

WHERE
CAREERS
THRIVE

When potential
is unlocked,
talent *thrives*



West
Northamptonshire
Council

Job description and person specification

Senior Assessment Officer

Revenue & Benefits, Finance Directorate

Thank you for your interest in this role. Our vision at West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is: 'to make West Northants a great place to live, work, visit and thrive'.

We truly stand by this and work hard every day to make this a reality, and at WNC it's about our people. People who thrive with ambition, bring new ideas, demand better ways of working, care about every detail, and who never shy away from a challenge.



West
Northamptonshire
Council

Our culture is a gateway for new experiences. A place to forge new opportunities. To empower you in your career and unite you with like-minded people. When potential is unlocked, talent thrives.

Purpose and impact:

1. To administer Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction new claims and change in circumstances efficiently and promptly to minimise fraud and overpayments and to maximise subsidy income to the Council, in accordance with government legislation, and corporate priorities.
2. Responsible for processing more difficult and complex claims and providing guidance and advice on claims processing to Assessment Officers.

Accountable to:

Responsibilities:

1. Interpreting and keeping up to date on complex legislation to assess and make necessary decisions on all types of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction applications including changes in circumstances. Process more difficult and complex claims.
2. To provide advice and assistance to the Assessment Officers and to ensure that new and existing legislation is complied with and to assist in the implementation and development of new working practices and in the formation of policies and procedures
3. Deputise for the Assessments Team Leader in carrying out delegated staff administration tasks including control of leave, general welfare at work and in the absence of the Team Leader ensure the office and telephones are suitable staffed
4. Assist Team Leaders with the testing of software releases for the benefits system.
5. Assist the Assessments Team Leader with the compilation of statistics and reports.
6. Allocate work to Assessment Officers to ensure that new claims and changes in circumstances are processed efficiently in line with Council policies and to meet the service standards to provide an excellent service to our customers.
7. Communicate and liaise with landlords, Debt and Welfare Benefit team, Housing, Revenues, the Rent Service, DWP including Universal Credit Service Centre and other stakeholders to ensure entitlement is correct, vulnerable clients are supported and to maximise income.
8. Ensure that overpayments are correctly identified and categorised in accordance with legislation and to maximise the subsidy income to the Council.
9. Prioritise and manage own workloads to ensure objectives and targets are achieved and customer requirements are met and to identify possible fraudulent cases, refer to Corporate Fraud team and provide information and evidence as required.
10. To comply with new and existing Revenues and Benefits legislation and working practices, including ensuring the procedure manual is kept up to date
11. To undertake any other duties that can reasonably be expected of the role and the level of responsibility.

12. To maximise personal productivity, minimise duplication and errors; and manage our information efficiently and securely to reduce risk, through effective use of Office 365 and our internal IT systems and applications.
13. Actively challenge and seek to eliminate any directly or indirectly discriminatory practice or behaviours.
14. Demonstrate awareness and understanding of other people's behavioural, physical, social and welfare needs and ensure that reasonable care is taken at all times for the health, safety and welfare of yourself and other persons.

This job description reflects the major tasks to be carried out by the post holder and identifies a level of responsibility at which they will be required to work. In the interests of effective working, the major tasks may be reviewed from time to time to reflect changing needs and circumstances. Such reviews and any consequential changes will be carried out in consultation with the post holder.

Person specification:

The requirements for the role are outlined below and will be part of the selection process. Each of the criteria listed below will be measured by:

(**A**) Application Form, (**T**) Test, (**I**) Interview, (**P**) Presentation, (**D**) Documentation.

Minimum levels of knowledge, skills experience and qualifications required for this job.

Skills and abilities:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Good verbal and written communication skills with the ability to support and negotiate with customers, landlords and stakeholders in a calm, sensitive way in difficult situations.	Essential	A, T, I, P, D
Proven ability to work on own initiative with the minimum of supervision and to use own discretion and judgment	Essential	
Proven ability to prioritise large volumes of complex work to meet tight deadlines and targets while having regard to urgent more vulnerable cases and the need to be accurate	Essential	
Works accurately with a high attention to detail	Essential	
Proven ability to work as an effective, flexible member of a team.	Essential	
Equal opportunities- Ability to demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs	Essential	

Knowledge:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Legislation- Demonstrate ability to understand, interpret and explain complicated government legislation and the ability to keep up to date with frequent legislative and procedural changes.	Essential	A, T, I, P, D
IT Systems- Demonstrable knowledge and experience of Capita or Northgate Revenues and Benefits systems.	Desirable	

Relevant experience:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Legislation- Experience of assessing claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction and knowledge of welfare benefits.	Essential	A, T, I, P, D
IT Skills - Experience of working with IT systems including Microsoft products and document imaging/workflow systems.	Essential	

Education, training and work qualifications:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Good general standard of education	Essential	A, T, I, P, D
5 GCSE's Grade A – C including Maths and English	Essential	
IRRV Technician (level 3) or equivalent NVQ level 3, or willing to undertake study within 12 months of employment	Desirable	
Experience of working in a Revenues environment at a Officer level.	Essential	
Evidence of continuing CPD	Essential	
Experience of assessing claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction and knowledge of welfare benefits.	Essential	

All appointments are subject to standard pre-employment screening. This will include identity, references, proof of right to work in the UK, medical clearance and verification of certificates.

Day-to-day in the role:

Job family & salary band:	Regulatory and Technical 7	Worker type:	Flexible
People management responsibility:	[manager to insert]	Budget responsibility:	[provide c. £x figure]

Current pay scales and other benefits are published on the [Jobs and Careers](#) section of West Northamptonshire Council's internet.

Our organisational values and behaviours

Everything we want to achieve for West Northants depends on having the right people in place and doing the right things and we want all colleagues to THRIVE, both personally and professionally. Our values and our behaviours framework underpin how we work and what partners and customers can expect from us. We want to do our very best for our residents, service users and businesses and for our staff – we want everyone to THRIVE.

T	Trust	We are honest, fair, transparent and accountable. We can be trusted to do what we say we will.
H	High Performing	we get the basics right and what we do, we do well. We manage our business efficiently.
R	Respect	we respect each other and our customers in a diverse, professional and supportive environment.
I	Innovate	we encourage curiosity, we are creative and seize opportunities to grow individually as an organisation and as an area.
V	Value	We continually strive for best practice and ways of improving existing procedures, practices and systems and thereby promoting efficiency and cost effectiveness
E	Empower	we believe in people, will listen, learn and trust them to make decisions. We help people to realise their ambitions.

“Valuing colleagues as individuals and encompassing our different perspectives to deliver our collective ambitions. One West inclusive culture”

When potential is unlocked, talent *thrives*

Choose a career that offers you a true sense of achievement, fills you with pride and challenges you in a positive way, everyday.

The benefits of a career at WNC include:

- **People** are at the centre of everything we do. Without our people, we wouldn't be able to deliver services to the people in our community.
- **Ambition** runs through everything we do at West Northants Council, we nurture and develop our people's ambition and willingness to succeed, to continually improve the service we provide to the community.
- **Care** is at the heart of West Northants Council, we care in so many ways; seen and unseen, helping our colleagues and community to thrive.
- **Flexibility** is key, we know work-life balance is critical to wellbeing, so we work hard to make sure our benefits package promotes and improves wellbeing; from annual leave, sick pay, family leave and flexible working, financial security offered by a local government pension scheme and life assurance, and discount schemes which make a difference to your day-to-day life, through to employee helplines offering free legal, health, financial and wellbeing advice and support.

We want you to have balance and be happy.

