

Advocacy Practice Programme for Information Providers

“Advocacy is a means of empowering people by supporting them to assert their views and claim their entitlements and where necessary representing and negotiating on their behalf”.
CIB Advocacy Guidelines

The DIT accredited Citizens Information Board (CIB) Advocacy Practice Programme (APP) sets out to outline the legal background to advocacy, explain its elements and key principles, develop the skills required by a good advocate and apply them in a range of areas e.g. employment, social welfare, health. The '10 -'11 Programme as a priority will select learners from CIB Regions 1, 2 & 5. It is open to learners who have completed CIB's FETAC accredited Information Providers Programme (IPP) at Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) **or** have worked for at least 2 years as an information provider / advocate and wish to develop their knowledge and skills to execute the role and functions of an advocate according to best practice.

The first APP was delivered over 8 training days in 2008 at different venues throughout the country and twenty three learners received *Continuous Professional Development* Certificates with 10 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits that are recognised at Level 7 on the NFQ. An additional 24 learners are completing the '09 / '10 APP which will be completed in October '10.

Advocacy Practice Awards Ceremony



Some of the Region 2 learners who successfully completed the Programme in '08 pictured with their DIT *Continuous Professional Development* Certificates at a CIB/DIT Awards Ceremony in Mountjoy Sq., Dublin in '09 together with personnel from both organisations.

The demand for practical advocacy has increased from the formalising of advocacy as provided for in the legislation i.e. “The Citizens Information Act 2007” (February 2007) which amended “The Comhairle Act 2000” (March 2000). This APP has been designed to bridge the gap between other courses by providing practical in-depth training for experienced information providers. The other courses delivered by CIB include: - (i) The IPP with a basic advocacy element while its main focus is on information provision and (ii) the 12 module Higher Certificate in Arts (Advocacy Studies) course accredited at HETAC Level 6. This Advocacy Studies course has been developed by Sligo Institute of Technology with input from CIB and the Equality Authority and is undertaken by distance learning and requires a considerable commitment from students over a two year time frame.

Programme Aim

The APP for Information Providers sets out to: -

- explain the different elements of advocacy and its boundaries
- identify the core principles underlying advocacy
- develop the necessary understanding and the range of skills required by a good advocate
- outline the legal background to advocacy
- support and empower clients to speak for themselves wherever possible
- apply advocacy skills in a range of areas, for example, employment, social welfare and health.

Programme Objectives

At the end of the APP learners should be able to: -

- identify cases to take on and devise ways of progressing them
- analyse situations creatively and come up with practical solutions
- develop a good working knowledge of procedures relating to the topic areas
- research options and outline case precedents
- work collaboratively and avail of supervision
- use a range of communication skills – interviewing, negotiating, report writing and making a case
- utilize knowledge of tribunal and other paralegal processes.

Accreditation

A 75% attendance at the training sessions is mandatory (6 of 8 days training) and learners are required to complete two 3,500 word written assignments following the 4th and 8th training days. A 50% weighting or 5 credits is applied to each assignment amounting to a total of 10 ECTS credits, as part of a *Continuous Development Certificate* validated by the DIT, and recognised at Level 7 on the NFQ.

The **first assignment** is based on an ‘equality’ or ‘employment’ case study and the learners are required to identify key areas where advocacy skills can be applied.

In the **second assignment** learners are required to provide a description and a review of an actual advocacy case which they have undertaken. This case should involve assisting a client in a formal appeal process in one of the following topic areas: - ‘disability, health; social welfare, immigration, housing’. Alternatively, a review of an actual case in which the learner acts as an observer could be considered subject to a number of conditions.

Learners are invited to check the alternative case option with the course co-ordinator in advance of completing the assignment.

Marking Criteria

5 marks are awarded to each of the ten categories outlined hereunder amounting to a total of 50 marks per assignment (100 marks overall for the two assignments): -

1. Presentation of the initial information
2. How the query presented itself and how Information Provider/Advocate prepared for the appointment
3. What questions they asked (or would ask?)
4. An analysis of the law involved i.e. identification of the correct legislation involved to process the claim and to initiate the appeals procedures
5. A look at the strengths and weaknesses of both sides of the argument
6. A look at why the decision came about
7. What were the possible remedies/ compensations/ settlements?
8. How to appeal and how to enforce decisions made?
9. What has the Information Provider/Advocate learned from this particular case and how this will impact on their future practice
10. Overall perspective.

