# Immigration Adviser

Thank you for your interest in the post of Immigration Adviser. This application pack contains the following:

* Information about HMSC
* Job description
* Person specification
* Equal opportunities monitoring form

The Application Form is a separate document.

Please apply by **completing the application form provided**. See the job description and person specification for essential requirements for this post and **address them in your statement**. We will shortlist candidates according to these criteria.

We would be grateful if you could also complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form, which will be separated from the application and not considered as part of the selection process.

Please return your application by email to joinus@haringeymsc.org (please write “Immigration adviser recruitment” in the header). We will acknowledge receipt of all applications sent by email.

CLOSING DATE: **Friday 23rd October 2020, 12 noon.**
**We are scheduling interviews as the applications come in so please apply early.**

INTERVIEWS: w/c Monday 26th October 2020 – exact date to be confirmed

START DATE: asap

** **

POST: **Immigration Adviser**

Accountable to: Centre Manager

Hours: 21 hours/week (Mondays, Tuesdays and a third day)

Salary/Fee: £30,457 incl Greater London Weighting, pro rata (or equivalent freelance fee)

Contract: part-time, employment or freelance, fixed term contract for 12 months, extension subject to funding

The post will require a current DBS check.

**INFORMATION ABOUT HMSC**

Haringey Migrant Support Centre (HMSC) provides a weekly Monday triage drop-in service offering initial advice and signposting services on immigration, housing, welfare and health issues, followed by advice appointments (usually on Tuesday) with immigration advisers (from Islington Law Centre, and Coram Children’s Legal Centre) and housing/welfare advisers.

HMSC also works closely with organisations which support it with specialist outreach advice: for example, Lawstop Solicitors (housing and community care), Doctors of the World and Project 17. Links and referral routes have also been established with (amongst others) solicitors’ firms, accommodation providers, local food banks and soup kitchens, local children’s centres, CABx, the Refugee Council and Refugee Action. HMSC employs a Centre Manager, a Destitution Coordinator (3 days a week), a Caseworker for Families and Young People (4 days a week) and an Interim Office Manager, and has about 50 volunteers working with it in various roles. The team will soon grow by two new members of staff. HMSC is authorised to provide immigration advice and services at OISC level 3.

During the Covid-19 crisis HMSC has been working remotely and in a limited capacity. We have been supporting our existing visitors (clients) and took on a limited number of new cases. We have also used the time to upgrade our IT systems and to prepare for implementation of a new case management system.

We are now working to scale up our services again and as part of that, we are looking for a new in-house immigration adviser.

The role would suit an immigration lawyer/OISC adviser who would like a challenge of working in a committed and friendly team, with the opportunity to gain considerable frontline experience advising migrants of various backgrounds across a range of legal issues including citizenship, family migration, asylum, family reunion, trafficking and the rights of EU nationals and family members. Because of the Monday and Tuesday sessions the adviser needs to be available on those days of the week; we are happy to consider flexible arrangements for the third day. We can either employ the right candidate or engage them on a freelance basis.

**PURPOSE OF THE ROLE**

HMSC has had an in-house, freelance immigration adviser intermittently since 2014, initially funded by the London Legal Support Trust. We have now obtained funding to be able to engage an adviser for a period of 12 months, with the aim of extending the post if we manage to secure more funding.

The Immigration Adviser is part of the core staff at HMSC and will work alongside the Destitution Coordinator, the Casework Coordinator (recruitment for this new post is in progress), the Caseworker and a small team of Legal Support Volunteers. The post holder will oversee and coordinate the delivery of high quality immigration advice and assistance to HMSC visitors, where it falls outside of remit of other projects running in parallel.

The primary function of the Adviser will be to lead on the triage of immigration cases during the Monday drop-in (or telephone triage for the duration of the remote working arrangements), in order to assess and allocate cases to the Tuesday appointments with outreach advisers. The adviser will provide one-off diagnostic advice in those cases where it is possible to do so in triage, in the short space of time. The post holder will provide occasional urgent legal assistance to visitors (e.g. urgent applications and requests to the Home Office and /or the Tribunal, urgent ECF applications, etc.). Finally, the adviser will support volunteers with their work, including supporting OISC trainees to register under the scheme.

**THE CURRENT MODEL OF DELIVERING IMMIGRATION ADVICE AND CASEWORK AT HMSC**

Most of the visitors attending HMSC lack the financial means and capacity to access the immigration advice that they are in desperate need of. Every week we see between 35-45 visitors and typically two-thirds of them need immigration services i.e. advice and/or casework. These are individuals who, due to their lack of status, are excluded from taking any employment, and are thus left in a state of semi- or complete destitution.

The immigration advice model involves an immigration surgery on a Monday where people are triaged and given initial advice, where it is possible. Subsequently, where necessary, appropriate cases are booked in for appointments with a specialist outreach immigration adviser. HMSC has solicitors attend for in-depth advice appointments from Coram Children’s Legal Centre (who only see families under a specific project) and Islington Law Centre. The Immigration Adviser will also provide advice on some of the triaged cases as well as completing immigration follow-up work and overseeing work done by volunteers.

HMSC’s approach is one that has been carefully developed, reviewed and amended since the charity’s opening to best reflect the needs of visitors and the barriers and opportunities presented by the legal environment. In recent years, HMSC’s focus has been on securing Exceptional Case Funding for those visitors who have meritorious cases but no means to pay for representation and then referring them to a legal aid provider. Volunteers are heavily involved both in supporting the adviser to make referrals, ECF applications, etc., and in assisting visitors directly, e.g. to gather evidence or to advocate with previous legal representatives.

