
Welfare Rights Training Programme

March - July 2025

Greenwich Welfare Rights Service



Printing Tip: If you are printing off a copy of this programme, for best results set your printing preferences to page size A5, and 2 pages per sheet.

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ABOUT OUR COURSES

This training programme includes a mix of online and face-to-face courses to adapt to the changed environment.

Please check if there are any criteria that you must meet before booking a course, for example if you need to have certain level of experience. To discuss whether the course is suitable for you, call 020 8921 6376 (select option 2) or email wrs.training@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING

Course Times

Courses run from 10am to 4pm unless stated otherwise. Please arrive at 9.45am for registration as courses begin promptly at 10am. You may not be able to join the session if you arrive after 10.15am and your organisation may be charged. You may also be charged if you leave early. Please contact us beforehand if you know you're going to have difficulty with the times (call 020 8921 6376 or email wrs.training@royalgreenwich.gov.uk).

Venues

The courses are mostly in Woolwich. Your email joining instructions will confirm the venue details.

Venues are accessible to people using wheelchairs. Disabled parking is also available but must be booked in advance. Please contact us as early as possible if you need to book disabled parking so that we can reserve it for you (see above).

Our notes and training packs are normally in font size 14pt; please let us know if you need larger than this.

Tea and coffee are provided mid-morning and mid-afternoon. Lunch is not provided but there are shops and cafes close by.

ONLINE TRAINING

Our scheduled online courses will be delivered via Zoom. Training materials will be emailed to you.

There will be regular scheduled breaks during our Zoom training sessions. For example, for three-hour training sessions there will be two 15-minute breaks.

Details of how to join the online course will be sent with the joining instructions.

TRAINING CALENDAR

Date	Month	Page
	March	
3 rd and 4 th	Introduction to Benefits	19
12 th and 13 th	Welfare Benefits Update	25
19 th	Live Well Greenwich Briefing	20
31 st	Challenging Benefit Decisions	16
	April	
2 nd and 3 rd	Challenging Personal Independence Payment Decisions	17
24 th	Universal Credit and Students	21
28 th	Universal Credit Managed Migration – The Final Countdown	24
	May	
14 th and 15 th	Advising Non-European Nationals about Benefits	14
	June	
9 th	Universal Credit Housing Costs	23
16 th and 17 th	Housing First Aid – An Introduction to Housing and Homelessness	18
26 th	Universal Credit Managed Migration – The Final Countdown	24
	July	
7 th and 8 th	Benefits for Older People	15
31 st	Universal Credit Calculations	22

BOOKINGS

New booking system

We have introduced a new electronic booking system for our training courses, available through the Learning Hub website: <https://royalgreenwich.learningpool.com/login/index.php>. You can also use this link to view all the available Welfare Rights Service courses.

Please note that all bookings must be approved by a manager, training co-ordinator, or equivalent person. Your manager, training co-ordinator must authorise the booking through the Learning Hub website. If you are the most senior person in your organisation, an alternative authorisation process will apply. After placing your booking using the instructions below, please email Wrs.Training@royalgreenwich.gov.uk to notify us of your seniority.

If your organisation pays for our courses, please make sure you have appropriate funding approval before making your booking.

If you have a training query - please [email us](#) or phone 020 8921 6376 (select option 2).

How to book a place

Booking requests must be submitted via the [Learning Hub](#). The booking process is the same whether you are part of an external organisation or an internal council staff member. However, how you log into the Learning Hub depends on whether you are an external organisation or an internal council staff member.

- **External Organisations – logging onto the Learning Hub**

If you work for an external organisation, both you and your manager will need to set up accounts on the Learning Hub. Your manager's account is required to approve any bookings you make.

Please note that you will only be able to book courses offered by the Greenwich Welfare Rights Service.

To make the transition smoother, we've automatically created Learning Hub accounts for those already on our external mailing list who responded to our request for further information. If you sent us your manager's details, an account has also been created for them. In July, we sent out an email asking you to confirm your manager's details. If you didn't respond, you and your manager will need to create an account yourselves- see below on how to do so. Your manager will need to set up their own account to approve your bookings.

