**Job description**

Job title: Welfare Rights Universal Credit Advisor

Responsible To: Tar Isteach Welfare Rights Advice Manager.

Salary: Salary Scale: £15.500 - 16,500: per annum pro rata (based on 22.5 hours) (NJC Scale 6, Pt 21 - 22)

Probationary Period: The probation period for this post is 6 months.

***Purpose of Job:***

To provide advice, information and representation in all aspects of Welfare Rights.

To carry out administrative duties including case recording, presentations of statistical and other information.

***Main duties****:*

To be responsible for the daily management, operation, organization and delivery of advice sessions in Tar Isteach and Newington Housing Association.

* UC drop-in clinic,
* face to face appointments
* specialist support for vulnerable/complex needs tenants,
* UC digital support and signposting/referrals to employability.

The post holder will provide an effective and efficient support service for first time and ongoing Universal Credit claimants. The service includes;

* the provision of advice,
* information and digital support via face-to-face,
* claimants supported through to the first payment of Universal Credit,

Advice will be provided on all areas of UC including;

* full benefit entitlement check, better-off calculations,
* UC application process,
* digital support,
* advance payments and grants,
* loan repayments,
* housing and rent arrears,
* UC limited capability forms,
* Claimant commitment and maintaining a UC claim.
* Support & empower clients to set their own priorities and objectives

To maintain detailed records relating to all clients.

To provide regular reports and statistical information on the uptake of advice services as requested relating to all clients.

To meet regularly with the Manager and Management Committee and network with caseworkers.

To review and discuss the level and nature of casework conducted at the outreach sessions.

To attend all necessary meetings as directed by coordinator and management committee.

To liaise with relevant statutory and other departments.

***Policies:***

To ensure that the services provided are free, impartial and confidential.

To explain systems and routines devised for the purpose of ensuring customer feedback on quality or relevance of services provided.

***Development Work:***

To promote all aspects of the Project.

To provide talks, host training/information works as required.

***Training/Personal Development:***

To advise the Welfare Rights Advice Manager of any personal training requirements or gaps in knowledge.

To source and participate fully in training programmes, both internal and external

Person specification

***TAR ISTEACH***

 ***Job Title* Welfare RightsUniversal Credit Advisor**

**ESSENTIAL CRITERA – Qualifications, knowledge, and experience**

The successful applicant will have:

1. Have a degree level qualification or equivalent and have a minimum of 1 years' experience of working in an advisory role delivering basic welfare benefit checks including telephone advice

OR

1. Can demonstrate 1 years' experience in all of the following:

(i) Carrying out benefit calculations and/or a review of existing entitlement;

(ii) Liaising with a range of relevant stakeholders;

(iv) Handling case work, and prioritising managing a caseload with conflicting priorities.

1. A certificate in welfare rights, including Universal Credit.
2. Can demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the benefits system and welfare reform
3. Can demonstrate:

(i) Excellent communication skills, both written and oral;

(ii) Excellent planning and organisational skills

(iii) Ability to research, analyse, and interpret complex information;

(iv) Advice and advocacy.

1. Experience of using computer databases and software packages e.g., Microsoft Office, AdvicePro.
2. The ability to work effectively on one’s own imitative and as part of a team.

Desirable Criteria:

***EDUCATION/TRAINING***

Comprehensive knowledge of all the relevant statutory and legal provision

Must be prepared to undertake any necessary training as directed by management committee.

***EXPERIENCE***

At least 1 year’s recent experience in welfare rights capacity which must have included:

* The operation of an advice caseload
* including follow up work and administration.

***SKILLS***

* Demonstrate ability to use legislation codes/practices for benefit of clients.
* Ability to present cases and advocate on behalf of clients.
* Ability to analyse social policy developments.
* Ability to listen to clients with empathy.
* Up to date knowledge of current Social Security and other social welfare provisions.
* Knowledge of various services and other providers.

***DESIRABLE CRITERA***

Knowledge of housing legislation in relation to tenancy conditions and rent collection.

Experience of maintaining case records, dairy, logs and statistics.

Successful candidates will be expected to have a flexible approach.

An understanding of the issues and needs affecting the residents of north Belfast.

An understanding of housing need in north Belfast.

**Job Title:** **Universal Credit Adviser**

## Roles and responsibilities

* To advise and support clients who need help with any aspect of the welfare reforms that are affecting their lives.
* Interview clients using sensitive listening and questioning skills in order to allow clients to explain their problem(s) and empower them to set their own priorities
* Supporting clients to use IT to make their new Universal Credit claim
* Complete benefits checks and better off calculations
* Research and explore options and implications so that clients can make informed decisions
* Act for the client where necessary using appropriate communication skills and channels
* Refer internally or to other specialist agencies as appropriate
* Ensure that all work meets quality standards and the requirements of the funder
* Complete the required training to comply with quality assurance processes
* To refer to and engage with the other community/voluntary organisations when appropriate
* To use effective and appropriate referral mechanisms to other services as appropriate
* To maintain comprehensive and up-to-date confidential case records for all clients using the Advice Pro case recording system
* To identify, record and follow up social policy issues as they arise
* To assist the advice manager to collect statistics on service usage and financial/non-financial outcomes achieved by the service and carry out periodic client profiles surveys
* To assist the advice manager to prepare reports and to provide documentation required by the funding bodies or other stakeholders
* To keep updated with the changes relating to Welfare Reform and the benefits system
* To address information gaps or meet specific needs
* To participate fully in training programmes, both internal and external, as arranged by the advice manager
* To attend team meetings/adviser forums as required and participate in quality assurance
* To act as a representative on appropriate outside bodies and co-operate with other relevant agencies as may be required
* To use new technology following appropriate training and where technology is available
* To carry out general clerical duties
* To undertake any other tasks as may be required