



FSU
FREE SPEECH UNION

The Free Speech Union
5th Floor
167-169 Great Portland St.
London W1W 7PF

FreeSpeechUnion.org

Case Officer

Location: Home-working, with monthly travel for a day of face-to-face meetings in London (travel paid for by the FSU)

Salary: c.£33,000, depending on experience

Contract: Full-time

Department: Case Team

Reports to: Director of Case Management

Deadline: Applications will be considered on a rolling basis. The final deadline is 10am on Monday 14th September, but we may appoint before then.

About the Free Speech Union

The Free Speech Union is a non-partisan, mass-membership public interest body that stands up for the speech rights of its 47,000+ members and campaigns for free speech more widely. We provide a wide range of support: from arranging legal representation to giving media advice, to assisting with employment disputes to giving pastoral support. We want to win individual disputes for our members and change the law to protect and promote freedom of speech.

About the Role

Your core responsibilities will be to (1) help Free Speech Union members who are being punished or penalised for exercising their right to lawful free speech, and (2) to support the Director of Case Management and the Case Team as required.

Your primary role will be to assist people facing cancellation, investigation or punishment of some kind for something they have said. They might be in trouble with their employer, university, or the police. A typical week might see us assisting members who work in the NHS, academia, the Civil Service, the military, the private sector and virtually any other conceivable line of work.

You will be given and develop your own list of open cases, and for each of these members you will be the designated point of contact. You will guide them through the crisis they are dealing with, whatever its nature. You will seek advice from your colleagues as needed in order to do this, and we will provide the successful applicant with both dedicated training and ongoing support so that you can learn the ropes. You will be part of a highly collaborative and supportive Case Team, and you will have an assigned partner in our Legal Team to provide you with legal input. It is a very supportive environment where people look out for and help each other.

The work will be busy and highly varied. It requires intelligence, empathy, quick thinking and a commitment to protecting free speech, as well as a sense of humour.

In addition to managing your own cases, you may from time to time be required to assist with occasional other tasks, such as preparing case summaries for journalists, responding to general queries about the FSU's stance on issues of the day, or providing other relevant support to the Director and colleagues. You will also help monitor the cases of other staff during periods of absence.

We've been involved in over 6,300 cases since we were founded in 2020 and we've achieved a favourable outcome 74% of the time. It's a busy, varied and sociable job.

Do not be put off applying if you cannot match every single aspect of the job specification: we want to hear from intelligent, highly capable, and committed people who are willing to learn. We invest significant time into training and developing our staff.

Please do not apply if you have an open case with us: we are unable to consider applications for this post in those circumstances. We will also be unable to consider applications from members we have very recently helped.

Key Responsibilities

- Investigating new cases as they come in, building an evidence picture, establishing crucial facts, points of contention, and identifying the key characters in each case, including carrying out social media and background checks where necessary.
- Corresponding with the member who is seeking our help, using your own judgement and with guidance from the Director of Case Management or other colleagues, using appropriate tone, syntax and grammar.
- Drafting high-quality documents for the member's case, e.g. statements for employment meetings, written appeals, letters and other correspondence as needed.
- Prioritising the interests of the member when handling a case, while balancing legal, political and media considerations.
- Recognising which cases and queries need to be handled sensitively and carefully and seeking appropriate guidance.
- Filing all correspondences and documents in good order for ease of access using our Salesforce case management system.
- Assisting the Director of Case Management or other colleagues as needed with other related tasks.
- Providing good service to members, managing expectations sensitively and communicating clearly; this requires an awareness of the scope and remit of what the FSU can and cannot do, as well as what it will and will not do, for its members.
- Attending internal and external meetings, with particular focus on the weekly online Case Team meeting, weekly online General meeting, and monthly in-person meeting.

About You

Commitment to the cause of free speech, including awareness of the Free Speech Union and our work is a must, but it is not sufficient on its own; applicants must have a relevant mix of skills, aptitude and experience.

Essential Criteria

- Educated to degree level, or equivalent work experience.
- Able to communicate orally and in writing in a persuasive and professional manner, including the ability to write formal (and sometimes public) letters on members' behalf and sometimes in the name of the FSU.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and an empathetic nature, the ability to communicate with people from all walks of life.
- Experience of handling extensive correspondence, cases, or complaints, and/or managing large volumes of information, files, evidence and material.
- Good intellectual and analytical ability to apply complex political and legal concepts to practical issues, and to learn quickly.
- Awareness of or training in some relevant UK law, such as GDPR and/or the Equality Act.
- Good knowledge and understanding of the political and media landscape in relation to free speech, with the political judgement and knowledge to consider our statement of values and broader context when evaluating cases and providing support.
- Self-starter with the ability to use your own initiative while knowing when to seek advice.
- Have your own premises, equipment and systems to enable productive working from home.

Desirable Criteria

- Some knowledge of Freedom of Information and/or Subject Access Requests, though training will also be provided.
- Experience of dealing with case management, database and/or archive systems would be an advantage, but our systems are not beyond the reach of anybody with reasonable IT abilities, and a full induction will be provided.
- Some history of the thoughtful application of AI tools.

What We Offer

- The autonomy and flexibility of working from home.
- Full access to our learning and development programme.
- 20 days paid annual leave per year.

How to Apply

To be considered for this role please send us a CV, along with a cover letter outlining why you are interested in the role and how your skills align with the person specification. Please send that to jobs@freespeechunion.org.

The FSU is actively recruiting for this role and may withdraw from the recruitment process at its discretion.

Please include “Case Officer” in the subject line of your application.

Review of this Job Description

This job description is intended as an outline of the general areas of activity and will be amended in the light of the changing needs of the organisation. To be reviewed in conjunction with the post holder.

The FSU is an equal opportunity employer and will consider qualified applicants without regard to protected characteristics.