



Universal Support Worker Job Pack

Thank you for your interest in working at Citizens Advice Brent. This job pack should tell you everything you need to know to apply for this role and what it means to work at Citizens Advice.

Closing date for applications:

Tuesday 19th February 2019

Interview dates: To be arranged

In this pack you will find:

- Information about the organisation and role
- The Job Description and Person Specification for all roles

Citizens Advice Universal Support – Help to Claim Service

Universal Credit (UC) is the fastest growing advice issue for the Citizens Advice service and local Citizens Advice (LCA) offices across the country. Since the rollout began we've helped nearly 150,000 people across England and Wales move to the new system. Over the past few years we've worked together as a service to urge government to fix the problems people are having with UC. We've achieved some important changes for our clients so far:

- making the phoneline free
- reducing the time people are waiting for their first payment
- securing extra funding for Universal Credit in this year's budget.

In its current configuration, evidence and public feedback shows low claimant awareness and take-up of Universal Support (US) nationally. Given the challenges ahead for UC, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions announced on 1 October that she has asked Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland to deliver an end-to-end help to claim service delivering nationally consistent and high quality local support for UC claimants. This new service, Universal Support – Help to Claim, will be delivered by LCA offices across the country including Citizens Advice Brent.

The new US will be available throughout England, Wales and Scotland from April 2019 – in person, over the phone and online (for some areas the new service will

begin earlier). The new improved US from April 2019 will help people through the claim process – offering tailored support to help them to use the flexibilities available in UC, helping them to get their first payment on time and making sure they are ready to manage it when it arrives.

Citizens Advice will continue to work closely with jobcentres, local authorities and other partners across the country to build on best practice and deliver joined-up services in a way that makes sense for people in communities and achieves the right results.

How the service will work

There will be 2 main parts to the service:

Part 1 offers people support to submit their initial claim. Under the current system we know that it's taking many clients up to a week to prepare and submit their claim – causing further delays to payments. This part of the new service is designed to reduce that wait time.

Part 2 offers people support to complete their full claim and be ready to receive their first payment. This part of the service will help people to submit all the evidence needed to receive their payment and be ready to manage it when it arrives.

The service will be available face-to-face and over the phone. We'll assess each client's circumstances and level of need and adapt our support accordingly to make sure people get the support they need in the way they want to receive it.

Preserving our impartiality

In accepting the funding for the US service from the government, Citizens Advice has been clear that it won't in any way affect our impartiality. We'll continue to speak up on UC as we do on all the issues that matter most to our clients. In particular, we want to ensure that the process of moving people from legacy benefits to UC through managed migration works for our clients, including the most vulnerable. Delivering the US service will give us even greater insight into how UC is working and increase the opportunities to raise our evidence with the government.

To be ready to begin delivery we are recruiting our project team:

- **Project Lead & Manager** – Expected to commence in February and will lead on the setting up of the project and continue as the Lead and Manager for the project – (fixed term to 31 March 2020)
- **Universal Support Workers** (fixed term to 31 March 2020) – working with claimants, face-to-face and on the phone
- **Universal Support Team Administrator** (fixed term to 31 March 2020) – keeping everything organised

All new UC claims will be made online (with a few exceptions) and so we will be providing digital assistance. This could be anything from where to use a computer at community venues, to help with part of an application, to full assistance to complete the online application process.

We will work from locations across the area which may include Jobcentres, libraries, local authority buildings, existing outreach locations and our existing offices etc, to provide face-to-face support. We will provide telephone support from offices yet to be decided. To ensure claimants can access the service quickly, we will develop referral routes and protocols with partner organisations and other stakeholders.

UNIVERSAL SUPPORT PROJECT LEAD & MANAGER- Job Description

Context of role: Responsible to the Service Manager

The Opportunity & Role purpose: Citizens Advice is set to deliver a new service supporting Universal Credit claimants. We have an exciting new opportunity for a Support Project Manager starting in February prior to roll out on April 1st 2019 and then take on the role of Lead Manager for the fixed term up to March 31st 2020.

The Project Manager will be responsible for helping with the recruitment process of other team members, source training if required, and any other tasks as identified by the roll out programme. The Project Manager will aim to gather information about how the new service will be delivered and as the Lead Manager, how it performs.

Key for the initial set up phase will be to develop relationships with relevant local stakeholders and share ideas and best practice prior to going live and manage these as the project is rolled out. Additionally, as part of a wider network, the role will work across Brent's Jobcentre Plus area to improve people's experience of Universal Credit and Universal Support as well as feed into the work of national Citizens Advice plus carry a small case-load when required.

