“...extremely interesting, well structured and simple to follow...

...fantastic – moves quickly/smoothly...

good balance of presentation/information...

...trainer was very clear and put me at ease...

...very motivating and, empowering...

...training materials and handouts excellent resources...

...excellent, enjoyed every minute of it...

...simplifies something I never thought I’d be able to do...”
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about Lasa and rightsnet training

Lasa has provided expert advice and information services since 1984 (see www.lasa.org.uk). A recognised centre of excellence and innovation, our welfare benefits support services are considered to be some of the best in the UK.

Millions of pounds in benefits go unclaimed each year and the connection between poverty and ill health/educational underachievement is well documented. All our courses are designed to enable advisers to spot benefit entitlement and maximise clients’ income.

Advisers need a broad set of skills to deliver effective advice to their clients. For advisers whose clients face multiple debts and low income please see our introduction to debt advice course, devised in response to trainees who told us they find this area confusing and don’t always feel confident when advising clients on debt. The course will increase your confidence and demystify basic debt advice.

A large part of advice work depends on how well the adviser manages the interview and communicates with the client. This isn’t always easy. Our interviewing skills course will help you develop the skills required for effective interviewing.

We often hear our own trainees say that after attending our courses they are expected to train other people in their organisation. Our training for trainers course will help you develop the skills and confidence required to structure and deliver effective, interesting courses.

Check out the website – www.rightsnet.org.uk/training – for news, or subscribe to our email updates list.

Our welfare benefit training is CPD accredited (law society reference BMKL/LASA), and our trainers have extensive experience in providing expert social security advice and support to individuals and organisations.

who we train

Rightsnet welfare benefits training courses are designed to meet the needs of staff working in a wide range of organisations, including housing associations, local government and the independent advice sector. Most of our courses have a maximum of twelve participants. This ensures that everyone receives individual attention and allows trainees to share ideas and establish links with others working in the field.

Our introductory level courses are aimed at staff (paid or voluntary) working in either a supportive or advisory role with people claiming benefits; whilst our intermediate and advanced courses are aimed at specialist advisers. Some courses do require prior knowledge of the benefit system. Please see the course outlines for further details or ring us on 020 7377 9981.

venue and access

Training courses take place at Lasa’s fully equipped training room. For details on the location and transport see the map on the back cover. Lasa training facilities include: access and toilets for disabled people, an induction loop and parking for disabled people. Parking must be arranged at least 2 days before the course. We can also provide course materials and this programme in alternative formats. If you require parking, or have any other access requirements please let us know when you book.

“Simply the best” … “good value for money”

“Excellently presented, very informative”

free telephone helpline providing support on welfare benefit queries after the course

We don’t abandon you after your initial training. In addition to information and access to the rightsnet website discussion forums all trainees gain access to our welfare benefits advice line.

let us come to you

All of our programmed courses can be delivered in-house. If you have a group of up to 15 people requiring the same training course we can provide in-house courses tailored to your organisation’s needs. We can deliver the course at your premises or alternatively you can come to us and use our training room.

If you require a course that is not in the programme please let us know as we may be able to develop it for you.

Prices for in-house courses start at just £1000 a day. Please ring us on 020 7377 9981 if you would like to discuss purchasing an in-house course.
equal opportunities statement
Lasa recognises that certain groups and individuals are disadvantaged and discriminated against because of the way that society is structured. Lasa is committed to equality of opportunity, taking positive steps to ensure that we do not perpetuate this discrimination.

how to book
Prices are on page 24.
For our booking form, please see page 25.

not sure what course is for you?

does your job involve...?

- providing basic advice
  and/or
  spotting entitlement

- helping people to complete forms
  and/or
  checking claims
  and maximising entitlement

- appealing decisions
  and/or
  taking cases to tribunals/commissioners

- welfare benefits overview
  plus
  our other introductory courses

- effective form filling
  plus
  interviewing
  plus
  other single subject introductory courses
  plus
  our intermediate courses

- tax credits – the problem areas
  plus
  our intermediate courses
  plus
  our advanced courses

If your job involves all three levels of advice:
we suggest that you start with the introductory courses and progress to the advanced courses.
welfare benefits overview

This is THE essential course for all new and returning staff working in an advisory or supportive capacity with benefit claimants.

who this course is for:
Anyone whose work requires them to have an understanding of how the benefit system works and/or practical skills for dealing with the DWP or Local Authority benefit offices. No prior knowledge of the benefit system is needed.

what this course is about:
Attending this course will increase your ability to maximise your client’s income by spotting entitlement to benefits and by demystifying the working of the benefits system.

