



Legal Officer (October 2024)

Rainbow Migration, the longest-running charity in Europe dedicated to supporting LGBTQI+ people through the asylum and immigration system, is recruiting a Legal Officer to advise and help improve the representation of LGBTQI+ people seeking asylum and help change the asylum and immigration system to one that treats everyone with compassion, dignity and respect.

We are looking for a qualified solicitor or barrister with valid practising certificate, or already accredited to Level 3 OISC, with two years' experience in providing advice and representation in asylum including working in legal aid.

You will be responsible for the day-to-day delivery of the legal advice service. Under the guidance of our Legal Service Manager, you will also build capacity amongst legal representatives by designing and delivering training, giving second tier advice and developing and coordinating a network of practitioners working in this area. You will use the knowledge you gain in this role to help deliver Rainbow Migration's policy work, such as inputting into policy papers and meeting with partner organisations when required.

We will also consider applications from people who do not want to do the policy elements of the job, but to instead focus on first and second tier advice. Please mention in your covering letter if you are applying for this option.

This is a unique opportunity to build on your experience as a lawyer to improve representation across the sector and create change in government policy and practice. You will be supported to develop as a specialist lawyer and in your policy skills.

Responsibilities will include:

- Deliver one-off advice to adult LGBTQI+ people seeking asylum and work with colleagues to refer them to quality legal aid and pro bono lawyers
- Provide casework assistance e.g. helping to prepare witness statements, making referrals to other specialist organisations and taking other urgent steps (whilst not representing service users or maintaining a caseload)
- Provide occasional advice (within competence) on other issues affecting asylum and partnership service users such as asylum support, legal aid, trafficking, family reunion or community care
- Deliver second tier advice to the legal representatives of LGBTQI+ people seeking asylum and other charities and professionals



- Work with the Legal Service Manager to design and deliver training to lawyers, NGOs and other professionals
- Write blogs and articles on asylum and immigration policy and legislation as they apply to LGBTQI+ people
- Contribute to policy and briefing papers
- Assist with preparing guidelines and briefings for legal services and pro bono lawyers

The Legal Officer will not be providing direct legal representation of service users. However, the role includes substantive advice and casework within the scope of legal support and referrals for our service users, as well as merits testing and second tier advice.

Rainbow Migration's vision is that LGBTQI+ people can settle in the UK and lead fulfilling lives. Our values are:

- **Safety:** We believe everyone should be safe from persecution and safe to be themselves. We strive to create a safe workplace culture, and we place importance on the wellbeing of everyone involved with Rainbow Migration.
- **Integrity:** We are thorough and honest in everything we do, and we take responsibility for our actions. We want to be accountable to our communities and those who support us.
- **Belonging:** We welcome and include all LGBTQI+ people, and we celebrate and value their range of experience in terms of gender, religion, race, age, disability status and class. We try to remove obstacles to participation, champion equality and promote a sense of family or home through our services.
- **Respect:** We believe that every person is equal and deserves the same level of courtesy, care, and attention. We respect the rights, wishes and feelings of our service users, and campaign for their rights to be respected as they go through the asylum and immigration system.

At Rainbow Migration, we don't just accept difference – we celebrate it, we support it, and we thrive on it. We're proud to be an equal opportunity employer and we value diversity. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, colour, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, marital status, or disability status. We consider all qualified applicants, consistent with any legal requirements.

We welcome applications from candidates with lived experience of going through the UK asylum or immigration system or who have been subject to immigration control. We offer a guaranteed interview scheme for anyone considered as disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if they meet the necessary criteria in the person specification.



Owing to the nature of the work, the successful applicant will be required at the point of conditional job offer to disclose all spent and unspent criminal records and subsequently to undergo an enhanced DBS check. See our [website](#) for more information.

Contract Type: Permanent.

Hours: Full-time (35 hours per week). Working part-time or job-sharing will be considered. Occasional work in the evenings and at weekends may be required but with plenty of notice. Rainbow Migration encourages staff to maintain a good work life balance and has a TOIL system in place.

Salary: Starting at £40,175, with potential annual step increases up to £44,868 (pro-rata for part-time employees), plus statutory employer's pension contribution. In addition to an annual step increase, the trustees consider giving a separate inflationary increase every April.

