

# OISC Newsletter: Winter 2022

## Message from the Commissioner

Saying that 2021 was a year that we had not hoped nor planned for is an understatement.

At one stage we saw the easing of personal restrictions as we thought the challenges of 2020 was behind us especially as we had been so successful with the rollout of jobs across the country as a whole.

However, despite the booster programme, Omicron had brought us fresh challenges and further restrictions beyond those envisaged in Plan B'.

However, challenges should always be viewed as opportunities for innovation.

Nothing captures this more than the OISC virtual conference which we held last autumn.

Not only did attendees have the opportunity to hear from senior government representatives including Tom Pursglove, the immigration minister, but it allowed attendees and those who watched the recording to hear more about the changes the OISC will begin rolling out in April as part of our three-year Development Programme.

Changes that are enshrined in our new vision:

**Every person seeking immigration advice within the UK makes an informed choice to seek advice only from a regulated immigration adviser and receives reliable and professional advice and service that they have confidence and trust in.**

As restrictions begin to ease we all look forward to working more closely and directly than has been possible in the last 2 years.

2021, the twentieth year of the OISC's existence, marked the beginning of changes for the organisation.

Over the coming weeks we will share more information about these changes and how they will affect and benefit you.

Changes that will continue the OISC's relevance as a key player in the immigration field and a trusted body for those seeking immigration advice.

John Tuckett, Immigration Services Commissioner

# OISC Adviser Conference: November 2021

Last November we held the first OISC online adviser conference.

The main focus on the conference was on the OISC's new vision and how we will be working from April 2022. Our Commissioner John Tuckett spoke to attendees about how we will be placing more emphasis on the needs of the advice seeker and moving to a new regional structure which will give the OISC a greater regional presence. Our Head of Regulation Deirdre Gilchrist provided more detail on the regulation agenda.

More details can be found on the [slides](#) from the event.

## New Publications

In November, the OISC published on its website a revised version of its [Immigration Assistance](#) document. The 2021 version of the document updates two of the exemptions provided by the Secretary of State (through Statutory Instruments) which allow organisations operating in line with the exemptions, to provide immigration advice and services without needing to be regulated by the Commissioner. A number of the examples and scenarios provided within the document have also been updated.

Two other revised documents which have recently been published may be of interest to regulated advisers.

The first is an update to our Guidance Note on [Solicitors and OISC Regulation](#) which sets out the circumstances in which an SRA regulated solicitor can work in an OISC regulated firm. A flow chart to help organisations navigate this area has been added to our guidance note.

The second is an update to our Practice Note on [Judicial Review Case Management](#) which provides further clarification on the roles of the OISC adviser and the instructed counsel.

## Thematic Reviews

The OISC continue with its thematic reviews of compliance alongside its remote/premises audit programme for regulated organisations.

Two reviews are planned during 2021-22, the first a thematic review on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) which started in September.

The review looked at how organisations and advisers are meeting the requirements of the revised CPD scheme.

Organisations were chosen at random and informed by email at the start of the review about what information needed to be sent to the OISC.

Further guidance on the revised requirements for CPD can be found [here](#):

The CPD Thematic Review has been followed by a review of organisations client care letters which began in December.

## Competence Assessment

The OISC has been pleased to note a healthy pass rate among its Level 1 candidates over recent months and a reduction in queries from candidates on assessment days. We have taken on board feedback on the assessment process, improved communications in how to access online tests and onboarding registration and made improvements to the online testing platform.

We have also received record numbers of applicants applying at Level 2 and 3 who require assessments and are delighted to report an increase in candidate success rates on these higher level papers.

## In The News

The OISC continues to look at new and exciting ways to reach stakeholders and the general public to share our core message shared above in the Commissioner's Message.

Building on our recent poster and video campaigns the last year has seen the OISC featured in the mainstream media.

In April, the Times newspaper featured an article about the successful OISC prosecution of a married couple, Choice and Sherman Dzviti who conned 6

victims out of almost £20,000. They were sentenced at Southwark crown court to two years in prison and 200 hours of community service respectively.

Later in the year the OISC was featured in BBC One's Defenders:UK programme where one of our investigators took viewers through the inquiry and successful prosecution of Harvinder Kaur Thethi in a lengthy segment which also featured the victim of a similar crime talk about the impact it had on her and on her family.