

Ikbal Solicitors

Excellence Award in Emerging Legal Services - Greater Manchester

At a time when cuts by the government meant that people could no longer afford to pay their legal fees in deeply personal cases, one man had a vision of what it could mean to help the people suffering the most. The result is Ikbal Solicitors, a boutique law firm that helps the public have access to legal assistance and resources at a time when government cuts result in delays that leave cases with no conclusions. Having earned success in this year's Legal Awards with SME News, we take a closer look at the firm.

Founded just last year, Ikbal Solicitors is a new face on the block within the legal sector in the United Kingdom, but one of the most exciting and client-centric. The idea began with Cameron Iqbal, who is the Managing Director of the firm, and evolved into the law firm being founded in 2019 in a famous local cake shop in Oldham. Despite the unorthodox setting, nothing about what Cameron wanted to do was unorthodox. His vision was, and remains to this day, to help the public with their legal needs at a time when the government was closing courts and decreasing legal aid. Cameron believed that those governmental cuts would eventually lead to individuals having no access to courts in order to raise their concerns, resulting in more delays and a lack of clarity surrounding any pending cases or concerns. It might also mean that those same individuals would be forced to give up their right to challenge a resolved matter, as expensive legal fees would prevent most people from being able to access the court. It was this that Cameron sought to change, and change it he has.

Since being founded in 2019, Ikbal Solicitors has already expanded its service offerings to help clients in a wide range of legal areas, including commercial, contract, consumer, construction, criminal, debt, privacy, litigation, transport, public, sports, and immigration law alongside a myriad of many others. However, despite offering advice on cases pertaining to medical or clinical negligence, Cameron and his team do not cater for personal injury cases and more specifically, road traffic accidents.

Cameron believed that in order to clear the backlog of the cases within the courts, solicitors would need to adopt a different mindset. One of putting people before profits, to create a domino effect. Not only would this approach help the people who need it most, but it would also eventually create wealth as the assets that



are subject to disagreement would be resolved quicker, thereby helping the country's financial position. Thus began Ikbal Solicitors, with the mission of becoming the most affordable law firm in the country by charging the lowest per-hour rate whilst making sure that legal matters should not put the client into a financially compromised position.

In order to achieve this, the team at Ikbal Solicitors works to ensure that the client is allowed to propose their own per-hour rate fee by conversing with the firm itself. As a result of this dedication to putting people before profits, Ikbal Solicitors has already achieved its goal of becoming the lowest legal fee per hour priced law firm in the United Kingdom. In doing so, the firm has taken great pride in its ability to be there for people who otherwise might not be

able to afford the legal services they require. Its rates are a testament to its mission and desire to put people before profits, and help them gain closure in any pending cases. Whilst each client may have various different legal issues and requirements, Cameron and the team at Ikbal Solicitors has assisted on legal drafting, advisory services, litigation, and negotiation in civil, family, contract, property, commercial, immigration, and issues between landlord and tenant.

One of the other major areas that Ikbal Solicitors has managed to emerge as a top law firm in is that of reconciliation. Some parties would rather resolve an argument or a dispute before it gets to the courtroom, and since being founded just one year ago, Cameron and his team have found themselves being instructed on matters relating to reconciliation between those

parties. Regardless of the service that is being performed, clients find it easier to instruct the team at Ikbal Solicitors knowing that the firm is reasonably-priced, and that if they agree a rate with the firm on one matter then that same rate can apply to another area of law too. At no point in any process is there any hidden charge for the client. Just solid and professional legal assistance of the highest quality.

Providing clients with an update on their matter once a week, Ikbal Solicitors seek to work quickly and efficiently to accomplish a satisfactory conclusion to any outstanding legal issues that a client may have. However, that does not mean that the team is simply left to it for the remainder of the week, as Cameron and his team also provide clients with a legal strategy on how to resolve the matter quickly whilst avoiding proceedings. At Ikbal Solicitors, the team provide clear and concise advice with the view to demonstrating to the client that if they can avoid legal proceedings by settling the matter quickly, then they should seek that route.

Based on a culture of putting people before profits, Ikbal Solicitors is built around the understanding that taking care of those around you creates loyalty and hard work. Whether interacting with employees, clients, or members of the legal profession, Cameron has instilled a belief that any interaction should be to foster good relations based upon mutual and professional respect. That main value of putting people before profits permeates every facet of what Ikbal Solicitors does, whilst making sure that every person is treated with dignity and respect along the journey of having their needs met.



