

Job Profile Comprising Job Description and Person Specification

Job Description

Job Title: Lead Tribunal Officer	Grade: PO3
Section: Special Needs Assessment Service (SNAS)	Directorate: Children's Services
Responsible to: Special Needs Assessment Service Manager	Responsible for:
Post Number/s:	Last review date:

Working for the Richmond & Wandsworth Better Service Partnership

We're Richmond & Wandsworth Better Service Partnership, the shared public service team for Richmond and Wandsworth Councils. Like any local authority, our role is to deliver the agenda of our elected members on behalf of the people who live and work in our part of the world. We deliver key services to our communities including social care, public health, children's services, housing and regeneration and environmental and community services.

Our joint workforce creates efficiency and resilience by bringing more creativity to the way we work, more objectivity and adaptability too, helping us deliver better services for all our residents.

We're here to help our communities thrive in a changing world, and to be there for the people who need us most we believe we need to keep adapting. That's why, at Richmond & Wandsworth Better Service Partnership, you'll be at the forefront of innovation in local government, and we'll invest in you and offer you opportunities to grow in a way only our unique organisation can.

Job Purpose

To lead on the management of all medium complexity SEND appeals and support the Tribunal and Mediation Manager in delivering a fair, lawful, and timely response to formal disputes. The Lead Tribunal Officer will act as the key point of legal oversight for cases below the most complex level, provide strategic input into appeal decisions, and supervise junior officers when required.

This role blends expert legal understanding with people management, service improvement, and a strong focus on communication and early resolution.

Specific Duties and Responsibilities

1. Provide legal and procedural oversight for Tribunal cases handled by the team, ensuring responses are lawful, robust, and person-centred.

2. Directly manage a caseload of appeals relating to Sections B, F, and I, including attendance at hearings where appropriate.
3. Provide Case supervision and professional support to Tribunal Case Officers and Tribunal Officer.
4. Ensure timely preparation and submission of Tribunal paperwork, including review and sign-off of others' drafts.
5. Monitor the implementation of Tribunal outcomes and contribute to service-wide reflection and learning.
6. Work closely with the wider SEND team, Educational Psychology (SCPS), schools, and other partners to promote inclusive practices and ensure appropriate placements and provision decisions are made.
7. Support the delivery of a legally compliant and efficient SEND service—adhering to national legislation, local policy, and the SEND Code of Practice, with specific attention to mediation, appeals, and equality law.
8. Play a key role in developing and maintaining practices that minimise the risk of legal challenge, including Tribunal appeals, judicial reviews, and complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman.
9. Deliver training and guidance to the wider SEND team to build legal awareness and early resolution approaches.
10. Take a proactive role in regional and local dispute resolution efforts. Represent the Authority at SEND Tribunals and work with senior leaders and operational teams to reduce the volume of appeals overall.
11. Provide expert guidance for EHC Coordinators, particularly around complex and high-risk cases, offering guidance and oversight where needed.
12. Ensure Tribunal rulings are acted upon promptly by overseeing timely updates to Education, Health and Care Plans.
13. Promote a parent-focused approach in all aspects of Tribunal-related work, helping to build trust and transparency with families.
14. Guarantee that parents, carers, and young people understand their rights in relation to the Tribunal process and are clearly informed about available resolution routes.
15. Work collaboratively with the SEND Tribunal and Mediation Manager to identify themes, reduce escalation, and strengthen trust with families.
16. Analyse service data to inform decision-making, identify trends, and support consistent, fair outcomes in EHC assessments, planning, and annual review processes.

17. To undertake other duties as required by the SEND Tribunal and Mediation Manager, commensurate with the grade, role and function of the post.