Entry Requirements

Completion of the IPP or at least 2 years work experience as an information provider / advocate is essential. Priority for this APP will be for learners from **CIB Regions 1, 2 & 5** on a pro rata basis (Max. 25) and hereunder are contact details of the course co-ordinators plus the geographical extent of each Region: -

Applicants will be selected according to the relevance of the APP to their role as information providers / advocates in their particular service. If you are interested in applying for this Programme please complete the application form overleaf, identify a workplace / advocacy mentor who has experience of taking advocacy cases to support you with the course either face to face, over the phone or by e-mail. A Disability Advocate is the most obvious choice. This person can be from outside the CIS network. Please ensure that the application form is signed off by your workplace manager and forward to: -

**The Customer Service & Training Administrator, Citizens Information Board,
Georges Quay House, 43, Townsend St., Dublin 2.**

The closing date for receipt of Programme applications is Fri. 10th September '10.

Queries in relation to the Programme may be addressed to: -

Region 1 - Counties of Cavan, Dublin City (Northside & Fingal), Louth, Meath, Monaghan
Contact: - **Liam Murtagh**, Regional Training Executive, T: 042 9332913;
F: 042 9337081; E: liam.murtagh@ciboard.ie

Region 2 - Counties of Dublin City (Southside), Dublin South County, Kildare, Laois, Longford, Offaly, Westmeath.
Contact: - **John Long**, Regional Manager, T: 01 4620444; F: 01 4620494;
E: john.long@ciboard.ie

Region 5 – Counties of Donegal, Galway, Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon, Sligo.
Contact: - **Claire Ruddy**, Regional Training Executive, T: 094 9022169;
F: 094 9021963; E: claire.ruddy@ciboard.ie

Advocacy Practice Programme – 2010 / 2011

Priority for Learners from CIB Regions 1, 2 & 5

A maximum of 25 learners will be selected.

The focus of the Programme is on the practical advocacy dimension of each topic. Learners will receive preparatory reading material from the topic trainer in advance of attending each of the one day courses to update on relevant topic information. This material will contain some questions for learners to test themselves on.

Training Duration: - 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Semester 1

Date	Topic(s)	Trainer	Venue
Day 1: -Wed. 20 th Oct. '10 CS & T	(1) - Introduction to Advocacy (2) - Negotiation Skills	Mairide Woods, CIB Colin Daly, Northside Community Law Centre	Carmichael Centre, Dublin 7.
Day 2: - Wed. 17 th Nov. '10 Region 1	(1) - Equality (2) - Employment Law / Preparation & Application Process for Claims	Bernadette Treanor, Equality Consultant; Alan Haugh, Employment Law Consultant	Carmichael Centre, Dublin 7.
Day 3: - Wed. 19 th Jan. '11 Region 5	Employment Law - Hearing of Claims in the different statutory bodies	Alan Haugh, Employment Law Consultant	The Athlone Education Centre, Moydrum Rd.
Day 4: - Wed. 16 th Feb.'11 Region 2	(1) - Case Management; (2) - Report Writing	Una Tobin, CIB and Jill Farrelly, Dublin City Centre CIS Jim Gogarty, Training Consultant	Carmichael Centre, Dublin 7.
Complete Assignment 1 - Focus: - 'Equality' or an 'Employment Law' case study Due Date – Friday 18th March '11			

Semester 2

Date	Topic(s)	Trainer	Venue
Day 5: - Wed. 20 th April '11 CS & T	(1) – Health (2) - Disability	Antoinette O'Shea, HSE Training Section Selina Doyle, Cumas	Carmichael Centre, Dublin 7.
Day 6: - Wed. 18 th May. '11 Region 5	Social Welfare – Focus on Appeals	The Northside Community Law Centre	The Athlone Education Centre, Moydrum Rd.
Day 7: - Wed. 21 st Sept. '11 Region 1	Immigration	Catherine Kenny, Immigration Consultant and Gill Kennedy, Immigrant Council of Ireland	Carmichael Centre, Dublin 7.
Day 8: - Wed. 19 th Oct.'11 Region 2	(1) – Housing (2) - Redress Mechanisms (3) – Programme Conclusion	Frank Murphy, Ballymun Law Centre Rep. from Ombudsman's office & another redress presenter.	Carmichael Centre, Dublin 7.
Complete Assignment 2 - Focus: - 'Health; Disability; Social Welfare; Immigration; Housing' case study. Due Date – Friday 18th November '11			

The closing date for receipt of Programme applications is Fri. 10th September '10.

