

Role profile

Role title	Employment Adviser (EA)
Department and directorate	BMA Cymru Wales
Job family level	Grade 6
Reports to (job title and name)	Assistant Secretary
Direct reports (job title and name)	No direct reports

Summary – purpose of the role

Describe as concisely as possible the overall purpose of the job and including the core duties/responsibilities required to be performed in the role (e.g. to provide a full range of administrative support services to the department including x, y & z)

Advising/Representing/Recruiting Members

- Provide advice, assistance and representation to members (individually and collectively) on employment and other work-related issues. Representation includes pay issues, job plan appeals, sickness reviews and grievance hearings with EA presenting case on behalf of member to the management panel.
- Undertake recruitment and retention activities by representing the Association at medical student events and junior doctor meetings, facilitating and participating in seminars and other core programme activities (including campaign work designed to promote the Association and recruit and retain members across all grades).
- Act as the principal point of contact with medical students and officials of Swansea and Cardiff University Medical Schools. Prepare and ensure the delivery of an effective programme to maximise medical student recruitment.
- Establish and maintain effective relationships with key senior personnel in Health Boards, Trusts, Welsh Government, HEIW and Medical Schools including student representatives.
- Prepare and progress claims with employers by telephone, in writing, and by direct representation.
- Provide expert advice on contractual documentation and Terms and Conditions of Service for employed doctors.
- Advise GP members on their contractual/legal responsibilities as employers and how best to manage their employees.
- Advise GP members of the NHS Regulations for GMS practices.
- Provide support to BMA Cymru Wales national Branch of Practice committees, attending meetings as required, especially Welsh Medical Students Committee and Welsh Junior Doctors Committee.
- Develop areas of specialist interest and work within agreed team to develop and update guidance, as necessary.
- Attend Member Relations liaison groups, working parties and other groups as deemed necessary and feedback key information to colleagues.
- Provide support, advice and training to the BMA's First Point of Contact Centre on issues relating to Wales.



Skill (level and breadth of application)

What relevant experience is necessary to undertake this role? What specialist, technical or professional qualifications are required to be able to perform the job?

How far does the role extend out across the organisation, e.g. confined to own team, involves co-ordination with another department or requires regular negotiation with many other parts of the organisation. Why is this necessary? Describe the range of issues that are involved in this, e.g. resolving people's IT problems, collecting information on key research items or advising members on a particular issue.

- Graduate or equivalent qualification with previous experience in areas covered by the role. Ideally from within a trade union or employment related background (legal practice, HR, medical staffing).
- Up to date and in-depth knowledge of employment legislation, employment relations practice and human resource policy, procedures and good practice and NHS terms and conditions.
- Advanced computer literacy and keyboard skills, requiring in-depth knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel, Powerpoint, case management / CRM systems and ability to effectively conduct web-based research.
- Good presentation and public speaking skills required to deliver engaging presentations to large medical student audiences.
- Excellent skills of oral and written communication e.g. letters of complaint to NHS employers about how a member's case has been dealt with; dealing with distressed members over the telephone and in person.
- Good working knowledge and understanding of the NHS structure in Wales and major NHS issues, together with an understanding of the role and function of the BMA.
- Highly developed ability to gather, assimilate and analyse information and develop a strategy for handling complex individual cases.
- Ability to prioritise and manage own work effectively with a personal case load.
- Excellent interpersonal skills in order to facilitate the development of effective relationships at senior level and to be able to communicate and empathise with members both over the telephone and in person.
- Excellent planning and organisational skills required e.g. to complete case plans for individual cases in terms of the action required and their deadlines. This assists in satisfactorily resolving cases and to organise own case load and other working commitments in the short, medium and long term to achieve the same.
- Predominately works without direct supervision (although advice and guidance will be provided by the Senior Employment Adviser) and has flexibility to work on own initiative, dealing with telephone and other methods of making enquiries including first line employment relations and human resource queries.
- It is essential that a good working knowledge of employment law, terms and conditions of service plus local and national policies is maintained, taking into account frequently occurring changes, so that advice given to Members is correct and appropriate at all times. Advice is subject to review and challenge by counsel (both ours and opposing) and potentially by Employment Tribunals and Courts.
- Ability to identify and address gaps in knowledge independently and prioritise learning needs.
- Required to deal with members on a daily basis and so the role is very much external to the organisation in its scope and focus. In addition, support and further guidance is often sought from senior BMA Cymru Wales staff, central BMA staff, and external bodies such as the HEIW and the Welsh Assembly Government in order to effectively deal with cases.
- Flexibility in approach to ensure that each case is dealt with differently depending on its merits.

Intellectual demands (complexity and challenge)

What sorts of problems, situations or issues are typically dealt with? Give any illustrative examples. How are the problems, situations or issues dealt with (e.g. undertaking original research and analysis or seeking specialist advice)?