We know that the benefits system is confusing – for advisers and clients. This essential one day course will enable you to know the basic conditions for benefits and which benefits can be paid together (and help to maximise your client’s income); how to check the relevant handbooks to find out more information and understand how benefits are administered. The aim is to increase your awareness of opportunities to maximise your client’s income and demystify the workings of the benefit system.

new to advice?
Check these courses – practical solutions to common benefit problems, income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance, housing benefit, the social fund, introduction to debt advice and disability living allowance/attendance allowance.

dates

• Level: Introductory
• CPD Hours: 5

practical solutions to common benefit problems

who this course is for:
If you are a more experienced adviser we recommend you attend the challenging benefit decisions course.

what this course is about:
There is light at the end of the tunnel!

Pulling your hair out in complete frustration because a benefit query has got stuck in no man's land? Feel that your client has not been fairly treated but you seem to have hit a wall of bureaucracy when trying to get recompense? Dread calling the DWP because you always feel that whatever you have done it wasn’t quite what was required?

This’ll be the course for you then! The course is aimed at those of you who deal with benefits as part of your work – you need to know how to solve those problems that come up again and again (new claim fails to be paid, missing payments not replaced, challenging an overpayment) in the quickest and most direct way, and how to get what you want from your contact with the DWP, the Revenue, and housing benefit departments.

At the end of the course you will be able to identify under-claiming of benefits, understand what evidence is needed to support a claim and know how to formally challenge a wrong decision and take forward a complaint and request for compensation.

providing basic advice?
Check these courses – introduction to debt advice, income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance, housing benefit, the social fund and disability living allowance/attendance allowance.

dates

• Level: Introductory
• CPD Hours: 5
who this course is for:
Workers who advise or support people claiming income support and/or income-based jobseeker’s allowance.

If you work primarily with either 16/17 years olds or people over 60, we recommend that you attend our benefits and young people course (see page 11) or our pension credit and other benefits for older people course in addition to this course (see page 7).

what this course is about:
Are you confused about why different people are paid different amounts of benefit? Are you unsure about when people can claim income support and when they need to claim income-based jobseeker’s allowance? And while we’re talking about JSA what are those labour market conditions all about? What about child tax credits – when and how does that fit in?

On this course you will learn who is eligible and how to make a claim. We’ll make sense of applicable amounts and equip you with a framework to calculate entitlement and identify when people are being underpaid. You will also learn about the labour market conditions and what steps claimants need to take to avoid being sanctioned and losing money. By the end of the course you will feel confident when advising clients on whether they are entitled to income support/income-based jobseeker’s allowance, how they can claim and how much they should receive.

maximising people’s income?
Check these courses – pension credit, housing benefit, the social fund, tax credits and disability living allowance/attendance allowance.

pension credit and other benefits for older people

who this course is for:
Staff advising older people on eligibility for benefits, particularly pension credit.

If you have very little knowledge of the benefit system we recommend that you attend our welfare benefits overview course first (see page 6 for details).

what this course is about:
Do you work with or advise older people? Are you confident about advising them on their eligibility to claim pension credit? Do you understand how it interacts with other benefits people might be receiving such as carer’s allowance and housing benefit?

This course will give you the knowledge to answer all these questions positively. Not only will you be able to successfully identify who is eligible to claim pension credit, advise on how to claim and correctly carry out pension credit calculations – both the guarantee and the savings credit. This will enable you to maximise your clients’ incomes and reduce the huge amount in benefits under-claimed by older people each year.

advising older people?
Check these courses – housing benefit, the social fund, disability living allowance/attendance allowance and community care and benefits.
tax credits

who this course is for:
Staff working in an advisory or supportive capacity with families and/or people in low paid work.

what this course is about:
Working tax credit and child tax credit were introduced in April 2003 to provide support for most working people on a low income and families with responsibility for children and forms part of the Government's strategy to “make work pay”; yet take-up of tax credits remains stubbornly low.

