

Volunteer: Paralegal

This volunteer placement provides an excellent opportunity for those interested in pursuing a legal profession or for those who would like experience working in a legal environment. You will work under the direct supervision of a solicitor or caseworker and provide assistance to them in managing their caseload.

The following is a breakdown of the different units at the Islington Law Centre (ILC):

Legal Unit	Brief Description of Work
Debt & Consumer	Helps clients with priority debts, charging orders, debt relief orders, bankruptcy orders, challenge unfair contract terms, misrepresentation in contract, advise on defective goods and services, and complaints to Financial Ombudsman.
Education	Deals with statutory assessments of special educational needs, school attendance, appeals and formal complaints.
Employment	Assists with various employment matters and claims to the Employment Tribunal and higher courts, matters include grievances and disciplinary actions, unfair dismissal, unlawful discrimination, deductions from wages and compensation.
Housing	Deals with a wide range of housing issues including possession proceedings, anti-social behaviour/nuisance injunctions, evictions, overcrowding, rent arrears, evictions, disrepair, advocacy including trial work and homelessness of adults and minors.
Immigration	Assists clients with all aspects of immigration and asylum law, including applications to remain, appeals against detention and deportation, refugee status, bail and human rights.
Welfare Benefits	Advises and assists clients on all aspects of welfare benefit entitlement and provides representation at social security tribunals.

Islington Law Centre® serves the community by providing free independent legal advice and representation including specialist help in Consumer, Debt, Education, Employment, Housing, Immigration & Welfare Benefits Law

Islington Law Centre® is contracted with the Legal Aid Agency and is part funded by Islington Council

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Tasks:

The opportunities and specific nature of your work will vary across the units and will be discussed further with your supervisor; however, in general, you can expect to perform the following tasks:

- Assisting with legal and other research
- Attending client meetings with your supervisor and noting instructions
- Drafting statements, advice letters etc. for your supervisor to consider
- Liaising with external agencies as requested by your supervisor
- Attending court, where appropriate
- Occasional clerking

General Requirements:

- A minimum commitment of two days per week for three months
- High degree of professionalism
- Sensitivity towards clients and their needs

Person Specification:

	Skill/Experience	Essential	Desirable
1	Legal academic background, i.e. law degree or equivalent	■	
2	Office experience and willingness to undertake administrative tasks. High standard of customer service skills and a professional approach towards providing reception and telephone service, when required	■	
3	Ability to work under close supervision and recognising when to seek support	■	
4	Good communication skills. Ability to communicate with clients, other professionals and organisations	■	
5	A non-judgemental approach	■	
6	Ability to deal with clients in a professional manner and manage stressful situations appropriately	■	
7	Commitment to the aims of the Law Centre and their client group - many of whom are on low income and from a variety of ethnic backgrounds	■	
8	Understanding of the importance of maintaining client confidentiality and willingness to sign confidentiality agreement	■	
9	Practical approach towards ensuring our Equal Opportunities Policy is continually applied in all areas of your work	■	