Salary: £28,845

Hours: 37 hours per week – Commencing February 2019
Fixed term until March 31st 2020

Job location: To be agreed

Learning, development and training

- Facilitate inclusive group and / or one-to-one learning and development activities.
- Organise internal and external learning and development activities to ensure the competence and continuing development of designated staff.
- Contribute to the assessment of competence of designated staff.

Supervision of Support Workers and Administrators

- Provide an appropriate level of support and supervision to individual Universal Support Workers depending on their level of competence.
- Monitor the case records of designated staff to meet quality standards of advice and any service level agreements.
- Ensure remedial and developmental issues are identified and acted on to develop individuals, improve the quality of advice, and ensure clients do not suffer detriment due to poor or inadequate advice.
- Conduct regular one-to-one supervision with project Support Workers.

- Conduct independent file reviews of all Universal Support Workers, regardless of funder.
- Carry out any other reasonable tasks by agreement with your Line Manager.

Staff management

- Create a positive working environment in which equality and diversity are well-managed, dignity at work is upheld and staff can do their best.
- Participate in the induction, appraisal, learning and development of Universal Support Workers and Administration staff as required.

Generic

- Keep up to date with Citizens Advice aims, policies and procedures and ensure these are followed.
- Ensure that work reflects and supports the Citizens Advice service's equality and diversity strategy.
- Keep up to date with social policy issues and ensure social policy is promoted and integrated in a way relevant to the role.
- Develop and maintain effective admin systems and records relevant to the role.
- Monitor and evaluate activities appropriate to the role and contribute to the bureau planning process by providing regular reports and feedback on the areas of responsibility.
- Attend regular bureau and external meetings relevant to the role (staff, team, management etc).
- Work cooperatively with colleagues and encourage good teamwork, clear lines of communication and common practices within requirements of the project.
- Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for own health and safety and that of colleagues.
- Identify own learning and development needs and take steps to address these.
- Carry out any other tasks within the scope of the post to ensure the effective delivery and development of the service.

Networking and partnerships

- Develop links with relevant statutory and non-statutory agencies relevant to the role.
- Use influencing skills to promote the bureau and foster good relationships with Job Centre Plus, Brent Council and other external organisations.

Person specification

1. Proven ability to analyse complex information and make decisions/ formulate recommendation quickly and communicate information clearly and accessibly.

2. A good, up to date understanding of equality and diversity and its application to the provision of advice, and the supervision and development of staff.
3. Excellent interpersonal communication skills including the delivering of presentations when required and build relationships with staff at all levels.
4. Ability to monitor and maintain own standards.
5. Proven ability to manage / supervise others, including ability to develop, train and motivate staff.
6. Able to supervise and monitor casework and to maintain casework systems and procedures to ensure qualitative and quantitative targets are met.
7. Ability to research, analyse and interpret complex information and produce and present clear reports verbally and in writing when required.
8. Ability to prioritise own work and the work of others, meet deadlines and manage workload in a busy environment.
9. Ability and willingness to use the Citizens Advice case-management system for recording (Casebook).
10. Experienced in the use of IT systems and packages such as Google, Word, Excel and Outlook.
11. Able to use own transport and be prepared to travel across Brent and on occasion, other UK locations if required for training purposes or other activities.

UNIVERSAL SUPPORT WORKER - Job Description and Person Specification

Context of role: Responsible to the Universal Support Lead

The Opportunity & Role Purpose: To provide an effective and efficient support service for first time Universal Credit claimants. The service includes the provision of advice, information and digital support via face to face and telephone aimed at helping claimants through to their first payment and any additional support that may be required.

Salary: £23,658

Hours: 37 hours per week – Fixed Term until March 31st 2020

Job Location: To be agreed

Service Delivery:

- Contribute to positive working relationships with a range of agencies, including the DWP
- Engage with clients to assess individual support needs to determine the most appropriate level of service
- Actively promote the use of self-help information or assisted access to digital information as appropriate
- Support and assist clients to:
 - access appropriate websites and identify relevant forms and self-help information
 - access, download and print off relevant information to complete online claim forms
 - develop the skills and confidence to access digital services
- Where assisted digital access will not meet the client's needs, assist them to start their Universal Credit claim. This may include:
 - setting up a personal email account for claimants
 - setting up a new bank account
 - accessing online gateway and setting up a Universal Credit account
 - assisting the client to complete the tasks required
- Where a valid claim has been accepted, supporting the client until such time as they receive their first payment. This may include:
 - helping the client verify their identity
 - providing and uploading any additional information or evidence that the DWP may require
 - setting up an account
 - making or reviewing online journal entries
 - notifying any change of circumstances
 - preparing for DWP work coach appointments
 - providing basic budgeting support including accessing emergency financial support e.g. foodbank vouchers Research and campaigns