To what extent are standard procedures and processes followed when undertaking typical tasks, and how is personal initiative used when solving problems? To what extent is creativity used in solving the problems (e.g. adopting different approaches, trying things that have not been done before within the organisation or improving/changing previous approaches).

Whilst EA role is supported by a range of guidance and procedural documents he/she;

- Manages own case work load on a daily basis with aim of resolving each case to individual member's satisfaction in a timely manner. Cases are usually, but not limited to issues surrounding pay and benefits, contracts of employment, bullying and harassment, sickness, job planning, discrimination, managing staff capability or conduct, disciplinaries and grievances.
- Dealing with each individual case involves use of own knowledge and expertise, further research into terms and conditions or employment legislation, liaising with other BMA staff and/or external representatives e.g. Welsh Government.
- Has freedom of action within the broad constraints of case handling, seeking support and advice from senior colleagues where appropriate, to determine and deal with each case based on its own individual merits.
- Inherent in the role is the requirement to autonomously balance and manage competing and multiple constraints that arise from own case load; constraints such as time, legal deadlines, members' expectations, realistic outcomes, CPD, student recruitment activity etc.
- Required to recognise and adhere to specific critical timescales as part of the case handling process arising from Employment law requirements/local employer procedures (e.g. three-month time limits for certain tribunal claims).
- Works on own personal initiative to resolve issues and to determine whether cases should be referred to more senior level e.g. cases that involve suspensions or termination of employment.
- Decisions taken and advice given have a high impact on Members and credibility of the Association and therefore must be correct.
- Will seek guidance from senior colleagues in advance of major decisions.
- Members can be emotional, demanding and difficult. EA has to work with the member to understand the issue, manage the emotion, their expectation and guide them through the internal procedural process in order to ensure their legal rights are protected.
- Complex, extensive and detailed information needs to be analysed in order to ensure that the adviser has an accurate understanding of the issue to be addressed. Effective questioning and listening techniques are required to gather all the relevant information necessary to achieve this.
- Direct representation of a member at a hearing will require an ability to adjust approach as further information becomes available. Adjournments may need to be sought and further, often difficult, discussions held with the member before proceeding.
- The types of cases referred to BMA Cymru Wales are not always routine, therefore occasionally a new or unusual case, a type of which has not been seen before, requires a degree of creativity and further research before advising the member accordingly. On these occasions an ability to think laterally is required.

Judgement (independence and level and impact limitations)

What are the typical decisions that are made in the job without reference to any higher authority? What informs/constrains the decisions (e.g. expenditure limits, have to follow clearly laid down procedures or working within broad objectives). What influence upon policy, procedures or resources is there (e.g. giving advice to others)?

Who (or what) is next to be affected by the decisions that are made – for example, supervisor sees them before they leave the team or the whole department sees and has to respond to the change that is made. Give typical example(s) of the consequences of the decisions (e.g. what impact does the decision-making have on the performance of the team/section/department/organisation)?

- Decisions taken and advice given have a high impact on Members and the credibility of the Association and therefore must be correct e.g. advice to GP employers directly impact and influence the way they manage their staff; advice on job planning affects the day to day arrangements of members.
- Has freedom to act with individual responsibility for providing expert advice for own case load within the broad constraints of case handling e.g. advising on pay issues arising from assimilation to new contracts, entitlements under the terms and conditions of service, queries and disputes arising from monitoring and job banding.
- Has autonomy for way in which those cases are managed e.g. dealing with the matter formally or informally in the first instance, which policy or terms and conditions would apply, determining who should be contacted within the Health Board.
- Will seek guidance from senior colleagues in advance of major decisions.
- Required to organise events and activities (e.g. student recruitment) within set budget.
- Required to recognise and adhere to specific critical timescales as part of the representational/case handling process arising from Employment law requirements/local employer procedures e.g. 3-month time limit for certain tribunal claims.
- Input into the formulation of policy e.g. working with colleagues to identify trends in junior doctor's cases to be raised and discussed with the Welsh Assembly Government and other appropriate internal and external organisations/committees.
- Performance, final outcomes and the extent to which are achieved determines the degree of member satisfaction and the way in which the Association is perceived by members and external organisations.

Use of resources (supervision of resources and influence)

What responsibility is there for managing people, equipment, budgets, resources, customer's welfare or confidential information? If this is a staff management role describe what is involved, e.g. staff reporting, staff development, appraisal, leading a department or the allocation of work.

How does the role fit within the organisation, e.g. support role, team member, team leader, specialist policy adviser, or leading major areas of core business?