Once your account is set up, you'll be able to book courses in the same way as council staff ([see the process below](#)).

If you need to set up a Learning Hub account, follow the steps below.

How to create a Learning Hub account

1. Navigate to the Learning Hub using [this link](#).
2. Select 'Create a new account'.
3. Complete the brief form – including the mandatory section for External users. Your username will be your email address. Your username cannot include apostrophes. If you have an apostrophe in your email address please omit it from your username. For example, Joe.O'shaughnessy@example.com username will be Joe.Oshaughnessy@example.com
4. Select 'Request account'.

You will be sent an email which asks you to click on a link to confirm your email address. An account request will be sent to our team for approval. Once we approve your account, you will receive an account confirmation email from our HR Workforce development team. In some instances, we may need to contact you to obtain further information prior to approving your account.

- **Royal Greenwich Staff**

If you are an internal member of staff, you will not need to create a Learning Hub account – as a council employee one has already been created.

How to find and book a Welfare Rights Service course once you have a Learning Hub account

Logging onto your account

Log on by going to:

<https://royalgreenwich.learningpool.com/login/index.php>

- **For Royal Greenwich Staff:**

Automatic sign on - Choose this option if you regularly use RBG systems like SharePoint or email. This allows you to access the site without entering your username and password. It should work for all RBG employees. If it doesn't, or if you have any questions, please contact HR at HR-WorkforceDevelopment@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

Manual sign on – Or if you prefer, you can enter your usual log-in details manually.

- **For External Organisations:**

Select **Manual sign on** and enter your login details.

Once logged in you will see the Homepage and can now search for and book a course.

Searching for a course

You can search for a course in two ways:

- I. **Job-Specific Training:**

Click on **Job Specific Courses** and then select **Welfare Rights Training** to view all available Welfare Rights Training courses.

2. **Keyword Search:**

- If you know the course name or relevant keywords, use the search box to find it.
- For example, enter keywords like "fuel poverty," "poverty," or "fuel arrears" to view all matching courses in the catalogue.

Accessing Course Information

- Click on a course of interest to view a summary in an information block.
- To learn more or book a place, click on "Go to course" or close the block with the "x" button.

Booking a Place on a Course

On the course page, you'll find details like aims, objectives, target audience, and trainer information.

1. **Tip:** Courses are initially locked. Click the "Unlock" button to unlock and book a course.

Unlocking the Course:

- Adds the course to your learning path and indicates your interest.
 - You can remove the course from your path by clicking "I am not interested in the course," which will lock it again.
2. Click on **View all events** to see the schedule.
 3. Choose the event you want and check availability. Then, click **Request to book on**.

Course dates					
Benefits for Disabled Children					
Date	Time	Venue or online link	Places available	Status	Options
11 November 2024	1:00 PM - 4:00 PM		20	Booking open	Request to book on
View all events					

Tip: If you see "More info" instead of the booking option, email HR-WorkforceDevelopment@royalgreenwich.gov.uk to update your profile.

- After selecting **Request to book on**, add any specific requirements, if necessary, and confirm your request.

Tip: It's recommended to keep the option to "Receive confirmation by Email with iCalendar appointment" to avoid missing the training.

- You will receive a message indicating that your request has been sent to your manager for approval. This will include a calendar invitation which can be added to your calendar as a placeholder, but this does not guarantee approval. Your booking is **not** confirmed until it is approved by your manager. A place will only be allocated to you after your manager's approval (see [Terms and Conditions](#) below for more information).

Once approved, both you and your manager will receive confirmation emails, calendar invitations and joining instructions. You will also receive training materials if it is a virtual course.

- If your manager declines the request, you will receive a cancellation notification.

Terms and Conditions

- **Managers approval**

If your manager has a registered account on the Learning Hub, they will be sent details of your booking request.

