

Trainee Solicitor (EO) Information Pack

Welcome from General Counsel

Rhys Davies



I am delighted that you are interested in applying for the post of Trainee Solicitor at the Independent Monitoring Authority (IMA).

The successful candidates will join the IMA at an exciting time. The role provides an opportunity to contribute to the developing understanding of the Withdrawal Agreement between the UK and the EU.

You will join a small and dynamic team of lawyers and will have the chance to work on a broad range of work. We advise on public law, EU law, immigration law, analyse legislation and conduct litigation on behalf of the IMA. You will work with colleagues across the IMA including advising the Board and the Chief Executive.

We look forward to receiving your application.

About the role

Job Title	Grade	Duration	Salary
Trainee Solicitor	EO	Two-year fixed term	£28,585 - £30,044 Prior to successfully completing the required training contract, a 24-month transitional period will apply during which you will be offered a permanent appointment as a Legal Adviser at Senior Executive Officer (SEO) grade working towards Grade 7 (£41,348) grade working towards Grade 7 (£56,802)

*The Trainee Solicitor role is a fixed term appointment of two years. If appointed and you successfully complete the required training contract, a 24-month transitional period will apply during which you will be offered a permanent appointment as a Legal Adviser at Senior Executive Officer (SEO) grade working towards Grade 7. During the transitional period, you will be expected to successfully complete the objectives and meet the performance standards of the Grade 7 Legal Adviser Framework. In accordance with business needs, you will be provided with the support, training and opportunities to develop the skills, knowledge and expertise to achieve this goal.

Starting salary will normally be offered at the minimum of the band. Existing Civil Servants or those transferring from accredited Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) on level transfer will move on current salary or the pay range minimum, whichever is higher up to the maximum of the pay range. If you transfer on promotion, you will move to the new pay range minimum or receive a 10% increase, whichever is higher.

Location: The IMA is currently based at the Civic Centre, Oystermouth Road, Swansea, SA1 3SN.

The IMA currently operates informal, non-contractual hybrid working arrangements with a regular requirement to attend the office in Swansea (around 40% of contractual working hours over the course of a year) for in person working in the office (our Swansea Office or through direct contact operational activity (e.g. meeting with stakeholders and citizens, attendance at court etc). Some of this time is mandated by business activity but the remaining time is not fixed and can be managed in discussions with line managers to provide flexibility at an individual level. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact HR@ima-citizensrights.org.uk

Pattern of Working: Due to the nature of the role this is a full-time post. The IMA offers a flexi time scheme.

Note to existing Civil and Public Servants: The IMA is not a Civil Service employer. Any current Civil Servants recruited to the IMA on a permanent basis will cease to be Civil Servants. If you are a member of the Civil Service Pension Scheme, you will be eligible to continue in this scheme. We will honour continuous service dates for Civil Servants and employees of accredited Non-Departmental Public Bodies and Arms' Length Bodies for contractual purposes in relation to entitlements for annual leave, sickness absence, entitlement to Maternity/Paternity/Adoption Leave and completion of probation up to the maximum entitlements in the IMA. Employment with a previous employer or the Civil Service will not count as part of your continuous service for statutory purposes.

Are you looking for a truly varied role where you will be involved in a range of matters including inquiries, litigation and complaints?

This is an exciting time for the IMA and some of the work we have been doing includes:

- A range of [litigation](#), including a landmark judicial review of elements of the EU Settlement Scheme, and important interventions on novel and contentious questions of interpretation of the Withdrawal Agreement
- The IMA's first [inquiry](#) on delays in the issuing of Certificates of Application under the EU Settlement Scheme
- Reviewing [legislation](#) from each of the different governments across the UK which cover a range of subjects including student finance, social security, immigration and the recognition of qualifications
- You can read more about this work and more on our [website](#)

The advice will be provided in the context of:

- A range of [litigation](#): the IMA was successful in a landmark judicial review of elements of the EU Settlement Scheme, and has undertaken important interventions on novel and contentious questions of interpretation of the Withdrawal Agreement before all courts of the UK, from the county court and tribunals, to the Supreme Court and potentially the Court of Justice of the EU
- IMA inquiries: the IMA has concluded its first [inquiry](#) on delays in the issuing of Certificates of Application under the EU Settlement Scheme and has commenced its second on delays in the determination of applications under the EU Settlement Scheme
- [Compliance](#) and [intelligence](#) work: the IMA carries out a range of compliance and intelligence work looking at the actions of public authorities, identifying where there are problems but also highlighting good practice. This includes looking at the experience of individuals entering the UK, accessing student finance, healthcare and housing assistance, the experience of looked after children and the rules which govern the immigration status of those citizens within our responsibility
- [Legislation](#) from each of the different governments across the UK and Gibraltar which cover a range of subjects including student finance, social security, immigration and the recognition of qualifications

You can read more about this work and more on our [website](#).

