



In-house market moves report

Q3 2024



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Introduction

In the past quarter, the UK in-house legal market has experienced a dynamic period of senior-level movements, with a total of 229 moves across various sectors. Reflecting both the internal development of legal talent and the strategic acquisition of external expertise, there has been a notable balance between promotions and external hires. Notably, 53% of these moves were internal promotions, highlighting the competitive and evolving nature of the industry.

Promotion vs. External Hires

Many sectors demonstrated a commitment to nurturing in-house talent, with a significant number of promotions to senior legal positions. For instance, the Technology sector, leading with 36 moves, showed a higher proportion of internal advancements. This suggests that companies in this rapidly evolving industry prioritise developing existing staff for leadership roles to retain specialised knowledge and drive innovation. Similarly, sectors like Consultancy/Professional Services and Entertainment/Media/Sports exhibited a majority of internal promotions, indicating strong career progression opportunities within firms.

Conversely, sectors such as Consumer Goods/Retail and Construction/Engineering/Real Estate leaned more towards external hires for their senior legal positions. This trend may reflect a desire to bring in fresh perspectives and specialised expertise to navigate industry-specific challenges, such as shifts in consumer behaviour and complex regulatory environments in construction and real estate.

Sector Comparisons

- **Biotechnology/Healthcare/Pharmaceuticals:** With 14 moves, this sector exhibited an equal split between promotions and external hires. The

balance suggests that while companies value the growth of internal talent, they also recognise the need for external insights, possibly due to rapid advancements and regulatory complexities in the field.

- **Financial Services:** Across sub-sectors like Banking & Lending, Insurance, and Investment Management—with a combined total of 41 moves—there was a mix of internal promotions and external appointments. This diversity indicates a strategic approach to legal staffing, combining institutional knowledge with new skills to address evolving financial regulations and market conditions.

- **Energy/Sustainability/Utilities:** Experiencing 17 moves, a slight majority of movements were internal promotions, highlighting the sector's investment in developing legal professionals who are already versed in the industry's regulatory environment and sustainability goals.

- **Education and Charity/Public Sector:** Both sectors displayed a balanced approach, with equal numbers of promotions and external hires among their movements. This balance may be due to the unique demands of these sectors, requiring both experienced insiders and fresh talent to address changing policies and public needs.

Overall, the recent movements within the UK in-house legal market underscore a dual strategy employed by organisations: fostering internal talent to retain corporate knowledge and culture, while also bringing in external expertise to drive innovation and address new challenges. This approach reflects a broader trend of adaptability and proactive talent management in response to an ever-changing legal and regulatory landscape.

Contact us

If you'd like to discuss this report, consider your next steps or wish to hire for an in-house position, please do get in touch with us.



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