

# Contact Centre Adviser

Tier One Advice Service

## Job Pack

Thank you for your interest in working at the Citizens Advice service that supports residents across Manchester. This job pack should give you everything you need to know to apply for this role and what it means to work for the Citizens Advice service.

In this pack you'll find:

- Our values
- 4 things you should know about us
- How the Citizens Advice network works
- Information about the organisation, team and the role
- The role profile and person specification
- The application process and training for the role
- The benefits of working for the organisation
- Our approach to equality and diversity

### Want to chat about the role?

If you want to have a chat about the role further, you can contact:

**Stephen Hurst (Operations Manager)** [stephen.hurst@citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk](mailto:stephen.hurst@citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk)

**To apply submit your CV via our website:**  
**[www.citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk/work-with-us](http://www.citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk/work-with-us)**

We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination.  
We encourage and welcome applications from people of all backgrounds.

<b>Interview Dates:</b>	Tuesday 8 February & Wednesday 9 February 2022
<b>Start Date:</b>	Monday 14 February 2022

## Our values

**We're adaptable.** We recognise that our clients' needs are changing and that we need to change with them. We like to try new things and learn when things don't work. We are confident enough to constructively question ideas and adapt to changes.

**We're respectful.** We foster relationships and respect our colleagues and clients. We willingly share our knowledge and experiences to maximise the social impact of our work. We are honest in our views and value that everyone has something to offer.

**We're responsible.** We recognise that everyone is entitled to basic needs and rights and work towards supporting these seeking help to achieve them. We remember we are a charity and work within our charitable objectives by being responsible in the way we use our resources and pursue new opportunities.

## 4 things you should know about us

**We're local.** We have an Information Hub based in Manchester Town Hall as well as extensive outreach service with sessions across the city. We also have a well developed service offered by telephone, email, webchat and facebook messenger. We offer direct support to over 29,000 clients per year with 101,000 issues. We helped achieve £4.2 million of financial gains for residents and prevented 984 people from becoming homeless last year.

**We're also national.** We support the wider Citizens Advice network of 300 independent charities by providing telephone and digital advice to hundreds of thousands of people across England & Wales each year, through our Consumer Service and Money Advice Service Contact Centres.

**We're here for everyone.** Our advice helps people solve problems and our advocacy helps fix problems in society. Whatever the problem, we won't turn people away.

**We're listened to - and we make a difference.** Our trusted brand and the quality of our research mean we make a real impact on behalf of the people who rely on us.

## How the Citizens Advice Network works

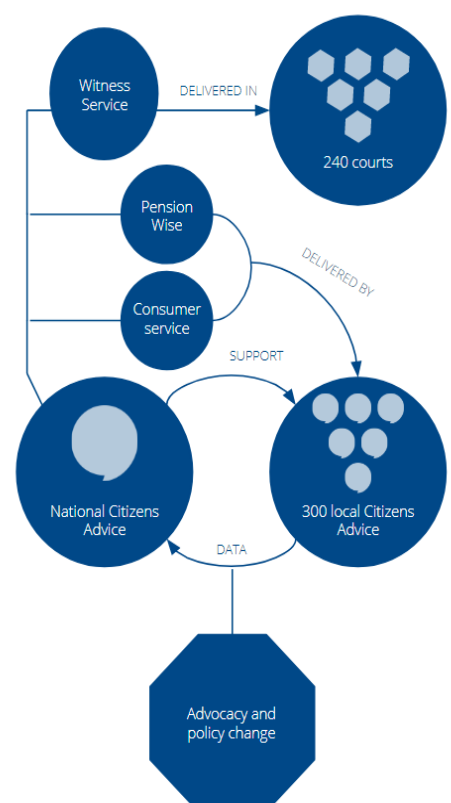
Citizens Advice Manchester is a member of the national Citizens Advice service which is made up of a network of around 300 local Citizens Advice members.

Citizens Advice nationally is a charity which includes 800 national staff working in one of our 6 offices or as homeworkers or as part of the Witness Service from over 240 courts across England and Wales 3000 Witness Service volunteers.

Local Citizens Advice are all independent charities, delivering services from over 600 local Citizens Advice outlets and over 1,800 community centres, GPs' surgeries and prisons.

