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INDEPENDENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE ADVOCATE (ISVA)

Responsible to:	Advocacy Service Manager, with supervision from the Sexual Misconduct and Harassment Policy Adviser, LSE EDI Team
Line management of:	N/A
Salary	£30,000
Type of Contract	Fixed term to 22 September 2027, with extension available thereafter
Hours of work	35 hrs, full time, across the whole academic year (1 August to 31 July), within LSE core working hours
Location	Hybrid. Remote, RCSL offices, LSE campus or a suitable third space, as agreed with the service user
Hybrid/Remote/Office based	Hybrid
Closing Date	We will review applications on a rolling basis

ABOUT US

As a registered charity Rape Crisis South London (RCSL) are a specialist provider for victims of sexual violence across twelve South London Boroughs. Our services and programmes are available in person at Croydon centre or through six additional satellite locations, as well as remote sessions across 12 South London Boroughs.

Our programmes comprise of: Counselling. Group therapy. Play therapy. Self Esteem Workshops. Training and Consultancy for professionals on the impacts of sexual violence. Prevention and education workshops with young people. Advocacy support & information for survivors going through the Criminal Justice System. Outreach for survivors for who face additional marginalisation. or additional barriers to accessing support, and ISVA Services.

In 2022, we became a partner for the delivery of the Rape Crisis England & Wales 24/7 Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Line, alongside Lincolnshire Rape Crisis & Sexual Abuse Services and ARCH Teesside. We are a member of Rape Crisis England & Wales.

Our services include responding to the needs of survivors and the disproportionate nature of sexual violence committed by men against women and girls. We believe sexual violence to be both a cause and a consequence of gender inequality and are committed to a feminist, empowering model of working.

JOB PURPOSE

To provide independent, impartial advocacy and support to survivors of sexual violence who are students or staff at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

The postholder is the main point of contact for ISVA support at LSE. They work alongside survivors to help them understand their options and rights, to assess and manage risk, and to navigate the processes they encounter, including but not limited to the criminal justice system, LSE's reporting, complaints and disciplinary procedures, and university support mechanisms.

The role also promotes the service across LSE, holds the relationships the service depends on, and leads on monitoring and evaluation of the provision. It works dynamically across the advocacy service's streams and RCSL's contracts. Its independence, of the police, of the courts and of the university, is what makes it effective.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Advocacy and survivor support

- Provide practical and emotional advocacy support to survivors of sexual violence, remotely and in person, working in a way that is non-judgemental, survivor-led, trauma-informed and anti-oppressive throughout
 - Undertake needs and risk assessments, and develop support plans in collaboration with survivors, reviewing plans as needs and risk change
 - Identify and assess risk across VAWG, including but not limited to domestic and sexual violence and abuse, stalking and harassment, and modern slavery
 - Work with survivors facing multiple and intersecting needs and structural barriers, including immigration status, housing, mental health, substance use and contact with the criminal justice system
 - Respond promptly to enquiries and manage a caseload, protecting capacity so that new referrals are picked up quickly
 - Arrange and accompany survivors to appointments, meetings and court where requested and required
 - Support survivors to understand their rights, choices and entitlements, including Criminal Injuries Compensation, and make referrals to other services
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- Support both students and staff appropriately to their context, in line with the LSE and HR policies, regulations and procedures that apply to each

2. Criminal justice, university and legal processes

- Support survivors through all stages of the criminal justice process, from reporting through to outcomes
- Support survivors with No Further Action decisions, the Victim's Right to Review, and complaints
- Liaise with the police, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Witness Service and other agencies
- Ensure survivors receive their entitlements under the Victims' Code of Practice
- Support survivors to make formal complaints to LSE, and through university disciplinary processes
- Support survivors through civil and family proceedings where these arise
- Advocate and inform without providing legal advice or representation
- Maintain the boundaries of the ISVA role, remaining independent and impartial throughout

3. Point of contact, promotion and outreach

- Act as the main point of contact for students and staff at LSE seeking ISVA support
- Promote the service across the university and carry out campus outreach as caseload allows
- Build and maintain relationships with key contacts across LSE, working with the EDI Team to keep the service accessible

4. Recording, monitoring, evaluation and reporting

- Maintain accurate, confidential and defensible case records
- Store casework records securely, in line with data protection requirements and LSE policies
- Record all cases and track outcomes
- Produce regular anonymised reports and statistics on cases and trends for LSE
- Lead on monitoring and evaluation of the provision, and seek service user feedback to shape the service
- Support information requests, and work within the service's case management, risk assessment and supervision processes

5. Safeguarding, partnership and multi-agency working

- Recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns for adults, children and young people, in line with RCSL's safeguarding policies and the statutory frameworks
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- Make safeguarding referrals to children's and adult social care and to the police, and follow them through to a response
 - Escalate concerns to the designated safeguarding lead without delay, and to LSE where its arrangements apply
 - Apply the mandatory reporting duties that apply to the role
 - Record safeguarding concerns, decisions and the reasoning behind them
 - Work within LSE's safeguarding arrangements and keep safeguarding contact information current
 - Follow the service's arrangements for advocate safety, including lone working and working away from the office
 - Establish and maintain relationships with relevant external stakeholders and local specialist services
 - Attend relevant multi-agency meetings, and share information in line with agreed protocols
 - Co-ordinate risk management with external and community agencies

