

Self-Employed Advocate

Applicant information pack





Introduction from Rita Waters NYAS Group CEO (England and Wales)

Thank you for your interest in working with NYAS (National Youth Advocacy Service), the charity that makes sure care-experienced vulnerable children, young people and adults are aware of their rights and gets their voices heard, helping them to engage in decisions made about their lives.

NYAS is very proud of the positive development and impact achieved over the last thirty years for care-experienced children and young people. We know from our feedback and evaluation methods that what we do makes a huge difference. However, we also know much more needs to be done and to achieve our mission we need a team of excellent people who are the best in their field.

As a leading national rights-based charity we have experienced continued growth over the past few years.

Our total staff numbers are around 220 employees (this doesn't include our 590 amazing volunteers or 330 self-employed contractors). It makes working for NYAS part of an exciting, vibrant and dynamic team.

Everyone who works with NYAS gives their best, and we believe in acknowledging personal, as well as team achievement and celebrating it. We regularly review and improve our processes because we know that we can't achieve anything without the right people, and those people need the right tools, the support and motivation to do their job well.

I hope that you will find this opportunity exciting and compelling and will consider joining us to contribute to our future and most importantly the lives of young people in care.

Our Vision

Our Vision

- **Every child and young person has the right to be heard.**
- **Every child has a right to feel safe.**
- **Every child has the right to be involved in decisions made about them.**

Mission

At NYAS we **listen** to what children and young people want, care about what they say and **empower** them to get their voice heard. We ensure their wishes and feelings are expressed and acted upon to improve their situation and help them build a better future.

We will **never** stop in our efforts to influence, lobby and campaign to bring about positive changes and ensure children's and young people's rights are upheld.

Values

- **Collaborative**

We **work closely** with colleagues and partners to deliver an outstanding service to the children and young people who need us.

- **Accountable**

We are **open, transparent and accountable**, taking responsibility for what we do.

- **Respectful**

We **value and respect** each other and the people we work with, embracing diversity and nurturing trust.

- **Empowering**

We **listen** to children and young people when they are not being heard, inform them of their rights and **empower** them to change their lives for the better.



What we do

As a leading children's rights charity and provider of advocacy services to children, young people and adults, NYAS ensures all care-experienced people across England and Wales are fully represented, respected and supported to actively participate in decisions that affect their lives and reach their full potential.

NYAS shares the opinion that every child or young person experiencing care should have the same chances to live happy, healthy and rewarding lives as their peers.

Most of our income and expenditure is restricted funding for local authority service contracts. We rely on voluntary contributions from fundraising to help us deliver additional projects and campaigns so desperately needed.



We empower children & young people to have their voice heard

“Advocacy is about representing the views, wishes and needs of children and young people to decision-makers, and helping them to navigate the system.”

Many care-experienced children are unaware of their rights and struggle to access support to which they are legally entitled, such as having a say in their care plans, an education, contact with their families, and financial support.

Our independent advocates support children and young people to understand their care experience and ensure their voice is heard, their rights are respected and upheld and their achievements recognised.

Our freephone helpline helps thousands of children and young people in care get much needed advice about their rights and entitlements.



We campaign for change

We bring care-experienced people, decision makers and elected representatives together, to shape legislation and associated services which they are dependent on.

We will never stop in our efforts to influence, lobby and campaign to bring about positive changes and ensure children's and young people's rights are upheld.



We value our people

We invest in our workforce to ensure they are engaged, empowered and skilled to deliver a high quality consistent service to our stakeholders.

Service specification for

Self-Employed Advocate

Main purpose of services

To provide independent and confidential advocacy services in accordance with NYAS' aims and objectives.

Service hours

Variable – Evenings and weekends may be required, in line with service user availability. There is no obligation to accept referrals, which may be consigned to other qualified and NYAS-registered self-employed advocates.

Contract rate

Paid sessionally at the agreed rate for advocacy and dependent upon the rate agreed by NYAS in contract with a local authority or other agency. This is a self-employed role and individuals are responsible for the accurate recording and reporting of their own earnings to the HMRC.

Client

National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS).

Purpose of the services

To provide an independent and confidential advocacy service to children, young people and/or adults through either one-to-one issue-based advocacy casework and/or visiting advocacy services to ensure they are aware of their rights, feel listened to and able to have a voice and participate in the decisions about their lives.