**JOB DESCRIPTION - IMMIGRATION ADVISER**

**1. Purpose of the Appointment**

To oversee and coordinate the delivery of high quality immigration advice and assistance to HMSC visitors, where it falls outside of remit of other projects running in parallel.

**2. Work required**

- To provide face-to-face diagnostic immigration advice (in relation to immigration, asylum and nationality law) during the triage session (currently over the phone);

- To provide in-depth immigration advice during appointments (currently over the phone);

- To provide legal assistance to visitors identified as in urgent need and to work towards securing them legal representation outside of HMSC in the long-term, if needed;

- To have overall responsibility for immigration cases falling outside of remit of projects with Coram Children’s Legal Centre or Islington Law Centre;

- To have overall responsibility for the quality of work of legal support volunteers, e.g. making appropriate referrals, collating bundles, obtaining documents from the Home Office;

- To supervise trainees working towards OISC accreditation (usually one trainee at a time);

- To keep comprehensive records relevant to the post and required for funding;

- To support the work of the colleagues specialising in welfare and housing issues, as required;

- To assist in developing and improving resources and practices for HMSC signposting service, including maintaining referral lists;

- To ensure that existing policies, procedures and precedents are adhered to and to identify where any additions/amendments need to be made;

- To comply with accreditation and professional standards imposed by the Law Society or OISC;

- To provide ongoing legal updates and training to HMSC staff and volunteers, as time permits. This includes providing regular support to legal support (and other) volunteers, as required;

- To collaborate with HMSC staff in initiating and attending supervision;

- Special Circumstances: on occasion, the Adviser may be asked to attend at a different time during the week;

- Many of the above tasks will be carried out in collaboration with or by delegation to HMSC Staff and Volunteers;

- The above tasks may be subject to change in accordance with the needs of the Centre and the post holder will be expected to be flexible. New or adapted responsibilities will be subject to agreement between the Centre Manager and the Adviser.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

Position: **Immigration Adviser**

Item marked **E** are essential and **D** are desirable

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Education/ Training** | **E -** Educated to at least A level, preferably degree level or equivalent qualification, or appropriate experience**E** - Accredited to Level 2 IAAS/OISC Level 3 or equivalent.  |
| **Experience** | **E -** Experience of providing advice and assistance on immigration matters to migrants irrespective of their status**D -** Experience of providing advice on an emergency basis, where solutions to complex matters have to be found quickly**D -** Experience of providing support, supervision and training to volunteers **D -** Experience of working with databases**D -** Experience of recording and reporting outcomes  |
| **Knowledge/ Technical Skills** | **E -** Knowledge of London-based refugee, migrant and appropriate relevant organisations (including solicitors’ firms and barristers’ chambers) providing assistance in immigration matters**E -** Thorough, up-to-date understanding of immigration, asylum and nationality law relating to asylum-seekers, refugees, undocumented migrants and EEA nationals **E -** Ability to keep accurate records of activities**E -** IT literate. Experience of using standard office applications and databases**D** - Understanding of the issues affecting destitute migrants**D -** Working knowledge of housing and benefit entitlements, asylum support provision and community care support for migrants |
| **Personal skills** | **E -** Highly effective communication and interpersonal skills, including communicating with those whose first language is not English**E -** Understanding of and ability to deal with refugees’ and migrants’ issues with cultural sensitivity and awareness**E -** Proven ability to work in a team in a stressful and pressurised environment**E** - Ability to work independently and on own initiative, taking responsibility for delivering and reporting on set targets**E -** Ability to think creatively, and adopt proactive and holistic responses to address the complex issues of migrants**E -** The ability and commitment to maintain confidentiality of client information and to remain responsive to their needs**E -** Ability to work in a diplomatic, efficient and professional manner both verbally and in writing, ensuring accuracy of information given and received**E -** A high standard of written and spoken English**E -** Demonstrable commitment to the principles of equal opportunities**E** - Excellent administrative and organisational skills to operate administrative and record-keeping systems |
| **Special Circumstances** | **E -** Commitment to ongoing training and involvement in the advice work of HMSC**E -** Commitment to keeping abreast of developments in the various areas of law concerning migrants as well as within the advice sector |

**Equal opportunities monitoring form**

In the interests of monitoring our recruitment procedures we would be grateful if you could complete this form. We will separate this document from the application form and it will not take part in any selection process.

**Please tick as appropriate**

Male [ ]  Female [ ]  Other [ ]

**What is your ethnic group?**

**A White**

[ ] English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British

[ ] Irish

[ ] Gypsy or Irish Traveller

[ ] Any other White background, please write in …………………………………..

**B Mixed/multiple ethnic groups**

[ ] White and Black Caribbean

 [ ] White and Black African

 [ ] White and Asian

 [ ] Any other Mixed background/multiple ethnic background, please write in………………………

**C Asian or Asian British**

 [ ] Indian

 [ ] Pakistani

 [ ] Bangladeshi

 [ ] Chinese

 [ ] Any other Asian background, please write in ……………………………………………..

**D Black or Black British**

[ ] Caribbean

 [ ] African

 [ ] Any other Black background, please write in …………………………………

**E Other ethnic group**

[ ] Arab

 [ ] Any other ethnic group, please write in …………………………………………

**Do you have a disability as defined under the Disability Discrimination Act (**defined asa physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on [your] ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)**?**

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

**What age group do you belong to?**

Under 25 [ ]

26 – 35 [ ]

36 – 50 [ ]

51 and over [ ]

**Thank you for providing this information to assist us with our recruitment monitoring**