

Role Profile

Job Title:	Senior Officer – Subsidy and Policy Team	Grade: 11	Spinal column point range: 35-37
Department:	Benefits	Post no:	48879
Directorate:	Customer and Transactional Services	Location:	

Role reports to:	Benefits Subsidy and Policy Manager
Direct Reports:	
Indirect Reports:	
<p><i>This role profile is non-contractual and provided for guidance. It will be updated and amended from time to time in accordance with the changing needs of the council and the requirements of the job.</i></p>	

JOB DESCRIPTION

PURPOSE OF ROLE:

- To support Benefits Subsidy and Policy Manager in managing all aspects of Appeals and Revisions work ensuring their outcomes are analysed and the feedback is used to strengthen quality of decisions, policies and training.
- To support Benefits Subsidy and Policy Manager to ensure controls and service improvements are developed and implemented, thus improving residents' experience and safeguarding benefits subsidy, Council Tax Reduction expenditure and other discretionary funds administered by the Service
- To carry out all aspects of Benefits assurance work identifying and addressing barriers to efficient service delivery and potential risks to the council, financial or otherwise.
- To work closely with IT team, taking an innovative approach to the identification and implementation of improved IT systems, policies, processes, procedures and training.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES:

- To coordinate the work of Appeals and Revisions in such a way that it is dealt with in the most effective and efficient manner and that the statutory and service deadlines are met.
- To maintain comprehensive management information on revisions, appeals, complaints and queries. Compile statistics, analysis and reports as required.
- To work with Policy and Subsidy Manager to review revisions and appeals correspondence, external media (forms, web content, etc.) processes and procedures to ensure these are streamlined and efficient.
- Identify training needs and plan and co-ordinate or deliver these in relation to Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payments, Local Welfare Assistance, and other functions administered by the Benefits, and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of learning and development interventions.
- To provide Revisions and Appeals Officers guidance and support on complex cases including support with tribunal hearings.
- Work closely with managers within the service to develop effective methods for monitoring and reviewing service quality and performance and identifying barriers to efficient service delivery and potential risks to the council, financial or otherwise.
- Ensure an up-to-date knowledge is kept of legislative requirements and systems or other changes that could impact how services are delivered, and to ensure that policy and procedures are developed, IT systems tested and any such changes are communicated effectively.
- Identify and instigate innovative and effective service improvement initiatives, through IT systems, policies, processes, procedures and training, whilst ensuring areas of risk are controlled and managed.
- To assist with testing new software packages and software releases to ensure compliance with legislation and accurate reporting and to provide solutions on technical issues relating to systems inputting, systems configuration and parameters.
- Where required assist in various projects including annual billing, software upgrades and corporate change projects.
- To plan and draft risk assessments instructions and internal auditing questions relating to individual claims, subsidy, service level agreements, specific areas of administration and performance
- To undertake aspects of quality assurance checks in order to identify service

issues through analysis of the causes of errors, subsidy loss, complaints and working practices and help develop proposals and plans for addressing and improving these.

- To devise solutions to data cleansing issues, establish correct information in relation to accounts, properties and claims. To provide business support to the annual Year End processes.
- To understand and facilitate internal and external audit activities; managing these processes effectively and safeguarding council subsidy, income and reputation. Ensure legislative requirements and compliance with governing bodies is adhered to.
- To provide assistance and support in the completion of the benefits subsidy audit claim by sampling and analysis.
- To undertake complex data analyses utilising multiple sources; use statistical or financial data to make accurate forecasts, including expenditure and subsidy forecasts; and present complex information in understandable formats to a variety of audiences and via various media.
- Ensure accurate and timely statistical, subsidy and qualitative management information including information on individual performance is recorded and presented with conclusions and recommendations as required.
- Be proactive in identifying and developing opportunities for joint initiatives with other service areas, external partners and local authorities in order to achieve shared objectives, deliver savings and generate income.
- Support Benefits Subsidy and Policy Manager with reviewing and development of Ealing Local Council Tax Reduction scheme.
- Professionally represent Ealing Benefits Service and the Council in formal liaison including court hearings, tribunals and ad-hoc interaction with internal and external service stakeholders at a variety of levels.
- Carry out duties with due regard to the Council's Customer Care, Equal Opportunities, Information Governance, Data Protection and Health and Safety policies and procedures.
- Other duties and responsibilities at a similar or lower level that may be allocated from time to time.
- To carry out duties and responsibilities of the post with due regard to all the Council's policies.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Coordination of Revisions and Appeals work
- Performance monitoring of the service carried out on time and to management requirements
- Risk assessment schedule created and reviewed periodically in line with audit requirements, recommendations and changes in legislation
- Analysis of risk assessment results carried out and recommendations formulated including remedial actions
- Audit activities completed as required and queries resolved
- New software packages and software releases thoroughly tested and implemented in collaboration with IT team and Policy and Training Officers
- Year End activities completed successfully

