

Job description

Job title: Ombudsman's Casework Manager

Directorate Private Office

Reports to: The Ombudsman

Purpose

To provide senior support to the Ombudsman and Deputy Ombudsman in respect of all casework activities, including:

- reviewing and assessing submissions on cases to the Ombudsman and to the Deputy Ombudsman and, where required, producing drafts for them;
- liaison with the other Private Office Managers to ensure the Ombudsman's input into casework issues is planned and prioritised in accordance with her other workload;
- effective management of the work of the External Reviewers and other contracted staff who undertake specialist complex casework for the Ombudsman;
- managing key external relationships about casework including with the Public Administration Select Committee.

Key accountabilities

- Develop and operate the systems to manage the flow of casework to and from the Ombudsman and her Deputy, and to liaise with Operations staff over relevant cases or casework issues, in order to optimise the input of the Ombudsman and/or her Deputy.
- Analyse files on receipt and review drafts in relation to casework quality. Produce or amend submissions where appropriate.
- Give information and advice to colleagues from the Operations Division in order to clarify issues for presentation to the Ombudsman and her Deputy and to share learning across the Office.
- Plan and organise monthly casework meetings for the Ombudsman and her Deputy to discuss high risk and other relevant cases with senior Operational staff.
- Produce draft correspondence and other material for the Ombudsman and her Deputy Ombudsman as required.
- Manage case-specific and general liaison with the External Reviewers and other contracted staff who undertake specialist complex casework for the Ombudsman.

- Manage, support and develop the three Assistant Casework Managers and the Executive Assistant to the Casework Management Team.
- Manage the Ombudsman's Casework Team budget.
- Represent the Ombudsman and her Deputy on Office working groups and committees, as directed.

Person specification

Delivering quality outcomes

- A strong track record of delivering high quality casework, demonstrating excellent judgment with an ability to balance all relevant considerations.
- Track record of critically reviewing and analysing complex information, distilling key issues, summarising them accurately and succinctly, making robust recommendations and effectively managing risk.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Committed to high standards and continuous improvement.
- Motivated by resolving problems and achieving improvement in public services.

Working together

- Well-developed interpersonal skills to secure co-operation and influence at all levels.
- Ability to provide effective constructive challenge to senior management.
- Seeks and takes opportunities to contribute to developing PHSO's strategies, policies and business.
- Customer focused and solution orientated.

Leading and managing self and others

- Strong experience of effective team and people management and leadership, particularly during periods of change.
- Supports change and develops plans for dealing with barriers, using all appropriate means to achieve successful outcomes.

- Able to identify the wider policy implications of casework issues.
- Self-motivation, enthusiasm and drive.
- Flexibility and adaptability.
- Self-disciplined.

Managing the business

- Demonstrated ability to take a cross-Office perspective.
- Exemplary organisational skills.
- Balances short and long term priorities effectively, using all available resources to achieve the best possible results.
- Excellent risk assessment and mitigation skills.
- Strong project management skills.
- Ability to move between the big picture and the detail.

Job description

Job Title:	Assistant Casework Manager to the Ombudsman
Directorate:	Private Office
Location:	London
Reports to:	Ombudsman's Casework Manager

Purpose

- To assist the Ombudsman's Casework Manager with the management of the casework-related workload of the Ombudsman and the Chief Operating Officer.

Key Accountabilities

- Assess, allocate and manage casework related correspondence sent to the Ombudsman or Chief Operating Officer to ensure any correspondence requiring attention is identified and resolved within customer service standards and in line with the Ombudsman's Principles.

