Principal Pensions Officer

* Service area: Service Finance
* Grade: PO2/3
* Reports to: Deputy Pensions Manager
* Your team: Islington Pensions Office
* Number of supervisees: 1

# Our mission

We are determined to create a more equal Islington, where everyone who lives here has an equal chance to thrive.

To do this, everyone who works at Islington Council lives by a set of values which guide us in everything that we do: collaborative, ambitious, resourceful, and empowering. They spell out ‘CARE’, which is what we think public service is all about.

[Watch our video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LfdyvXRk5a0) to hear more about our mission and how you can help us achieve it from the Leader of the Council, Cllr Kaya Comer-Schwartz.

Key responsibilities

To support and assist in the efficient and effective management of the Pensions Administration function. This includes all aspects of pensions work, transfers, estimates, additional pension purchase contracts, retirements, deaths, admitted body reconciliation and financial reporting in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and other related legislation for the Council and its employees.

Contribute to the creation of a digital culture within the service by embracing technology in every-day activities and actively seeking digital improvement opportunities and e-solutions to obtain greater efficiencies.

**Resources and Financial management**

1. Advise and actively support the development and training of the Pensions Officers to ensure that the service provision is in accordance with the Council’s commitment to deliver a high-quality service to customers, to include the ongoing training and development of Pensions Officer as required by the department and ensuring that all targets are met.

2. To contribute to processes to ensure a safe working environment in the Pensions Office, including participation in the staff induction process to ensure that all relevant health and safety issues are highlighted to ensure compliance with both policy and the associated legislation.

3. Control and check, with minimal supervision, a wide range of pension cases including, transfers, estimates, divorces, deferments, retirements, employer returns and admitted bodies.

4. Acquire, maintain and communicate expert technical pension’s knowledge for the benefit of staff and the Council as a whole. This will include research into new practices, liaising with different agencies and compliance with best practice and guidance from the Pensions Regulator and the Pension Scheme Advisory Board.

5. Responsibility for the balancing of payments received from and paid to a defined group of admitted bodies and outsourced schools, including the annual recording and processing of contribution returns as necessary.

6. Responsible for analysing and testing of a defined group of member contributions to ensure accurate postings to member records and identify any under/overpayment of contributions.

7. Assisting in all work processes for the annual closure of the pension fund account.

8. Assisting in devising and maintaining pension operational procedures.

9. To participate in all work processes associated with the annual Pension Increase program on the pension’s database and the triennial Actuarial Valuation of the Council’s Pension Fund.

10. To contribute to the continual improvement of the financial management of Pension income and expenditure, via quarterly reconciliations and helping to ensure that the Pensions Office produces and maintains accurate financial records.

11. Prepare and provide accurate employer information for various cyclical and ad-hoc processes including FRS17/IAS19 reports and year end reconciliations.

12. To check and supervise the work of the Pensions Officers as directed.

13. Assist in all work process issues associated with the timely and accurate production of Annual Benefit Statements for both current members and preserved beneficiaries.

14. To ensure that the Council recovers the maximum amount of monies owed to it from pensions overpayment by adhering to overpayment procedures and liaising with sundry debtors.

15. Processing of death cases, interviewing relevant beneficiaries, liaising with solicitors and personal representatives as necessary.

16. The successful transfer of knowledge and the development of staff to improve and enhance the quality and effectiveness of the Pensions Office.

17. Contribute to the development and effectiveness of e-solutions in order to maintain continual improvements in service delivery and lean working.

18. To liaise with Senior Council Managers, Government departments and other external organisations in relation to complex pension matters, to ensure compliance with relevant processes, standards and conditions.

**Additional Requirements at P03**

19. Assist in all work process issues associated with the Annual Allowance and the issuing of Pension Saving Statements.

20. Lead in all work processes associated with the McCloud Judgement.

21. Managing all work processes associated with Life Certificates and the assessment of continued Children’s pension eligibility.

22. To work with a degree of autonomy in delivering results on our key objectives, taking personal responsibility for making an effective contribution to their success.

23. To engage in strategic discussions on project development for service improvements, building relationships across services.

**Linked Grade Progression**

Incremental progression between the grades is subject to satisfactory performance of all duties. Review of performance will be made at least once a year but can take place in advance of that period as circumstances require. Satisfactory performance will be determined by ways of working, the ability to work at pace and take direction.

## Leadership

As a member of the council’s management team, to contribute proactively to the collective leadership for the council, working collaboratively with Members, services across the council, partners and stakeholders to deliver the council’s objectives and priorities.

To drive positive cultural change, embodying and promoting the values and behaviours of the council and empowering staff to reach their full potential. Ensure that the performance and development framework is effective for all staff.

To lead on and ensure the effective implementation of corporate initiatives and transformation programmes that cut across the whole or part of the council’s activities.

## Resources and Financial Management

Ensure effective Financial Management, cost controls and income maximisation in an ever changing environment, fluctuating demands and priorities. Ensure resources are well managed and effectively deployed to the best possible effects assuring value for money in all activities.

## Compliance

Ensure legal, regulatory and policy compliance under GDPR, Health and Safety and in area of your specialism identifying opportunities and risks and escalating where appropriate.

Work style

Office-based & Home-working

# Person specification

You should demonstrate on your application form how you meet the criteria. Please ensure you address all the criteria as this will be used to assess your suitability for the post.

## Essential criteria

**Education & Experience**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Essential criteria  | Criteria description  | Assessed by  |
| E1  |  PMI qualified or extensive experience working in Local Government Pensions. | Application  |
| E2  |  Experience in the use of pension database systems for Local Government. | Application/Interview  |
| E3 | Ability to analyse and interpret pension legislation and develop strategies and procedures in order to meet the requirements of the Local Government Pension Scheme and associated regulations. | Application/Interview |
| E4 | Excellent organisational and interpersonal skills. | Application/Interview |
| E5 | Experience of prioritising conflicting demands and working effectively under pressure. | Application/Interview |
| E6 | Experience of developing positive and effective working relationships and working as part of a team. | Application/Interview |
| E7 | Thorough working knowledge of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations, and associated Payroll, Income Tax and National Insurance matters. | Application/Interview |

**Skills**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Essential criteria  | Criteria description  | Assessed by  |
| E8 |  Excellent organisational and interpersonal skills, including verbal, written and presentation skills. | Application  |
| E9 |  Ability to manage and deliver change projects using appropriate systems and resources. | Interview |
| E10 |  Ability to plan, supervise and monitor work to tight time scales. | Interview |
| E11  |  Ability to work flexibly at pace and take direction. | Interview |
| E12 | Knowledge of and commitment to the council’s Dignity for All (equal opportunities) Policy and pursue its objectives. | Application/Interview |
|  | **Additional requirements – P03** |  |
| E13 | Thorough working knowledge of the Annual Allowance and its implementation. | Application/Interview |
| E14 | Thorough working knowledge of the Pensions Regulator code of practice. | Application/Interview |
| E15 | Demonstrable experience of being an agent of change and providing an improvement in service delivery. | Application/Interview |
| E16 | Ability to think critically, apply innovative and creative thinking to address complex service challenges. | Application/Interview |

# Our accreditations

Our accreditations include: the Healthy Workplace award; Timewise; London Living Wage Employer; Disability Confident Committed; The Mayor’s Good Work Standard; Stonewall Diversity Champion; and Time to Change.