CIBs Advocacy Practice Programme for Information Providers

Application Form

**Please complete and return this application form signed by your manager to attend all of the 8 “One Day” courses to: -
The Customer Service & Training Administrator, Citizens Information Board,
Georges Quay House, 43, Townsend St., Dublin 2.**

Time 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.	<p style="text-align: center;">Outline of the eight “One Day” courses</p> <p>Day 1 – Introduction to Advocacy - Mairide Woods, CIB Negotiation Skills – Colin Daly, Northside Community Law Centre o Wed. 20th October '10 in The Carmichael Centre, Dublin 7</p> <p>Day 2 – Equality - Bernadette Treanor, Equality Consultant Employment Law - Preparation & Application Process for Claims – Alan Haugh, Employment Law Consultant o Wed. 17th Nov. '10 in The Carmichael Centre, Dublin 7</p> <p>Day 3 – Employment Law - Hearing of Claims in the different statutory bodies – Alan Haugh, Employment Law Consultant o Wed. 19th Jan. '11 in The Athlone Education Centre</p> <p>Day 4 - Case Management – Una Tobin, CIB & Jill Farrelly, Dublin City Centre CIS Report Writing – Jim Gogarty, Training Consultant o Wed. 16th Feb. '11, The Carmichael Centre, Dublin 7</p> <p>Day 5 – Health – Antoinette O’Shea, HSE Training Section Disability – Selina Doyle, Cumas Advocacy Service o Wed. 20th April '11 in The Carmichael Centre, Dublin 7</p> <p>Day 6 – Social Welfare – Focus on Appeals – The Northside Community Law Centre; Wed. 18th May '11, Athlone Education Centre</p> <p>Day 7 – Immigration – Catherine Kenny, Immigration Consultant and Gill Kennedy, Immigrant Council of Irl. o Wed. 21st Sept. '11 in The Carmichael Centre, Dublin 7</p> <p>Day 8 – Housing Frank Murphy, Ballymun Law Centre; Redress Mechanisms – Rep. from Ombudsman’s Office and another redress presenter; Programme Conclusion. o Wed. 19th Oct. '11 in The Carmichael Centre, Dublin 7</p>
Name of applicant	
Home Telephone:	Email: (Essential)
	Mobile:
	Organisation
Organisation address	Correspondence address
Special requirements i.e. learning / access / diet?	
Where did you hear about this training programme?	
Training Calendar <input type="checkbox"/>	CIB website <input type="checkbox"/>
	Other Website please specify
	Other Source
Status of organisation	
Statutory <input type="checkbox"/>	Voluntary <input type="checkbox"/>
Your status	
Employee <input type="checkbox"/>	Volunteer <input type="checkbox"/>
	Jl <input type="checkbox"/>
	SE/CE Scheme <input type="checkbox"/>
Board of Management <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/> (please specify)

The APP accredited by the DIT is open to learners who have completed the Information Providers Programme (IPP) with two FETAC credits at Level 6 on the NFQ **and** / **or** have at least 2 years work experience as an information provider / advocate.

- o Have you completed the FETAC accredited IPP? Yes Year? ____ No
- o Please outline your experience working as an information provider / advocate?

The APP requires the learners to have a competency in Information Technology i.e. to source information on the Internet; to record information; to type assignments etc. Could you please indicate your level of competency in IT?

Basic Intermediate Advanced

Comment: _____

Please state:-

Your Job Title?	
Hours per week working in organisation?	
Length of time with organisation?	
<p>If accepted onto the Programme who will act / support you in your learning as an Advocacy Mentor? e.g. Development Manager / Manager; Experienced Advocate / Information Provider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ CIB do not engage with the advocacy mentor. It is up to each individual participant to provide the mentor with course documentation and to let their support needs dictate the frequency of contact and level of engagement. ➤ Participants are advised to liaise with their Manager and agree how much of work time will relate to the Programme. 	

How do you think the APP will benefit you in your work in the organisation?

Important

Approved (within organisation) by:

Development Mgr/Board of Management: *(signature)*: _____

(Print name & title please) _____

Course Fees

Citizens Information Centre/Service (CIC/CIS) and Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) Staff: No fee