- Responsible for own budget line for student recruitment activity with the BMA Cymru Wales budget.
- Responsible for supporting the induction of new employment advisers both within team and wider team.
- Key team member of Member Relations in Wales – EAs are the first point of contact to the BMA Cymru Wales Member Relations team and therefore crucial for good first impressions and sound analysis and advising of the query.
- EAs must exercise confidentiality and discretion at all times in relation to their cases, and to identify potential conflicts immediately so that an alternative case worker can be assigned to the case.
- Ability to manage expectations and advocate for those members in need e.g. liaising with Employers/HEIW for members who are diagnosed with a disability and long-term sickness, or those facing the end of their medical career, referring member to Doctors for Doctors when professional counselling is deemed necessary.
- Provide support, advice and training to BMA's First Point of Contact Centre on issues relating to Wales.
- Provide advice to colleagues across the Association on Wales-specific terms and conditions.

Communication (level, internal and external demands and significance)

*What people are typically contacted (regardless of the medium) **inside** the Association, e.g. immediate colleagues, senior managers or administrators? Committee members are the only members classed as internal communication. Normal non-committee membership and doctors are external (see below)*

*Who is in regularly contact with the role holder **outside** of the Association, e.g. members who are not committee members, suppliers, members of the public? Approximately what percentage of the time is spent on external communications?*

What is the purpose of these contacts, e.g. conveying information, gathering data?

- Required to communicate on a daily basis with members of BMA Cymru Wales office and Member Relations colleagues in particular.
- Required to liaise and develop good working relationships with Branch of Practice Committee Executive Staff, and other colleagues across the BMA. The ability to deal with individual member queries often requires information and advice from these additional specialist BMA departments e.g. ill health retirement queries in relation to pensions, etc.
- Majority of time spent in external communication with members, Welsh Government officials, Health Board HR, general management and payroll staff, external lawyers, the HEIW, Swansea and Cardiff Medical School administrative staff. This is a key part of case work and recruitment/retention role, and therefore the ability to foster and maintain relationships with individuals from these organisations is crucial.
- Requires well developed interpersonal skills to obtain case history from members and to manage their expectations in order to identify and achieve objectives.
- Requires supportive and empathetic telephone manner to frequently deal with members who are distressed, angry, tearful or concerned for their jobs or future financial stability.
- The purpose of these contacts is to gather, research and disseminate information, provide advice to and negotiate on behalf of members. As well as providing support and counselling where needed.
- Presentation of cases and the arguing of the member's position requires well developed influencing and negotiating skills. In the majority of cases these are required in telephone conversations and during informal meetings. Occasionally these need to be displayed in formal hearing where persuasive skills are necessary.
- In the short term, these skills are deployed to the immediate advantage of the member and to promote the service. There is a requirement to balance this with maintaining long-term relationships with employers and other external contacts.
- Effective presentation and public speaking skills are required to deliver engaging presentations to large medical student audiences.

Physical demands & coordination (physical effort and mental strain)

Are there any unusual physical or mental demands of the role; for example, lifting heavy objects, standing for long periods, using VDUs extensively or high levels of concentration?

- There will be normal physical demands typically associated with an office environment and there will be a limited requirement to engage in lifting / carrying or other exertion. There will be a requirement to use office technology and systems as provided or recommended by the BMA.
- The role holder will be required to travel in order to carry out the role, in line with Member Relations and BMA policy. Attendance at meetings at a variety of locations (e.g. hospitals and trusts) will be required.
- There are internal health and safety policies and guidance to be followed and adhered to by the post holder. These policies apply both in the normal office environment and also when visiting other locations in the execution of duties.
- Job holder required to travel to meetings and recruitment events across Wales as part of the role. The occasional travel to BMA House in London will be required for training.

Working conditions and emotional demands)

- The job is typically conducted with in a normal office (including home office) environment or external location as required to carry out the role and is not considered to be exposed to hazardous conditions or extreme anti-social behaviour (which should be reported through the appropriate internal channels).
- There may be times where the post holder is involved with a case that involves an emotionally charged situation. Infrequent exposure to verbal abuse and some challenging written remarks, arising from distressed members. This can be raised through the appropriate internal channels to ensure support is given to the role holder as required.

BMA competency level required	
Behavioural competency	Level
Personal responsibility – demonstrates a positive attitude and takes ownership and responsibility for work performance	C/B
Service focus – demonstrates an understanding of customer needs and has a service orientation and builds relationships with members and colleagues.	B
Gathering information – is driven to seek out information and carries out research to the level required to achieve objectives	C
Team working – works with colleagues cooperatively in own department and the wider organisation and contributes to the success of the team.	B
Influencing others – persuades others to support a viewpoint and achieve their participation	C
Dealing with change – implements and adapts to new ideas and ways of working at individual, team and organisational level. Proactively responds to and implements change.	B
Creativity and innovation – takes a creative approach to work, identifies new ways of doing things and develops ideas to benefit the association. Contributes new ideas and suggestions.	B
Managing and developing people – sets goals and ensures others perform to their full potential and meet required standards	n/a
Leading people – communicates goals, engages and motivates others to achieve	n/a

Sign-off

Manager:	Date:
Role holder:	Date:

