



Voices in Exile

Supporting refugees, asylum seekers & those with no recourse to public funds

**Job Description: Immigration caseworker**

Job Title:	Immigration caseworker
Responsible to:	Immigration casework manager; Director
Status:	Part-time 3-4 days pw (negotiable)
Contract:	Permanent
Hours:	21-28 hours per week (negotiable)
Location:	Office-based & remote as needed
Salary:	NJC pay scale entry point SP19 (£29,777 FTE)(OISC L1) or SP20 (£30, 296 FTE)(OISC L2)
Holiday entitlement:	25 days per annum pro rata, with 1 additional day per annum for every completed year of service up to a maximum of 30 days

**Background:**

Voices in Exile is a registered charity that works with refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants with no recourse to public funds in Brighton & Hove, East and West Sussex. We offer practical and legal support including generalist advice and specialist immigration casework for those who would otherwise be unable to access justice. As part of our holistic approach we also advocate for, accompany and enable people to access services, connect with communities, and develop their own potential through a programme of learning and creative activities. Post holders will form a key part of a small, committed team working to develop Voices' services and activities at a critical point of growth for the organisation.

**Job purpose:**

We are looking for someone for a demanding but rewarding and evolving role at Voices in Exile as an immigration caseworker accredited at a minimum at OISC L1 and ideally OISC L2 or higher. The post holder will be flexible and skilled, with an essential interest in and experience of working with migrant and refugee clients, many of whom have additional complex needs. You will work closely with our immigration caseworker manager to provide one-to-one specialist immigration advice and casework to migrant and refugee clients in Brighton & Hove and across East and West Sussex in the areas of immigration & asylum up to OISC L2. We actively welcome applications from those with lived and relevant experience – please see the job description and person specification below.

We are currently the only free, Level 2-accredited, year-round provider of out-of-scope immigration advice on the South Coast, and increasing local immigration capacity is critical to

address growing demand and changing demographics in the region. Our current core caseload is largely non-EEA nationals whose immigration cases are out of scope of legal aid. However we are also seeing and will continue to see new arrivals and emerging needs in the region including Afghans resettled under the ARAP and ACRS schemes, Sudanese evacuees, EEA nationals who still have not registered for pre-settled or settled status, and an increasing number of both newly arrived and established asylum seekers placed in emergency ('contingency') and dispersal Home Office accommodation.

The balance of time spent between different client groups and cases will therefore need to be responsive to the changes we see in the city and region. Many of our clients also have complex additional needs including health and homelessness and the post holder will be expected to liaise closely with our generalist caseworkers and external providers to ensure that people's holistic needs are met.

You will work as part of a small, supportive advice and casework team that also includes two generalist advice caseworkers, an employability caseworker, a groupwork facilitator and four dedicated resettlement caseworkers who are supporting newly resettled refugee families mainly from Syria and Afghanistan.

Regular supervision and support and in-house and on-the-job training will be provided, as well as external training on specific issues where needed. However you will need to be ready to step immediately into a busy advice environment with the necessary confidence, skills and knowledge to begin to deliver advice and casework and pick up an existing caseload.

Ideally you will already be OISC L2-accredited, but if only L1-accredited you must be willing to work towards accreditation within the 6-month probationary period.

Postholders will need to have the right to work in the UK.

**Hybrid working and what we're like to work for:**

In the wake of Covid we have developed a hybrid working model with most staff working part of the time from home and part from our offices in Kempton. Working from home and flexible working arrangements are negotiable and under regular review but we aim to be as flexible as possible within the limits of safety, team cohesion and operational need. Individual working arrangements can be discussed with your line manager and/or our director, but we imagine that this post will be largely office-based at least for the probationary period.

We provide the kit (IT and phone) where needed for staff to work from home safely and comfortably, but would expect you to have adequate working broadband and data allowance in place at no additional cost to Voices if you do wish to spend some of your time working from home. We are willing to discuss this if it is a barrier for you.

We have a work culture that is friendly, welcoming and inclusive, and we take staff wellbeing seriously. Clinical supervision is available for all frontline workers and we make time for collective care and peer support within our working hours. We are a learning organisation and are open to hearing about how we can do better.

