

Brighton and Hove Speak Out: Job Description

Job title	Bank Advocate/Advocacy Worker
Accountable to	Advocacy Team Leaders
Based at	Speak Out office, Brighthelm Centre 40 North Road, Brighton BN1 1YD (Hybrid working)
Contract	This is a zero-hour contract. Hours are on an ad hoc basis.
Hours	This work is on an as and when required basis. Hours may vary.
Pay	Between £13.97 – £14.25, dependent on qualifications and experience.
Interview date	To be confirmed
Start Date	On completion of induction
How to apply	<p>To apply for this post please send a CV (including details of two referees whom we may contact) and a personal statement outlining why you want this role, your relevant work or voluntary experience, skills, knowledge, any relevant qualifications or training and any other information that will support your application – no more than two sides of A4. Please provide details of any criminal convictions in the personal statement.</p> <p>Successful applicants are required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before starting work with Speak Out.</p> <p>Please send your CV and personal statement to info@bhspeakout.org.uk for the attention of the CEO. If you would like an informal discussion about the role or have any questions, please call Will Davies, the CEO, or Emily Barratt, the Deputy CEO on 01273421921 or email info@bhspeakout.org.uk .</p>

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in applying to be a Bank Advocate/Advocacy Worker with Brighton & Hove Speak Out.

This is an excellent opportunity for someone who wants to make a positive difference to the lives of people with learning disabilities and who enjoys working with people with learning disabilities. It is a role suitable for a person who is passionate about:

- Ensuring people's rights are met
- Helping people make their own decisions
- People being at the centre of decision making
- People being heard and having the chance to speak up
- Supporting people to make the changes they want and need

The primary role of the Bank Advocate/Advocacy Worker is to be flexible, working across both 1:1 and Self Advocacy services. You may be required to take on advocacy case work where you are the advocate for somebody with a learning disability who may or may not be receiving support from Adult Social Care, working towards the outcomes they want to achieve. Or you may support our self-advocacy group work, supporting or leading a group, event, or drop-in: enabling people with learning disabilities to develop their self-advocacy skills.

Please note this is an ad-hoc role where the times of work may fluctuate depending on funding and where cover is needed against periods of staff sickness and annual leave, sometimes at short notice.

About Speak Out

Brighton and Hove Speak Out (BHSO) is an independent advocacy charity for people with learning disabilities. Since 1994 we have been supporting people with learning disabilities to speak up and take action about the things that matter to them. Our aim is to create a fairer world for people with learning disabilities, and give a voice to one of the most marginalised groups in society.

We do this by offering a unique range of advocacy services and community projects for adults and young people with learning disabilities (17+yrs). A team of staff and volunteers support over 400 beneficiaries each year with a wide range of issues including accessing health, social care or mental health support, addressing housing/ financial problems, bullying and isolation. Service users are supported to build their skills and confidence and develop community/peer networks that lead to resilience, reduced isolation and improved wellbeing. Our services include:

- 1-1 issue advocacy - community and statutory case work
- Citizen advocacy – longer-term volunteer advocacy.
- Self-advocacy groups - including groups for young people with learning disabilities .

- Weekly drop-in sessions - space to meet others, access immediate short-term advocacy, information, and signposting.
- Learning Disability Voices Network - Citywide network bringing people with learning disabilities together to explore shared issues and bring about positive changes for the wider learning disabled community.
- Engagement and consultation activities with Brighton and Hove council and NHS
- User-led training and easy read services

Principal tasks and responsibilities

We are looking for somebody who can work flexibly: at times taking on advocacy 1:1 cases, RPR work, or supporting our self-advocacy work.

1:1 Advocacy Work

Our 1:1 advocates support people with a learning disability when they have a particular problem. They ensure they are listened to, get the right information, and that their rights are met. This might be helping a person with a problem relating to their support, transition, housing, or any problem that is adversely affecting their quality of life. Taking on 'one off' advocacy cases or having a case load for a set period of time. You may also take on RPR work: this is helping to make sure a person who is deprived of their liberty has their views, wishes and rights respected.

