

## Post Specification

<b>Date</b>	<b>June 2024</b>
<b>Post Group Number</b>	<b>8264</b>
<b>Post Title</b>	<b>Senior Benefits Officer</b>
<b>Job Family</b>	<b>Business Support</b>
<b>Job Family Role Profile</b>	<b>BS8</b>
<b>Final Grade</b>	<b>Grade 8</b>

To be read in conjunction with the job family role profile

<b>Service Area description</b>
<p>This post is part of the Revenues and Benefits service area within the Resources Directorate. The service makes provision for the prompt and accurate billing, collection and recovery of Council Tax and Business Rates relating to over 130,000 household and businesses within the Westmorland and Furness area. The service is responsible for the administration of over 18,000 claims for both Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction, providing financial support to those in need towards their housing and Council tax costs.</p>
<b>Purpose of this post</b>
<p>To undertake the assessments and maintenance of all types of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction claims. This will include the more complex claims e.g. supported accommodation applications, persons from abroad, students, temporary accommodation and self-employed claims; thus ensuring the quality and the standard of work undertaken fully complies with Legislation and the Councils policies and procedures.</p>
<b>Key job specific accountabilities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine applications for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction. This includes gathering information, calculating entitlement and notifying the customer in writing of the outcome using technical knowledge, statutory legislation and guidance, systems and processes.</li> <li>• Process Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction changes in circumstances including changes in income and capital, the number of occupants and address changes ensuring the changes are determined in accordance with statutory legislation and guidance.</li> <li>• Calculate the entitlement for homeless people in temporary accommodation</li> <li>• Process applications for backdating of claims ensuring decisions are determined in accordance with statutory legislation and guidance.</li> <li>• Process applications for Discretionary Housing Payment applications when required.</li> <li>• Assist the Team Leader with housekeeping reports.</li> <li>• Review and deal with stage 1 Appeals ensuring decisions and further appeal rights are sent to the customer.</li> <li>• Provide Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction advice and assistance to customers in a professional, courteous, and confidential manner whether in person, via the telephone or in writing.</li> <li>• To liaise with stakeholders i.e., Department of Work and Pensions, Housing Department, Valuation office, Landlords, welfare organisations etc. in a polite courteous manner and complying with customer confidentiality.</li> <li>• To keep up to date with changes in legislation, Data Protection and Council policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Make sure any overpayments generated are classified correctly thus ensuring the Council claims the correct subsidy</li> </ul>

- Process work in a timely and accurate manner to enable performance indicators to be achieved.
- To always work in a safe manner within the requirements of health and safety legislation, and to comply with other relevant statutory legislation.
- To actively assist the Council in meeting current and emerging requirements of Equality legislation and comply with measures that are introduced to ensure equality of opportunity and non-discrimination
- To have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This post does not have specific safeguarding duties

**Please note annual targets will be discussed during the appraisal process**

**Key facts and figures of the post**

<b>Budget Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>
<b>Staff Management Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>

**Essential Criteria - Qualifications, knowledge, experience and expertise**

**Qualifications**

Good standard of education with a minimum of 5 GCSE's (grade 4-9) or equivalent, including Mathematics and English, or demonstrable experience based on current work-based competency

**Knowledge/Experience**

**Essential**

- A minimum of 12 months experience in a Revenues and Benefits role
- Proficient use of Benefits IT systems and Microsoft office applications.
- Significant working knowledge of Benefit Regulations and working practices
- Experience of dealing with customers in a range of different circumstances
- Proven ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of individuals including customers, colleagues and stakeholders both orally and in writing
- Ability to organise and prioritise workload, to ensure work is accurate and completed in a timely manner
- Excellent team player and also able to work independently
- Working knowledge and understanding of GDPR
- To act in a tactful, diplomatic manner and remain calm and professional in all situations
- Understand the Councils values and priorities and ensure the priorities link to the role

**Desirable**

- Institute of Revenues, Rating & valuation (IRRV) full or technical qualification
- Proficient use of NEC systems including IWorld and Information@work

**Disclosure and Barring Service – DBS Checks**

- This post requires a DBS check.
  - The level of check required is: DBS Basic

**Job working circumstances**

<b>Emotional Demands</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to manage the emotional demands of the role. The job involves dealing with some of the most vulnerable customers within our community</li> </ul>
<b>Physical Demands</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normal</li> </ul>
<b>Working Conditions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible working is currently permitted, officers are asked to come into the office at least once a week with the rest of the time working from home</li> </ul>

subject to agreement by the manager. However remote working would be considered for the right applicant.

- Officer must be willing to attend meetings or training events to keep up to date with changes.

**Other Factors**