**Staff reporting to this post:**

Volunteers

**Key responsibilities:**

- Provide one-to-one immigration advice (to OISC L2 under supervision) and support to migrant and refugee clients in Sussex by phone, email and face-to-face;
- Conduct initial holistic assessments and make appropriate internal and external referrals to address people's holistic needs & strengths;
- Provide thorough follow-up casework and support where appropriate and carry a caseload of ongoing immigration casework under the supervision of the casework manager;
- Actively develop professional relationships and referral links with law centres and solicitors' firms, and refer/signpost clients to other legal services & agencies as appropriate;
- Manage own caseload, keeping clear, accurate and timely records of all work done using case management system AdvicePro and other internal recording systems, and ensuring that work is monitored, evaluated and quality-assured to meet internal and external requirements;
- Assist in evidencing the impact of work done, including recording, monitoring and reporting against project targets, regular case studies and other information & reports as requested;
- Assist in devising and delivering in-house training for trainee and volunteer advisers as needed;
- Work with the casework manager to develop & maintain clear case management systems, policies and procedures;
- Attend & contribute to relevant fora & networks (virtual and actual), including liaison with local refugee and migrant community groups and networks;
- Attend regular team meetings & participate in other advice and staff team commitments and meetings as needed;
- Participate fully in individual supervision, training, appraisal and collective care and wellbeing;
- Work with colleagues in Voices in Exile to maintain and develop our holistic approach and commitment to human rights, community development, diversity and best practice in working with vulnerable migrants;
- Carry out other duties as required.

A = Application form  
(Please address the relevant points in order)  
I = Interview

**Please bear in mind that you can demonstrate how you meet these requirements using examples from paid employment, volunteering, lived experience or a combination of all these.**

Person Specification	Essential/ Desirable	Assessment Method
<b>Qualifications/level of experience</b>		
1. A relevant qualification <i>or</i> lived or professional experience in one or more of the following areas: advice giving, law, migration studies or related field.	E	A
2. OISC Level 1 immigration & asylum accreditation	E	A
3. OISC Level 2 immigration & asylum accreditation	D	A
<b>Experience</b>		
4. Minimum 1 year's experience of providing advice, casework or similar support to migrants or other vulnerable/at risk clients in a frontline service or casework environment	E	A+I
5. Experience of OISC L1 immigration casework, including actively making and following up immigration applications on clients' behalf	E	A+I
6. Experience of OISC L2 immigration casework	D	A+I
7. Experience of advocating effectively and clearly on a client's behalf with statutory and other agencies	E	A+I
8. Experience of working in the voluntary or community sector	D	A+I
9. Lived experience of the UK immigration system	D	A
<b>Knowledge</b>		
10. Good general knowledge of issues faced by refugees and migrants in the UK	E	A
11. Good up-to-date knowledge of the immigration system and of barriers to access to justice for migrants in the UK	E	A+I
12. Good up-to-date working knowledge of access to services for migrants in the UK, and in Brighton and Hove in particular	D	A+I
13. Good awareness of gender & LGBTQI issues as they intersect with immigration & asylum	D	A+I

14. Good awareness of mental health and issues relating to trauma	D	A+I
15. Good awareness and understanding of current safeguarding law, policies and procedures	D	A+I
<b>Skills &amp; qualities</b>		
16. Ability to step into pressurised advice environment and take on one-off advice and casework with minimal supervision	E	A+I
17. Ability to plan and organise own work and meet deadlines	E	A+I
18. Ability to interview clients sensitively, clearly and accurately in partnership with interpreters to diagnose and prioritise client needs	E	A+I
19. High level of spoken and written English, and the ability to analyse complex written information and communicate it effectively	E	A+I
20. Excellent online research and analytical skills	E	A+I
21. Ability to work as an effective team member and to relate well and communicate clearly and respectfully with a diverse group of people	E	A+I
22. Personal resilience and the ability to maintain clear professional boundaries and manage expectations	E	A+I
23. Ability to work competently with Microsoft Office ICT packages including case management systems and Excel; and to be administratively self-servicing	E	A
24. Ability to speak another relevant language	D	A
<b>Other</b>		
25. Commitment to working with migrant and refugee clients	E	A+I
26. Commitment to ViE aims, values and ethos, including working in an inter-cultural, multi-faith environment	E	A+I
27. Commitment to maintaining client confidentiality and delivering a high-quality professional service	E	A+I