Services to be undertaken

One to one Issue Based Advocacy

- To inform children and young people and adults about their right and entitlement to the advocacy service, explaining the advocate role and parameters of the service.
- To listen, empower and support children and young people and adults to explore their views, wishes and feelings.
- To support children and young people and adults to explore the potential impact of decisions and/or care and support options and help them to make informed choices.
- To agree a plan with the children and young people and adults which identify the issues they want help with and agree how these issues will be taken forward.
- Represent and support children and young people and adults to communicate their views wishes and feelings and ensure these are taken into account within decision making processes.
- At all times to aim to achieve outcomes acceptable to children and young people and adults, and to explain the outcome/decision making to them.
- Inform and support children and young people and adults to access their rights and entitlements.
- To support children and young people and adults to make a complaint or representation, helping them to navigate processes where informal resolution isn't successful.
- To support children and young people and adults to access legal advice and representation and other services when necessary.
- To gain feedback from children and young people and adults throughout the intervention, as well as acting at the end point of involvement with them.

Service specification for Self-Employed Advocate

Residential Visiting Advocacy

- Visit residential or secure unit setting at mutually agreed fixed intervals.
- Raise awareness of advocacy, ensuring children and young people receive information on their right and entitlement to an advocate.
- Listen to and support children and young people to articulate any concerns/issues about their care and inform them of their rights and entitlements.
- Support children and young people to raise and informally resolve any issues raised about their care within the residential setting.
- Support children and young people to log/make a complaint or representation within the home if necessary.
- Refer children and young people to the relevant advocacy provider where issues are external to the residential setting.
- Report in line with service requirements, on the experience of the children and young people in the establishment they are visiting in order to ensure that the wishes and feelings of the children and young people are heard by those responsible for their care.

Other requirements

- To adhere to NYAS policies and procedures at all times and in particular confidentiality and safeguarding.
- To provide clear, accurate and timely records in accordance with NYAS policy and processes.
- Enrol on mandatory safeguarding, data protection and advocacy training.
- Undertake NYAS best practice sessions and take individual responsibility for own professional development.
- Provide services in alignment with NYAS values and behaviours at all times.
- Have access to own dedicated work phone, computer/laptop, internet, and printer.



Service specification for

Self-Employed Advocate

Contractual requirements of a Self-Employed Advocate	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications		
<p>Either:</p> <p>A recognised professional qualification (e.g. social work, youth work, law, teaching) which evidences direct involvement with children and young people.</p> <p>Introduction to Advocacy (Level 3) (6 credits).</p> <p>National Certificate in Independent Advocacy (4 units and specialist unit).</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>
Experience required		
<p>Experience of significant direct work with marginalised/vulnerable children and young people and/or adults.</p>	✓	
Knowledge required		
<p>Knowledge of the legislative/policy framework for relevant service users and the accompanying guidance and regulation e.g., UNCRC 1989, Children Act 1989, and/or Children Act 2004, and/or Children and Young Person's Act 2008, Care Act 2014 (England), Mental Health Acts 1983/2007, Social Services Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 as a minimum.</p>	✓	
<p>Knowledge of equality, diversity and inclusion principles.</p>	✓	
<p>Knowledge of Local Authority/Health Complaints Procedures.</p>		✓
<p>Knowledge of systems that children and young people and/or adults have to navigate, for example social services, criminal justice, education, health.</p>	✓	

Contractual requirements of a Self-Employed Advocate	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge required cont.		
Knowledge and/or understanding of issues facing vulnerable children and young people and/or adults.	✓	
Understanding of confidentiality and knowledge of safeguarding.	✓	
Knowledge of the legal and policy framework relevant to children and young people and/or adults.	✓	
Abilities and Aptitudes required		
IT Skills to intermediate level as a minimum.	✓	
Ability to assess and summarise accurately and concisely.	✓	
Ability to work in a way that empowers and enables service users to develop self-advocacy skills.	✓	
Ability to communicate effectively with all service users both orally and in writing.	✓	
Ability to develop a sensitive and empathetic but solutions focused approach to the situations in which children and young people can find themselves.	✓	
A confident, persuasive approach in negotiation of issues.	✓	
Ability to handle conflict constructively.	✓	
Ability to communicate effectively and confidently with figures in authority, in particular in local authority settings, both orally and in writing.	✓	
Provide services in line with and promote NYAS values.	✓	

Contractual requirements of a Self-Employed Advocate	Essential	Desirable
Abilities and Aptitudes required cont.		
Ability to keep accurate records on CRM systems.	✓	
Ability to work in partnership with colleagues to challenge discrimination.	✓	
For roles in Wales, the desire to speak Welsh.		✓
Other		
Satisfactory references.	✓	
Satisfactory DBS and DRA check.	✓	
A full driving licence and access to a motor vehicle.		✓

All posts are subject to receipt of satisfactory references, a Digital Risk Assessment and a satisfactory DBS enhanced disclosure check.