The network does this with 6,500 local staff and over 23,000 trained volunteers.

Our reach means 99% of people In England and Wales can access a local Citizens Advice within a 30-minute drive of where they live.



# The organisation and team

The role you're applying for is **Contact Centre Adviser** within our **Tier One Advice Service**. Teams in this service are usually the first point of contact for people accessing advice and support from Citizens Advice Manchester. Initially successful candidates will work on our Consumer Advice Helpline which is managed by the Operations Manager, supported by a team of Supervisors.

Here are ways you can find out more about us:

Watch videos about the work we do: [Find a way forward](#), [Your best advice](#), and [Advice in a changing world](#).

- Watch a video about our volunteers [Volunteers at CAM](#)
- Take a look at our [website](#)
- Take a look at the [national Citizens Advice](#) website and the [Campaigning site](#)

## The role

Citizens Advice Manchester is a charity which provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We are a modern, innovative and progressive advice service that aims to provide the advice people need for the problems they face and to improve the policies and practises that affect people's lives.

Contact Centre Advisers on the Consumer Advice Helpline support clients using the protection offered to them by the Consumer Rights Act. The role involves giving clients advice when things have gone wrong with a purchase, or when they have been treated unfairly as a consumer. This can include issues such as: credit and store cards, faulty goods, counterfeit goods, poor service, contracts, builders, rogue traders etc. In the last year alone the Consumer Advice service helped consumers save £124 million pounds and supported 11,338 vulnerable energy clients with referrals to the Extra Help Unit!

Before you start advising our clients, you'll receive training in the role. In order to be fully competent to give advice you'll need to complete the full time training course, this usually lasts for 4 weeks and is paid at the full time rate. Training will be held at our City Centre offices which have been adapted to meet government guidelines for a safe working environment. During your training you will work a reduced 35 hour working week. Once you've successfully completed training and begin taking calls your working week will increase to 37.5 hours.

## The type of work you'll be doing

To help you gain an understanding of the type of work employees on the Consumer Advice Helpline do here are some examples of how we help our clients:

### Case Study 1:

Ms Smith contacted us about a used car she recently bought. Two weeks after purchase, the car went into limp mode when she was driving on the motorway with her small children. She was recovered from the motorway with her car and the children and told by the Recovery Service that the car was not safe to drive. Since then, she has struggled to get the garage she bought it from to repair the car or provide a refund. Ms Smith was hoping to get through to Trading Standards but her call has been answered by us.

Our adviser explained all of her rights under the Consumer Rights Act to Ms Smith and gave guidance on the steps she could take to get the trader to fix the problem or refund her. We also took details about the purchase, the car and the trader and made a referral to her local Trading Standards office to alert them to a possible safety issue with the car. Although initially frustrated that she couldn't speak to Trading Standards directly, once our adviser explained the referral relationship, Ms Smith was reassured that some action would be taken to stop a similar thing happening to someone else.

### Case Study 2:

Mrs Ryan is 87 and lives alone. She has contacted us because she's worried she might have been scammed. Earlier in the morning, two men came round to her home and informed her that her roof was in a dangerous state and could collapse at any point. Distressed at this news, she has signed a contract to pay them £20,000 for roofing work. The men took her to the bank and had her withdraw £250 as a deposit to pay them there and then. The men are due to return tomorrow. She has since spoke to her neighbour who assured her that her roof is fine but she is worried she will be in trouble if she doesn't pay the rest of the £20,000.

We discussed the case with Mrs Ryan and confirmed she would still be within her rights to cancel the contract. Mrs Ryan was very relieved that she has the opportunity to get out of the contract. We also took details of the trader to make a referral to Mrs Ryan's local Trading Standards office to make them aware of a possible doorstep crime.