Your manager must sign into this weblink: [Royal Greenwich: Log in to the site \(learningpool.com\)](#) to authorise your booking.

- Once your manager has approved your booking request, you will receive an email confirmation, and an invoice if you must pay.
- Further joining instructions will be emailed to you 14 days before the course. If you don't receive them, please [email](#) or [phone](#) us.
- A further reminder will be emailed to you 48 hours before the course.
- Please do **not** attend a course unless you have received confirmation of your place.
- Cancellations must be made via the Learning Hub website at least one week before the course. Please [email](#) us if you need support cancelling the booking via the Learning Hub.

We can only refund the booking fee for cancellations made in writing at least 5 weeks before the date of the course.

COURSE FEES

Courses are free for the following organisations:

- Greenwich Council employees and advisers
- Health Service employees
- Local community groups/voluntary sector advice services who work with Greenwich residents.

There is a charge for attending our courses for the following organisations:

- Housing associations (including voluntary services run by housing associations)
- Social Enterprises (including voluntary services run by Social Enterprises)
- Solicitors, Trade Unions, similar organisations
- Advisers from outside Greenwich borough.

Our fees:

Whole Day Courses	£100.00
Part Day Courses and Seminars	£50.00

Fee for cancelling at short notice/non-attendance

We charge a £75 administration fee for:

- all cancellations received with less than a week's notice (irrespective of the reason for cancellation),
- non-attendance without cancellation or for incomplete attendance.

COURSES

ADVISING NON-EUROPEAN NATIONALS ABOUT BENEFITS

Part 1 Wednesday, 14th May (Online) 1 – 4pm

Part 2 Thursday, 15th May (Online) 1 – 4pm

This course covers the main rules that specifically affect non-European nationals claiming social security benefits. It is delivered by Rebecca Walker.

It is suitable for:

Advisers with a working knowledge of benefits and who advise non-European nationals on their benefit entitlements.

The course covers:

- Who is a ‘person subject to immigration control’ and how this affects entitlements
- When a ‘no recourse to public funds’ restriction is relevant
- How to advise couples and families with differing immigration statuses
- Current issues and recent changes

Please note: there is a separate course covering the benefit rules for European nationals, which will be run in the next programme.

BENEFITS FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Day 1: Monday, 7th July (Face-to-Face) 10am – 4pm

Day 2: Tuesday, 8th July (Face-to-Face) 10am – 4pm

This extended two days course provides an overview of benefits before and after pension age. It is delivered by Tom Messere.

It is suitable for:

Advisers working with people nearing or over pension age. You should have attended the *Introduction to Benefits* course or have a good general understanding of the benefits system.

The course covers:

Day 1 Approaching retirement:

- Key ages and their impact on benefits
- Work and personal pensions – a brief overview
- Pension choices from age 55 and their effect on “working age benefits”
- Mixed age couples - who can get still get Pension Credit and who must claim Universal Credit (UC)
- Sickness and disability benefits: ESA/UC for sickness and PIP.

Day 2 Over pension age

- Earnings replacement benefits - State Pension and Carer's Allowance.
- Support for working pensioners
- Means-tested benefits - Pension Credit, pension-age Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction.
- Disability benefits: DLA, PIP and new claims for Attendance Allowance, plus how a successful claim affects other linked benefits and entitlements.

CHALLENGING BENEFIT DECISIONS

Monday, 31st March (Face-to-Face) 10am – 4pm

This one-day course , delivered by Tom Messere, aims to help you support claimants to challenge adverse benefit decisions.

It is suitable for:

Anyone advising people on benefit entitlement who already has a good understanding of the benefits system.

The course covers:

- **What counts as a decision?** How to know when one has been made? Which ones can be appealed—and what can you do if they can't?
- **Asking the DWP to reconsider:** The difference between revisions and supersessions, time limits and their impact, Mandatory Reconsiderations (and when you can avoid them for ESA), plus help from the Emergency Support Scheme.
- **Appealing to independent tribunals:** How tribunals work, how to apply, what “open” and “closed” periods mean, how much detail to include, gathering supporting evidence, the different types of hearings, what happens on the day, and how to handle adjournments vs. postponements. Plus, how to make your case and how not to be afraid of caselaw (nor the formality of appeals).
- **What happens after the appeal:** Getting the decision and quick look at “setting aside” decisions.

