

Housing

Ombudsman Service



Dispute Examiner
Candidate information pack

The recruitment process

Enclosed within this document you will find:

- Overview of recruitment process
- Indicative timetable for the recruitment process
- The role profile for the Dispute Examiner - job profile and person specification
- Benefits

Our website www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk has details about what we do and how we do it.

The following corporate publications may be of interest and can be found under the Corporate Information menu, under Publications on our website:

- Business Plan 2022-23
- Corporate Plan 2022-25
- Annual Report and Accounts 2021-22

We hope that you decide to apply to this key role within our organisation.

Candidates who are short-listed will be asked to carry out an assessment exercise and a panel interview with the Housing Ombudsman Service. It is likely that the assessment / interview will be conducted remotely (via MS Teams).

Indicative Timetable

Closing date for receipt of applications: 23.59 on Sunday 16th April 2023.

Please note: Following unprecedented interest in our vacancies, we reserve the right to bring forward the closing date (close it early). The role will be closed to new applications immediately if / when we receive 220 applications or at the stated closing date – whichever occurs first. Applications after the role has closed cannot be accepted. We therefore strongly recommend applying as soon as possible.

Short-list Interview & Assessment: short-listed applicants will be asked to complete an assessment exercise on a day between the 1st and 5th May. Candidates successful at assessment will be invited to a short list interview (via MS Teams) - likely to be between 22nd May and 2nd June.

Throughout the process, we will advise you about the outcome of your application at the earliest opportunity.

Application Process

Our application process is anonymised. Submitting an application is a two stage process:

Stage 1 - create an account. This largely focuses on the information that you would include in your CV.

Stage 2 - upload and submit your supporting statement.

Please note that once you have submitted your application for a specific role, that application for that role cannot then be changed. Any changes you make to your account will be reflected in any subsequent application you choose to make.

If you have any questions, please contact Jonathan McIntyre, Managing Director of CJA Group, our advising consultant on 020 7588 5407 or via jmm@cjagroup.com.

Job Description

Position: Dispute Examiner

Working pattern: Permanent

Hours: 35

Location: Home-based.

Overall purpose of the role

Working as part of a busy team, you will apply your detailed knowledge of housing law, the Ombudsman's jurisdiction and your excellent customer care skills to assess cases when a landlord's internal complaint process is complete.

You will speak with residents to confirm what issues remain unresolved for them and identify the most appropriate route for complaint resolution.

You will define the outstanding issues and send clear, relevant evidence requests to landlords to ensure that case files support a speedy investigation, or provide them with insight as to how they can attempt resolution themselves. You will decide which complaints are outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction, and you will write to explain this decision to the resident and landlord. You will be responsible for supporting and guiding residents through this process, some who will be managing complex vulnerabilities.

You will also share knowledge and insight gathered from your triaging activity internally to help shape our added value sector reports and tools. You will also comply with all corporate requirements.

Main Accountabilities

- Work independently to manage a busy, varied, complex caseload.
- Ensure compliance with GDPR legislation and associated Ombudsman guidance when managing casework.
- Identify cases that are outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction at the earliest opportunity and managing the associated communication with all parties.
- Liaise with residents and landlords to establish the most appropriate intervention for the Housing Ombudsman Service including requesting information to prepare a case for investigation, mediation, or early determinations.
- Assess the complexity and risk profile of all relevant casework to support Dispute Resolution casework management.
- Ensure residents are signposted to other services effectively, e.g. the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, Citizens Advice.
- Provide excellent customer service to residents and landlords including addressing any communication needs and considering individual circumstances.
- Share insight, good practice, themes and trends with our Quality and Engagement Department to promote sector improvement.

Person Specification

Qualifications

- Degree level or equivalent (*desirable*)

Knowledge and Experience

Essential

- Demonstrable knowledge of housing law
- Knowledge and experience of dispute resolution and complaint handling, including assessment of jurisdiction.
- Experience of delivering against set targets and KPI's.
- Excellent communication skills including active listening skills and the ability to speak confidently, clearly and fluently avoiding jargon or criticism.
- Experience of working with high volume of information at pace and with accuracy and collating and interpreting data/information.

Desirable

- A working Knowledge of the role of an Ombudsman.

Skills and Abilities

Essential

- Research skills
- Customer care skills
- Proactive
- Autonomous
- Organised – planning and prioritising skills
- Collaborative working
- Pro-actively seeks to learn
- Objective analysis
- Excellent report writing skills
- Ability to have effective conversations with a wide range of people including those with additional needs.
- Ability to deal with difficult situations in an effective manner
- Ability to analyse a large volume of complex information

Additional Requirements

Essential

- Willingness to work flexibly within the team to ensure high quality, effective and efficient services are delivered.
- To comply with the Housing Ombudsman Equal Opportunities policies.
- To comply with the Housing Ombudsman Health & Safety policies.
- To comply with the Housing Ombudsman IT policies and procedures.

This role profile is not exclusive or exhaustive. It is intended as an outline indication of the areas of responsibility and may be amended in light of the changing needs of the organisation.

Benefits

Rewarding career, rewarding benefits

In addition to a basic salary of £41,375.76 per annum, you will also receive a benefits package including:

- Local Government Pension Scheme – opportunity to join the Local Government Defined Benefit Pension Scheme.
- Healthy Work/Life Balance – 35 hour working week, flexi-time scheme, working from home opportunities.
- Generous Annual Leave – Minimum of 25 days holiday, rising after four years of continuous service plus eight statutory bank holidays and three, paid Christmas closure days.
- Commitment to health and wellbeing – Free on site gym and shower facilities, cycle to work scheme, free yearly health check-up, employee assistance programme, access to CSSC Sports and Leisure website, discounts on days out, restaurants and high street shopping, contribution towards eye-tests and glasses.
- Season ticket loan – Interest free public transport ticket loan.
- Commitment to ongoing development - Payment of professional memberships fees. Regular training workshops.
- Office location – within walking distance of Underground and DLR stations, waterside location near Canary Wharf Shopping Centre and various bars, cafes and restaurants.



"I joined the service because I relish the opportunity to make a difference every day"

Richard Blakeway
The Housing Ombudsman