Location: Remote or from Rainbow Migration's offices in central London. Hybrid working will also be considered. The successful candidate could work from anywhere in the UK but would be expected to occasionally travel to London and other parts of the country for meetings and events. At the time of posting this advert, none of our staff are going into the office every day. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Annual Leave: 25 days per year rising after 24 months by 1 day after each year of service to maximum of 28 days per year (pro rata if working part-time).

Benefits:

- Two days of wellbeing leave to be taken at short notice in each calendar year (pro rata for part-time staff)
- Enhanced parental leave and pay
- Full pay for jury service (up to four weeks), compassionate leave (up to two weeks) and dependents leave (up to four days, pro rata for part-time staff)
- Separate salary step and inflationary increases considered every year
- TOIL system
- Hybrid working policy, including possibility of working abroad for 10 working days (pro rata for part-time staff) each year
- Policy on staff loans or salary advances for difficult times
- Work laptop and mobile phone
- Training and learning opportunities
- Employee telephone counselling service
- Clinical supervision for staff delivering services



How to apply

Closing date: Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Interview date: Interviews will be scheduled on an ongoing basis in response to applications received.

Please read the job description and person specification. If you have any questions about the role or would like to find out more before applying, then you can contact the line manager via recruitment@rainbowmigration.org.uk.

Please send:

1. Your CV
2. A written statement (max 1,000 words). Instead of a written statement you may submit your statement by video or audio recording (max 8 minutes) to recruitment@rainbowmigration.org.uk.
3. Optional: please use this link to complete a [monitoring form](#)

In your statement, please:

1. Give examples of how you meet the person specification. In addition to what is on your CV, we want to hear about any relevant skills and experience that demonstrate how you meet the necessary criteria for the role, and if you meet any of the advantageous criteria. Skills and experience could be from training, volunteering, interests or life experience
2. Confirm if you wish to be considered under the guaranteed interview scheme for anyone considered as disabled under the Equality Act 2010 (physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' effect on your ability to do normal daily activities)
3. State how many hours a week you wish to work and if you have a preferred pattern, or if you are applying as part of a job-share
4. If you do not want to do the policy elements of the job and instead focus on first and second tier advice, please mention this.

By submitting an application, you:

1. Confirm that you have the right to work in the UK and will produce the necessary documentation if you are offered this post.
2. Declare that to the best of your knowledge and belief, the information provided with your application is true and correct and that you understand that any false information or statement given will justify the dismissal from Rainbow Migration if appointed.



3. Accept that, if successful, you will be required to disclose all spent and unspent criminal records at the point of conditional job and subsequently to undergo an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check.

We are proud to be a member of the Experts by Experience Employment Network (www.ebeemployment.org.uk), which aims to create a charitable sector that is led by people with lived experience of the asylum and immigration system. As part of this network, we challenge the one-size-fits-all approach in our employment practices, and respect personal circumstances and needs of people with lived experience. Please feel free to use information and resources at <https://www.ebeemployment.org.uk/ebe> which may help in preparing your job application.

Privacy notice

If you apply for this role, the information you provide will be processed according to Rainbow Migration's [privacy policy](#). Rainbow Migration will not share your information with any third parties unless part of the recruitment process or are legally required to do so. By applying, you are permitting Rainbow Migration to access and use the information for recruitment purposes. Rainbow Migration will store your data for 12 months after the conclusion of the recruitment campaign. Monitoring information is kept separately and is pseudonymised to avoid identification of applicants. It is amalgamated for statistical purposes and the original data is then deleted after six months.



