

Many thanks for your interest in volunteering with MVAP. Please find enclosed the Information Pack including the application form.

Please complete the application form and when doing so it would be helpful if you could refer to the role descriptions so you can address the key skills within your application.

Feel free to contact the Volunteer Development Worker if you have any questions or would like any help with the application form.

After we have received your application we will contact you to arrange meeting up so that we are able to find out more about you and also that you can find out more about MVAP.

We look forward to hearing from you and hope that this will be the start of an enjoyable and rewarding volunteering experience.

Yours sincerely,

Dawn Kaveney

Volunteer Development Worker

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07816 580792



Volunteering with the  
Manchester Volunteer Advice  
Partnership

Volunteer  
Information  
Pack



## Manchester Volunteer Advice Partnership (MVAP)

### What does MVAP do?

MVAP is a partnership between Mind, Cheetham Hill Advice Centre, Manchester Refugee Support Network, Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit and the Young Peoples Support Foundation. The project provides excellent quality volunteering opportunities in advice activities across all our organisations.

Volunteering is an opportunity open to everyone to increase skills, knowledge and confidence, to meet others and we aim to make it a fulfilling experience.

### How do I get involved?

#### How to apply to become a volunteer

Recruitment is carried out centrally by the Manchester Volunteer Advice Partnership

The procedure is as follows:

1. Submission of an application form.
2. Informal chat with the Volunteer Development Worker.
3. Attendance and successful completion of training and induction to the organisation. There are different training requirements dependent on your role.
4. References are requested on the application form however any difficulties should be discussed with the Volunteer Development Worker.
5. Volunteer roles will be subject to a DBS check. Having a conviction will not necessarily disbar you from volunteering in this project but checks do need to be made because we are working with children, young adults and vulnerable people.

Volunteer Development Worker: Dawn Kaveney  
Contact at 07816 580792 or email [dawn@cheethamadvice.org.uk](mailto:dawn@cheethamadvice.org.uk).

## The Partners

### Manchester Mind

Manchester Mind has built an excellent reputation in Manchester as a provider of services to people with mental health needs. It has over 40 dedicated and enthusiastic staff and over 30 volunteers working for 6 projects and partnerships across Manchester.

The projects include:

The Young Adults Services and Projects for people aged 15 to 25 years old (YASP). It offers mentoring and befriending helping people get out more and find activities they enjoy, there's an advice service to help people sort out any difficulties with housing, benefits and debts and a counselling service. All of these are based in a café in Levenshulme where people can come and hangout, use computers for free and eat some tasty grub.

Manchester Minds' Advice Service is based in the Zion Centre in Hulme but also provides outreach services providing advice on welfare rights. In the centre there's a café and catering enterprise where people can learn skills in catering.

### Cheetham Hill Advice Centre

Cheetham Hill Advice Centre is an independent community advice organisation who offer confidential help, advice, information and support to residents of Manchester, in particular Cheetham and Crumpsall where they are based. The on a wide subjects including: welfare benefits, housing, money, consumer, immigration and nationality, legal problems, access to education, access to health problems, information on local services.

We usually have up to 20 volunteers involved in the Centre doing advice, interpreting, reception and admin work. Local residents are from many different communities. The largest group whose first language is not English is Urdu and Punjabi speakers.

Volunteers are able to make a contribution to the work of CHAC in a number of ways. They enable more people in the local community to get advice and support and make a particular contribution in enabling people from minority communities, especially those who don't speak English, to gain access to services.

## **Manchester Refugee Support Network**

Manchester Refugee Support Network (MRSN) is a grass-roots organisation directly managed by refugee communities based in Manchester. MRSN aims to build strong and independent refugee community organisations, develop the skills of community leaders and give people the information they need to settle and build new lives. The projects include:

An independent community advice service, giving information and advice on welfare benefits, tax credits, debt, housing, asylum support, and access to health services to refugees and asylum seekers and their families. It runs drop-in advice sessions and appointments.

A community development project supporting Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs) to become strong and independent (they currently have a membership of 21 RCOs and are in contact with around 40 in Greater Manchester).

