

VOLUNTEER ADVISER

Role profile

Purpose of the role

- To help Citizens Advice Esher & District provide an effective and efficient advice service to members of the public
- To help to influence government and other organisations by informing them of the effect of their actions on the lives of the clients of Citizens Advice Esher & District ('research & campaigns')

Main duties and responsibilities

- Interviewing clients, both face-to-face and on the telephone, letting the client explain their enquiry and helping them to set priorities
- Researching, interpreting and communicating the relevant information in a range of advice areas so the client can explore their options, and the implications, to come to a decision
- Enabling clients to take an active role in their support process
- Acting, where necessary, on behalf of the client by negotiating, writing letters or making appropriate referrals
- Identifying research & campaigns issues through interviews with clients, recognising the root causes of problems and participating in taking appropriate action
- Completing clear and accurate digital client case records
- Keeping up to date on important issues through ongoing training and essential reading
- Attending monthly staff meetings

Personal qualities and skills

Volunteer advisers carry out complex work for which a wide range of skills and abilities are needed.

Volunteers are not expected to have all the skills needed for the role on appointment. All volunteers receive support and practical assistance and take part in a thorough training programme to develop the skills needed for the job.

Potential volunteer advisers should be able to demonstrate that they:

- Have an understanding and acceptance of the aims and principles of the Citizens Advice service
- Have an awareness of discrimination and can provide a non-judgemental service
- Understand and accept the need for a confidential service

- Are able to listen with understanding, conduct relevant research and advise clients with clarity from available information sources, including the Citizens Advice digital information database
- Are able to work with clients in a non-directive manner
- Are able to communicate with a range of audiences and adapt communication accordingly, including with clients, specialist services, council officials and government services
- Are able to write accurately and clearly to produce supporting letters, complete forms and maintain client case records
- Are able to undertake accurate basic calculations
- Are able to use a range of software programmes competently, e.g Microsoft Office suite
- Are able to progress through the Citizens Advice digital training programme as a self-directed learner, covering advice areas including welfare benefits, debt, employment, consumer and housing
- Are able to work as a reliable team member and commit to the minimum required time of two years volunteering