Purpose of the role

We are expanding our Legal team to help support this work and are looking for a Trainee Solicitor to join our current team.

We are offering a truly varied role that will give wide exposure across the full range of legal matters requiring input from the IMA Legal Directorate. The role will offer a unique opportunity to develop your skills in a supportive but challenging environment.

You will work to a Senior Legal Adviser, within a current team of 9 lawyers (comprising 3 Senior Legal Advisers 5 Legal Advisers and 1 Trainee Solicitor) within the Legal Directorate of the Independent Monitoring Authority, reporting to the IMA General Counsel.

As a Trainee Solicitor, you will be expected to contribute to the successful delivery of legal services within the IMA. You can expect to assist in all aspects of the IMA's work, including in relation to inquiries, legislation monitoring, litigation, complaints in addition to contribution to the development of training materials and guidance. You will have the full support of all colleagues both from within the Legal Directorate and from colleagues across the IMA.

As part of your training, it is likely that you will be expected to undertake a short period of secondment with another public sector legal department or solicitor's firm, to ensure that you receive a breadth of experience of working within the legal sector.

We offer any tailored learning and development required for you to thrive in this role and you have support and guidance to progress your legal career.

Essential skills

You will have:

- a minimum of a 2:2 honours degree although this does not have to be in law. [Alternatively, if you hold a Certificate of Academic Standing or Equivalent Means from the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA), you will be eligible to apply. Fellows and graduate members of CILEx who have satisfied the SRA's academic stage of training are also eligible
- either passed the Legal Practice Course (LPC) or both the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) 1 and SQE 2 by 1 September 2025

And you will be able to demonstrate the following:

- excellent legal research skills
- good drafting skills
- good written and verbal communication skills
- accuracy and attention to detail, planning and organising to deliver work to tight deadlines
- ability to build effective working relationships with a range of colleagues and work as part of a team



For the Citizens'
Rights Agreements

Behaviours

Essential skills:

We will assess you against these behaviours during the selection process:

- Making Effective Decisions
- Working together
- Communicating and Influencing
- Delivering at pace

What to expect working in our Legal team



Lee Cooper

Senior Legal Adviser

I joined the IMA in 2023, having spent the previous part of my career in government. The legal work is intellectually stimulating, challenging and rewarding. The working environment in the Legal Team is always collegiate, friendly and supportive. Given the newness of the Agreements and our ever-developing understanding of their impact, there is regular opportunity for open discussion of burning issues, where views are shared freely and the involvement of lawyers at all grades is encouraged and valued. If you enjoy the full-fat, interpretive dimension of the law at its most fundamental and would like to belong to a team whose work has a direct impact on the lives of citizens, this is the job for you.



Lisa Salkeld

Senior Legal Adviser

I joined the IMA in February 2021. Working as a lawyer in the IMA is exciting, and every day is different. As a small organisation, everyone is truly valued and is listened to. The legal work is extremely interesting, and I learn new things every day, I could be looking at legislation in the morning and filing court documents in the afternoon. There are plenty of social opportunities and the IMA is really invested in training and developing staff. If you enjoy the law, then I would encourage you to apply to join us.

What to expect working in our Legal team



Alex Griffiths

Legal Adviser

I joined the IMA whilst completing my Solicitors Qualifying Exams with little experience or knowledge of public law and having never worked within the public sector. The members of the Legal Team are incredibly welcoming and helpful which was invaluable as a new employee. Despite my original lack of experience, the team took the time to support me in developing the skills I would need to succeed in my role.

One thing that stands out about working for the IMA is the encouragement to engage in professional development whether this be directly related to your role in Legal or in connection with the wider organisation. Taking those learning and development opportunities enabled me to build confidence in working in this interesting area of law and apply those skills and knowledge in all areas of work of the Legal Team from litigation to legislation and the internal governance of the organisation. This has provided great experience and variety during the early stages of my legal career.