- Works with colleagues in Operations division and elsewhere to ensure that casework submissions to the Ombudsman and Chief Operating Officer are 'right first time' and ready for consideration.
- Shares knowledge and learning identified through the Ombudsman's and Chief Operating Officer's involvement in casework across the team and other areas of the office.
- Undertake assessment, analysis and review of casework being referred to the Ombudsman or Chief Operating Officer highlighting the salient issues and priority actions and recommendations.
- Assist in the supervision of the Executive Assistant to the Ombudsman's Casework Team including some quality assurance of work to ensure an effective, integrated and comprehensive customer focused service.
- Undertake assessment, analysis and prepare replies on correspondence received on closed complaints about us cases, considering where appropriate the recommendations to use the 'do not acknowledge' instruction or appropriate policy in the face of repeated correspondence on specific cases.
- Provide briefings, analysis and drafts for consideration by the Ombudsman and Chief Operating Officer in respect of casework as appropriate. Identify themes and issues, including those that might need to be discussed at monthly casework meetings, at stand alone meetings and/or that might require learning to be shared across PHSO.
- Support the Ombudsman's Casework Manager in preparation for and running of the corporate casework meetings held with the Ombudsman.
- Liaise with others in the team and the rest of Private Office to ensure casework related telephone calls received are efficiently handled, and where appropriate a response is given.
- Responsible for keeping full, accurate and up to date records and audit trails on Visualfiles and on paper casework files.
- Maintain appropriate technical knowledge and seeks to continuously develop an understanding of the external context within which PHSO works to enable cross office working and contribute to wider PHSO objectives.
- Contribute to meeting team, Private Office and organisational objectives as well as personal objectives by undertaking cross office activities and assisting with events and projects where possible.
- Acts as the first point of response to both internal and external approaches to the Ombudsman and Chief Operating Officer on casework matters, clarifying what is expected, providing advice or a response on behalf of the PHSO and proactively proposing courses of action/recommendations for agreement by the Ombudsman or Chief Operating Officer.

- Effectively communicates with senior management on casework decisions, as appropriate, working closely with the Operations, Communications and other teams.

Person Specification

DELIVERING QUALITY OUTCOMES

- Carries out casework in accordance with the Office's Casework Policy & Guidance, which meets the quality standards set out in the Casework Quality Framework (see CQF for details), and which requires little or no correction by managers

WORKING TOGETHER

- Communicates orally and in writing clearly, confidently, comprehensively and persuasively to customers and colleagues at all levels
- Manages relationships with customers and colleagues by listening attentively, probing, showing empathy and feeding back to check understanding
- Engages in informal reviews of cases with peers and provides constructive feedback
- Makes a pro-active contribution to the achievement of the Team, Directorate or Office objectives, beyond their core role
- Shares knowledge and information and learning across team and other areas of the Office
- A team worker, able to build highly effective partnerships and productive relationships with people across and outside an organisation.
- Able to support senior managers in a high-pressure and demanding environment

MANAGING SELF

- Manages own workload in an efficient and proactive manner to achieve or exceed service standards, Business Plan and personal targets, without prompting by managers
- Behaves in line with and upholds PHSO values of excellence, leadership, integrity and diversity
- Takes responsibility for personal development and engages with line manager in identifying personal development needs and appropriate activities
- Acquires, evaluates and applies relevant, up to date knowledge and information to carry out duties effectively
- Motivates self and demonstrates self-discipline, enthusiasm and the ability to get things done
- Demonstrates commitment to high standards and achieving improvements in public services

SUPPORTING THE BUSINESS

- Understands the Office's vision and strategy and can clearly articulate their role in and contribution to meeting them, and can set their work in a corporate context
- Shows openness to change and commitment to continuous improvement; acts flexibly, collaboratively and confidently, even in times of uncertainty, and is responsive to variations in business approach / priorities
- Proactively develops understanding of the external context and takes this into account in their work
- Complies with PHSO's records management policies and procedures
- Able to provide innovative and responsive support to senior managers in a complex and demanding area of work
- Takes a broader view of the plans and workload of others to manage the flow and identify alternative solutions

Technical Requirements

- Strong track record of high quality delivery against targets
- Experience of dealing appropriately with high levels of telephone and written contact from callers who may be exhibiting challenging behaviours or who may be angry, upset or distressed
- Able to identify, acquire and assess relevant and complex technical background knowledge in order to deal appropriately with a wide range of work
- Able to analyse a high volume of complex information and produce a concise summary within tight timescales
- Able to move quickly between detail and the bigger picture and fully understand the internal and external landscapes within which we operate
- Experience of dealing with a varied high volume workload

Part 1: Job Profile

Job Title:

Executive Assistant (Ombudsman's Casework Team)

Date: 11 June 2014

The Main Purpose of the Job:

Please identify in three to four key sentences why your job is required by the business and what are the reasons for the existence of your job.

