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| **Job Description** |
| **Post title** | Principal Supported Accommodation Officer (Assessment & Awards) |
| **JE Reference No** | N11116 |
| **Grade** | 10 |
| **Service** | Resources |
| **Service Area** | Assessment and Awards |
| **Reporting to** | The post holder will be accountable to the Assistant Assessment & Awards Manager. |
| **Location** | Your normal place of work will be Green Lane, Spennymoor but you may be required to work at any Council workplace within County Durham. |
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| **DBS** | This post is subject to a Basic disclosure. |
| **Flexitime** | This post is eligible for flexitime. |
| **Politically restricted** | This post is not designated as a politically restricted post in accordance with the requirements of Section 1(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and by regulations made from time to time by the Secretary of State. |

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| **Description of role** |

* To successfully manage all aspects of the Supported, Specified and Temporary Accommodation Housing Benefit Caseload.
* To provide technical support relating to the Finance and HR Service (Assessment and Awards)
* To support and assist the Financial Support Services Management Team with efficient management of a comprehensive Benefit service and its continuous improvement in line with the Councils objectives and Government Direction.

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| **Duties and responsibilities** |

Listed below are the responsibilities this role will primarily be responsible for:

* Manage all aspects of Supported, Specified and Temporary Accommodation as directed by the Assistant Assessment and Awards Manager including forward planning, delivery of tasks and activities.
* Support and assist the Assistant Assessment & Awards Manager in the day-to-day management and development of the Assessment and Awards Service, in accordance with Council Policies and Financial Regulations.
* Supporting and assisting the Assistant Assessment & Awards Manager in the formulation and development of policies, practices, initiatives and procedures in respect of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction.
* To support and assist the Assistant Assessment and Awards Manager in developing and maintaining a robust performance management framework within the section focussing on key performance indicators and monitoring / reporting on the performance measures in order to continually improve the service
* To be conversant and maintain a detailed working knowledge of all legislation procedures and working practises relating to Housing Benefit and Durham County Council’s Council Tax Reduction scheme.
* To manage a Value for Money approach to service delivery, seek continuous improvement in processing times and ensure correct benefits are paid and are accounted for and reconciled.
* Supporting and assisting the Assistant Assessment & Awards Manager in the maintenance and reconciliation of proper records and accounts and the production of information for statistical purposes and the completion of government returns when required, ensuring that performance standards are being met.
* Promote a customer orientated service and carry out the Council’s Assessment and Awards functions in line with the Value for Money principles.
* To represent the Assessment and Awards team at meetings and developing effective networks with key stakeholders.
* Engage with key internal and external stakeholders, colleagues from other services and departments and agencies to identify opportunities for improvements, efficiencies and best practices.
* Maintain professional and operational standards, ensuring adequate staff supervision, identifying training needs and the development of staff in accordance with corporate standards and guidelines.
* Assist in the provision of a customer focused Assessment & Awards Service, through the development of partnership working with key stakeholders to maximise benefit take up and promote awareness of welfare benefits and social and financial inclusion.
* To lead the management and monitoring of disciplinary matters, sickness absence and other human resource issues relating to Assessment and Awards staff.
* To have an awareness and understanding of the Council’s vision, values and objectives and be able to communicate to the staff how the service links to that vision.

The above is not exhaustive and the post holder will be expected to undertake any duties which may reasonably fall within the level of responsibility and the competence of the post as directed by the Head of Service.

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| **Organisational responsibilities** |

* **Values and behaviours**

To demonstrate and be a role model for the council’s values and behaviours to promote and encourage positive behaviours, enhancing the quality and integrity of the services we provide.

* **Smarter working, transformation and design principles**

To seek new and innovative ideas to work smarter, irrespective of job role, and to be creative, innovative and empowered. Understand the operational impact of transformational change and service design principles to support new ways of working and to meet customer needs.

* **Communication**

To communicate effectively with our customers, managers, peers and partners and to work collaboratively to provide the best possible public service. Communication between teams, services and partner organisations is imperative in providing the best possible service to our public.

* **Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

To take responsibility for health, safety and wellbeing in accordance with the council’s Health and Safety policy and procedures.

* **Equality and diversity**

To promote a society that gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live, free from discrimination and prejudice and ensure our commitment is put into practice. All employees are responsible for eliminating unfair and unlawful discrimination in everything that they do.

* **Confidentiality**

To work in a way that does not divulge personal and/or confidential information and follow the council’s policies and procedures in relation to data protection and security of information.

* **Climate Change**

To contribute to our corporate responsibility in relation to climate change by considering and limiting the carbon impact of activities during the course of your work, wherever possible.

* **Performance management**

To promote a culture whereby performance management is ingrained and the highest of standards and performance are achieved by all. Contribute to the council’s Performance and Development Review processes to ensure continuous learning and improvement and to increase organisational performance.

* **Quality assurance (for applicable posts)**

To set, monitor and evaluate standards at individual, team and service level so that the highest standards of service are delivered and maintained. Use data, where appropriate, to enhance the quality of service provision and support decision making processes.

* **Management and leadership (for applicable posts)**

To provide vision and leadership to inspire and empower all employees so they can reach their full potential and contribute to the council’s values and behaviours. Managers and leaders must engage in personal development to ensure they are equipped to lead transformational change; always searching for better ways to do things differently to meet organisational changes and service priorities.

* **Financial management (for applicable posts)**

To manage a designated budget, ensuring that the service achieves value for money in all circumstances through the monitoring of expenditure and the early identification of any financial irregularity.

*The above is not exhaustive and the post holder will be expected to undertake any duties which may reasonably fall within the level of responsibility and the competence of the post as directed by your manager.*

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| Person specification |
|  | Essential | Desirable |
| Qualifications | Level 5 or equivalentOrIRRV Full Professional Qualification/Diploma | Management Qualification |
| Experience | Substantial experience of working in a Revenues & Benefits environmentExperience of Supported, Specified and Temporary accommodation, including the decision making involved in new scheme set-ups for the purposes of Housing Benefit.Experience of supervising and directing staffExperience of engaging with internal and external customers and stakeholders and building positive working relationships.Proven ability of working under pressure to prescribed deadlinesProven ability of introducing new systems or new ways of working. | Previous experience of supervising staff within Revenues/Benefits |
| Skills & Knowledge | Detailed knowledge of Housing Benefit legislation and practiceDetailed knowledge of Specified, Supported, Exempt & Temporary Accommodation.Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, both written and verbal including the ability to produce detailed reportsGood IT literacy skillsHighly numerate with an analytical approach, able to think laterally and solve problemsAbility to manage and prioritise own workload and ensure tasks are completed accurately and within the prescribed timescales. Ability to supervise and direct staff to ensure tasks are completed accurately and within prescribed timescalesAbility to work under pressure | Knowledge of Civica Open Revenues Systems |
| Personal Qualities | Highly motivated and enthusiastic self starter, able to work individually or as part of a teamAbility to take ownership and responsibilityFlexible approach to workSelf-motivatedWillingness to undertake continuous professional developmentAccess to a car or means of mobility support (if driving then must have a current valid driving licence and appropriate insurance).May be required to work outside of normal office hours. |  |