Yet, for all of its focus on being the lowest priced law firm in the country, Ikbal Solicitors boasts more knowledge and experience than many others, even for one so young. Managing Director Cameron brings seven degrees to the table, which is almost unheard of. Armed with six master's degrees, his extensive level of education and knowledge regarding various different areas of the law. Clients can rest easy in the knowledge that they are well and truly in good hands with Cameron, drawing on his vast wealth of legal acumen and educational knowledge to bring about successful resolutions in his cases. Whether other competitors charge higher rates for the same work, Cameron's service is humble in price and exceptional in delivering results. In doing so, Ikbal Solicitors continues to make it difficult for its competitors to prove why their costs are so extremely high.

Both Cameron and the entire team at Ikbal Solicitors maintain that exceptional level of delivering results based on Cameron's extensive legal knowledge, but never at the expense of the client. Legal matters should never put a client in a financially compromised position, and Ikbal Solicitors exemplifies this excellently. Should a client come to a solicitor in times of need, how can that law firm profit from their misery? Ikbal Solicitors does not, instead looking to provide a low legal fee avenue that allows them to overcome their difficulties.

Therein lies the most rewarding aspect of working in the legal profession, especially at Ikbal Solicitors: helping clients. As it puts people before profits, the team's happiness and satisfaction comes from being there for clients in their time of need. Everyone has faced some legal issue at one time or another, and some feel that they might have been overcharged or should have had a chance to negotiate the fee. At Ikbal Solicitors, there is no such reflection. Rather, Cameron and the team are all too happy to provide clients with the opportunity to propose the per hour fee for their work. Ultimately, as long as the client is happy, so too is the team at Ikbal Solicitors.

Making people happy is the key service at Ikbal Solicitors, and for that reason, there is no discrimination when it comes to the hiring process. Recognising that C-grade students sometimes become industry leaders, Cameron understands that talent is important, and that sometimes grades do not reflect that talent. Taking each new hire or potential hire on their own merits and challenges, Ikbal Solicitors provides opportunities to people based upon hard work, keeping in mind that the difficulties they have faced should not be held against them or prevent them from being hired. Everyone that applies for a role at the firm is given an equal opportunity, and those that are hired are given an enormous amount of trust to prove themselves.

However, for all the outstanding work that Cameron and the entire team at Ikbal Solicitors are doing, there are still developments and challenges that the legal profession faces. Arguably one of the biggest and most significant challenges that the legal profession faces is high legal fees. Partners at law firms can charge

excessive amounts that are impossibly high for those who are weak, vulnerable, wronged, or in the minority. It is those individuals that Ikbal Solicitors seeks to advocate for. The firm's very existence is based around the understanding that it wishes to make a difference, changing the profession in order to make it more accessible and cheaper for those who need it most. As the lowest price law firm in the country, it is overcoming these challenges at a faster rate than any other.

Where there was once a challenge in the form of competition and acquiring new clients, there is now no such thing. Having established itself as a law firm synonymous with helping clients for lower costs, clients have raced to be involved with Ikbal Solicitors. Offering a wide range of specialisations, there is no reason for clients not to be involved with the firm. In terms of future challenges that the firm will seek to overcome just as easily will be balancing time between resolving issues and completing administrative tasks. Also, just as other firms are doing, Ikbal Solicitors will also be looking at developments in technology in order to further aid the firm in helping more people.

Looking to the future, there is a wealth of exciting potential that Cameron has envisioned for Ikbal Solicitors. Where once his vision extended to simply creating a law firm that served the people, now that vision has expanded greatly to include more offices, a free legal clinic, and a mentoring programme. What began with a desire to give back to the town of Oldham has since evolved into a game-changing law firm that constantly goes above and beyond in its servitude of other people, assisting them with legal issues and offering hope. Now in the process of opening a free legal clinic, Ikbal Solicitors is seeking to carry out certain tasks for free for the people of Oldham, as a way of cementing its commitment to the community and assisting in the best way it knows how. The soon-to-be-starting mentoring programme will also seek to provide the youth of Oldham with an insight of what to expect in a law firm, and get youth away from the gang culture that has spread through the community.

Ultimately, Ikbal Solicitors is so much more than just an exceptional and outstanding law firm that offers the lowest prices in the country. It is a source of hope for many people, knowing that someone truly has their back and wants to see them succeed without breaking the bank to do so. Seeing it as a duty to help people, the story of Cameron and Ikbal Solicitors may only just be beginning, but it is already one that people will be talking about for years to come.

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