- Assist with research and campaigns work by providing information about clients' experiences related to the project
- Collect evidence to highlight any problem areas
- Provide case studies to demonstrate the impact of the project
- Assist with compiling reports for the Research & Campaigns team on the impact of Universal Credit Administration and monitoring
- Maintain case records for the purpose of continuity, information retrieval, statistical monitoring and report preparation
- Ensure that all work conforms with the systems and procedures in place

Professional development:

- Keep up to date with legislation, policies and procedures and undertake appropriate training
- Read relevant publications
- Attend relevant internal and external meetings as agreed with the line manager
- Prepare for and attend supervision sessions / team meetings / staff meetings as appropriate

Other duties and responsibilities:

- Uphold the aims and principles of the Citizens Advice service and its equal opportunities policy
- Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for own safety and that of colleagues
- Carry out any other relevant administrative and support duties required to ensure effective delivery of the Universal Support Help to Claim service
- Complete the training required to comply with quality assurance processes

Person specification:

1. Knowledge and experience of welfare benefits advice (desirable)
2. Proficient in IT and experience of providing digital support
3. Effective oral and written communication skills
4. Understanding of the issues involved in interviewing and supporting clients
5. Numerate to the level required in the tasks
6. Ability to prioritise work and meet deadlines
7. Ability and willingness to work as part of a team
8. Ability to monitor and maintain own standards
9. Demonstrate understanding of social trends and their implications for clients and service provision
10. Awareness that our clients are at the heart of everything we do
11. A commitment to continuing professional development of self and others
12. Ability to commit to and work within the values, aims, principles and policies of the Citizens Advice service in which equality and diversity is embedded throughout
13. Ability to travel throughout the area
14. Willingness to share hours of work with colleagues

Universal Support Project Administrator - Job Description and Person Specification

Context of role: Responsible to the Universal Support Project Lead

Role purpose: To provide administrative, clerical and secretarial support

Salary: £21,119 (pro-rata)

Hours: 30 hours per week – Fixed Term until March 31st 2020

Job Location: To be agreed

Key work areas and tasks:

Reception

- Receive clients and other visitors if required.

Correspondence, reports and other documents

- Word process letters, documents and reports as required.
- Maintain and collate statistics, and produce to a prescribed format.
- Produce information from reports and databases to assist with effective case-management.

Administration

- Use photocopier, scanner, fax and other office machines as appropriate.
- Prepare client files for use by Universal Support Workers.
- Create and maintain a structured filing system for storage and retrieval of documents, IT-based and hard-copy as required, in accordance with the bureau's systems and procedures.
- Open, record and distribute incoming post, and prepare outgoing mail for dispatch.
- Maintain leaflets, posters and forms, on-line and hard-copy in respect of Universal Credit.
- Liaise with Line Manager to ensure supply and maintenance of required reference material.
- Answer the telephone and refer calls or take messages. Send and respond to email.

Meetings

- Assist Line Manager in arranging team meetings if required.
- Attend meetings and take notes for minutes if required.

Other duties and responsibilities

- Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for own safety and that of colleagues.
- Carry out any other tasks which may be within the scope of the post to ensure effective provision, delivery and development of the service.
- Any other relevant administrative and support duties.
- Uphold the aims and principles of the CA service and its equal opportunities policies

Person specification

1. Previous administrative experience
2. Ability to monitor and maintain own standards.
3. Ability to work on own initiative, prioritise own work, meet deadlines.
4. Good interpersonal skills.
5. Written communication skills to level required for drafting correspondence, transcribing minutes
6. Skills in accurate word processing with a typing speed of 40 wpm
7. Skills in using Microsoft Word and Excel
8. Skills in using case management system (Data Base)
9. Flexible approach and willingness to work as part of a team.
10. Ability to research, analyse, interpret and check information.
11. Numeracy to the level required to carry out the tasks.
12. Understanding of and commitment to the aims and principles of the Citizens Advice service and its equal opportunities policies.