

Civil/crime news: provider opportunity to become peer reviewers

News story

Applications welcome from 4 July 2022 for suitably qualified legal aid practitioners to become independent peer reviewers.



We are looking for qualified legal aid professionals who wish to become contracted peer reviewers for the Legal Aid Agency.

Contracts are being awarded in the following categories:

- crime
- family
- housing
- immigration and asylum
- mental health

Anyone currently delivering peer review services who wishes to continue doing this work from 1 October 2022 must also apply.

Timescales

What is peer review?

Peer reviewers independently assess random samples of provider case files using guidance developed in consultation with the Law Society, law centres and not-for-profit advice agencies. This guidance is available on our GOV.UK

legal aid pages

Once assessments are completed, a report is produced, which sets out positive findings, areas for improvement and the overall quality rating.

This work is important for our auditing and assurance processes.

How much will I be paid?

Peer reviewers are paid an hourly rate of £53.57.

How long do contracts last?

Successful applicants will begin training to become a peer reviewer from September 2022. The contract will be for a period of 2 years, with an option to extend for 2 additional years.

Where can I find out more?

Detailed information on the application process and minimum requirements is available on GOV.UK.

Further information

[Apply to be a peer reviewer](#) – to find out more and download application forms

[Legal Aid Agency audits](#) – for guidance on the independent peer review process

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**[Watch the conference live:
International Ministerial Conference
on Freedom of Religion or Belief,
London 2022](#)**

News story

You can register to watch the Freedom of Religion or Belief conference live as it takes place in London on 5 and 6 July 2022.



The Freedom of Religion or Belief Conference taking place in London on 5 and 6 July 2022 will be available to follow live online. You must register and create a profile before you can watch the livestream.

You will be able to watch the livestream from 9am on Tuesday 5 July, with the opening plenary starting at 10am. Find out more about what the conference will cover in the [conference programme](#).

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[Air Vice-Marshal highlights Dstl's unique contribution to supporting air power](#)

News story

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory hosted an Air Systems Showcase demonstrating the impact of its research portfolio across UK military aviation.



Featuring a keynote address from Air Vice-Marshal Linc Taylor, Chief of Staff

for Capability (Air), the Showcase brought together stakeholders including senior RAF leaders, Army and Royal Navy aviation specialists, industry representatives and Dstl scientists.

[Dstl Air Showcase](#)

The event highlighted Dstl's achievements and future plans over the 5 themes within [Dstl's Air Systems programme](#):

- air operational analysis and decision support
- air manoeuvre, maritime aviation, and air mobility (future aviation concepts; aviation in contested environments; support to Apache, Chinook, New Medium Helicopter)
- air information and enablers (air information advantage; counter-uncrewed air systems; aircrew systems research)
- combat air (support to Typhoon and F-35; future combat air systems (FCAS); CUTLASS air combat simulator; concepts and technologies; freedom of access and manoeuvre)
- air survivability (concepts, technologies, and analysis; air platform protection)

In addition to speaker presentations, military stakeholders had the chance to meet Dstl and industry representatives as well as viewing and experiencing some of the technology on display. The day also provided the opportunity to explore how Dstl and its industry partners could deepen their collaboration with military customers.

Air Vice-Marshal Linc Taylor said:

When we bring scientific, technical and engineering advice alongside the experience of the war fighter about how we are going to employ either the analysis, the techniques or the technologies behind them, that synergy is far better than just the two organisations operating alone.

Dstl brings a unique insight. It brings decision-quality evidence and world-class technology.

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[Second community drop in event to be held in Matlock](#)

The Environment Agency and its partners, Derbyshire County Council and

Derbyshire Dales District Council, are holding a second community drop in event in Matlock, Derbyshire on Thursday 14 July from 2pm to 8pm.

The event offers an opportunity for locals to find out more about the Environment Agency's work to restore flood protection for 50 homes and businesses in the town and view the designs for the new replacement flood wall.

It also gives visitors the chance to learn more about the partnership plan to activate two way traffic on Matlock Bridge while part of the A6 is closed to allow for construction of the replacement flood wall.

Members of the project team will also be on hand to discuss other key matters of interest to people including heritage, environmental enhancements, water based recreation and flood risk contingency plans.

The event will be held in the large hall at:

Imperial Rooms
Imperial Road
Matlock
DE4 3NL

Naomi Doughty, Project Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

Following on from our first well-attended community event in May, we have responded to feedback from attendees who told us they would like to know more about the replacement flood wall design.

The event will enable visitors to see the new designs and allow us to make any necessary adjustments following their feedback. Members of the public will also be able to learn more about the construction programme that is due to start in August and the likely impacts of the project such as vibration, noise and hours of operation.

We have extended the opening hours for the event to allow more people to have the chance to come along and find out about our long-term plans to reinstate the flood protection for Matlock.

Derbyshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways Assets and Transport, Councillor Kewal Singh Athwal, said:

I'm pleased to see the work underway in Matlock and would encourage local residents to go along to the meeting to find out more about the Environment Agency plans for the flood defences.

Tim Braund, Director of Regulatory Services at Derbyshire Dales District

Council, said:

Derbyshire Dales District Council is pleased to be a part of this essential project and we would like to remind residents and visitors that Matlock remains open for business during the ongoing works.

More information about the flood defence project can be found on the dedicated [webpage](#).

Independent assessment of FCDO support for persecuted Christians around the world: FCDO's response to the findings

Government response

Lord Ahmad responds to an independent assessment of how the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office implemented recommendations to support persecuted Christians.



In response to recommendations from an independent assessment of Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) support for persecuted Christians around the world, Lord Ahmad (FCDO Minister for South Asia, North Africa, the United Nations and the Commonwealth) said:

Freedom of religion or belief is a human right and should be a free choice for all, no matter where in the world you are.

In 2019, the [Bishop of Truro published a report](#) setting out recommendations for a strengthened UK government response to the horrifying abuses and persecution of Christians and other faiths

around the world.

Three years on, I am pleased to welcome a [report on the findings of an independent review](#) carried out by Professor Nazila Ghanea, Sir Malcolm Evans KCMG OBE, Professor Ahmed Shaheed, Dr Gehan Gunatilleke and Dr Caroline K Roberts on the FCDO's implementation of the Bishop's review recommendations.

I welcome the review, and I am encouraged by what has been achieved so far in the face of many global challenges.

Standing up for freedom of faith or belief is a right which we will always stand up for. The UK is committed to promoting and strengthening the freedom of religion or belief as a fundamental human right for all – including through [hosting an international conference](#) this week bringing together governments, civil society, faith and belief groups.

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