The IMA is not only a great place to develop your career but the frequent opportunities to engage with colleagues both on work related issues and socially outside of work creates a welcoming and friendly work environment.

What to expect working in our Legal team

Gareth Pembridge

Legal Adviser

When I joined the IMA three years ago, I enjoyed the challenges of working in a relatively new, Legal team in a developing legal subject area, applying the text(s) of the Withdrawal Agreements for the benefit of EU EEA citizens, as well as playing a part in the wider development of the team.

The legal work/advice required is intellectually stimulating and each day affords different opportunities to work closely alongside IMA colleagues and to represent the IMA in our work working with UK Public Bodies and Government (both at UK level and devolved) to uphold citizens rights. To help meet the IMA's strategic objectives and as most of the legal issues are still developing in nature, there is the need for the IMA Legal team to be able to continuously apply that on-going knowledge via the provision of timely legal support and advice. Therefore, being flexible is key for the role.

The best part about the IMA for me, is the teamwork across all Directorates and the friendly staff environment.

Further information about the role and Legal team can be found by watching our [Trainee Solicitor video](#).

The IMA is an exciting place to work. We have progressive policies and a commitment to learning and development

The IMA supports all staff to develop the skills and strengths you need to excel at your job and reach your full potential.

Find out more about what it's like working at the IMA in our [recruitment video](#)

Our people are entitled to:

Pension

- A Civil Service Pension - Choose from a defined benefit pension scheme with a generous average employer contribution of 28.97% or a defined contribution arrangement
- [Find out what benefits a Civil Service Pension provides](#)



Learning & Development

- Minimum of 10 days learning and development a year
- We offer any tailored learning and development required for you to thrive in this role and you will have support and guidance to progress your legal career



Further benefits of working for us

Annual Leave

- 25 days a year (increasing to 30 days after five years' service)
- One privilege holiday a year plus eight Public holidays
- Scheme to buy or sell leave

Work life balance

- Flexible working hours (flexi-time) – providing flexibility to vary working time and length of the working day within fixed limits and take time off in lieu

Family Friendly Policies

- Including career break, part-time working, job share, term time working, special leave
- Generous maternity, adoption and shared parental leave

Diversity and Inclusion

- We pride ourselves on being an employer of choice
- We champion diversity, inclusion and wellbeing and aim to create a workplace where everyone feels valued and a sense of belonging

Financial benefits

- Reward and Recognition Scheme
- Employee Benefits Platform offering discounts on a range of goods and services
- Interest-free loans for travel season tickets and bicycles

Other benefits

- Up to five days volunteering a year
- Access to occupational health
- Access to Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)
- Free sight test
- Supportive workplace equality and other employee-run networks

The IMA is an independent body that makes sure the rights of EU and EEA EFTA citizens and their family members living in the UK and Gibraltar are upheld following the departure of the UK from the EU.

The IMA has two broad duties as set out in Part 2 of the Withdrawal and Separation Agreements – to monitor and to promote.

- We monitor UK public bodies to make sure they adequately and effectively implement the rights provided for by the Citizens' Rights Agreements
- We promote the adequate and effective implementation and application of the Agreements by holding public bodies to account where there is not full compliance

The IMA is an independent arms-length body of the Ministry of Justice.

Further information can be found at: <https://ima-citizensrights.org.uk/>

We encourage applications from people from all backgrounds and aim to have a workforce that represents the wider society that we serve.



We ensure the rights of EU and EEA EFTA citizens, and their family members, are at the heart of UK public bodies' work.

Our values inform the way we work. Our values reflect:

- Our **independence** from government
- Our **willingness to listen** to people and public bodies
- Our **transparency** in the way we work
- Our ability to make **impartial** decisions
- Our **people centred approach** which places people at the heart of everything we do



Selection Process

This vacancy is using [Success Profiles \(opens in a new window\)](#), and will assess your Behaviours, Strengths and Experience.

