

**Advice Quality Standard v4**

**Advice with Casework Self Declaration Form**

**(This form replaces the previous Case 1 forms)**

**(N.B. This form will not be accepted after the assessment has taken place. To achieve casework accreditation you must provide your assessor with a completed copy before the assessment)**

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**About the Advice with Casework Self Declaration Form**

Advice organisations applying for Advice with Casework are required to complete this Self-Declaration Form. This form will help your assessor determine the depth of casework provided and will ensure that your advice service has robust casework supervision measures in place to support your caseworkers.

The current categories for casework are split into subject and client categories which are set out below:

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| **Subject Based** | **Client Based** |
| Consumer/General Contract | Asylum Seekers and Refugees |
| Debt | Disability |
| Employment | Older People |
| Health & Community Care | Racial Discrimination and Racial Harassment |
| Housing | Students |
| Immigration/Nationality | Women |
| Welfare Benefits | Young People |
| Family Law |  |

**Selecting Casework Categories Essential Information**

When selecting casework categories please consider the points below before completing this form:

* Advice services seeking **‘client’** category casework accreditation must be undertaking casework for these client groups where they can show a depth of cases which relate to issues that are specific to that category of client. For example:
* It is not appropriate to award advice services as having casework in ‘Women’ where they have undertaken 10 benefits claims for clients who happen to be women but are not related to women-specific issues.
* However it is ok for an advice service to have a narrow focus, so for example, if you had 10 cases across just one or two matter types (e.g. discrimination against women; or a domestic violence), then this would be acceptable.
* Typically ‘Students’ are covered by university advice centres who specialise in the issues facing students e.g. academic appeals, housing, Student Finance England
* Advice services seeking ‘Older People’ casework typically work solely for this client group and/or have specific project funding in place to target/reach this client group.
* Please remember it is unlikely that your service will be delivering casework across multiple casework categories, it is far more likely that you will specialise and have expertise in 2 or 3 key areas.
* You will be required to demonstrate the person responsible for supervising each casework category.
* You will be required to demonstrate training and development activity in each casework category and relevant resources for each category.
* For **Debt** and **Immigration** caseworkyou will be required to meet the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) and Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) regulatory requirements, provide evidence of accredited training and supervision.
* You can use 1 client case to cover 2 examples of cases maximum, however we will not accept the same case to cover multiple examples of casework

Before you begin to complete this form, please use the table below to **self-assess** whether your advice service meets the casework criteria as defined in the AQS Standard v4. For further guidance please refer to the guidance within the AQS Standard v4.

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| **Examples of AQS Casework Criteria:**  ***(Please note you are not expected to meet each requirement below, however they will help your assessor determine whether your service is delivering casework)*** | **Yes** | **No** |
| Diagnosing the client’s legal problem and any related legal matters |  |  |
| Identifying relevant legislation and deciding how it applies to a client’s particular circumstances, including identifying the implications and consequences of such action and grounds for taking action |  |  |
| Providing information on matters relevant to the problem, including:   * advice on next steps * identifying dates by which action must be taken in order to secure a client’s rights. |  |  |
| Helping a client with debt problems to draw up a financial statement and negotiate a repayment schedule. However, after receiving advice, the client would carry out any action needed |  |  |
| Helping the client to complete a claim form (e.g. for a social security benefit) which requires the adviser to understand the legal issue: (e.g. the criteria for the award of a particular benefit). |  |  |
| Advising a client on the merit (what we mean by “merit” is explained in glossary) of their case (or telling a client that the adviser has not assessed the merit and then signposting or referring the client to an agency which can advise on merit if the client so wishes). |  |  |
| Referring or sign-posting a client to another source of help, having first assessed the nature of the query and the level of advice or help needed: e.g. a client seeking advice following relationship breakdown is given advice on a welfare benefits matter but also sign-posted to a solicitor for help with a family problem |  |  |
| Drafting, or helping a client to draft, letters to third parties. In general, correspondence will be from the client, not from the advice provider. |  |  |
| Making telephone calls for a client to request information, to carry out one-off negotiations or check the progress of an enquiry. (e.g. where a client is unable to make calls themselves). For practical reasons, it may not be possible to make these calls while the client is present. This may mean that calls are made after the advice session and the client is asked to make a further appointment to find out the results of the call |  |  |
| Taking action to obtain detailed information from a third party in order to resolve a client’s problem |  |  |
| Challenging the decision or action of a third party and corresponding or negotiating with third parties |  |  |
| Undertaking a large volume of work on a given matter and/or over an extended period of time |  |  |
| Representation at a court or tribunal where there are no complex matters or law to present |  |  |