Generic Duties and Responsibilities

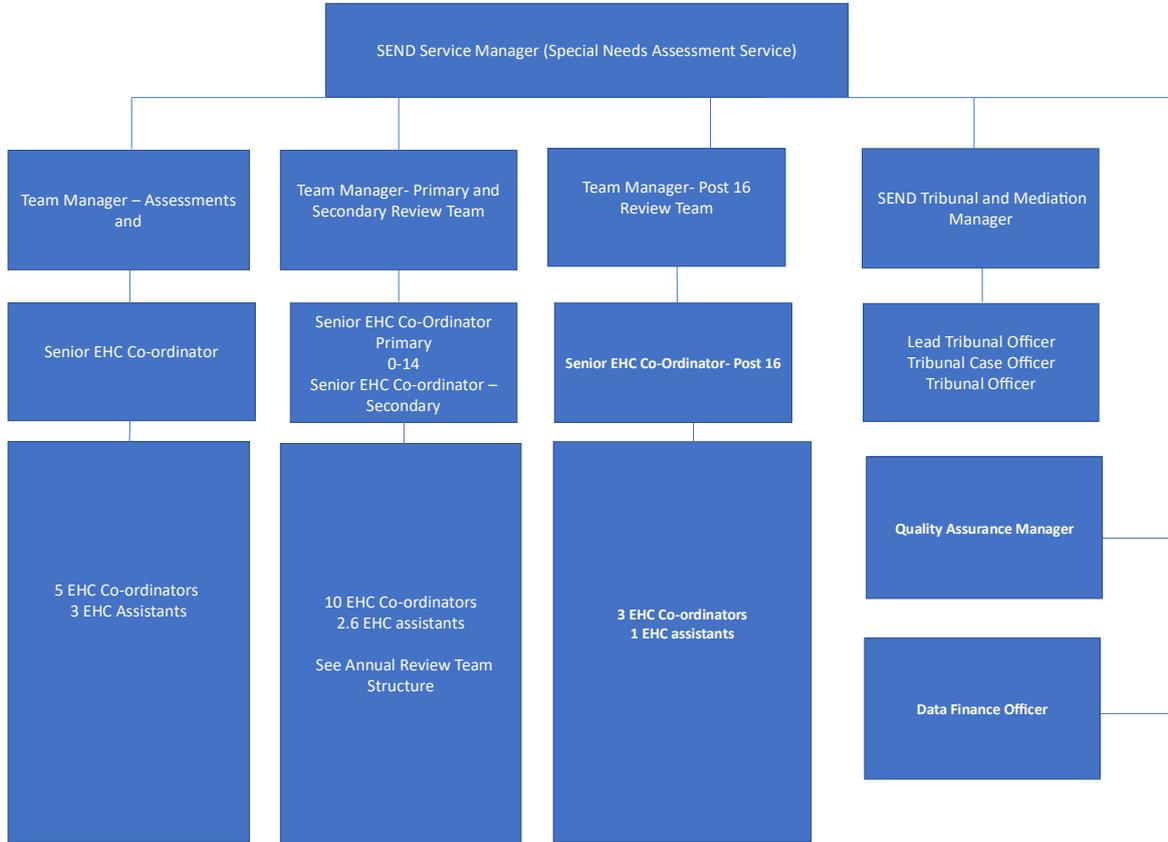
- To contribute to the continuous improvement of the services of Richmond & Wandsworth Better Service Partnerships.
- To comply with relevant Codes of Practice, including the Code of Conduct and policies concerning data protection and health and safety.
- To adhere to security controls and requirements as mandated by Richmond and Wandsworth procedures and local risk assessments to maintain confidentiality, integrity, availability and legal compliance of information and systems
- To promote equality, diversity, and inclusion, maintaining an awareness of the equality and diversity protocol/policy and working to create and maintain a safe, supportive and welcoming environment where all people are treated with dignity and their identity and culture are valued and respected.
- To understand both Councils' duties and responsibilities for safeguarding children, young people and adults as they apply to the roles within the Councils.
- The profile is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the duties the post holder will carry out. Other reasonable duties commensurate with the level of the post, including supporting emergency and priority situations, will form part of the role.

Additional Information

N/A

Current Team Structure

Official



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Our Values

THINK BIGGER

EMBRACE DIFFERENCE

CONNECT BETTER

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Our Values are embedded across Richmond & Wandsworth Better Service Partnership and throughout all roles and responsibilities at all levels of the organisation. Please [familiarise yourself with our values](#) as they are an integral part of our recruitment and selection process.

Person Specification Requirements			Assessed by A/I/T/C (see below for explanation)
Knowledge	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
A good knowledge of the Children & Families Act (2014); SEN Code of Practice 2015 and Education Act 1996 and any subsequent revisions or new legislation is essential; experience of applying it in practice is highly desirable.	X		A/I
Excellent knowledge and understanding of current issues in education for children and adults with complex needs, including safeguarding.	X		A/I
Excellent understanding of the roles, function and services of key partner agencies/services working with disabled children /young adults and their families,	X		A/I

particularly health services, schools, colleges.			
An understanding of the role of elected Members.	X		A/I
Experience	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
Proven experience leading complex casework and writing persuasive legal statements.	X		A/I
Proven track record of overseeing a range of responsibilities and co-ordinating service delivery in a multi-disciplinary statutory environment.	X		A/I
Experience of working collaboratively with education, health and social care professionals, schools and other education settings and children and families in needs assessment and delivery.	X		A/I
Experience of managing complex cases including complaints and appeals to the Tribunal.	X		A/I
Significant experience working in a multi-agency setting at a senior level.	X		A/I
Significant experience of working in a legal arena for the last 5 years.		X	A/I
Skills	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
Ability to supervise and develop staff, promoting reflective and high-quality practice.	X		A/I
Able to work flexibly and effectively under pressure and to be resilient and solution focused when facing challenges.	X		A/I
Excellent and highly developed negotiation and communication skills.	X		A/I
Able to communicate effectively and present complex information, including clear and concise reports to managers and partnership groups.	X		A/I
Demonstrable ability to make decisions in relation to children and young people based on sound assessment of needs and appraisal of available options.	X		A/I
Good ICT skills which will enable you to prepare paperwork and bundles for Tribunal.	X		A/I
A strong personal commitment to continuing professional development.	X		A/I
Able to ensure that equality of opportunity, valuing diversity, respect for difference and anti-discrimination are integrated into	X		A/I

practice.			
Qualifications	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
Degree level educated, or professional equivalent experience.	X		A/I/C
Evidence of continuing professional development.	X		A/I/C

A – Application form / CV

I – Interview

T – Test

C - Certificate