

Head of Business Acceptance

Risk & Compliance - London

The opportunity

An excellent opportunity has arisen for a Head of Business Acceptance to lead the new Client and Matter Inception process and to take a key role in the Firm's approach to the management of conflicts and the AML, sanctions and financial crime risks to which it is subject. The role would be suitable for someone with excellent technical conflicts and AML knowledge, and management experience, seeking to further their career. The Head of Business Acceptance will be supported by a Compliance Manager who will manage the Business Acceptance (**BA**) team members on day-to-day aspects.

The firm

Bird & Bird opens up a world of possible for lawyers and professionals everywhere. Working for a leading international law firm like Bird & Bird means working alongside people who are truly collegiate in the way they work with everyone. We work as one global team, with over 70% of work involving people from across the firm. And that's only increasing! It's this common purpose and shared approach that makes for a more productive and collaborative place to work. Your firm. Your future.

The team

The BA team comprises circa 45 individuals, most of whom are located in the Firm's main London office; there is also a team based in HK with a local manager who reports to the Head of Business Acceptance.

The Firm runs its Business Acceptance and conflicts clearance processes on the Intapp suite of products (Open, Walls and Terms) which have been rolled out over the last 3 years. Familiarity with Intapp applications will be a significant benefit.

Our promise

Bird & Bird is committed to maintaining an inclusive working environment and we are an equal opportunities employer. We will actively support and supervise your professional development. For those with the necessary energy and ability, we will ensure that the firm is a first-class platform on which you can develop into an industry leader. We support an agile working environment and are happy to discuss flexible working.





What you'll do

The candidate will work closely with the MLCO, MLRO and COLP to ensure that the Firm complies with its obligations in relation to Client Due Diligence (CDD) in all the jurisdictions in which the Firm operates. The candidate will report directly to the MLCO/MLRO but will be expected to work collaboratively with the other senior members of the Risk & Compliance and Business Services teams to ensure that the Firm's has robust processes in relation to CDD, conflicts, AML and sanctions. The candidate will also work closely with IT specialists concerning the continued development and enhancement of the Intapp platforms.



Core Responsibilities:

- Management and supervision of the BA team, and their work, in London, UK remote workers, and Hong Kong, including ensuring that its approach to CDD complies with the regulatory requirements in each of the jurisdictions in which the Firm operates, is proportionate and fit for purpose.
- Ensuring that all team members have appropriate training and that their work is quality checked to ensure that the Business Acceptance team provides a consistently high level of service.
- Dealing with day-to-day Conflicts and AML queries linked to the client and matter inception process, including guiding the team on more complex or sensitive issues and being a first point of escalation where this is deemed appropriate by the MLCO/MLRO.
- Being responsible for budgets, including IT spend, and team resources, salaries, headcount, recruitment, promotions and team structure.
- Managing relationships with suppliers of technology resources and online databases for client due diligence.
- Oversee team members' appraisals and provide guidance and support to members of the team.
- Oversee team training and professional development ensuring that they have a comprehensive and up-to-date understanding of the Firm's obligations in relation to CDD and making amendments to the BA processes when a change in regulation requires.
- Measuring and reporting service and productivity levels for the work of the team and highlighting any issues to the Heads of Risk & Compliance and General Counsel.
- Being responsible for promoting and overseeing user engagement around the Firm with a wide range of stakeholders including Partners, Finance Managers, Fee-earners and PA's.

The Head of Business Acceptance will be supported with day-to-day operational matters by the Compliance Manager. AML queries, where judgement is required, are to be referred to the MLRO/Deputy MLRO. Conflict and confidentiality queries, where judgement is required, are to be referred to the conflicts team overseen by the COLP.

About you

Experience

The ideal candidate will have experience of:

- managing the new client and matter inception team of a comparable, or preferably larger, international law firm, including experience of a centralised conflicts system using Intapp Open, Walls Conflicts and Terms software to manage the Client and Matter Inception process;
- engaging with a wide range of Stakeholders and being a spokesperson of the BA function and advocate for improved standards of financial crime compliance across all relevant stakeholder groups, including at Partner and senior management (C-Suite) level;
- generally, alongside IT specialists, managing the specification, tailoring, testing and introduction of new software, together with training of BA team and other users across the Firm and communicating with users regarding changes.





We are looking for an individual with a proven track record, energy and enthusiasm to manage both business as usual for the team and projects to develop the team and function.

Skills & attributes

- Strong technical skills in AML, conflicts, and financial crime regulation
- Excellent team player and effective management skills.
- Experience of software projects and project management.
- A self-assured yet diplomatic manner – someone adept at explaining new concepts to a group of people and tactfully challenging the status quo.
- Willingness to learn and develop. A self-starter who shows readiness to ask questions and verify information.
- Ability and enthusiasm to handle complex workflow and team pressures by prioritising work effectively and identifying level of detail needed for each task.
- Excellent command of written and spoken English, and the ability to tailor style as appropriate whilst maintaining a professional manner at all times. Ability to communicate with non-native English speakers is essential.
- Conscientious and methodical approach to problem solving.
- Ability to document analysis, methodology and proposals clearly and concisely.
- Good organisational skills and the ability to work methodically and accurately.
- Excellent persuasion and reasoning skills, and the ability to recognise when to escalate an issue and to whom.

Qualifications & experience

- Proven proficiency and high-performance managing Client and Matter Inception in a major London international law firm.
- Experience of centralised conflicts analysis and of operating Intapp Open, Walls and Conflicts.
- Knowledge of SRA and international rules on conflicts of interest and AML regulations.
- Essential applications experience: Outlook, Word and document management and practice management systems.
- Experience of identifying and dealing with issues relating to sanctions, high risk jurisdictions and other high-risk situations.
- Proficiency in a second mainstream European language, alongside English, would be an advantage.

The main responsibilities of this role are outlined above; however, this description is not exhaustive, and the job holder may be required to undertake additional duties from time to time to ensure the smooth running of the department. The role may require some working outside our normal working hours of 9:30am- 5:30pm.

Bird & Bird is committed to creating and sustaining a diverse and inclusive environment. We are delighted to confirm that we have recently achieved Mansfield Certification for the second year, following our successful participation in the UK pilot programme. This certification was achieved by considering at least 30% women, lawyers from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups, lawyers with disabilities and LGBTQ+ lawyers for at least 70% of UK fee earner and leadership positions. We are participating in Mansfield Rule UK 3.0 and continue to work towards ensuring a diverse pool of candidates are considered our roles, in line with the Mansfield Rule. You can read more about this [here](#).





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