A Refugee and Migrant Forum which aims to enable refugees and asylum seekers to express the needs and aspirations of their communities and to play a part in influencing policy in the city of Manchester and across the UK. For instance it is currently supporting the Refugee Council and TUC with a national campaign for the right to work for asylum seekers.

## **Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit (GMIAU)**

GMIAU provide free, confidential and independent specialist legal immigration and asylum advice and representation to people seeking entry or leave to remain in the UK. It runs a drop-in advice session and appointments and has advice pages on their website as well as information about projects and campaigns.

They have a contract with the Legal Advice Agency (LAA) to provide the service free to people who qualify for assistance under the Legal Help scheme, and they have a contract with Manchester City Council to provide an integrated immigration advice service to people who live in Manchester. They also raise funds to represent people who are not eligible for Legal Aid for a number of reasons but who are very vulnerable. This includes young people, people who are destitute or women who are claiming asylum and who have been subject to violence.

## **The Young Peoples Support Foundation (YPSF)**

The Young People Support Foundation (YPSF) provides a wide range of services to support young people towards an independent life as an adult. They work with young people aged 16-25, although some of their services are available for those aged 14 and 15. It's available to anyone even if they're living with parents or relatives, in council care, sleeping rough, are single or part of a couple or have children.

Their services range from practical support and advice for those at immediate risk of homelessness, to help with learning how to find employment, cook healthy meals or budget for household bills. Their aim is to help young people to find and maintain a home life that's safe and secure, with the means to support themselves, live healthily and be free from harm.

They run regular drop-in sessions from Oldham Street in Manchester city centre and Brownley Road in Wythenshawe, where anyone aged 16-25 can call in to talk to them. They also run temporary drop-in sessions across Manchester. The morning drop-in advice sessions on Oldham Street and Brownley Road are free, informal and open to all and the Oldham Street centre also has free hot showers and laundry facilities. Anyone aged 16-25

can call in for a free breakfast and informal chat, with the option to take up further support if required.

# Volunteer Roles

## Volunteer roles

Our aim is to have flexible roles tailored to your needs. The following gives you an idea of the kind of tasks that MVAP offer. You can express your preferences in the application form and with the Volunteer Development Worker.

### For all roles you need to:

Carry out all work in an impartial way in compliance with policies of confidentiality and equality of opportunity and have a positive, sensitive and non-judgmental attitude towards clients and colleagues regardless of their age, beliefs, disability, ethnic origin, gender, health, marital status, sexuality and responsibility for children and other dependants.

## Advice Worker

Advice work is a specialised form of volunteering which involves learning and using a range of skills. In order to take on the Advice Worker role you will need to be willing and able to commit to complete the full training programme and be willing to attend further training and meetings to maintain and develop your skills and knowledge.

## Skills and qualities you'll need



Good spoken English, the ability to listen and explain something clearly.

The ability to read and write English to a good standard.

For example be able to read and write a letter on behalf of a client and help someone fill in a form.

The ability to perform simple calculations, using a calculator if preferred.

The ability to work well with other people in a team and to work on own initiative when appropriate.

A willingness to learn and to undertake ongoing training.

## **The role**

Interview and advise clients in person, by phone, by email or through home visits. This includes:

- Finding out what the client's problem is
- Helping the client identify possible solutions
- Researching and giving information clearly and simply
- Talking or writing to other agencies on the client's behalf
- Helping the client to write letters or fill in forms
- Record interviews with clients by writing up case sheets and keeping relevant statistics
- Manage own casework

**Immigration Advice Worker**

Immigration Advice Workers will be trained to deliver basic immigration advice. This will involve completing the specialist OISC training to level 1. There are however other roles within immigration advice if you don't complete or do not want to take the course but this is an area of interest. Ask the Volunteer Development Worker.

### **Skills and Qualities you'll need**

- The ability to listen.
- The ability to read and write English to a good standard. For example be able to read and write a letter on behalf of a client and help someone fill in a form.
- The ability to work well with other people in a team
- A willingness to learn.

### **Advice Support Worker**

In some cases there are opportunities to volunteer as an Advice Support Worker\_(ASW) helping out advisers. ASW's can help with tasks such as filling in basic forms (paper and/or online) or writing a basic letter to an agency, photocopying, inputting data, filing and retrieving information. Some volunteers may wish to take on this role at first and then progress to doing full advice work later. You will need to complete part of the training course.