Legal Officer Job description

Purpose

The Legal Officer will help us achieve Rainbow Migration's strategic goals:

1. Asylum and immigration system treats LGBTQI+ people fairly and with dignity
2. LGBTQI+ people who need protection are granted leave to remain

and the following **outcomes** from our strategy:

Changes to lives

LGBTQI+ people seeking asylum:

1. Present better asylum claims
2. Overcome time-critical challenges to their asylum claims
3. Receive quality legal advice and representation
4. Be more likely to be granted leave to remain

LGBTQI+ people subject to immigration control will:

5. Spend less time in detention

LGBTQI+ people making partnership applications will:

6. Receive quality legal advice and information

Changes to systems and structures

1. Improved government practice for determining LGBTQI+ asylum claims
2. Increased lawyer capacity in LGBTQI+ asylum claims
3. Increased geographic diversity of lawyers with knowledge of LGBTQI+ asylum claims
4. Increased capacity and quality of services from voluntary sector and statutory services

Responsibilities

Legal advice

- Give LGBTQI+ people one-off advice on their legal options and asylum claims



- Conduct outreach sessions in immigration detention centres and locations outside London
- Work with the Casework Coordinators to make referrals to quality legal aid and pro bono lawyers
- Provide casework assistance in some individual cases such as through research, helping to prepare witness statements or other evidence, making referrals to other specialist organisations and taking other urgent steps (whilst not representing service users or maintaining a caseload)
- Provide advice and assistance with asylum appeals to the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal
- Provide occasional advice or other work in relation to LGBTQI+ partnership applications
- Occasional advice (within competence) or identifying and/or signposting or referrals on other issues affecting service users such as non-asylum immigration matters, legal aid availability, asylum support
- Maintain processes and procedures to enable Rainbow Migration to continue to be regulated by the OISC and maintain that regulation including through OISC audit
- Ensure that monitoring requirements related to the service are met and data recorded accurately in Salesforce
- Keep abreast of relevant developments in asylum, immigration and relevant human rights law and practice

Capacity building

- Provide second-tier advice and assistance to lawyers on LGBTQI+ asylum claims or to other services supporting LGBTQI+ people seeking asylum
- Assist in the design and delivery of training including to lawyers, charities and others

Policy and influencing

- Use evidence from the legal service to inform Rainbow Migration's policy work
- Contribute to Rainbow Migration policy briefings
- Attend meetings with Home Office officials or other stakeholders as required
- Support colleagues in other policy, advocacy and influencing efforts

Communications

- Draft blogs and articles on asylum and immigration policy and legislation as they apply to LGBTQI+ people
- Draft content for the website and other materials to assist LGBTQI+ people seeking asylum and their legal representatives



Other

- Coordinate an email network of lawyers and caseworkers representing LGBTQI+ people seeking asylum to enable the exchange of information and learning
- Comply with all Rainbow Migration policies
- Undertake other reasonable tasks as requested

Reporting

The Legal Officer will be line managed by the Legal Service Manager.



Legal Officer

Person specification

Experience can be gained from a variety of places: paid or voluntary work, training, general interest, and life experience. We are happy to hear about relevant experience you have gained from another field and why you think it is transferable to this role.

Necessary skills and experience

1. Two years' experience providing asylum legal advice and representation
2. Qualified solicitor or barrister in England and Wales (authorised to practice without a supervising solicitor in a legal advice centre) with valid practising certificate, or already accredited to Level 3 OISC
3. Experience of representing people seeking asylum, including under legal aid
4. Ability to build rapport and communicate sensitively and sympathetically with traumatised and/or vulnerable people.

Advantageous skills and experience

1. Experience of representing LGBTQI+ people seeking asylum
2. Knowledge of other immigration law and policy that may also apply to LGBTQI+ people seeking asylum, such as trafficking, partner/spouse leave, detention and bail
3. Current IAAS accreditation as a senior caseworker or above
4. Knowledge/experience of legal aid funding regulations relating to asylum and immigration and judicial review
5. Experience of delivering advice on partnership immigration applications
6. Experience of providing second tier advice
7. Experience of delivering training
8. Experience of writing articles on immigration and asylum issues.

Essential core competencies expected of all Rainbow Migration staff

1. Committed to Rainbow Migration's mission, vision and values
2. Good English verbal and written communication skills
3. Ability to work independently while understanding the importance of seeking guidance and support when required
4. Ability to plan and prioritise work and meet deadlines
5. Ability to work collaboratively within a small, multidisciplinary team
6. Ability to work occasionally outside regular office hours with plenty of notice
7. Ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds



8. Ability to use standard workplace software programmes including Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint

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