
Welfare Rights Training Programme

April - July 2024

Greenwich Welfare Rights Service



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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 either be one 30-minute break, or two 15-minute breaks.

Details of how to join the online course will be sent with the joining instructions, 10-14 days before the course.

TRAINING CALENDAR

Date	Month	Page
	April	
15 th and 16 th	<u>Introduction to Benefits – Part 1 and Part 2</u>	13
15 th	<u>Universal Credit Managed Migration Briefing</u>	17
23 rd and 24 th	<u>Challenging Personal Independence Payment Decisions – Part 1 and Part 2</u>	11
	May	
8 th	<u>Universal Credit Standard Course</u>	19
15 th	<u>Universal Credit Managed Migration Briefing</u>	17
16 th	<u>Universal Credit Migration</u>	18
20 th	<u>Benefits for Older People</u>	9
22 nd	<u>Universal Credit Journal Overview</u>	16
	June	
4 th	<u>Universal Credit Calculations</u>	15
11 th	<u>Universal Credit - Safeguarding Vulnerable Claimants</u>	20
13 th	<u>Benefits for EEA Nationals</u>	8
19 th	<u>Housing Benefit and Universal Credit Housing Costs</u>	12
20 th	<u>Universal Credit Managed Migration Briefing</u>	17
	July	
3 rd	<u>Challenging Benefit Decisions</u>	10
9 th	<u>Welfare Benefits Update</u>	21
17 th	<u>Personal Independence Payment – Standard Course</u>	14

BOOKINGS

How to book a place

- Training bookings can be made by emailing wrs.training@royalgreenwich.gov.uk
Bookings must be for a named person and for a specific course.
- Bookings must be agreed and authorised by a manager, training co-ordinator, or equivalent person and approval should ideally be attached to the booking request (or your manager cc'd into the booking). 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).

Terms and Conditions

- Once we have received your booking, we will send you an email confirmation, and an invoice if you must pay.
- Further joining instructions will be emailed to you 10-14 days before the course. If you don't receive them, please [email](#) or [phone](#) us. Please do **not** attend a course unless you have received confirmation of your place.
- Cancellations must be made in writing (or by [email](#)) at least one week before the course.
- 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

BENEFITS FOR EEA NATIONALS

Thursday, 13th June (Face-to-Face) 10am – 4pm

This standard level full-day course examines the main rules affecting European benefit claimants. It is delivered by Rebecca Walker.

It is suitable for:

Advisers with a working knowledge of benefits, who sometimes advise EEA nationals on their benefit entitlement.

The course covers:

- An overview of the benefit rules that specifically affect EEA nationals.
- The benefit consequences of applying for, and being granted, leave under the EU Settlement Scheme.
- The circumstances in which European nationals can satisfy the right to reside test for benefits, including Universal Credit.

BENEFITS FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Monday, 20th May (Face-to-Face)

10am – 4pm

This course provides an overview of the benefits available to people over state pension age. It is delivered by Tom Messere.

It is suitable for:

Any adviser working with people over pensionable age. Participants should have attended the Introduction to Benefits course or have a good general knowledge of the benefits system.

The course covers:

Benefits that people over state pension age can claim – including:

- An overview of Attendance Allowance.
- Brief overview of other non-means-tested benefits (including State Pension and Carer's Allowance).
- An overview of Pension Credit and the 'mixed age' couple problem, 'mixed age' couples and Universal Credit managed migration issues, Housing Benefit in pension age and Council Tax Reduction. Please note that this course does not include Pension Credit calculations in detail.
- Impact of a successful award.

CHALLENGING BENEFIT DECISIONS

Wednesday, 3rd July (Face-to-Face) 10am – 4pm

This one-day course aims to help those supporting claimants in challenging benefit decisions. It is delivered by Tom Messere.

It is suitable for:

Anyone advising people on benefit entitlement and with a good understanding of the benefits system.