# Role profile

<b>Role:</b>	Contact Centre Adviser
<b>Location:</b>	central Manchester
<b>Salary:</b>	£18,849 (rising to £19,812 on successful completion of training)
<b>Hours:</b>	37.5 hours per week - Monday to Friday (35 per week during initial training)
<b>Reporting to:</b>	Operations Manager
<b>Contract term:</b>	Permanent in line with funding

## Purpose of the Role

<p>The principal focus of the post is to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be the initial point of contact for consumer enquiries.</li> <li>2. Make contact with referred customers by telephone/digital channels to undertake an assessment of their consumer advice needs to direct them towards the most appropriate advice to support in the resolution of their problem.</li> <li>3. Work in accordance with the performance and quality standards of the consumer service.</li> </ol>
--

Key accountabilities	Key elements & tasks
<b>Service Delivery</b>	Deliver excellent customer service.
	Conduct short, focused interviews either by telephone or digitally to explore the customer's situation and issues that need resolving.
	Make a judgement about what the next steps should be, based on understanding the problem, the customers capability and effective use of resources and other agencies which provide advice.
	Where appropriate, provide quality assured assisted self-help/early intervention information.
	Where appropriate, refer or signpost customers to one of the external partners in line with documented procedures.
	Ensure all customer work is entered onto the relevant case recording system, maintaining detailed and accurate statistical information as required.
	Staff the telephone during the Service opening hours.
<b>Referral and Signposting Management</b>	<p>Where additional advice needs are identified follow documented procedures to refer or signpost those customers to an:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed external partner</li> <li>• Local Citizens Advice</li> </ul>
<b>Performance and Quality Standards</b>	Meet the individual key performance targets and performance targets of the Consumer Service daily, weekly, monthly and annually.
	Adhere to the documented Consumer Service quality standards.
<b>Team Working</b>	<p>Work collaboratively with volunteers by providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day to day on-site support and guidance.</li> <li>• On-going coaching and mentoring.</li> </ul>
<b>Personal Development &amp; Training</b>	Attend regular performance review meetings required.
	Self-identify your own development needs and attend training.
	Maintain an up to date knowledge of consumer law and changes in consumer practises.
	Attend staff meetings as required.

<b>Research &amp; Campaign Work</b>	<p>Ensure that all staff and volunteers within the domain take an active role in the Research and Campaigning process by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forwarding all examples of R&amp;C as appropriate</li> <li>• Regular communication of current research and campaign priorities, initiatives and plans to advice team</li> <li>• Monitoring staff and volunteer performance/contributions to local and national campaigns</li> </ul>
<b>General</b>	Uphold the aims and principles of Citizens Advice and its equality & diversity policies.
	Abide by health & safety guidelines & share responsibility for your own safety and that of colleagues.
	Work in a positive and supportive manner and contribute to the creation of a good team environment.

Please note that this job description does not constitute a 'term and condition of employment'. It is provided only as a guide to assist an individual in the performance of the job and is not included to be an inflexible list of tasks.

Citizens Advice Manchester is a fast-moving organisation and therefore an employee's duties may be varied from time to time. The post holder accepts that they may be required to work flexibly and undertake any other work or duties as may reasonably be required, within the scope of and commensurate to the nature of the post.

## Person specification

Essential
Good standard of education with strong skills in numeracy & literacy.
At least 6 months experience of providing a high standard of customer service in a fast-paced target driven environment (Contact Centre experience desirable).
Experience of listening and questioning with an ability to manage challenging situations.
Ability to work individually and as a productive member of the team.
Ability to retain information and apply this knowledge appropriate to the needs of the consumer.
Ability to communicate information effectively to clients, both orally and in writing in a clear and understandable way.
Ability to work accurately with minimum supervision in a fast paced environment.
Other requirements for the role
Ability to contribute to an adaptable, respectful and responsible organisational culture in line with our values.
Ability and willingness to work as part of a team and a commitment to collective team responsibility.
Understanding of, and commitment to, the aims and principles of the Citizens Service in which equality and diversity is embedded throughout.
Awareness that Citizens Advice clients are at the heart of everything we do.

# The application process

## Stage 1

You are required to submit a copy of your CV, this will be screened against the role description and person specification to assess whether your skills and experience is a good fit.

**SUBMIT YOUR CV VIA OUR WEBSITE:**

**[www.citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk/work-with-us](http://www.citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk/work-with-us)**

**Please ensure your CV includes the following information:**

- Your contact details (address, **telephone number** and email address)
- Information about your education history
- Information about your career history
- Details of any professional qualifications

## Stage 2

If successful, you will be invited to participate in a short telephone interview (lasting for around 10-15 minutes) during the call you'll be asked to talk about your previous experience and the skills that you have, you will also have an opportunity to ask any questions you may have about the role or our service. We often give 24-48 hours notice of this call, if the time/date suggested isn't convenient for you please advise and we can rearrange.

