Edge Hill University

Job Description and Person Specification

Summary

Job title:	Associate Director Legal and Compliance Services
Area:	Legal and Compliance Services
Reference:	EHM0321-0426
Salary:	£73,400
Contract Type:	Permanent
Hours:	Full Time (37 hours per week)
Location:	Campus based role. Hybrid with base at Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 4QP
Accountable to:	Director of Assurance, Risk and Legal Services
Reporting to:	Director of Assurance, Risk and Legal Services

disability confident EMPLOYER

MINDFUL EMPLOYER

DORA

Athena Swan Bronze Award GENDER CHARTER

About the Role

The Associate Director Legal and Compliance Services will lead the University's legal operations and compliance function, ensuring effective coordination of legal matters, management of external legal advice, and oversight of key compliance areas including information governance, insurance and student casework. The role will support the University in identifying, understanding and managing legal, regulatory and compliance risks in a proportionate and practical way.

Reporting to the Director of Strategic Assurance, Risk and Legal Services, the postholder will work closely with colleagues across academic and professional services. The postholder will act as an intelligent client for external legal providers, ensuring that legal advice is appropriately commissioned, clearly understood, value for money, and translated into effective action for internal stakeholders.

The role will provide leadership for information governance and insurance services, supporting robust compliance with relevant statutory, regulatory and institutional requirements. The postholder will also take on oversight of student casework once established in post, helping to ensure that complaints, appeals, conduct, fitness to practise and OIA-related matters are managed fairly, consistently and in line with sector expectations.

The successful candidate will bring strong knowledge of the higher education regulatory environment, or comparable experience across related sectors, and the ability to operate confidently in a complex, multi-stakeholder organisation. A legal qualification or practising background would be advantageous, particularly where combined with sector regulatory experience, but the core requirement is the ability to coordinate legal matters, lead compliance activity, manage external professional advisers, and provide clear, pragmatic advice to senior colleagues. Applicants with experience in contract law, contract review or commercial agreements would be particularly welcomed, especially where they can support the University to manage routine and lower-risk contractual matters in-house and identify when specialist external legal advice is required.

Working arrangements: This role may be offered on a hybrid basis, with an expectation of attendance on site. Working patterns can be discussed and agreed with the recruiting manager upon appointment.

About Us

Founded in 1885 as the first non-denominational teacher training college for women, Edge Hill was born from a belief that education could – and should – change lives. It's a university that has always been shaped by those willing to move forward, even when it meant standing apart. Today, Edge Hill is a pioneering university defined by action, where staff play a vital role in connecting students to real skills, real networks and real futures.

The University's teaching, research and innovation transforms lives, creates opportunity and strengthens society. 62% of the University's research was classed as 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent' in the 2021 Research Excellence Framework.

It has over 12,000 students studying at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. As a university based in the heart of the North West, it takes a connected approach in bringing together education, business, public services and communities.

Edge Hill was awarded University of the Year for Student Experience (Daily Mail University Guide 2026) and 5th in the UK Overall (Uni Compare 2026). In 2024, it was the first University to achieve Ofsted Outstanding for all phases of its Initial Teacher Training provision under the new Inspection Framework.

The University aims to create an environment in which colleagues can thrive, adapt and lead in a changing world. With a strong focus on continuous improvement, inclusion and wellbeing, the University places staff, students and communities at the heart of its success. For staff, this means the opportunity to contribute to a values-led institution, work collaboratively across disciplines and services, and build a rewarding career in an ambitious university community.

Continued investment in campus facilities and digital infrastructure supports an ambitious and inclusive working environment. This includes a £17.4m Life Sciences Building, alongside a £35m investment in brand new accommodation and a Students' Union building which opened at the beginning of October 2024. It has also been recognised as one of the UK's best green spaces for 14 successive years (Green Flag Award 2025).

The University is committed to providing staff and students with accessible, high-quality services, underpinned by innovation, collaboration and a culture that values people.

Duties and Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Lead the development and delivery of the University's legal operations and compliance service, ensuring it is responsive, proportionate and aligned to institutional priorities.

- Support the Director of Strategic Assurance, Risk and Legal Services in embedding effective legal, regulatory and compliance oversight across the University.

- Contribute to the University's wider strategic assurance and risk arrangements by identifying emerging legal and compliance risks and advising on appropriate mitigation.

- Maintain awareness of developments in the higher education regulatory environment and assess their implications for the University.

- Develop effective policies, procedures, reporting arrangements and service standards for legal operations, compliance, insurance, information governance and student casework.

Legal Services

- Act as the University's senior operational lead for coordinating legal matters, ensuring that issues are triaged appropriately and progressed in a timely and risk-based way.

- Manage the relationship with external legal advisers, ensuring that legal support is high quality, proportionate, value for money and aligned to institutional needs.

- Act as an intelligent client for external legal services, ensuring instructions are clear, advice is understood, and recommended actions are followed through.

- Provide oversight and coordination of contract-related legal matters, including routine contract review where appropriate, development of templates and guidance, and escalation of complex or specialist matters to external legal advisers

- Support colleagues across the University in understanding and applying legal advice in a practical and operationally effective way.

- Oversee the maintenance and use of standard legal templates, guidance and processes, including contract-related documentation where appropriate.

- Coordinate legal input into matters such as contracts, partnerships, disputes, student-related matters, regulatory issues and other institutional priorities

- Reduce unnecessary reliance on external legal advice by developing internal capability for routine legal and contract review, while maintaining clear thresholds for specialist advice and escalation.