Cases may be from existing projects including issue-based advocacy, care act, parents, or transition advocacy. It may also be to take on spot purchased advocacy, where advocacy is commissioned from outside Brighton and Hove. 1:1 advocacy work includes:

- Supporting people with learning disabilities to speak up about issues that are important to them.
- Speaking up for people with learning disabilities when they are unable to speak up for themselves.
- Finding out information for people for people with learning disabilities so they can make their own decisions and ensuring they get and understand the right information. Ensure people supported have the information they need about their options, rights and other support local services.
- Accompanying people to meetings to ensure they get to speak up, understand what is going on, and that their view is taken into account.
- Helping people to make choices and to make changes that are needed to improve their quality of life.
- Follow Speak Out's Code of Practice for Advocates and procedures for managing casework. Including referral procedures, agreeing advocacy plans with people supported and working creatively with them to achieve positive outcomes.

Self-Advocacy Work

Another way in which Speak Out ensures people with learning disabilities have a voice is through self-advocacy. We may require you to support or help facilitate with a group or speaking up event. Duties may include:

- At times covering or supporting advocacy groups, advocacy events, or weekly drop-ins.
- Supporting people to have a voice within a group setting.
- Supporting people to speak up and have a voice and get heard on various issues often relating to health, housing, social care, support, relationships, social life, or cost of living.
- Support drop-in sessions to engage people with learning disabilities and offer support, information and signposting
- Any other duties or tasks that contribute towards the charity fulfilling its Mission and Vision.

For both roles:

- Ensure monitoring and evaluation systems are used, including keeping up to date records of group and individual advocacy issues and outcomes using Speak Out’s CRM database (training will be provided).
- Keep up to date with professional, advocacy and policy developments relating to your work area, maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of social care, local structures, legislation and other advocacy related issues.
- Positively promote Speak Out in all networking situations.

Important note: With both 1:1 and self-advocacy work you will be expected to follow Speak Out policies and procedures on confidentiality and Safeguarding.

Personal Specification

Experience and Knowledge

Essential	You should have worked or volunteered in Social care, health, education, advice and guidance, or community work
	Good understanding of the values and principles underpinning independent advocacy work and be able to put these into practice
	Experience of working with adults with learning disabilities. (Experience in a voluntary capacity will be considered)
	Experience of working directly with people who are undervalued in society in a supportive and empowering way
Desirable	1:1 and/or Self-Advocacy experience
	Knowledge of advocacy and/or social care legislation, experience and knowledge of Safeguarding procedures
	Experience in organising and facilitating groups, events, or activities for people with learning disabilities

	Experience working in a team, including with volunteers
	Experience of using a CRM database for monitoring purposes
	An awareness of working to safeguard vulnerable adults, including relevant training
	An awareness, understanding and application of appropriate boundaries
	Awareness of legal frameworks such as the Care Act, the Mental Capacity Act, and the Mental Health Act.

Skills and Abilities

Essential	Good interpersonal, written and oral skills
	The ability to be supportive, non-judgemental, and empathetic
	Able to communicate effectively with a broad range of people with learning disabilities. Use and develop communication tools as needed and work at a pace appropriate to service user's needs
	Able to identify and assess potential risks involved in your work activities and manage these according to organisational policies and procedures
	Confident and able to effectively manage time, planning, organising and managing a diverse workload, prioritising tasks and meeting deadlines
	Good literacy and I.T skills – competency in using Microsoft 364, Teams, Word, Power Point
	Experience of supporting people in group settings or facilitation skills
	Awareness of need for confidentiality and equal opportunities in all work practice
Desirable	The advocacy qualification would be an advantage but not essential

Personal Attributes

Helpful, cooperative and sensitive to the needs and feelings of others, including a commitment to the organisation being user led
Demonstrate and promote Speak Out's Mission and Core values
Reliability, honesty, and a commitment to maintaining confidentiality

To have initiative, and the ability to work within a team but with minimal supervision
Flexible, resilient, motivated, and adaptable
Willingness to attend ongoing and additional training where appropriate

Speak Out will support you in your role, including a full induction, regular supervision, and regular training.

Speak Out is committed to promoting and supporting diversity and welcomes applications from all sections of the community. We promote inclusion throughout our work and have values, policies and working practices to support this. If you have the skills, knowledge and commitment that we seek and a passionate for bettering the lives of people with learning disabilities, then we would love to hear from you.