To assist the Ombudsman's Casework Team with the management of the casework-related workload of the Managing Director and the Ombudsman by:

- Prioritising the team's workload ensuring that any urgent or high risk referrals are brought to the attention of the Assistant Casework Managers and/or the Ombudsman's Casework Manager;
- providing briefings on specific high risk/high profile cases to the Ombudsman's Casework Manager as required;
- reviewing some casework submissions sent to the Ombudsman and Managing Director, as required by the delegation scheme, to ensure they are ready for sign off;

The Scope of the Job:

This section is designed to identify as one line bullet point statements the key elements of your job.

- a. Provide support to the Ombudsman's Casework Manager in assisting with the management and prioritisation of casework for the attention of the Ombudsman and Managing Director by prioritising the team's workload ensuring that any urgent or high risk referrals are brought to the attention of the Assistant Casework Managers and/or the Ombudsman's Casework Manager.
- b. Provide briefings and draft correspondence in response to contacts made to the Ombudsman/Managing Director on their behalf at the request of the Ombudsman's Casework Manager, flagging any high risk/high profile issues in the correspondence to the Manager and/or Assistant Casework Manager.
- c. Assist the Ombudsman's Casework Manager in ensuring the Ombudsman and Managing Director have appropriate briefing materials and support when undertaking casework related internal/external meetings.
- d. Review all incoming post addressed to the Ombudsman and direct to appropriate part of the office, noting any high risk or high profile issues and alerting the Ombudsman's Casework Manager to any cases of interest.
- e. Reviewing some (straightforward) casework submissions sent to the Ombudsman and Managing Director, as required by the delegation scheme, to ensure they are ready for sign off.
- f. Provide information and records management support by carrying out the duties of a LIRA for the Casework Team.

Part 1: Job Profile

Job Title: Head of the Corporate Casework Team

Job Holder:

Date:

1. The Main Purpose of the Job:

To ensure that the Ombudsman and the Managing Director receive appropriate, accurate and timely support in respect of all casework activities by: overseeing the review and assessment by the Casework Team of all casework submissions as required by the delegation scheme to the Ombudsman and Managing Director; and ensuring that the Ombudsman and Managing Director have appropriate briefing materials and support when attending casework related internal and external meetings.

Ensure that the team provide colleagues in External Affairs & Strategy with accurate and timely casework information and support to enable them to fulfil their functions effectively.

Work with Directors/Managers to ensure that high risk and high profile cases are being appropriately identified, assessed and managed and deciding when and how to involve the Managing Director and/or Ombudsman. In some cases deciding it is necessary to undertake specific pieces of work on cases to ensure they are on track.

To be responsible for leading the review process and ensure that in the cases where we need to take a further look because of a problem with our decision or our method, prior to JR, that the work is undertaken to a high quality and in a timely manner. This includes deciding when External Review or assurance is required or when cases need to be referred to the Legal Team for a view. Further to ensure that themes and learning from those complaints are identified, shared and inform continuous improvement as well as the development of relevant policy, guidance and training.

3. The Scope of the Job:

- a. Provide casework support to the Ombudsman and the Managing Director in respect of high risk and high profile cases; liaise with Operations Directors and Managers to ensure that these cases are being managed appropriately. Taking personal responsibility for handling some specific high risk and complex cases, preparing formal reports and achieving appropriate outcomes, negotiating as necessary with the bodies complained about.
- b. Ensure the Ombudsman and Managing Director have appropriate briefing materials and support when undertaking casework related internal/external meetings/correspondence - including those submitted by the Assistant Casework Manager's and Executive Assistant.
- c. Liaise with colleagues in External Affairs & Strategy to ensure they have the necessary casework knowledge and support to fulfil their functions effectively, for example, when dealing with press enquiries on specific cases or drafting press releases for published reports.
- d. Ensure that systems and processes and resources are in place for dealing with those cases where we think we need to take a further look and lead that process to ensure the appropriate resolution of those cases where we have identified something has gone wrong in an effective and proportionate manner that ensures the outcomes of those resolutions are communicated effectively.
- e. Provide the necessary support to the Investigation Manager in monitoring and reviewing progress against that part of the teams targets and service standards, highlighting achievements and identifying issues affecting delivery of the business plan and strategic goals; including briefing Directors, the Managing Director and the Ombudsman on progress of cases and significant issues arising
- f. Manage the External Reviewers, in terms of time, budget and quality to deliver high quality work for the team
- g. Play a role in the oversight of the systemic (big and repeated mistakes) casework - representing the Ombudsman/Managing Director in areas of this work including identifying themes from review work and proposes appropriate and creative ways to handle them, ensuring as appropriate that connections are made with other parts of the office and knowledge is shared to improve our complaints handling
- h. Ensuring that staff are coached, developed and equipped with appropriate skills and knowledge to deliver business plan outcomes, including: Ensuring that self and team have clear and up to date understanding of the external context in which they operate; Ensuring that self and team develop and maintain appropriate technical knowledge in their area of functionality

