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| **Department** | **ChieF EXECUTIVES** |
| **Job Title** | **WELFARE RIGHTS OFFICER** |
| **Grade** | **GRADE 6** |
| **Primary Purpose of Job** | To provide comprehensive and specialist welfare benefits casework,advocacy and tribunal representation to benefit claimants. To provide support and training to internal staff and other agencies.  |
| **Reporting To** | Senior Welfare Rights Officer |
| **Staffing** **Responsibilities** | N/A |

**Main Duties**

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| **1** | Provision of a comprehensive welfare benefits advice service to benefit claimants, carers, social care service users and their representatives. This will be by telephone, in writing, email, office interview and home visit or outreach location as appropriate. |
| **2** | Provision of a Welfare Rights consultancy service to staff in Bolton Council and staff in external organisations and peer support to colleagues in the team. |
| **3** | Provision of associated advice and information e.g. money advice, housing advice etc.in order to assist in conjunction with ongoing benefit cases. Identifying additional advice and social care needs and signposting and referring to appropriate services. |
| **4** | Delivery of casework and advocacy on behalf of benefit claimants including the management of complex casework. Assessment of case prospects and advice on merits and risks. Undertaking negotiation with other services to get the best outcomes for clients. |
| **5** | Preparation of appeal cases, researching legislation and caselaw. Preparation of written submissions and delivery of tribunal representation in person at the First tier and Upper tribunal and Valuation tribunal.  |
| **6** | Management of information and maintenance of accurate, comprehensive and timely case records in writing and using relevant ICT and data collection systems. |
| **7** | Delivery of technical benefits support and training to staff in the financial, income and assessment team and visiting team. |
| **8** | Maintaining an up to date knowledge of benefit changes and planned welfare reform and the consequences of these in an advice context. |
| **9** | Design and development of information and factsheets on benefits and related policy and practice issues for the public and team and other professionals. |
| **10** | Publicising and promoting the take-up of benefits through public campaigns and events and contributing to Anti- Poverty and Financial Inclusion initiatives. |
| **Date Job Description prepared/updated:** | **June 2018** |
| **Job Description prepared by:** | **Principal Officer Welfare Rights** |



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| **Department** | **ChieF EXECUTIVES** |
| **Job Title** | **WELFARE RIGHTS OFFICER** |
| **Stage One** | Disabled Candidates are guaranteed an interview if they meet the essential criteria |
| **The Minimum Essential Requirements for the above Post are as Follows:** | **Method of Assessment** |
| **1.** | **Skills and Knowledge** |
| 1. | A high standard and extensive knowledge of individual contributory, non-contributory and means tested Social Security Benefits Housing Benefits and Council Tax /Support and Tax Credits including Universal Credit and the Welfare Reform agenda. | Application Form; Interview; Work Related Exercise |
| 2. | Good numeracy skills in order to calculate entitlement to benefits and tax credits, prepare income and expenditure schedules and understand and challenge benefit and charging assessments and overpayment schedules. | Application Form; Interview; Work Related Exercise |
| 3. | An ability to identify and analyse complex problems and work cooperatively with customers and partner staff and agencies to identify options and achieve solutions with minimal supervision and support. | Application Form; Interview; Work Related Exercise |
| 4. | An ability independently manage and organise a varied and complex caseload and other duties, to prioritise work appropriately and meet deadlines and keep accurate and timely case records, in accordance with service standards. | Interview; Work Related Exercise |
| 5. | The possession of a high standard of verbal and written communication skills in English in order to present complex issues in a clear manner and to a standard appropriate for the audience concerned i.e., customers, other staff and the judicial arena.  | Application Form; Interview; Work Related Exercise |
| 6. | An ability to work sensitively with vulnerable customers in stressful situations and manage their emotional demands and expectations. | Interview |
| 7. | An ability to identify and use effectively relevant information resources including primary legislation, caselaw and guidance to research and prepare cases. | Interview; Work Related Exercise |
| 8. | An ability and willingness to acquire additional knowledge regarding; other discretionary schemes e.g. Local Welfare Provision/Discretionary Housing payments; relevant Council policies and processes e.g. the fairer contributions assessment process and health conditions/disability awareness. | Interview |
| 9. | Knowledge of the process for challenging and appealing decisions. An ability to professionally and confidently represent and advocate for claimants at Tribunal hearings, employing negotiation and influencing skills whilst maintaining the reputation of the Welfare Rights Service and responding appropriately to any new issues arising in the course of the hearing. | Interview |
| 10. | Competence and confidence in working with ICT systems, word processing and inputting data  | Application Form; Interview; Work Related Exercise |
| 11. | **Competencies** – Please note the council’s corporate competencies, which are considered to be essential for all roles, are in the attached CORE COMPETENCIES document | Interview |
| **2. Experience/Qualifications/Training etc** |
| 1. | Substantial recent welfare rights casework experience including tribunal work | Application Form; Interview  |
| 2. | Considerable experience of direct contact with the public providing advice or information services in a problem solving context. | Application Form; Interview;  |
| 3. | Recent attendance at a benefits related training course. | Interview |
| 4. | Experience of working within a team environment | Application |
| **3. Work Related Circumstances** |
| 1. | Some out of hours work maybe required during busy periods. | interview |
| 2. | **Delete if not applicable:**This post is subject to standard disclosure from the Disclosure & Barring Service | Application FormInterview |

