- To support the work of all BALPA on industry wide aviation matters as may be required by the Director for Legal and Governance and SLT members.

Communications and Influence

- To represent BALPA in the media when appropriate.
- To represent BALPA at meetings across the trade union movement and wider pilot organisations as directed.
- To participate in meetings and training of BALPA representatives .
- Work with the Director for Communications in reviewing and providing input to publications and other materials.

Work Practice and Working Culture

- To promote a positive and inclusive culture with a collaborative team which is open to new ideas and change.
- To undertake any duties that are reasonably in scope of the role as directed by the Director for Legal and Governance or the General Secretary.

(Please note that this job description is not an exhaustive list of duties and may be reviewed from time to time).

Person Specification	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge and Experience		
Experience of working in a legal advice environment, preferably a trade union or professional association.	x	
Experience in advising and representing members in employment tribunal cases, including undertaking advocacy at tribunal hearings.	x	
Experience and understanding of collective bargaining.	x	
Knowledge of UK employment, equality and trade union legislation.	x	
Knowledge and understanding of trade unions and particularly trade union governance and Rule Books.	x	
Qualified employment solicitor status		x
Knowledge of the aviation industry.		x
Building Relationships		
Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to communicate effectively with emotional intelligence.	x	
Ability to be calm under pressure, dealing with difficult situations showing both empathy and robustness with an ability to manage expectations.	x	
Act with credibility and integrity to gain trust in a short space of time.	x	
Skills and Judgement		
Solution and outcome-focused with excellent analytical and problem-solving skills.	x	
Legal research skills, making use of both paper-based and electronic legal resources.	x	
Excellent judgement and decision-making skills.	x	
Communication and Influence		
Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal.	x	
Handle sensitive information maintaining confidential information.	x	
Working Practices		
Ability to manage high work levels and meet competing demands while ensuring meeting key deadlines.	x	
Embrace change and contributes ideas to continuously improve the representation we give to our members.	x	
Excellent attention to detail with strong planning abilities.	x	
Understanding and following BALPA's strategies, policies and processes.	x	
Willingness to travel as appropriate (including occasional travel abroad).		x
Working Culture		
A willingness to learn, to develop and contribute to a positive culture that is open to new ideas and change.	x	
An ability to work well with colleagues in a supportive and collaborative environment and contribute positively to good workplace culture.	x	