

# Volunteer

## Adviser



**Volunteer and make a difference**

Give advice in your local CAB

**citizens  
advice  
bureau**



# Why volunteer in a citizens advice bureau?

As well as the satisfaction from seeing the difference you make, CAB volunteering will equip you with new skills that stay with you no matter what you do next. Many volunteers make friendships that can last a lifetime.

No wonder so many people all over Scotland choose to be a CAB volunteer.

## How about you?

### What does it take to be an adviser?

All sorts of people volunteer as CAB advisers and provide free, confidential, independent and impartial advice. There are some things bureau advisers have in common, though. CAB advisers:

- are good listeners
- work well in teams
- can read and write English, and do basic arithmetic
- are open-minded and don't judge people or their circumstances
- enjoy helping all kinds of people
- are prepared to commit 4 to 6 hours each week
- are willing to learn new skills
- feel good about the difference they make

You don't need special skills or knowledge to be an adviser, as your bureau will give you all the training you need. We'll pay expenses, and volunteering needn't affect your benefits either.



### What does an adviser do?

The role of a CAB adviser is varied. Some of the things advisers do include:

- interviewing clients – usually in person, but sometimes by phone or e-mail
- using Advisernet, the CAB Service's electronic information system, to give information to clients
- explaining the choices faced by clients, and what they mean
- offering practical help to clients by writing letters, making phone calls and helping fill in forms
- making calculations (for example, to check if clients are entitled to certain kinds of benefits)
- referring clients to other agencies if they are better placed to help
- keeping confidential records of clients' cases
- preventing future problems by identifying issues that affect a lot of clients. This information can then be used to try and change laws, regulations and business practices - this is called "social policy" work
- in some cases, advisers specialise and go on to represent clients at tribunals and other legal settings

### Confident Advising - training, support and development

Being a volunteer adviser can seem a little daunting, but don't worry! From the very first day you start at your local CAB you'll get all the help you need.

We've created a comprehensive, integrated training programme to prepare you for advising.

Using a clear, staged approach, we'll help you develop the skills and knowledge you'll need in the CAB. The programme uses observation, shadowing, supported interviewing and training sessions run in the bureau, all supported by an extensive set of training units and a growing range of e-learning modules you can work through at your own pace.

**Want to know more? Then we want to hear from you!**

## Get in touch

If you'd like to find out more about how you can help make a real difference to other people's lives by volunteering, get in touch.

### To find your local bureau:

- Visit the Adviceguide website [www.adviceguide.org.uk/scotland](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/scotland) where you can find out more about your rights for yourself
- Visit the Citizens Advice Scotland website [www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk) to find out more about your local bureau and its opening hours
- Look in the phone book under "citizens advice bureau"
- Use the contact details below.

### Your local CAB is:



Produced by The Scottish Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux -  
Citizens Advice Scotland (Scottish charity number SC016637)

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