

Assistant Legal Officer, Social Security, and Assistant Legal Officer, Employment and Self-referral Coordinator

Recruitment pack 2021-22

Application Process / Timetable:

Send the following documents by e-mail to admin@thefru.org.uk no later than **midday Monday 9th August 2021:**

1. A letter setting out how you meet the person specification (no more than 2 sides of A4).
2. A CV (no more than 2 sides of A4), giving the names and contact details of two referees.
3. A completed test answer.
4. A completed "information for administrator" form.

We are recruiting for two roles, one social security and one employment. Your letter should indicate your preference and whether you would also like to be considered for the other post.

We are committed to equal opportunities and to selecting the best candidate for the post. We will make any reasonable adjustment required for people with a disability.

The selection timetable will be:

- Stage I: Applications submitted by midday Monday 9th August 2021
- Stage II: Shortlisted candidates invited to an interview by Monday 16th August 2021
- Stage III: Interviews on Monday 23rd / Tuesday 24th August 2021
- Stage IV: Job offered subject to references
- Stage V: Start date: as soon as possible thereafter, subject to discussion of successful candidate's availability. We would hope the candidates could take up post in September/October 2021.

Background information

FRU offers representation in Social Security and Employment cases to those who cannot afford lawyers. Since 1972 we have helped our clients get access to justice in the tribunals. In the current environment, with all forms of legal aid and free advice under pressure, our work is needed more than ever.

We also offer training and advocacy experience for our volunteers, most of whom are students or recently graduated. Volunteers are supervised by FRU's staff, in particular our Principal Legal Officers and Assistant Legal Officers.

Our Assistant Legal Officers

As an Assistant Legal Officer you will make a vital contribution to FRU's work, but the post is also part of our efforts to give aspiring lawyers and junior practitioners training and experience. That is why it is offered as a paid internship lasting 12 months from September 2021 to August 2022.

Over that time we expect you to develop as a lawyer and advocate. With our help you will shoulder significant responsibility for supervising volunteers. You will also have your own clients and will be expected to make a substantial contribution to FRU's overall caseload, especially in complex and appeal cases.

You will be supervised and supported by our Principal Legal Officers.

What will you do?

You will spend most of each day in the FRU office helping volunteers. Common situations include:

- Discussing a case with a new volunteer, who needs to demonstrate that they will be able to conduct it properly
- Advising a volunteer on a difficult legal point
- Guiding someone through a difficult client handling situation or point of professional ethics
- Helping a volunteer to prepare written submissions
- Responding to telephone and e-mail queries from volunteers, other organisations and members of the public.

When you are not helping volunteers, you will work on your own cases. You will be expected to manage your work to balance your casework with supervision of volunteers.

We are advertising for two roles, one primarily related to Social Security and the other primarily related to Employment.

In either role you will be expected to be flexible and assist with other work when necessary. The precise division of work will depend on the needs of the organisation, as well as your own preferences.

The ALO, Employment will also be responsible for the day-to-day management of FRU's self-referral scheme, which allows clients to approach FRU directly. This will involve speaking to clients on the phone and, where the client has a suitable case, meeting them to receive the self-referral. You will also market the scheme to other advice agencies and clients.

What are we looking for?

An enthusiastic, committed and able candidate, of course!

We expect candidates to have some experience of working in social security or employment law, whether that be at FRU, as a volunteer in another advice agency or in paid employment. But we are primarily interested in finding candidates with ability and potential.

In essence, we are more interested in how good a lawyer we think you will become than in how much experience you have right now. One point of the post is to give people with that potential the experience they need to start their career. We are proud to say that most of our past Assistant Legal Officers have gone on to pupillage or training contracts.

Job Details

Job title:	Assistant Legal Officer, Social Security Assistant Legal Officer, Employment and Self-referral Coordinator
Reporting to:	Principal Legal Officer, Social Security/Employment
Hours of work:	35 hours a week. Normal working hours will be 10.00 to 18.00 with an hour for lunch. You will be expected to cover late night opening on Tuesday evenings until 20.00 and will be able to take time off in lieu to compensate (arrangements for this to be agreed). You will be expected to participate in the rota of staff conducting office inductions on Monday evenings. This will occur approximately once every 3 weeks, for about 45 minutes and you will be able to take time off in lieu to compensate.
Salary:	£29, 137 p.a.
Annual Leave:	25 days + Bank Holidays + period between Christmas and New Year
Location:	The post-holder will need to be available to volunteers and will therefore be based in FRU's offices in central London with some agreed hours spent home working, subject to Covid restrictions and dependent on business needs. The post-holder will be expected to travel to tribunal hearings when necessary.
Duration:	Fixed term post: September 2021 to August 2022.
Other:	Interest free loan for travel season ticket

Person Specification

Applicants for the post should demonstrate that they have the following:

A. Knowledge, experience and qualifications

Essential

1. A law degree, a GDL or equivalent qualification
2. Some knowledge of social security or employment law
3. Some experience of managing client cases and advocacy in social security or employment law

Desirable

4. Knowledge of and experience in both social security and employment law and practice
5. Experience of public speaking
6. Experience of managing or organising projects

B. Skills and abilities

Essential

1. Ability to analyse and understand complex legal issues
2. Ability to explain complex legal issues to different audiences
3. Ability to learn skills and information quickly
4. Ability to work in a busy environment with competing demands
5. Good oral and written communication skills

C. Personal qualities

Essential

1. Commitment to helping people obtain access to justice and to equal opportunities
2. Ability to take responsibility and make sound judgements
3. An interest in developing the skills and knowledge of others
4. Ability to work as part of a small team

Desirable

5. Ability to attend occasional evening and weekend meetings and events (which are planned in advance).

ALO Test 2021

You will find the ALO test available to download on our website in addition to this pack, which all candidates should complete. Your performance on the test is an important criterion in both shortlisting and appointment following interview.

Test

Summarise the case of *Brightman v TIAA Ltd* (an Employment case) or *CTC/1039/2012* (a Social Security judgment). In particular, set out the point of law the case established. Your summary must be no longer than 500 words.