

Global Recruitment

Guide to London

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Introduction to London

With more billionaires than any other city in the world London is one of the world's largest economies. A financial hub, it is also base for an enormous number of businesses, and a conveyor belt of new residential, commercial and public body construction projects. And the best bit? They all need lawyers.

The Legal Market

London is one of the world's most prominent legal markets, setting industry standards and home to many international firms. Around 48,000 Solicitors work in Greater London – that's approximately 42% of all practice certificate holders in England and Wales. So, if you want to begin or continue a career in the legal profession, there are not many places better suited to that pursuit.

Magic Circle Firms

This encompasses the biggest earning and employing law practices in London - Allen & Overy, Linklaters, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, Clifford Chance, and Slaughter & May. Generally focused on financial, corporate, and commercial work, they rely on multi-national clients that generate vast wealth. However, they are big enough to diversify and are always expanding their network of earning potential. Working for them is not only a lucrative and distinct experience, but also highly competitive.

Silver Circle Firms

Although they do not possess nearly the same yearly profits as the top-tier, these firms have carved out a name for themselves in a variety of areas. They include, Ashurst, Berwin Leighton Paisner, Herbert Smith Freehills, King & Wood Mallesons SJ Berwin, Macfarlanes, and Travers Smith. Unlike their larger competitors, these firms tend to be exceptional in a few areas while diversifying their talents as they increase their business.

Top 200

Firms in this category have a distinct presence within the market and are the competitors of the silver circle. Turnover ranges anywhere between £10m to £1.5 billion a year, although there are far fewer on the higher end of this spectrum. Practice areas are diverse much like larger firms, but are often used for particular specialities they may individually possess.

High Street, Regional & Boutique Firms

These are many in number and are a stark contrast to the Magic and Silver circles. As the name suggests, these are your firms lining the High street of localities within a number of cities. London is no exception. Boutiques function on a similar scale but are focused on particular areas in which they are well known. Vacancies are far more abundant across these types of firms.

In-House Opportunities

A popular option has been to work in house for a business, so how are the prospects shaping up for this year? The In-House Survey put forward by Legal Business and the In-House Lawyer, has noted that the economic downturn of recent years has been an incidental benefit to this road. Why? While many law firms contracted, so too did businesses, this meant that they were less willing to pay a private firm for every little thing. While corporations still do use law practices, cost-cutting made it more profitable to hire in-house counsel to take care of most matters. The dynamics of this is shifting, but in-house is still a great place to make a move, especially considering the greater roles these solicitors play in the day to day running of the company.

Lifestyle

Well known as a cultural centre and source of anything and everything, you'll not be disappointed with the atmosphere. The following is a small taste of some of what it has to offer, but do remember that London is the standard for a world class city, there is much more you can discover by exploring.

Shopping

Oxford Street: One of the main shopping areas in London with hundreds of shops ranging from your familiar retailers to speciality stores. Highly frequented and an experience of its own right.

Regent Street: With 2 km of stores lining this road there is a lot to see and buy. Well known for mid-priced fashion stores and international brands.

Bond Street: Looking to live in luxury? All the prominent high-end brands can be found here. Do be ready to spend though, as this is an exclusive shopping experience.

Covent Garden: Although you can find many big brands and amenities here, Covent Garden is known for its unique shops often paying homage to or catering to peculiar tastes. For example, there is a nautical themed shop called Nauticalia offering a variety of marine themed items like compasses, clothes etc.

Knightsbridge: Another high-end shopping area, likely best known for being the home of Harrods, a magnificent and extensive series of departments covering all your needs.

Notting Hill: Looking for a vintage feel? Perhaps shops that offer something different, or maybe some antiques? This place definitely has a pulse on culture and what's in; well worth a look.

Camden Market: Camden hosts a wide array of stalls, boutiques and bars offering a variety of food, drink and shopping. Straying away from your standard high street offerings, Camden is well known for its vintage and alternative merchandise. Even as a tourist, Camden is a fabulous place to visit and soak up the atmosphere – definitely worth a look!

Leisure & Local Attractions

The list would likely never end as to what you can do in London, but here are a few ideas to get you started:

Museums: There are so many to choose from, but here are a couple of our favourites:

The British Museum is the home of the Rosetta Stone, mummies, and millions of other objects of interest. As one of the oldest museums it has built a reputable collection over the years.

The Science Museum houses many educational exhibits, this place is a wonderful afternoon for any age. Try their Apollo simulator, or see a show in their IMAX cinema. There's a lot to see

and do with new exhibits opening all the time.

Notable Landmarks:

The London Eye is a great way to get a full breadth of the skyline and the city. Night viewing is available and is breath-taking with the many city lights.

St Paul's Cathedral is an architectural masterpiece with a rich and fascinating history, from its uses to the story of its construction, a true marvel and reflection of British engineering.

Additionally there are a number of theatres, markets, pubs, festivals, historical sites, restaurants etc. It really does come down to your tastes, but if you're adventurous you're not likely to be disappointed.

Food & Drink

London is so big that you will find a variety of places to eat and drink on every street, around every corner, quite a few underground and even some in old public toilets! (No, we're not kidding). It would be impossible to list more than a handful, and obviously personal preference would depend on your taste, but here are some places (based on the personal experiences of our team here at Douglas Scott) that we think are worth a visit!

