



ASSESSMENT TEAM MANAGER (PART TIME, SALARY NEGOTIABLE)

An Introduction to Intercountry Adoption Centre

Intercountry Adoption Centre, under its former name Overseas Adoption Helpline, was formed in March 1997. It was registered as a charity in January 1998. The Helpline continued to be the major service offered by the charity, alongside a developing library of publications focusing on the adoption requirements of individual countries as well as general topics of interest to prospective adopters and adoption professionals. In 2001 the charity moved to offices in Barnet. This allowed for the first time the provision of face to face services and the Helpline expanded from being an advice and information service to one that provided a subscription service for Local Authorities and Voluntary Adoption Agencies, dedicated preparation services for prospective intercountry adopters, workshops offering support after adoption, and a more extensive programme of training for adoption social workers and other adoption professionals. It also enabled the agency to work alongside adoptive families and people adopted from India to form Asha the Indian adoption group which the Agency continues to support and more recently it similarly supported a group of adopters from Pakistan to form their own support group.

In addition to delivering services to service groups Overseas Adoption Helpline lobbied for a comprehensive legal framework for intercountry adoption. The Adoption and Children Act 2002 heralded the first significant change in the adoption framework in the UK since 1976 or, some would argue, earlier. The first legal framework explicitly focusing on intercountry adoption, the Adoption (Intercountry Aspects) Act 1999, began to be implemented in part from January 2000, and was, for the most part, finally implemented in June 2003. This paved the way for the UK's ratification of the Hague Convention. The Children and Act 2006 introduced further changes to the framework by which intercountry adoption was regulated and services are delivered. Adoption Guidance issued in 2005 confirmed the

principle that the intercountry adoption service nationally should be comparable in standard to that offered domestically and in all of these developments Overseas Adoption Helpline played an active consultative role.

In April 2005 the Agency took on it's identity as Intercountry Adoption Centre and was formally launched in October 2005, a name change that reflected the broadening scope of the work undertaken, including Intermediary work.

In 2006 the Agency registered as an Adoption Support Agency and in 2008 as a Voluntary Adoption Agency which allowed the development of an Assessment Service, offered to subscribing authorities who wished to outsource this work. Further planned development includes a linking service with one or more states of origin.

IAC is the only adoption agency focusing solely on the development and delivery of Intercountry Adoption services. This uniqueness was further underlined in February 2011 when the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA), the adoption central authority of India, accredited IAC as an Enlisted Foreign Adoption Agency. This has enabled IAC to develop closer relationships with agencies in India and to assist prospective adopters seeking to adopt from India, to make their adoption arrangements and to support them throughout the entire adoption process.

Much change has been experienced in the field of intercountry adoption over the past two decades, Intercountry Adoption Centre (IAC) aims to achieve the best outcomes for children who are placed in intercountry adoption and their families as it acknowledges that adoption is an evolving life long process for all those involved – adopted people, birth and adopted relatives.

IAC continues to collaborate with local authorities and voluntary adoption agencies to offer adoption agency and adoption support services which augment and support those which they provide. IAC also continues to network and work in partnership with other organisations and governmental bodies both in the UK and overseas.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Key responsibilities of the post include:

Operational and development:

To manage the adoption agency assessment service in accordance with IAC's policies and procedures, including to:

- Take responsibility for the allocation of assessment work to assessment sessional social workers and their payment for work undertaken in accordance with contractual arrangements;
- Supervise and manage the assessment work undertaken by sessional social workers and conduct their annual performance review;
- Ensure the quality of Prospective Adopter Reports and their compliance with legal requirements;
- Manage reviews of adopters' suitability;
- Arrange and conduct intake, counselling interviews, and ensure that subsequent applications are in line with agency policy and eligibility criteria;
- Receive referrals from commissioning local authorities and liaising with them;
- Receive the child matching referrals and managing the matching stage of the process and post placement casework in line with legal requirements;
- Manage and supervise any casework work IAC is contracted to undertake on behalf of local authorities in compliance with FER 2005 and AAR 2005, including the provision of Rule 29 (Annex A) reports for the court;
- Ensure all relevant recording systems are maintained in accordance with agency policy and procedures, as well as managing the collation of paperwork for the Department for Education;
- Promote the service, liaise with and report back to commissioning authorities consistent with IAC/local authority contracts;
- Attend Management Team and other relevant meetings concerned with planning, developing, delivering, evaluating and promoting the wider agency services.

Strategic:

- Develop and grow the above service in line with the Agency business plan;
- Contribute to the review and development of relevant policies and procedures, as required.

Other tasks will include:

- Participate in recruitment, assessment, induction and training of sessional social workers, as required;
- Along with other IAC Managers, deputise for the Director as required in her absence (lead responsibility shared with other members of the senior management team);
- Attend training arranged for adoption agency personnel, as required.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

These include:

- Modern office environment and excellent administrative support;
- On site car parking and within easy walking distance of London Underground (Northern Line);
- Dedicated and committed management team (members of which are acknowledged specialists in the field of intercountry adoption) which is supported by a well informed and involved Board of Trustees.

A contributory pension and associated benefits are available to all staff who have been in the employ of the agency for 6 months or longer.

Probationary period

Offers of the appointment will be subject to a probationary period of 6 months. During this time the appointment may be terminated with one month's notice on either side. Following satisfactory completion of the probationary period a letter of permanent appointment will be issued by the Chief Executive.

Safer recruitment

The agency operates a safe recruitment policy and a full previous employment history must be supplied with all gaps in employment explained. The successful candidate would be required to have an enhanced Criminal Record Bureau check and references will be sought including from the current employer. The appointment cannot be confirmed until all references are received and are satisfactory. The agency has a policy governing the recruitment of ex-offenders.

Equal opportunities

IAC is committed to equal opportunities in all aspects of its work whether with clients, staff members or job applicants. We therefore seek to ensure that this approach is reflected in the recruitment of staff to the agency. The IAC policy on equal opportunities is available on request.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The following are essential criteria which you must demonstrate to be considered for this role and should be detailed in your application and any supporting documentation

Qualifications & Experience

- A professional social work qualification and GSCC registration including evidence of CPD
- Have at least 5 years' experience in child care social work and adoption work, of which two years experience of successfully supervising, coaching, and mentoring staff
- Experience of working with other organisations and regulatory bodies to achieve successful outcomes

Special working conditions

- A willingness to work flexibly including the occasional need to work evenings and "non-working" days
- Possession of a driving licence and access to a car when required which is insured for work purposes

Skills & Knowledge

- An ability to deal with and analyse complex information
- A good knowledge and understanding of current child care and adoption legislation, regulations and adoption inspection. This should include, at a minimum, basic knowledge of legislation, regulation and guidance pertaining to intercountry adoption;
- Knowledge of relevant research outcomes and practice issues;
- A good knowledge and understanding of Adoption Panel procedures
- Sound professional understanding of;
Safeguarding Children
Assessment skills

Confidentiality
Quality Customer Service and Service Delivery

- Excellent oral and writing communication skills
- Effective use of IT software packages including the use of all Microsoft office tools, email systems and the internet

Behaviours

- Adaptable and flexible problem solving approach
- Ability to work collaboratively within a small management team
- Ability to command respect through professional knowledge and interpersonal skills
- Sets high professional quality and integrity standards for oneself and others
- Respectful of others' knowledge, experience, or position
- Commitment to adhering to equal opportunities and maintaining a focus on diversity issues
- Has an international perspective
- Open to new ways of working, to think creatively and to innovate;
- Takes a continuous learning approach to work and life
- Has a sense of humour