- Ensure appropriate escalation of complex, high-risk or strategically significant legal matters to the Director of Assurance, Risk and Legal Services and other senior stakeholders as required

Compliance and Regulatory Oversight

- Lead and coordinate compliance activity within the remit of the role, ensuring that relevant legal, regulatory and policy requirements are understood, monitored and managed effectively, with appropriate reporting, escalation and alignment to wider institutional risk and assurance arrangements.

Information Governance

- Provide strategic oversight of the University's information governance arrangements, including data protection, freedom of information, subject access requests and records-related compliance, ensuring effective processes, specialist advice and appropriate escalation are in place.

Insurance

- Oversee the University's insurance function, ensuring effective management of insurance arrangements, claims, renewals, broker relationships and insurance-related risk advice across University activity.

Student Casework

- Following transition planning, lead the oversight of student casework within the agreed scope of the role, ensuring complaints, appeals, conduct, fitness to practise and OIA-related matters are managed fairly, consistently and in line with legal, regulatory and sector expectations.

Interface with Governance and Policy Functions

- Work collaboratively with the Governance function to ensure legal and compliance matters are appropriately aligned with institutional governance, policy and assurance arrangements, while maintaining clear boundaries between operational compliance leadership and formal governance ownership.

In addition to the above all Edge Hill University staff are required to: adhere to all University policies and procedures; complete all mandatory training and induction modules, including Equity, Diversity & Inclusion and Health & Safety; engage in appropriate learning and development activities; actively participate in performance review; demonstrate excellent customer care; contribute to an inclusive environment for everyone; respect confidentiality; act in a sustainable and environmentally conscious manner; and proactively consider accessibility in all aspects of your work.

Eligibility

Candidates should note that shortlisting will be based on information provided on the application form with regard to the applicant's ability to meet the criteria outlined in the Person Specification attached.

Person Specification

Please note that applications will be assessed against the Person Specification using the following criteria, therefore, applicants should provide evidence of their ability to meet all essential and, where possible, desirable criteria.

Qualifications

Criteria	**Essential or Desirable Criteria**	**Method of Assessment**
Degree or equivalent relevant professional experience.	Essential	Application and pre-employment checks
Evidence of continuing professional development in a relevant areas associated with the role	Essential	Application and pre-employment checks
Professional legal qualification, for example solicitor, barrister, chartered legal executive or equivalent	Desirable	Application and pre-employment checks
Relevant qualification or training in data protection, information governance, compliance, risk management or higher education regulation	Desirable	Application and pre-employment checks

Experience and Knowledge

Criteria	**Essential or Desirable Criteria**	**Method of Assessment**
Significant experience working in a complex regulated organisation, preferably within higher education, the wider education sector, the public sector or another highly regulated environment.	Essential	Application
Experience coordinating legal, regulatory or compliance matters across a complex organisation.	Essential	Application
Experience managing or working effectively with external professional advisers, such as legal firms, consultants, auditors, insurers or specialist compliance providers	Essential	Application

Criteria	Essential or Desirable Criteria	Method of Assessment
Strong understanding of the UK higher education environment and the legal, compliance, regulatory and student-related issues affecting universities	Desirable	Application
Experience working with senior stakeholders and providing advice on sensitive, complex or high-risk matters.	Desirable	Application
Experience in contract law, commercial agreements or contract review, with the ability to identify contractual risks and advise on routine or lower-risk contractual matters	Desirable	Application and interview
Experience in contract law, commercial agreements or contract review, particularly in relation to routine or lower-risk contractual matters.	Desirable	Application
Knowledge of consumer protection, OfS, OIA, CMA or other student-related regulatory expectations.	Desirable	Application and interview
Experience of working with outsourced legal, DPO or other specialist professional service models	Desirable	Application

Abilities and Skills

Criteria	Essential or Desirable Criteria	Method of Assessment
Ability to provide clear, balanced and pragmatic advice on complex legal, regulatory and compliance issues	Essential	Interview
Strong judgement, with the ability to assess risk proportionately and escalate appropriately	Essential	Interview
Excellent communication and stakeholder management skills, including the ability to explain complex matters to non-specialists	Essential	Application and interview
Ability to work collaboratively across academic and professional service boundaries.	Essential	Interview
High level of integrity, discretion, professionalism and resilience	Essential	Interview
Ability to develop guidance, templates, training or service improvements in legal, compliance, information governance, insurance or student casework areas.	Desirable	Application and interview

Criteria	Essential or Desirable Criteria	Method of Assessment
Ability to use data, case trends or compliance information to improve service delivery and risk management	Desirable	Application and interview

Candidate Guidance and How to Apply

Join our team at Edge Hill University! We're looking for talented individuals to join our dedicated and supportive community and make a difference to our students. At Edge Hill we value the benefits a rich and diverse workforce brings and welcome applications from all sections of society.

Key points:

- **Closing date:** 9.a.m on Monday 21st September 2026.
- **Applications:** please submit a CV and supporting statement (ideally, a maximum of 2 A4 pages) that clearly outlines your suitability for the role against the criteria in the person specification, including your interest and motivation in applying for this position. Please ensure that your application is emailed to response@peridotpartners.co.uk, inserting "**Edge Hill University – AD Legal and Compliance Services**" into the subject field.
- For further information about the role or to arrange a confidential discussion prior to the closing date, please contact the advising consultant at Peridot Partners: Sophie Carney – sophie@peridotpartners.co.uk - 07399 528307
- **Pre-employment checks:** Following offer, successful candidates will need to provide original proof of identity, qualifications and professional memberships, and evidence their right to work in the UK. You will also complete a pre-employment health questionnaire to support Edge Hill University make appropriate adjustments to support you in the role.
- **References:** References will be collected following issue of an offer of employment.