6. Professional development and specialist advice

- Undertake regular clinical supervision
- Complete required training, including the higher education sector training for this role
- Keep knowledge current on sector developments through training and relevant events
- Provide specialist advice to LSE staff, and deliver training or consultancy on request where capacity allows
- Continue to develop knowledge of LSE and the higher education sector

7. General responsibilities

- Promote and uphold the vision, values and feminist ethos of RCSL, internally and externally
- Contribute to a culture of equity, inclusion, continuous learning and best practice
- Uphold the rights of survivors and ensure all work is survivor-centred, trauma-informed and safeguarding-led
- Take responsibility for continuous professional development, and keep up to date with relevant research, legislation and practice
- Participate in supervision, training and service development activities
- Share learning from training, supervision and multi-agency work with the wider team
- Ensure compliance with data protection, health and safety, and equality legislation
- Support, promote and work in accordance with LSE's values, policies, aims and objectives at all times
- Undertake any other duties appropriate to the role

This list is indicative only, not exhaustive. It is intended to reflect a range of duties the postholder will be expected to perform but additional duties commensurate with the role may be required. The job description will be reviewed periodically and may change considering experience and changing circumstances, in consultation with the post holder.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Required qualifications	• A formal ISVA qualification from a recognised provider or willingness to complete the relevant qualification • Educated to at least A level standard, or equivalent experience.
Required knowledge, skills and experience	• Experience of supporting survivors of sexual violence, or adults at risk in a comparable setting • Experience of carrying out risk and support needs assessments and producing support plans • Strong understanding of the criminal justice system and of the Victims' Code of Practice • Experience of working with safeguarding issues, and knowledge of the relevant procedures • Able to manage a caseload independently, prioritise competing demands and protect capacity for new referrals • Able to work to agreed response times and manage competing deadlines • Experience of accurate record keeping, and of working within data protection requirements • Experience of producing reports, statistics or monitoring data • Experience of building and maintaining working relationships across an organisation and with external partners • Confident in promoting a service and carrying out outreach • Able to work independently and collaboratively, remotely and across more than one site • Confident using case management databases and Microsoft Office • An intersectional understanding of gendered violence and its effects

	• Experience of completing standardised risk assessments, including the DASH risk assessment and/or the service's equivalent • Experience of assessing stalking and harassment risk, including S-DASH and/or the service's equivalent • Understanding of the intersection of sexual violence with other forms of VAWG, including but not limited to domestic abuse, stalking and harassment, so-called honour-based abuse including forced marriage and FGM, modern slavery and human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and image-based and technology-facilitated abuse • Experience of support planning alongside safety planning, including reviewing plans as circumstances change • Experience of structured case management, including case review and peer case discussion • Knowledge of safeguarding for adults, children and young people • Evidence of continuing professional development in specialist practice
Desirable	• Experience of working in a higher education context • Understanding of higher education reporting, complaints and disciplinary procedures • Awareness of visa, scholarship and academic deadlines • Awareness of the HR context for staff • Experience of delivering training or providing specialist advice to professionals • Comprehensive awareness of criminal court proceedings and the legal system • A legal, counselling or advocacy background • Experience of working with diverse and marginalised communities
Other	• Commitment to a feminist, survivor-centred, anti-racist framework • Commitment to racial equality and equal opportunities • Willingness to complete higher education sector training • Organised and efficient, with excellent interpersonal and communication skills

	• Resilience, self-awareness, and a commitment to personal development • Willing to work flexibly across the advocacy service's streams and RCSL's contracts
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APPLICATION PROCESS

Please provide a CV **and** cover letter (maximum 1000 words) which sets out your suitability for the role against the job description and person specification.

BENEFITS

- Annual leave entitlement is 27 days a year plus 8 bank holidays (pro rata)
- Additional benefit of 3 days (pro rata) gifted to staff between 27 to 31 December
- NEST pension scheme; 3% employer contribution and 5% employee contribution
- Benefits package including life assurance, healthcare plan, Employee Assistance Programme, and cycle to work scheme.

MONITORING & EVALUATION OF THE POST

There will be a **6-month** probation period for this role.

The performance of the post holder will be monitored through regular supervision by the Advocacy Service Manager. The post itself may be subject to regular reviews.

OUR COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION

We are proud to be an inclusive employer and welcome applications from women of all backgrounds, identities, and life experiences. We particularly encourage applications from women who are underrepresented in the violence against women and girls' sector. We know that diversity strengthens our organisation and helps us better reflect and serve the communities we support.

VARIATIONS

Rape Crisis South London reserves the right, following full and reasonable consultations with the member of staff concerned and with her trade union or other representatives, to vary, add to or alter any of the terms and conditions of employment attached to this post.

This job description will be reviewed with your line manager annually and may need to be revised according to the priorities of current workload.

This post is open to female applicants only as being female is deemed to be a genuine occupational requirement under Schedule 9, Paragraph 1 of the Equality Act 2010.