Food

Café Pacifico: You'll find this Mexican gem just off the main streets of Covent Garden. Priced very affordably, the giant portion sizes definitely won't disappoint and as for taste – well you couldn't really ask for anything more!! With a range of cocktails to choose from you'll certainly find something to your taste to wash it all down with.

Meat Liquor: If you love a good burger then look no further. You'll find a few of these scattered across London, each offering a slightly different menu, but you can be sure that what you'll get is a lot of meat with all kinds of toppings and sauces – and plenty of drink options to accompany your feast.

The Diner: With seven restaurants across London, here you'll find some American classics (and variations thereof) which will have you going back for more. Grab a shake (or something stronger) and you can't go wrong!

Sushi n Sticks: Based in Covent Garden, Greenwich and Wimbledon, sushi fans will be in heaven in this chic eatery. There's a great breadth of food and you'll get much better value for money than many of the chains out there. Grab your chopsticks and dig in!

Nandos: For all you chicken lovers, you can feel safe in the fact that there are an estimated 80 Nandos restaurants in London, so you're likely to find one in every area. In fact if you can't find one it's likely you're not in London, or even England, in fact it's possible you're on the moon (it is our mission to put a lawyer there...).

Drink

Soho: Soho plays host to many diverse and vibrant bars and pubs, and as such is a very popular area for nights out. For a very good, but reasonably priced, cocktail we think Balans hits the nail on the head. Alternatively, for a slightly higher cost, Opium is a quirky but fabulous venue, offering drinks and food as late as 2.30am some nights.

Shoreditch: If you're looking for somewhere to catch a live band and grab a craft beer then Shoreditch is a fantastic area to spend your evening. Brewdog offers their very own craft beers which have proved ever popular with the beer lovers amongst us, or head over to Big Chill Bar to enjoy their live music and resident DJ's.

Covent Garden: For anything from cabaret to wine bars, Covent Garden has it all. Why not enjoy a cabaret night underground in Cellar Door, or head for some post work wine in Bedford & Strand. On a sunny weekend we definitely recommend finding a table on the terrace at 21 and watching the street performers with a nice cold drink in hand – perfect!

These are just a few of the areas in London which are popular for drinks, but with bars in every area we suggest you and a few friends try different places. Look down the side streets for those hidden favourites and ask around the locals. With new bars popping up on a weekly basis we're sure you'll find plenty of places to have a drink and dance – or whatever takes your fancy!

Quality of Life & Costs

It is no secret that London is one of the most expensive UK cities to live in, so you should consider this if you're thinking of relocating here. To give you an idea of the relative cost, we've compared a few basic costs to other large cities in the UK. This data is approximate, collected from an online source (<http://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/comparison.jsp> 17/03/15).

Item	London	Manchester	Birmingham	Bristol	Leeds	Liverpool
Loaf of Bread	£1.05	£0.88	£1.02	£0.97	£0.96	£1.03
Eggs (12)	£2.32	£2.01	£2.05	£2.31	£2.10	£1.95
Capuccino	£2.54	£2.38	£2.19	£2.10	£2.48	£2.19
Rice	£1.73	£1.30	£1.20	£0.98	£1.38	£1.12
3 course meal - mid range (2 people)	£50.00	£50.00	£32.50	£40.00	£47.50	£30.00
Pint of lager	£4.00	£3.00	£3.00	£3.35	£3.35	£2.75
Cinema ticket	£12.00	£7.50	£7.75	£8.00	£8.10	£8.00
Gym membership	£49.94	£26.48	£23.33	£39.67	£28.17	£32.50
1 bed apartment	£1586.00	£638.00	£683.00	£692.00	£595.00	£542.00
Internet	£20.00	£15.56	£18.10	£20.03	£20.60	£17.50
Standard monthly bills	£148.28	£126.95	£105.11	£148.40	£157.67	£110.00
Monthly transport pass	£130.00	£49.00	£57.00	£68.00	£52.50	£55.00

Some of these differences are marginal, but as we all know it's the small costs that add up so it's important to be aware. Considering these costs, salaries tend to be much higher in London, as much as 68% more than other cities.

Education

Aside from the various private and public options for children that are both reputable and long established, there are many exceptional universities including: London School of Economics, Imperial College London, University College, King's College London, among others. Schooling can be fairly costly and varies considerably depending on the option you wish to choose.

Safety

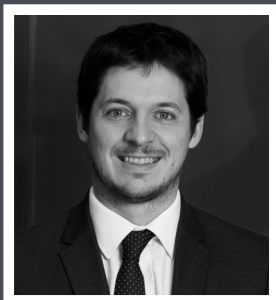
London is a fairly safe city, with incidents of crime usually being something like pickpocketing. While incidents of violence or other such crimes is quite low, it is recommended that you take precautions at night. You will find variation according to the area you are in, still do be mindful of your surroundings and you shouldn't have issues.

Weather

Summer is fairly warm with average temperatures in the low to mid 20's (Celsius), although there have been record highs in the 30's. Winters are relatively warm and wet with average lows above freezing, however there can be snow and this is disruptive to the roads. It does rain fairly often in London with 601 mm of annual fall (although if you're moving from the North then the rumours are true and it does rain less in the South).

The Little Things

With so much to consider it is easy to forget the little things. These are far too many to list so do be thorough in your research! This guide is a great starting point and if you do choose to work with Douglas Scott, we'll make sure that you've got all your bases covered. Otherwise, we wish you luck on this new and exciting journey!



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