KEY RELATIONSHIPS (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL):

Internally: Managers/Heads of Service within the Chief Executives Department, Housing, Revenues, Audit, other departments as necessary, e.g. Legal, Social Services.

Externally: DWP, Job Centre Plus, District Values, HMRC, Law Centres, CAB, Solicitors, Accountants and other professional advisers, Housing Associations, Accommodation Agencies, Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations, landlords operating in the borough.

AUTHORITY LEVEL (PEOPLE, POLICY, FINANCIAL):

- Deputising for Benefits Subsidy and Policy Manager when required
- Duties relating to quality assurance monitoring and remedial actions for the service
- Assisting with external and internal audits
- Liaison and collaboration with IT team

Person Specification

****Candidates only need to address criteria marked ****

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES:

1. ****Detailed working knowledge of the Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Discretionary Housing Payments schemes, housing benefit decision-making regulations and case law**
2. Knowledge of decision-making regulations and case law.
3. ****An understanding of performance management and the meeting of targets.**
4. ****Broad knowledge of other related legislation, including Welfare Benefits,**

- Council Tax, Housing and of current issues in local government and welfare reform
5. Knowledge and understanding of Microsoft Office products, in particular Excel.
 6. **Detailed knowledge and understanding of Benefit software packages and document management systems
 7. **Experience of working within a Housing/Council Tax Benefits/Support, Welfare Benefits or financial environment.
 8. **Experience of training or supervision or understanding of the fundamental skills that these require.
 9. **Ability to take responsibility for own activities, decisions and outcomes, manage your own workload and consistently meet challenging deadlines.
 10. **Ability to analyse, evaluate and interpret complex legislation and numerical information and to present this in an understandable way to a variety of audiences and via a variety of media.
 11. **Excellent interpersonal, negotiation and influencing skills and the ability to communicate effectively and constructively both verbally and in writing.
 12. Ability to network effectively and develop effective working relationships across a diverse range of internal and external stakeholders including IT professionals, service managers, DWP and other peers in other Councils
 13. Well organised, systematic and calm in approach, and able to inspire confidence and respect in others
 14. Ability to proactively identify creative and effective solutions to a variety of problems.
 15. **Ability to initiate, manage and drive change with a high level of personal resilience.
 16. Ability to develop training courses and to effectively deliver training to groups of staff and stakeholders or to coach and mentor individual staff
 17. Ability to empathise and understand the needs of customers, and a commitment to securing the best possible outcomes for them

ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATION (S):

- N/A

Values & Behaviours

Improving Lives for Residents	Trustworthy	Collaborative	Innovative	Accountable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is passionate about making Ealing a better place Can see and appreciate things from a resident point of view Understands what people want and need Encourages change to tackle underlying causes or issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does what they say they'll do on time Is open and honest Treats all people fairly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ambitious and confident in leading partnerships Offers to share knowledge and ideas Challenges constructively and respectfully listens to feedback Overcomes barriers to develop our outcomes for residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tries out ways to do things better, faster and for less cost Brings in ideas from outside to improve performance Takes calculated risks to improve outcomes Learns from mistakes and failures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages all stakeholders to participate in decision making Makes things happen Acts on feedback to improve performance Works to high standards