CHALLENGING PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT DECISIONS

Part 1 Wednesday, 2nd April (Online) 10am – 1pm

Part 2 Thursday, 3rd April (Online) 10am – 1pm

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) has been in existence since 2013 for new claimants, and the full migration of existing Disability Living Allowance (DLA) claimants to this benefit is long overdue. This full day course spread over two half-days will go through how to challenge a PIP decision more effectively, if the outcome is disputed. It is delivered via Zoom by Steve Johnson.

It is suitable for:

Advisers with some knowledge or experience of Personal Independence Payment and working with people of working age with long-term ill health or disability.

The course covers:

- The disability test applied to claimants.
- The mandatory reconsideration process and appeals process.
- Tactics on how to assist clients through the challenge process.
- Possible risks in challenging a decision.

HOUSING FIRST AID - AN INTRODUCTION TO HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

Part 1 Monday, 16th June (Face-to-Face) 10am – 4pm

Part 2 Tuesday, 17th June (Face-to-Face) 10am – 1pm

This one and a half day 'First Aid' course aims to give a broad introduction to housing rights for advisers without any previous knowledge, focusing on protection from eviction and responding to threatened or immediate homelessness.

By the end of the course, you should be able to recognise potential problems, refer on, and know enough to help take emergency action if needed with the help of specialist support.

It is suitable for:

Anyone working with clients at risk of homelessness, and it is a foundation for further training in housing rights.

The course covers:

- A brief introduction to the main types of residential tenancies and the difference between a tenancy and a licence to occupy.
- The main rules on eviction for tenants and licensees.
- Understanding homelessness assessment and emergency duties on local authorities.
- How the Council can discharge its full homelessness duty.
- Challenging decisions.

INTRODUCTION TO BENEFITS

<i>Part 1 Monday, 3rd March (Online)</i>	10am – 1pm
<i>Part 2 Tuesday, 4th March (Online)</i>	10am – 1pm

This full-day course aims to demystify the benefit system and help you spot possible entitlement to benefit. We look at why we need welfare benefits and how the benefit system developed over time. We then focus on sickness and disability benefits and look at how Universal Credit (UC) is already bringing major changes to many people being ‘migrated’ onto the UC system. This course is a platform for you to think about other, more detailed courses that are also available. It is delivered by Steve Johnson.

It is suitable for:

Staff and volunteers who are new to welfare rights and need an overview of the benefits system. It is not a refresher course.

The course covers:

- The basic structure of the benefit system.
- A brief guide to benefits.
- How and where to claim.

LIVE WELL GREENWICH BRIEFING

Wednesday, 19th March (Online)

10 - 11am

Live Well Greenwich is commissioned by the Royal Borough of Greenwich and plays an integral part in supporting borough residents. It is delivered by Charlton Athletic Community Trust (CACT) and was originally commissioned to support physical activity and smoking cessation programmes in the borough. Live Well has expanded over the years into an all-inclusive service offering a single point of access to support residents and refer them to a range of community programmes and specialist teams across the borough. It now acts as the foundation for all health improvement work at CACT.

Live Well is also the 'social prescribing' offer in Royal Greenwich. This supports better health and wellbeing by connecting people with social, emotional, or practical needs to a variety of non-clinical local services.

This briefing provides an overview of the Live Well service for advisers and staff who are unfamiliar with their work.

It is suitable for:

Anyone working with residents living in Royal Greenwich.

The briefing covers:

- What is Live Well
- What Live Well can help with
- Range of services offered
- How to refer to Live Well

UNIVERSAL CREDIT AND STUDENTS

Thursday, 24th April (Online)

1 – 4pm

Most students are outside the Universal Credit system – but it is crucial to know which ones are not. The course mainly concentrates on higher education, with some very brief references to further education. It is delivered via Zoom by Gary Vaux.

