



Outline of the role for a Volunteer Telephone Assessor

The assessor is a member of a team of voluntary and paid local office staff who provide a free, confidential, impartial and independent service to the public.

Purpose of the role:

Working within the aims, principles and policies of the Citizens Advice Service:

- to provide an effective and efficient advice and information service
- to help influence government and other organisations by informing them of the effect of their actions on the lives of clients (Research & Campaigns)

Ways of working:

- Give a service that complies with Citizens Advice principles
- Actively support Citizens Advice equal opportunities and anti-discrimination policies
- Contribute towards a safe and positive working environment
- Give a service which meets the need to maintain quality

Working with Clients:

In response to telephone calls, to interview clients in a way that is both confidential and impartial:

- Enabling the client to explain, explore and clarify the problem
- Decide what the next best step is for the client and their issue through the identification of key information about the problem including time limits, key dates and requirements for urgent advice or action together with an assessment of client's ability to take the next step themselves, the complexity of the problem and available resources
- Identifying discrimination through pro-active questioning
- Concluding the interview in a positive manner by making appropriate referrals, agreements and case records

Working to influence change (Research & Campaigns):

Contribute to the Citizen Advice service's work of exercising a responsible influence on policies, both local and national, which affect the lives of clients by:

- Identifying enquiries which have policy implications for a number of clients
- Raising issues following appropriate procedures
- Assist with local Research & Campaigns work such as surveys and local campaigns

Equal Opportunities:

Contribute towards the Citizens Advice Equal Opportunities and Positive Action policies by providing an impartial and non-judgemental service to all clients:

- Identifying possible breaches of Equal Opportunities legislation, policy and practice and advising the client accordingly
- Taking part in Research & Campaigns exercises focused on Equal Opportunities issues
- Challenging behaviour which indicates discrimination
- Assisting Citizens Advice Shropshire in making the service accessible to all clients irrespective of race, gender, sexual orientation and disabilities

Developing your own practice:

- Assessing own practice to identify own training and development needs
- Being assessed by the manager, advice session supervisor or trainer.
- Learning through training and reflecting on practice
- Keeping up to date with the information resources, including changes and additions, legislation and policies and procedures
- Keeping informed about the local community, local and national issues, developments and changes.
- Using and keeping up to date with relevant IT systems

Person Specification:

You don't need specific qualifications or skills, but you'll need to:

- be non-judgmental and respect views, values and cultures that are different to your own
- have good listening skills
- have excellent verbal and written communication skills
- have good maths and IT skills
- be able to understand information and explain it to others
- be willing to learn about and follow the Citizens Advice aims, principles and policies, including confidentiality and data protection
- be willing to undertake training in your role
- be prepared to give and receive feedback objectively and sensitively

Full training will be given including a blend of self-study, group sessions and observations, with a minimum commitment of 2 days per week during training.