

Post Specification

Date	September 2023
Post Group Number	8029
Post Title	Benefits Officer (Service Specialist)
Job Family	Regulation and Technical
Job Family Role Profile	RT9
Final Grade	9

To be read in conjunction with the job family role profile

Service Area description
Benefits
Purpose of this post
To undertake duties in connection with the processing of Housing and Council Tax Benefit, Council Tax Support and the collection of Housing Benefit Overpayments in accordance with legislation, Council policy and priorities set by the Benefits Team Leader.
To work alongside other Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service teams to provide quality customer care with a seamless front and back-office delivery.
Key job specific accountabilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To handle data in accordance with legal requirements and local procedures and to ensure that all data is accurate, comprehensive and distributed securely. To gather and process all information and documentation required to make decisions within pre-defined procedures, legislation, guidance, and Council policy in relation to Housing and Council Tax Benefit and Council Tax Support claims so that timely entitlement decisions are made. To respond to enquiries made by phone, face to face and via electronic means within set timescales to validate claims or changes in circumstances and to discuss payment arrangements. To be fully conversant with current Housing and Council Tax Benefit, Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit Overpayment legislation and have a good understanding of related state benefits. To minimise fraud and error in Housing/Council Tax Benefit and Council Tax Reduction Scheme (and in other welfare benefits and tax credits generally) by maintaining exceptionally high rates of accuracy and an awareness of fraud issues, referring suitable cases to the Fraud Investigation Unit and where appropriate passing information to relevant DWP sections and HMRC. To attend court as a witness for any fraud prosecutions. To maximise the authority's subsidy revenue and contribute to the department's performance against both national and local targets by ensuring all claims and changes are actioned promptly, accurately, in accordance with all relevant legislation and procedures and are correctly recorded for statistical purposes

- To determine and collect Housing benefit overpayments and initiate appropriate recovery action, including recommending cases for write off. This includes taking account of a debtor's personal circumstances and any corporate recovery and social inclusion policies.
- To support with the administration of Discretionary Housing Payment applications.
- To support the management team with the implementation of new systems/technology and procedures and to mentor other members of staff as required.
- To undertake relevant training, as required and to keep abreast of current developments and circulars associated with the department.
- To comply with and contribute to improvements in guidelines, procedures and policies that enable delivery of agreed targets and service standards.
- To work alongside other Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service teams to provide quality customer care with a seamless front and back-office delivery.
- To undertake such other duties that are required from time to time and are commensurate with this position.
- To be involved, as appropriate, in the event of emergency situations occurring within the Borough.
- To have a duty to take care of your own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by your actions at work. Employees must co-operate with employers and colleagues to help everyone meet the legal requirements of Health and Safety at work.

Please note annual targets will be discussed during the appraisal process

Key facts and figures of the post

Budget Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NA
Staff Management Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NA
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NA

Essential Criteria - Qualifications, knowledge, experience and expertise

- Good standard of education: including a minimum of 5 GCSE grade C qualifications or above or equivalent experience relating to job description.
- Commitment to furtherance of own learning and development.
- IRRV Qualification (or willingness to work towards this qualification)
- A minimum of 3 years current Housing Benefits assessment and administrative procedures experience
- A minimum of 2 years' experience within an internal customer environment.
- Must be able to demonstrate a detailed knowledge of Housing Benefit Regulations and Local Council Tax Support scheme requirements.
- Practical experience of Microsoft Office 'Word' and 'Excel' applications (or equivalent).
- Ability to be an effective team player and contribute to teamwork and team goals
- Effective customer care skills
- Ability to interrogate and accurately update on-line computer systems
- Ability to organise and monitor own workloads
- Effective verbal and written communication skills
- Commitment to highest levels of service delivery

- Tactful
- Ability to maintain appropriate confidentiality
- Highly accurate

Disclosure and Barring Service – DBS Checks

- This post does require a Basic DBS check.

Job working circumstances

Emotional Demands	The job role can involve dealing with generally distressing situations for others
Physical Demands	Normal
Working Conditions	Some dealing with difficult situations including abusive language and aggressive behaviour
Other Factors	