Part 1: Job Profile

Job Title: Reviewer (Caseworker, Corporate Casework Team)

Date: November 2014

1. The Main Purpose of the Job:

To provide an exemplary service to all customers, internal and external, by providing a safety net for those cases where something might have gone wrong, thereby ensuring the service to complainants and protecting the integrity of the Office.

To deliver high-quality and timely consideration of those cases where we think we might have made a mistake that meet service standards and adhere to our quality framework.

This includes providing a robust rationale for the conclusion reached and providing an excellent customer service to all key stakeholders.

Where the outcome of a further look at the complaint is to investigate it may be necessary for the investigators to undertake those investigations if pragmatic. In doing so they will carefully collect any further evidence necessary, analyse that evidence and make an appropriate adjudication.

Casework will be completed in a timely and proportionate manner, helping PHSO to deliver business plan targets and in a way which meets PHSO quality expectations. In doing so investigators reach appropriate conclusions and recommendations (where applicable) and protect the Ombudsman's integrity and reputation.

The conclusions reached will help to inform and secure service improvements and help to put things right if they have gone wrong. This applies to both organisations in jurisdiction and PHSO's own service.

2. The Scope of the Job:

- a. Manages personal caseload effectively, ensuring that all cases are progressed promptly and proportionately, and are fully resolved at the earliest opportunity
- b. Exercises judgement as to what further work is required in cases where we think we might have made a mistake and assesses risk as required
- c. Analyses information; identifies any gaps in that information that need to be closed in order to resolve the case; and obtains that information in a proportionate and efficient way
- d. Takes into account any wider strategic issues to be addressed in order to contribute to the improvement of public services
- e. Reaches logical, succinct and justified decisions and outline how those decisions can be communicated to the parties involved in the complaint
- f. Provides excellent customer service to all customers (internal and external) and maintains appropriate relationships with other stakeholders
- g. Exercises delegated authority in line with PHSO's standards (including risk management protocols) and values
- h. Maintains full, accurate and up-to-date records/audit trails on the case management system and paper files
- g. Quality assure decisions taken by others
- i. As part of continuous improvement, identify areas of our service where we could have done better.

Part 1: Job Profile

Job Title:

Assistant Casework Manager

1. The Main Purpose of the Job:

To assist the Ombudsman's Casework Manager with the management of the casework-related workload of the Managing Director and the Ombudsman by: reviewing casework submissions sent to the Ombudsman and Managing Director, as required by the delegation scheme, to ensure they are ready for sign off; identifying when further work is required; and identifying lessons to be fed back to the wider office following the input of the Ombudsman and Managing Director.

2. The Scope of the Job:

- a. Provide casework support to the Ombudsman and the Managing Director by reviewing and assessing casework submissions received from Operations ensuring they are ready for consideration and preparing them for referral.
- b. Provide support to the Ombudsman's Casework Manager in assisting with the management and prioritisation of casework for the attention of the Ombudsman and Managing Director.
- c. Provide briefings and draft correspondence in response to contacts made to the Ombudsman/Managing Director on their behalf deciding when necessary to involve them and/or the Ombudsman's Casework Manager in the cases when required.
- d. Assist the Ombudsman's Casework Manager in ensuring the Ombudsman and Managing Director have appropriate briefing materials and support when undertaking casework related internal/external meetings.
- e. Act as a first point of contact to approaches from internal and external casework queries put to the Ombudsman and Managing Director, dealing with them when appropriate or escalating any to the Ombudsman's Casework Manager as required.
- f. Feedback to operations at all levels where further work or information is

required to bring casework submissions to the appropriate standard and to share any wider learning with the office where appropriate.

Role: Business Support Officer (Ombudsman's Casework Team)

Main role: To provide a flexible business service and casework support to the Ombudsman's Casework Team .

To produce standard tailored letters and make routine telephone/email contact with complainants, bodies in jurisdiction, and other key stakeholders (for example MP's).

