



Universal Support Worker (Universal Support - Help to Claim team)

Job pack

Thank you for your interest in working at **Citizens Advice Nottingham & District**. 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.

In this pack you will find:

- Our values
- 3 things you should know about Citizens Advice
- Information about the organisation and role
- The Job Description and Person Specification

Closing date for applications:	Sunday 16 August 2020 (midnight)
Interview date:	Wednesday/Thursday 19 and 20 August 2020
Anticipated start date:	Tuesday 1 September

Our values

We're inventive. We're not afraid of trying new things and learn by getting things wrong. We question every idea to make it better and we change when things aren't working.

We're generous. We work together, sharing knowledge and experience to solve problems. We tell it like it is and respect everyone.

We're responsible. We do what we say we'll do and keep our promises. We remember that we work for a charity and use our resources effectively.

3 things you should know about Citizens Advice

1. We're local and we're national. We have 6 national offices offering direct support to people in over 290 independent local Citizens Advice services across England and Wales.

2. We're here for everyone. Our advice helps people solve problems and our advocacy helps fix problems in society. Whatever the problem, we won't turn people away.

3. We're listened to - and we make a difference. Our trusted brand and the quality of our research mean we make a real impact on behalf of the people who rely on us.

Citizens Advice Universal Support – Help to Claim Service

Background

Universal Credit (UC) is the fastest growing advice issue for the Citizens Advice service and local Citizens Advice (LCA) offices across the country. 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:

- making the phonenumber free
- reducing the time people are waiting for their first payment
- securing funding to support people making a claim for Universal Credit

Evidence from Citizens Advice and other organisations shows that people, especially the most vulnerable, need nationwide, consistent access to the best possible support to make their Universal Credit claim and get the right payments.

In October 2018, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions announced a new end-to-end help to claim service delivered by Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland providing nationally consistent and high-quality local support for UC claimants. This new service, Universal Support – Help to Claim, has been delivered by local Citizens Advice offices like Citizens Advice Nottingham & District since early 2019.

The service is available throughout England, Wales and Scotland in person, over the phone and online, and helps 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 also works 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 works

There are 2 main parts to the service:

Part 1 offers people support to submit their initial claim. This part of the service is designed to reduce the wait time.

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

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

Please note that during the coronavirus lockdown this service is provided by telephone and webchat only, and successful candidates will initially work from home (IT kit will be provided).

Preserving our impartiality

Impartiality is a cornerstone of Citizens Advice. We continue to speak up on UC as we do on all the issues that matter most to our clients. We aim 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 gives us greater insight into how UC is working and increase the opportunities to raise our evidence with the government and to press for necessary change.

Citizens Advice Nottingham & District

Citizens Advice Nottingham & District is a large local Citizens Advice (LCA) covering the area of Nottingham City, Gedling Borough and Rushcliffe Borough.

In the year 2018/19 we helped 11,841 people. We handled £13.7m of debt and raised £2.0m in benefit income for our clients. We have 42 paid staff and 60 volunteers.

Our Universal Credit Help to Claim (HTC) team comprises:

- Universal Support Coordinator / Supervisor – coordinating the service, supervising and supporting our Universal Support Workers
- Universal Support Workers – working with claimants face-to-face, via webchat and on the phone

Our HTC team is based at our main office on Maid Marian Way in Nottingham city centre. The team works from locations across the area to provide face-to-face support. Telephone support and webchat is located at Maid Marian Way. Potentially we could deliver the service with other LCAs beyond our geographical boundary.

To ensure claimants can access the service quickly, we have referral routes and protocols with partner organisations and other stakeholders.



How the Citizens Advice service works

The Citizens Advice service is made up of Citizens Advice - the national charity - and a network of around 300 LCA members.

The national charity includes:

- 800 national staff working in one of 6 offices (or as homeworkers), or as part of the Witness Service from over 240 courts across England and Wales
- 3,000 Witness Service volunteers

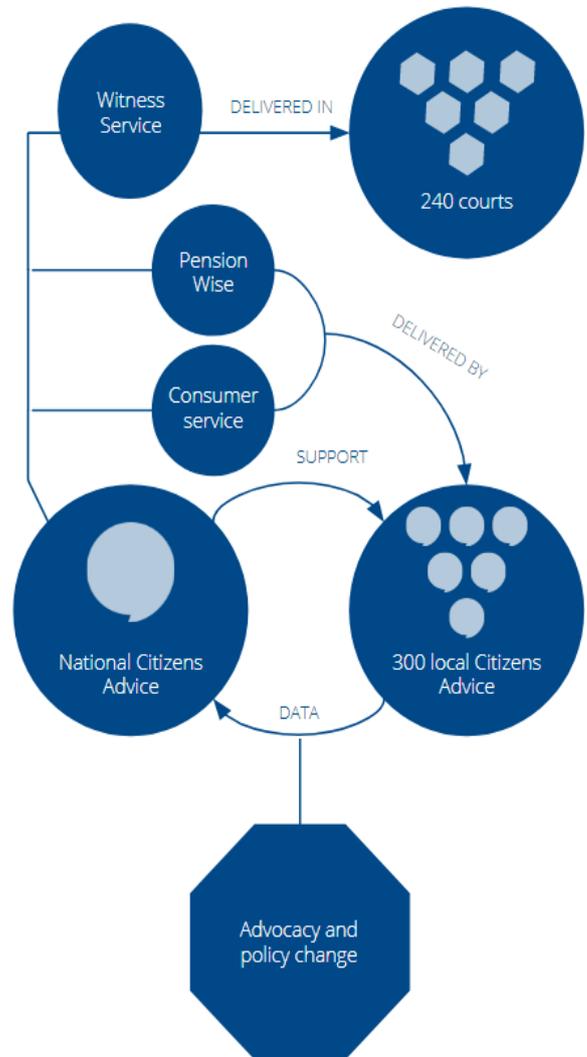
The local network members are all independent charities, delivering services from:

- over 600 local Citizens Advice outlets
- over 1,800 community centres, GPs' surgeries and prisons

They do this with:

- 6,500 local staff
- over 23,000 trained volunteers

Our reach means 99% of people in England and Wales can access a local Citizens Advice within a 30 minute drive of where they live.





Universal Support Worker (Universal Support Help to Claim team)

We are looking for people to join our Universal Support Help to Claim team. The team provides 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, telephone and digital channels, aimed at helping claimants through to the first payment of Universal Credit.

The Help to Claim service operates Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm. Successful applicants will work up to 37 hours per week.

Please note that during the coronavirus lockdown this service is provided by telephone and webchat only, and successful candidates will initially work from home (IT kit will be provided).

Job description

Main duties and responsibilities

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
 - 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
 - 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

- Knowledge and experience of welfare benefits advice (desirable)
- Proficient in IT and experience of providing digital support
- Effective oral and written communication skills
- Understanding of the issues involved in interviewing clients
- Numerate to the level required in the tasks
- Ability to prioritise work and meet deadlines
- Ability and willingness to work as part of a team
- Ability to monitor and maintain own standards
- Demonstrate understanding of social trends and their implications for clients and service provision
- Awareness that our clients are at the heart of everything that we do
- A commitment to continuing professional development of self and others
- 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
- Ability to travel throughout the area
- Willingness to share hours of work with colleagues covering Monday – Friday 9am-5pm