### **Skills and Qualities you'll need**

- The ability to listen.
- The ability to read and write English to a good standard. For example be able to read and write a letter on behalf of a client and help someone fill in a form.
- The ability to work well with other people in a team
- A willingness to learn.

### **Reception Volunteer**

Reception volunteers are the first point of contact for service users. They see people who come through the door and answer the telephone. Tasks will include taking messages, giving service users information about other services, photocopying documents and filing and retrieving information. You will need to complete part of the training course.

### **Skills and qualities you'll need**

- The ability to listen.
- The ability to work well with other people in a team
- A willingness to learn.
- There is also a particular demand for interpreters who can work on reception.

### **Admin assistant volunteer**

An admin assistant will work in the office carrying out tasks to support the running of the organisations. This could include filing and retrieving information, inputting data and writing basic standard letters. You will need to complete part of the training course.

### **Skills and qualities you'll need**

- The ability to listen.
- The ability to work well with other people in a team
- A willingness to learn.

### **Interpreters**

There is a great demand for interpreters in MVAP. Tasks include interpreting on reception and for Advice Workers during interviews. You will need to complete part of the training course.

### **Skills and qualities you'll need**

- Good spoken and written English and the ability to communicate accurately in a second language.
- The ability to listen.
- The ability to work well with other people in a team
- A willingness to learn.

# **MVAP**

## **Advice Work Training Programme**

### **MVAP Training Programme**

We have developed our advice work training programme to meet the needs of new volunteers in MVAP. It enables volunteers to gain the skills and confidence needed to carry out a range of roles. These skills are transferable and can open up other opportunities through personal development and increased knowledge.

### **What does it involve?**

Trainees will attend 1 days training at an external venue delivered by the Volunteer Development Worker and half a day in one of the MVAP centres. Going into the Centre enables participants to relate what they are learning on the course to how the Centre works in practice. You will shadow and observe workers, assist with tasks and undertake practical exercises, all under the supervision of the Advice Work Supervisor.

**The training programme** is divided into 3 units starting on the 26<sup>th</sup> March.

**Unit 1** will cover an introduction to the advice world and its role in the community, values and attitudes, policies within the organisations and communication skills.

**Unit 2** covers interview skills, good practice in form filling with service users and an overview of welfare benefits.

**Unit 3** will cover more detailed knowledge in Welfare benefits, Debt and Housing.

How much training you do is your choice but is also dependent on the role you wish to take up. Our aim is to provide you with the skills you need to fulfil your chosen role, to develop personally and to support you along the way.

# MVAP Volunteer Application Form

Please return to:

Dawn Kaveney, Volunteer Development Worker, Cheetham Hill Advice Centre, 1 Morrowfield Avenue, Manchester, M8 9AR or email [dawn@cheethamadvice.org.uk](mailto:dawn@cheethamadvice.org.uk) or call on 07816 580792.

If you have any questions or would like any assistance in completing the form please contact Dawn.

Why do you want to volunteer for MVAP?

What particular area of volunteer work with MVAP are you interested in?

What do you want to achieve?

Do you have any access needs or special requirements?

Full name :

Address :



**Skills and experience**

Please use this space to let us know about current or past experience which you can bring to MVAP. This may be through employment, voluntary work or within your home. Please check the role description for the work you are interested in and describe your skills and experience against this. Include any other information that you think might be helpful.

Telephone :

Email :

What languages do you speak?

How many hours a week are you able to volunteer?

### References

Please give the name, address, phone number and email address of 2 people we can contact for references. This could be a past employer or a personal reference. Please speak to the Volunteer Development Worker if you have any concerns or questions regarding references.

#### Referee 1

Name :

Address :

Telephone :

#### Referee 2

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email :	Email:
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Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence?

**YES / NO (please delete as appropriate)**

Any confirmation of offer of a volunteering role will be subject to a police check. Having a conviction will not necessarily disbar you from volunteering in this project but checks do need to be made because we are working with children, young adults and vulnerable people.

Where did you hear about MVAP?

Signed :	Date :
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**Cheetham Hill  
Advice Centre**