The course covers:

- What is a decision? How to know when one is made. Which ones are appealable, and which aren't (and if not, what can be done)?
- Asking DWP to think again: Revisions v. supersessions; time limits and effect, mandatory reconsiderations and when you can avoid them for ESA. Cash First Pathway (eg Emergency Support Scheme).
- Appeals: What's the difference? How to apply? Open and closed periods; how much detail to give & when; supporting evidence, what happens on the day; adjournments v. postponements; different ways of hearing appeals; making the case; case law and how not to be afraid of it.
- After an appeal: getting the decision; a brief look at setting aside and next steps.

CHALLENGING PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT DECISIONS

Part 1 - Tuesday, 23rd April (Online) 10am – 1pm

Part 2 - Wednesday, 24th 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 BENEFIT AND UNIVERSAL CREDIT HOUSING COSTS

Wednesday, 19th June (Face-to-Face)

10am – 4pm

This course looks at how claimants get help with housing costs through either Universal Credit or Housing Benefit. It is delivered by Gary Vaux.

It is suitable for:

Advisers and staff who are familiar with the benefits system and Universal Credit.

The course covers:

- What housing costs can be met through Universal Credit for working-age claimants.
- What housing costs can be met through Housing Benefit for those over pension age.
- Supported and temporary accommodation – Universal Credit or Housing Benefit?
- Liability issues and how different types of rent are treated..
- Problem areas such as non-dependents, mixed-age couples, lodgers, bedroom tax, benefit cap, local housing allowance, discretionary housing payments, appeals and ‘untidy tenancies’.

INTRODUCTION TO BENEFITS

Part 1 - Monday, 15th April (Online) 10am - 1pm

Part 2- Tuesday, 16th April (Online) 10am - 1pm

This full-day course spread over two half-days 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. We then focus on sickness and disability benefits and look at how Universal Credit will bring major changes to many people. This course is a platform for you to think about other, more detailed courses that are also available. It is delivered via Zoom 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.

PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT STANDARD COURSE

Wednesday, 17th July (Face-to-Face)

10am – 4pm

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) has replaced Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for working-age people. This course covers the rules that relate to PIP and advice on how to make successful claims. It is delivered by Gary Vaux.

It is suitable for:

Advisers working with adults (aged 16 to 65) who have physical or learning disabilities or mental ill health.

The course covers:

- The structure of the benefit.
- Who can claim and tips on how to make a successful claim.
- The disability tests for daily living and mobility, including updates on recent test cases.
- The claiming process including new developments in digital claim forms and assessment processes.
- What to do if a claim doesn't succeed.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT CALCULATIONS

Tuesday, 4th June (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 JOURNAL OVERVIEW

Wednesday, 22nd May (Online)

10am – 1pm

This course is designed to help advisers feel more confident about advising clients on managing their Universal Credit (UC) claims. It is delivered by Karen Mills.

It is suitable for:

Any adviser working with UC claimants and wanting to improve their practical knowledge of how the UC claim is managed through the UC journal.

The course covers:

- The layout and parts of the UC journal.
- Understanding UC payments/payment statements (what elements have been awarded and deductions taken).
- How to report a change of circumstances, and update information (including housing costs, household details and fit notes).
- The importance of managing the client “to do” list.
- How to communicate effectively with UC via the journal.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT MANAGED MIGRATION BRIEFING

Monday, 15th April (Online)	1 - 4pm
Wednesday, 15th May (Face-to-Face)	1 - 4pm
Thursday, 20th June (Online)	10am - 1pm

From August 2023 working-age Greenwich residents receiving Tax Credits were required to claim Universal Credit (UC) in a process the DWP call 'Managed Migration'. From April 2024 the remaining working-age Greenwich residents receiving 'legacy' benefits such as Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance and Tax Credits, Housing Benefit and Jobseekers Allowance will have to claim UC or face a termination of their benefits.

This is one of the biggest changes to the benefit system in many years so it's important that all officers and advocates working with Greenwich residents are aware of them. These briefings highlight the key things you need to know to enable you to support and signpost residents effectively and provide practical tips on what advisers and residents can do to prepare and navigate the move to UC.