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| **STAGE TWO** | Will only be used in the event of a large number of applicants meeting the minimum essential requirements |
| **Additional Requirements** | **Method of Assessment** |
| **1. Skills and Knowledge** |
| 1. |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |
| **2. Experience/Qualifications/Training etc** |
| 1. | Delivery of training/ presentations on benefit issues | Application FormInterview |
| 2. |  |  |

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| **Date Person Specification prepared/updated:** | **June 2018** |
| **Person Specification prepared by:** | **Principal Officer Welfare Rights** |

**These core competencies are considered essential for all roles within Bolton Council. Please be prepared to be assessed on any of these during the interview process and, for the successful applicant, throughout the probationary period**

**Developing Self & Others**

Promote a learning environment to embed a learning culture.  Support others to develop their skills and knowledge to fulfil their potential. Actively pursue your own development. Support and promote the principles of Investors in People.

**Civil Contingencies**

Bolton Council has a statutory duty under the Civil Contingencies Act to respond in the event of an emergency. If Bolton Council’s Emergency Management Plan is activated, you may be required to assist in maintaining key Council services and supporting the community.  This could require working outside of routine working hours and working from places other than your normal place of work.

**Equality & Diversity**

Uphold the principles of fairness and the Equality Act in all undertakings as a Bolton Council employee, including providing a fair, accessible service irrespective of customer’s race, religion, gender, sexuality, disability or age.

**Customer Care**

The ability to fully understand, assess and resolve the needs of all customers including those who present with complex situations, in a manner that respects dignity and expresses a caring & professional image.

**Health & Safety**

Take responsibility for the health and safety of yourself and others who may be affected by your acts or omissions, and comply with all health and safety legislation, policy and safe working practice, including participating in training activities necessary to your post.

**Data Protection and Confidentiality**

Ensure that any personal data or confidential data you hold is kept securely and is not disclosed, whether electronically, verbally or in writing, to any unauthorised third party. Follow Council policies and procedures on dealing with personal information and information assets, including The Code of Conduct, Data Protection, Acceptable Use and Information Security policies. Personal or confidential data should only be accessed or used for council purposes.

**Fluency Duty**

Should you be required, as a regular and intrinsic part of your role, to speak to members of the public in English, you must be able to converse at ease with customers and provide advice in accurate spoken English, as required byThe Immigration Act 2016.

**Working Hours**

The nature and demands of the role are not always predictable and there will be an expectation that work will be required outside of normal hours from time to time.

**Safeguarding**

This Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Should the role involve working with the above groups, you will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barred List check by the Disclosure & Barring Service.