## Stage 3

If successful at the telephone interview, you will be invited to participate in a short interview (lasting for around 25 minutes) and asked to complete a short competency based test. During your interview a panel involved in running our service will ask you questions based on the person specification (provided at page 5 of this pack).

**Interviews are scheduled to take place on Tuesday 8 February and Wednesday 9 February 2022.**

# Training & Beginning the Role

In order to be fully competent to advise our clients, all successful candidates will need to complete a full time training course which lasts for around 4 weeks (paid at the full time rate). Training will be held at our offices in the City Centre, these have been adapted to meet government guidelines for a safe working environment. During your training you will work a reduced 35 hour working week. Once you've successfully completed training and begin taking calls your working week will increase to 37.5 hours.

**Training will begin on Monday 14 February 2022 and is paid at the full time rate.**

# What we give our staff

We value all our people and can offer a supportive culture within a charity setting that is committed to social justice. The role attracts an attractive remuneration package with excellent terms including:

- A 37.5 hour working week (Monday to Friday, no shifts!)
- Pension scheme
- Cycle to work scheme
- City centre location
- Health plan with 24/7 telephone support service
- Generous holiday entitlement starting at 26 days per year (in addition to bank holidays) and rising with long service to a maximum of 34



## Equality & Diversity at CAM

Citizens Advice Manchester recognises the positive value of diversity, promotes equality and challenges unfair discrimination. We recognise people with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experiences bring fresh ideas and perceptions, and we wish to encourage and harness these differences to make our services more relevant and approachable. Citizens Advice Manchester will not discriminate or tolerate discriminatory behaviour on the grounds of race, colour, sex, transgender, disability, nationality, national or ethnic origin, religion or belief, marital/partnership or family status, sexual orientation, age, social class, educational background, employment status, working pattern, trade union membership or any other irrelevant factor in any aspect of employment.

Our values include a commitment to equality and fairness, and to valuing each other. All our employees are expected to have read and understood our Equality and Diversity Policy and to ensure they behave in accordance with its principles. Breaches of the policy may lead to disciplinary action.

## Dignity at Work

Citizens Advice Manchester is committed to providing a culture in which all staff value each other and are able to work together to their full potential in an inclusive environment free from harassment, bullying and other unacceptable forms of behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour in the workplace will be actively dealt with, all complaints will be taken seriously, confidentiality will be respected and victimisation of those that raise complaints will not be tolerated.

Our values include commitments to work together and value each other - all our employees are expected to have read and understood our Dignity at Work Policy and to ensure they behave in accordance with its principles. All staff are responsible for helping to create and maintain a positive and inclusive working environment free from bullying and harassment. All managers have a particular responsibility for ensuring a supportive and inclusive working environment in which dignity at work is actively promoted.

## Probationary Policy

New appointments are subject to a probationary period which begins once you have completed training. At the end of the probationary period the outcome of the assessment may be confirmation of post; notice of dismissal; or at our discretion, an extension of the probationary period.

## Our People

We value the people who work here - and we show that in what we offer. As well as things like annual leave and our workplace pension, working at Citizens Advice means getting access to many benefits:

- **A commitment to your development.** We have a coordinated staff training and development pathway. This means that training will be provided both for your current job and for your development.
- **Employee assistance programme.** Once out of probation everyone working at Citizens Advice Manchester has access to professional and completely confidential counselling and advisory services.

## Equality and Fairness in Recruitment

We are fully committed to stand up and speak up for those who face inequality and disadvantage. We want this to be reflected in the diversity of the people who work for us.

To help us achieve this, we aim to make our recruitment process as fair as it can be. We also offer support to disabled candidates to make sure no one loses out on a role because of their condition.

**We judge the application, not the person.** The select panel won't see your personal details. This makes sure each person's response is judged on its merits and not on their background.

Our commitment to equality runs through everything we do - read the [Citizens Advice Stand up for Equality Strategy](#) to find out more.