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| **Job Description** |
| **Post title** | Senior Officer (Assessment and Awards) |
| **JE Reference No** | N9453 |
| **Grade** | Grade 8 |
| **Service** | Resources |
| **Service Area** | Finance & Transactional Services – Assessment & Awards Service |
| **Reporting to** | The post holder will be accountable to the Team Leader. |
| **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** |

Provide first line day to day management in all aspects of the Finance Service (Assessment and Awards).

To provide technical support relating to the Finance and HR Service (Assessment and Awards).

To assist the Assessment and Awards Service achieve excellence in its services to its customers, both internal and external.

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| **Duties and responsibilities** |

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

* Supporting and assisting the Team Leader in the day-to-day management and development of the Assessment and Awards Service, in accordance with Council Policies and Financial Regulations and assist in the forward planning and co-ordination of all tasks.
* To supervise the day-to-day operation of a team within the Assessment and Awards Service to ensure the duties of the team are carried out fully, accurately, within timetables and system requirements, and report thereon.
* Supporting and assisting the Team Leader in the formulation and development of policies, practices, initiatives and procedures in respect of Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefit issues.
* Supporting and assisting the Team Leader 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.
* Supporting and assist the Team Leader in maintaining professional and operational standards, and responsible for ensuring adequate staff supervision, identifying training needs and the development of staff, in accordance with the Corporate appraisal process.
* Provide a customer focused Assessment and Awards Service, through the development of partnership working with key stakeholders to maximise benefit take up and promote awareness of welfare benefits and financial support.
* Provide a first line management contact for customers with more complex and contentious issues providing a prompt and efficient handling of any queries or problems and responding to complaints about the service adhering to the Corporate Complaints process.
* Protect customers through the application of the Council’s Debt management strategy and ensuring that customer receive all benefits, discounts and reliefs that they may be entitled to.
* Manage staff in dealing with customers at both a first line contact providing a prompt and efficient handling of any queries or problems and at a secondary level with more complex and contentious issues.
* Maintaining a good working knowledge of all legislation procedures and working practises relating to a Council Assessment and Awards service.
* Dealing with disciplinary matters (within the limits of the post), sickness absence (up to and including final interview) and other human resource issues relating to the Assessment & Awards staff.
* To support and assist the Team Leader 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.
* 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 4 or equivalent

Or* Level 3 IRRV Technician/Certificate, AAT or CIPS
 | * Management qualification
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| Experience | * Substantial experience of working in a Revenues, Benefits or AP/TPT environment
* Experience of dealing with internal and external customers
* Working under pressure to prescribed deadlines
* Experience of introducing new systems or new ways of working
* Operating online computer systems
 | * Experience of supervising staff within Revenues and Benefits
* Report writing
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| Skills & Knowledge | * Detailed knowledge of Revenues and Benefits legislation and practice
* Excellent ICT skills
* Highly numerate with an analytical approach, able to think laterally and solve problems
* Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
* Ability to produce detailed reports
* Ability to manage and prioritise own workload and ensure tasks are completed accurately and within the prescribed timescales
* Ability to supervise & direct staff to ensure tasks are completed accurately and within prescribed timescales
* Ability to work under pressure
 | * Knowledge of Civica Systems
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| Personal Qualities | * Highly motivated and enthusiastic and able to work individually or as part of a team
* Flexible approach to work
* Self-motivated
* Innovative
* Ability to take ownership and responsibility
* Caring, responsive and customers focused
* Willingness to undergo further training
* Access to car or means of mobility support (if driving then must have current valid driving licence and appropriate insurance)
* May be required to work outside of normal officer hours
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