**Organisation Details**

* The following information is used to determine the number of caseworkers that work in your advice service, which categories of advice they deliver, and the number of hours spent on casework per week. The AQS v4 evidence criteria D5.1 asks that you can demonstrate that at least 1 caseworker spends a least 12 hours per week and any others work spend at least 6 hours each week dealing with cases falling within the relevant casework category.
* The AQS v4 evidence criteria D5.2 looks to ensure that robust supervision measures are in place and that your casework supervisor(s) have previous and on-going experience in casework, are available to caseworkers and can demonstrate continued involvement in on-going casework.
* To ensure your caseworkers have access to relevant up-to-date legal reference material, AQSv4 evidence criteria D3.4 requires advice services to have adequate resources in place such as legal reference material and/or relevant subscriptions. This will ensure Caseworkers and Supervisors keep their knowledge and skills updated on a regular basis.
* For Immigration and Debt advice the AQSv4 evidence criteria C1.4 requires your advice service to be a member of a regulatory body for example the FCA (Financial Conduct Authority) and OISC (Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner).

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| **Name of Organisation:** |  | | |
| **Casework Category, Caseworkers and Hours Worked:** | **Category** | **Number of Caseworkers** | **Number of Hours Worked (per week)** |
| *e.g. Debt* | *4* | *1 x 18 and 3 x 12 hours* |
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| **Number of Supervision hours per Casework Category** | **Category** | **Named Supervisor** | **Number of Hours Worked (per week)** |
| *e.g. Debt* | *John Doe* | *18 hours* |
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| **Relevant Regulatory Body and Level of authorisation where appropriate e.g. FCA, OISC** | **Level of Authorisation** | **Regulatory Body** | |
| *N/A* | *FCA: FRN No. xxxxxx* | |
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| **List the resources/legal reference material you access or subscribe to, ensuring Caseworkers and Supervisors keep knowledge/skills updated on a regular basis** |  | | |
| *e.g. IMA Quarterly Account* | | |
| *e.g. Money Advice Liaison Group* | | |

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| **I confirm the above information is accurate:** | |
| **Name** |  |
| **Job Title** |  |
| **Signature** |  |
| **Date** |  |

**Casework Experience and Range**

**Please note cases that are put forward below can be open or closed but must have been active in the last 12 months;** you should provide at least **10 cases** for each casework category. Your assessor will select a sample of these records/files to be reviewed during your assessment.

To help you provide examples of the types and a range of cases in each category please see the link below:

[**Casework Examples**](https://www.recognisingexcellence.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Casework-Folder.zip)

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| **Casework Category** | e*,g. debt* | | |
| **Case ID** | **Date Case Closed** | **Caseworker Initials** | **Case Matter** |
| *12345678* | *01/02/2023* | *JD* | *Mortgage Arrears* |
| *23456789* |  | *JD* | *Utility Debts* |
| *34567891* |  | *JD* | *Charge Cards* |
| *45678912* |  | *EM* | *Credit Cards* |
| *56789123* |  | *EM* | *Fines* |
| *67891234* |  | *EM* | *Hire Purchase* |
| *78912345* |  | *PD* | *Debt Relief Order* |
| *89123456* |  | *PD* | *Bankruptcy* |
| *91234567* |  | *AJ* | *Mail Order/Catalogue* |
| *01234567* |  | *AJ* | *Unsecured Loans* |

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| **Casework Category** |  | | |
| **Case ID** | **Date Case Closed** | **Caseworker Initials** | **Case Matter** |
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| **Casework Category** |  | | |
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| **Casework Category** |  | | |
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| **Casework Category** |  | | |
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