The briefings will be delivered via Zoom and in person by Rebecca Lough, Haja Turay and Karen Mills.

It is suitable for:

Any staff or frontline adviser.

The course covers:

- The timetable to move over to UC and who is affected.
- The managed migration process.
- The deadline to submit a UC claim and possible grounds for extension or cancellation.
- Managed migration rules including transitional protection.
- What to do if a resident misses the deadline.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT MIGRATION

Thursday, 16th May (Face-to-Face)

10am – 4pm

The Government has recently accelerated the rollout of Universal Credit (UC) so that most working age means-tested 'legacy' benefits will be abolished within the next few years. There are two forms of migration ('Early' or 'Managed' Migration) - the rules differ in some respects but are similar in others. Many existing legacy benefit claimants could lose out by switching early. The Government is also simultaneously introducing compulsory 'Managed' Migration across the UK, including in Greenwich. Advisers need to be on top of these rules because there are clear risks to claimants who don't understand how things can go wrong. This course looks at both sets of migration rules. It is delivered by Steve Johnson.

It is suitable for:

Advisers working with working-age claimants and with a basic knowledge of UC.

The course covers:

- Who is affected by Early Migration – summary only.
- Deciding whether to switch to UC.
- How UC is affected if you switch early.
- Managed Migration.
- Who is affected?
- How claimants are selected and notified.
- Claim deadlines and seeking migration extensions.
- How the new UC award is affected.
- How any kind of migration can be eroded or terminated.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT - STANDARD COURSE

Wednesday, 8th May (Face-to-Face)

10am - 4pm

Universal Credit (UC) is the government's flagship Welfare Reform policy and represents the most significant change to the welfare benefit system for several decades. UC is now over 10 years old and has been applied to the whole of the borough. It will impact residents seeking to apply for working age benefits. Migration to UC from the old means-tested system is well underway. This full one-day course is intended to look in more detail at how UC will be assessed and administered. It is delivered in a face-to-face setting by Steve Johnson.

It is suitable 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.

The course covers:

- How UC differs from the current system and some of the implications to consider from this.
- Detailed consideration of UC entitlement conditions and financial assessment.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT - SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE CLAIMANTS

Tuesday, 11th June (Face-to-Face)

1 – 4pm

Just under 10 years ago Greenwich Welfare Rights Service (GWRS) developed a Benefits Safeguarding alert for residents. The alert was created to allow claimants to easily notify the DWP and certain departments within the Royal Borough of Greenwich (RBG) of their health conditions/circumstances which may make it difficult to claim benefits or manage their benefits. GWRS has successfully used the Benefits Safeguarding Alert as a tool to encourage the DWP to follow their own safeguarding procedures when making decisions on ‘legacy benefit’ claims. However, the onset of Universal Credit (UC) brings with it a different definition of what it means to be a vulnerable claimant as UC uses the term “complex needs”.

This course looks at the interaction of our Benefits Safeguarding alert with UC’s complex needs procedures. We consider how claimants with complex needs can seek support from the DWP whilst claiming UC.

It is suitable for:

Advisers and staff who are familiar with UC.

The course covers:

- The definition of complex needs in UC.
- Identifying complex needs amongst UC claimants.
- Overview of the DWP’s safeguarding measures and complex needs procedures.
- Requesting additional support from the DWP.
- Greenwich Welfare Rights Service Benefits Safeguarding Alert.
- The effectiveness of the Safeguarding alert with case examples and success stories.

WELFARE BENEFITS UPDATE

Tuesday, 9th July (Face-to-Face)

10am – 4pm

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:

- The ‘Limited Capability for Work’ developments and national statistics trends.
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP) case law developments.
- Universal Credit – including changes to backdating case law, conditionality requirements, early and managed migration, as well as other matters.



Welfare Rights Service

Email wrs.ce@royalgreenwich.gov.uk (advisers and staff only)

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