It is suitable for:

Advisers with a working knowledge of the benefits and tax credits systems.

The course covers:

- Universal Credit for students during term time - who is a student and who is eligible to claim?
- Benefits for students in the summer vacation
- How and when student finance impacts on Universal Credit, and how to spot common errors in benefit decisions.
- Students in specific situations such as parents, carers, being part of a couple, taking time out from a course and studying while disabled

UNIVERSAL CREDIT CALCULATIONS

Thursday, 31st July (Face-to-Face) 10am – 4pm

This course introduces advisers to how the Universal Credit (UC) calculation works. It is delivered by Steve Johnson.

It is suitable for:

Advisers and staff who are familiar with the benefits system and UC.

The course covers:

- What amounts and elements are included in the maximum UC figure, including transitional protection for early and managed migration cases.
- How UC income is calculated – including earnings from employment and self-employment and the impact and assessment of irregular income.
- The consequences of the UC Benefit Cap and how this may reduce awards.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT AND HOUSING COSTS

Monday, 9th June (Face-to-Face)

10am – 4pm

This full one-day course looks in more detail at how the housing cost element of Universal Credit (UC) is assessed and administered. It is delivered by Gary Vaux.

Who this course is for:

Advisers who work with working age claimants.

Course criteria:

You should have attended the Introduction to Benefits course and have a working knowledge of how the benefit system works.

What this course is about:

- A summary of how UC compares to Housing Benefit, and the implications for private and social sector tenants.
- Detailed consideration of the entitlement conditions and financial assessment, demonstrated through examples, interactive exercises and discussions.
- The course will cover matters such as:
 - what housing costs can be met through universal credit
 - who is eligible for housing costs and how these are paid
 - liability issues and how different types of rent are treated
 - problem areas such as non-dependents, supported housing, bedroom tax, benefit cap, local housing allowances, contrived tenancies, discretionary housing payments and ‘untidy tenancies’.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT MANAGED MIGRATION - THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

Monday, 28th April (Online)

10am – 1pm

Thursday, 26th June (Face-to-Face)

1 – 4.30pm

Managed Migration requires (mainly) working-age claimants on legacy benefits (such as Tax Credits, Income Support and Housing Benefit) to switch to Universal Credit. Claimants receive a Migration Notice with a deadline, after which their current benefits end. This process began in Greenwich in August 2023 and was extended to other legacy benefits since April 2024.

Given this significant shift in the benefits system, it's crucial for all officers and advocates in Greenwich to stay informed. We're offering updated briefings—both in-person and online—led by Haja Turay and Karen Mills. These briefings highlight the challenging practice issues that have emerged including the particular practice issues in switchover of ESA claimants. We'd encourage you to attend to refresh your knowledge even if you have attended a previous briefing.

It is suitable for:

All staff or frontline advisors.

The Briefing covers:

- The updated UC migration timeline.
- The managed migration process, transitional protection, challenges and emerging issues.
- The "Enhanced Customer Support" journey.
- UC claim deadlines, extensions, and cancellations and steps if a resident misses the deadline.
- Real-life case examples.

WELFARE BENEFITS UPDATE

Part 1 Wednesday, 12th March (Online) 10am – 1pm

Part 2 Thursday, 13th March (Online) 10am – 1pm

This course aims to update participants on changes to the social security system that have taken place within the last 18 months and looks ahead to the future. It is delivered by Steve Johnson.

It is suitable for:

Advisers and front-line staff who are familiar with the benefits system.

The course covers:

- PIP data release
- Digitalised PIP project update
- The new PIP ARI revision form release
- PIP case law developments
- Work Capability Assessment data and case law
- UC sanctions and AET changes (expected earnings)
- Changes to UC case law on decision making and backdating
- UC case law concerning improper ‘claim closure’
- Changes to early and managed migration rules and impacts



Welfare Rights Service

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