Training

As a leading advocacy and children's rights charity, NYAS understands many of the issues faced by children and young people, and the professionals working with them.

The NYAS training offer includes a wide range of specialist training courses that address many of these issues. Through these courses, we aim to empower professionals to provide the highest quality of support to those vulnerable individuals in their care.

To work with NYAS, it's required you undertake the OCN Level 3 in Advocacy. NYAS provides this training at a significantly reduced rate for self-employed advocates. Further details are discussed at interview.

Accredited training

We offer several accredited training routes at different levels, to suit the needs of professionals at different stages of their careers.

Accredited courses are regulated by independent awarding bodies, and result in recognisable qualifications. They entail a mixture of instructor-led learning and independent study, incorporating both online and offline activities – and may take several weeks to complete.

The courses are practice-based, which means that learners should already have some experience of the relevant role and should have an opportunity to carry out and reflect upon that role as part of the training process.

To view details of the current accredited training we have on offer, please [click here](#).

Practice-based training

Practice-based training offers professionals the opportunity to reflect on, inform and develop their practice.

All of our practice-based training courses are aimed at practitioners who are already working within relevant roles and would like to develop their practical competence in less familiar contexts. The courses will also suit those who currently work alongside such practitioners and want to gain an insight into the responsibilities and limitations of those roles.

Practice-based training may include:

- Non-Instructed Advocacy
- Working with Young People who are Leaving Care and Transitioning Towards Independence

To view details of the current practice-based training we have on offer, please [click here](#).

For further information, prices and bespoke dates, please contact the NYAS Learning and Development team at training@nyas.net.

Tips to help you complete the NYAS application form

Ensure you proof read your application for any errors before submission and ensure your CV is up to date.

Personal Details

Complete this section accordingly making sure all contact details are correct.

Education, Qualifications, Training and Skills

Please ensure that you highlight relevant experience, knowledge and skills in your application.

Be sure to include all relevant qualifications and level achieved. Please state whether you are a member of any professional bodies, indicating your level of membership and qualification. Proof of certificates may be required.

Training and IT Skills

Please give full details of any relevant training courses you have attended and any relevant software packages you have used.

Eligibility to work in the United Kingdom

Please complete fully.

Employment History and Salary

Please start with your current or most recent employer and give a brief description of your main responsibilities. These descriptions do not have to be very long as you will have an opportunity to expand on certain aspects in the Statement of Suitability section. Please list all previous positions of employment and ensure any gaps in your employment history since leaving school are explained.

Statement of Suitability

As we shortlist against the criteria you should relate your application to the requirements set out in the service specification (providing examples). Please address each section in sufficient detail and avoid leaving any blank spaces. If you do not complete all of the sections, this may impact your likelihood of being shortlisted.

Give clear, short paragraphs that show how your experiences meet the criteria and don't forget to outline any relevant skills, experience and training appropriate to this post.



Referees

Always ask your referees permission before giving their contact details for your application.

Your referees should be your current or previous line manager, academic tutor or a volunteer manager if applicable. They could also be a colleague. You should provide two references covering five years to date. We will also accept a character reference from a friend if relevant.

We reserve the right to request to approach any previous employer if deemed necessary.

Safeguarding

As a charity that supports children and young adults in care, we have a duty to ensure that the young people who benefit from our support are not harmed in any way, and we expect all our staff to share in our commitment to safeguarding and the welfare of young people.

The suitability of all prospective employees will be assessed during the recruitment process in line with safer recruitment practices including **satisfactory references, a Digital Risk Assessment and DBS enhanced disclosure check.**

NB: A previous conviction will not necessarily prevent you from joining NYAS. It would depend on a number of factors, including the nature of the conviction and the type of role you are applying for.

It is mandatory that all colleagues undertake safeguarding training when they join us.

Identity check

We are also obliged to confirm your identity and obtain proof of your right to work in the UK.

Equality and Diversity at NYAS

NYAS is an equal opportunities employer welcoming applications from all sections of the community.

Everyone can expect to be treated with consideration and respect and NYAS is committed to providing an inclusive environment for all. Good working relationships release the full potential, creativity and productivity of each individual, in an atmosphere where everyone can learn and work without prejudice, discrimination, harassment or violence.

You will need to complete an Equal Opportunities Form. Please be assured that this is not part of the application process and will be removed prior to the shortlisting process.

However the data we obtain from these forms is analysed to support our commitment to equal opportunities, and the information will help guide our recruitment strategies.



How to apply

To apply, you will need to complete the online application form for the post which can be found on the jobs section of the NYAS website www.nyas.net

Registered Charity No: 1004005 (England & Wales)

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