Monitors and pursues compliance internally with work commissioned by the Casework Team escalates cases to the Investigator/Investigation Manager/Head of Ombudsman's Casework Team as appropriate.

a. Delivers agreed volume of timely, efficient, effective and proportionate casework, to include investigations and resolutions, in cases where we think we might have made a mistake and manages the risk of those cases appropriately. The work must meet PHSO's quality standards and, where possible, identifies opportunities to contribute to the wider improvement of public services.

b. Takes personal responsibility for resolution of some escalated particularly high risk or complex cases, working with the Head of the Ombudsman's Casework team, and negotiating as necessary with organisations to achieve fair and equitable outcomes for complainants and BiJ.

c. Makes decisions on behalf of the ombudsman in accordance with the delegation scheme

d. Monitors, manages and assures quality within the team effectively, in collaboration with the Quality and Service Integrity function. Ensures that decisions made are appropriately communicated to high quality standards

e. Identifies evidence-based themes and emerging issues in our casework and agrees effective and creative ways to handle them ensuring as appropriate that connections are made with other parts of the office and knowledge is shared to improve our complaints handling

f. Manages performance effectively, Ensuring that staff are coached, developed and equipped with appropriate skills and knowledge to deliver business plan outcomes, including: Ensuring that self and team have clear and up to date understanding of the external context in which they operate; Ensuring that self and team develop and maintain appropriate technical knowledge in their area of functionality; using resources to achieve maximum efficiency and effectiveness

g. Delivers agreed business plan commitments

h. Makes an effective contribution to the wider PHSO management community. Acts as an Ambassador for PHSO through managing appropriate relationships with BiJ and a range of stakeholders as required.

Role: Investigation Manager (Ombudsman's Casework Team)

IMs are here to deliver against our customer facing targets. To ensure consistency and quality for complainants and organisations alike. IM's also recruit and train staff, as well as develop casework processes and procedures.

IMs lead, manage, motivate and develop a team of investigators and support staff to conclude casework in a timely and proportionate way, to the agreed quality and output standards and in such a way that our casework identifies strategic themes and makes robust decisions so it can contribute to the improvement of public services.

In this case, the IM's role is to manage a team of caseworkers who work on those cases where Customer Care believe we might have made a mistake. In those cases the IM is responsible for ensuring the caseworkers identify: if there is a problem with our decision or method and; how to resolve that problem - for example, by further work (in some cases investigation), discussion with the customer and/or body in jurisdiction, or some other way. The focus will be on identifying ways of resolving the complaints and, in most cases, referring the case back to customer Care so that resolution can be closed.

- a. Delivers agreed volume of timely, efficient, effective and proportionate casework, to include investigations and resolutions, in cases where we think we might have made a mistake and manages the risk of those cases appropriately. The work must meet PHSO's quality standards and, where possible, identifies opportunities to contribute to the wider improvement of public services.
- b. Takes personal responsibility for resolution of some escalated particularly high risk or complex cases, working with the Head of the Ombudsman's Casework team, and negotiating as necessary with organisations to achieve fair and equitable outcomes for complainants and BiJ.
- c. Makes decisions on behalf of the Ombudsman in accordance with the delegation scheme.
- d. Monitors, manages and assures quality within the team effectively, in collaboration with the Quality and Service Integrity function. Ensures that decisions made are appropriately communicated to high quality standards
- e. Identifies evidence-based themes and emerging issues in our casework and agrees effective and creative ways to handle them ensuring as appropriate that connections are made with other parts of the office and knowledge is shared to improve our complaints handling

f. Manages performance effectively, Ensuring that staff are coached, developed and equipped with appropriate skills and knowledge to deliver business plan outcomes, including: Ensuring that self and team have clear and up to date understanding of the external context in which they operate; Ensuring that self and team develop and maintain appropriate technical knowledge in their area of functionality

g. Delivers agreed business plan commitments

h. Uses resources to achieve maximum efficiency and effectiveness

i. Makes an effective contribution to the wider PHSO management community. Acts as an Ambassador for PHSO through managing appropriate relationships with BiJ and a range of stakeholders as required.

Knowledge

Public administration (central government in particular) or the NHS and the context in which it operates

Skills

Strong people management skills

IT literate

Excellent oral and written communication skills

Able to influence others including those outside of your direct working relationships

Excellent interpersonal skills

Exceptional analytical ability and judgement skills