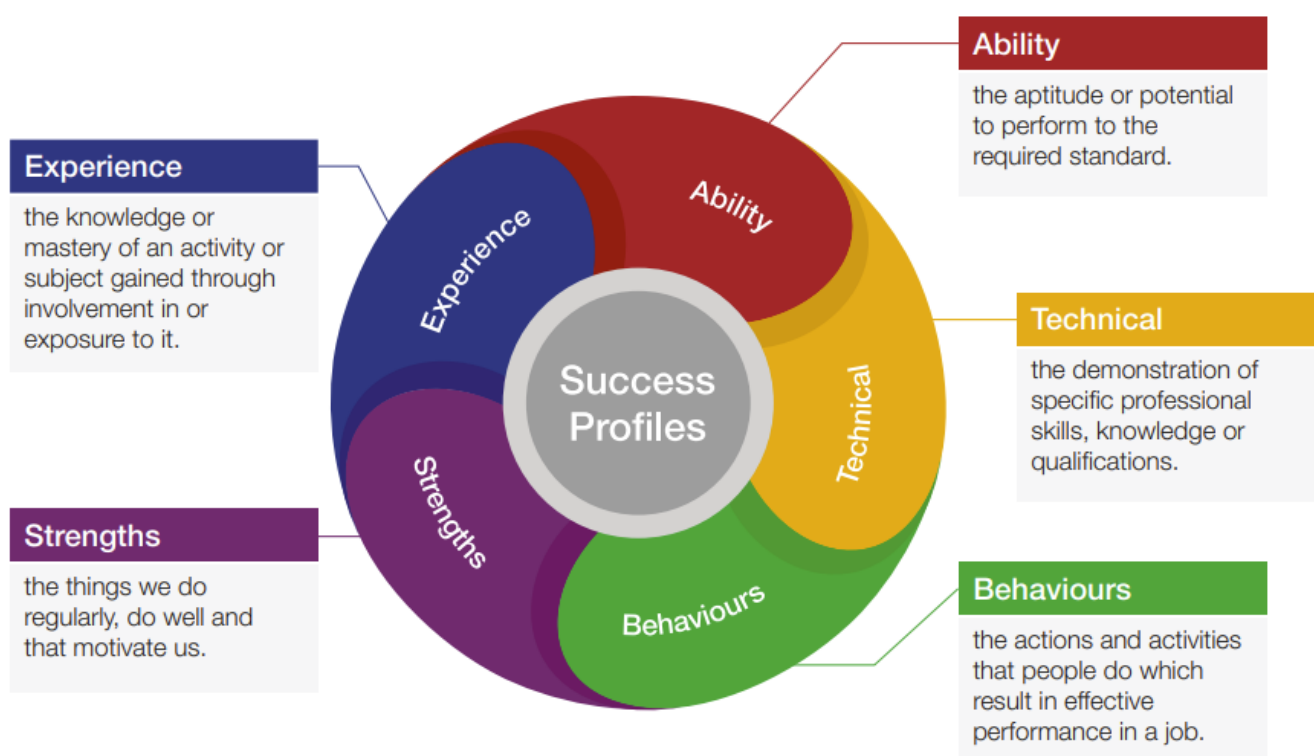
As part of the application process, you will be asked to complete a summary of your job history and previous skills and experience and personal statement. Further details around what this will entail are listed on the application form.

Please note that your personal statement should demonstrate your suitability in no more than 750 words that highlights the reasons you are interested in the role and how your experience makes you the best candidate. You should also refer to the essential requirements, qualifications and behaviours for the role.

At interview, you may be asked to prepare and deliver a presentation, details of which will be given to you in advance.

Feedback will only be provided if you attend an interview.

What are the elements of the Success Profile?



Do you want to know more about working at the Independent Monitoring Authority, the work of the Legal Team and the role?

Come along to our virtual open evening. You will have the opportunity to ask any questions that you may have.

The meeting will be held virtually on Microsoft Teams and will be taking place on:

17 June 2025: 17:00 – 18:00

Please email Lisa.Salkeld@ima-citizensrights.org.uk to confirm your attendance. The open evening can be accessed [here](#).

To make an application you are required to complete an application through our [recruitment portal](#).

You will be updated on your progress via the email address you register with. Please check your Junk Mail and Spam folders to make sure you don't miss any future correspondence.

Closing date for applications: 23 June 2025

Your application must be submitted before 23:55 on the closing date.

Interviews: 17 and 18 July 2025

Interviews will be held in person at the Civic Centre, Oystermouth Road, Swansea, SA1 3SN. Interviews are usually conducted in English.

Please note: We will not normally reimburse travel costs for interviews.

If you require any reasonable adjustments to be able to attend or undertake an interview, please contact HR@ima-citizensrights.org.uk