This course will increase your confidence when advising on tax credits. You will learn who is eligible for tax credits and how to advise clients on the procedures for making an effective claim. We will also teach you a clear step-by-step foolproof calculation that really works. You also learn how to minimise overpayments and how tax credits interact with other benefits.

working with families and/or people who work?
Check these courses – housing benefit, income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance, the social fund, domestic violence and benefits, the Children Act and benefits and disability living allowance/attendance allowance.

dates
Wednesday 13th June
Thursday 20th September

Level: Introductory
CPD Hours: 5

housing benefit

who this course is for:
Staff needing to advise clients/tenants on whether they can claim housing benefit and how much they are likely to receive.

If you have very little knowledge of the benefit system we recommend that you attend our welfare benefits overview course first (see page 6 for details).

what this course is about:
Do you want to feel confident about advising clients on housing benefit entitlement and the amount they should receive? Then this course is for you, whether your role is income maximisation, rent arrears minimisation or a bit of both.

We ensure that, by the end of the day, you will know how to identify who is eligible for housing benefit and how to make an effective claim. This includes accurately checking the start date of a claim and how to claim backdated housing benefit. In addition you will learn how to carry out an accurate assessment of a client’s entitlement, using a step-by-step framework for calculating housing benefit. This will allow you to identify when clients are being underpaid or are not claiming the housing benefit they are entitled to.

maximising people’s income?
Check these courses – pension credit, income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance, the social fund, benefits and offenders, claiming benefits as incapable of work and disability living allowance/attendance allowance.

dates
Friday 11th May
Thursday 5th July
Thursday 27th September

Level: Introductory
CPD Hours: 5
### The Social Fund – Extra Help for Vulnerable People

**Who this course is for:**
Staff working in an advisory, supportive or resettlement role with people claiming benefits.

*If you have very little knowledge of the benefit system we recommend that you attend our welfare benefits overview course first (see page 6 for details).*

**What this course is about:**
The Social Fund is often misunderstood and confuses advisers and clients; successful applications can have a hugely positive impact on people coping with a crisis or enabling people to remain or establish themselves within the community. Yet these payments can appear to be based on luck and chance.

Social Fund decisions must be made on certain criteria. Attending this course will increase your chances of gaining positive decisions by learning what these criteria are and how to apply the rules to help your clients make effective applications. You will learn how to advise your clients on which type of payment it is appropriate to apply for and what information they need to give.

By the end of the course you will feel confident about advising clients on entitlement to Social Fund payments and helping them to make effective applications.

**Providing basic advice?**
Check these courses – welfare benefits overview, introduction to debt advice, income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance, housing benefit and disability living allowance/attendance allowance.

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### Claiming Benefits as Incapable of Work

**Who this course is for:**
Staff working in an advisory and/or supportive capacity with clients who are ill and/or disabled.

*Staff attending will be expected to have a working knowledge of means tested benefits, including how to calculate applicable amounts. If not we recommend that you attend the welfare benefits overview and/or the income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance courses first.*

**What this course is about:**
One of the government’s aims is to get as many people as possible off benefits and into paid employment: this can create problems for people who are not capable of work.

You will learn which benefits people incapable of work can claim, how to claim and how to satisfy the relevant conditions. Problems often arise when the DWP find your client capable of work, whilst you and your client are sure they are not able. The ‘Personal Capability Assessment’ is the hurdle that most people claiming benefits as incapable of work must jump and clear. We will cover when this test applies, what it consists of and how to advise clients facing it. We also cover where the IB50 questionnaire fits into all of this and who is exempt from being tested.

By the end of the day you will feel confident about how to advise clients who need to claim benefits as incapable of work.

**Advising ill/sick or disabled people?**
Check these courses – income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance, community care and benefits, disability living allowance/attendance allowance, developing your interviewing skills, challenging benefit decisions, preparing a case for appeal, DLA caselaw and effective form filling.

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**Dates:**
- Wednesday 4th July
- Monday 11th June
- Friday 12th October

**Level:** Introductory
**CPD Hours:** 5

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**PLEASE SEE PAGES 24 & 25 FOR COSTS AND BOOKING DETAILS**

**www.rightsnet.org.uk/training**
disability living allowance and attendance allowance

who this course is for:
Staff who work in an advisory or supportive role with people with disabilities/health problems that lead to care and/or mobility needs and who may be entitled to disability living allowance/attendance allowance. If you work with people with mental health problems – see page 11. If you work with people who are drug/alcohol users – see page 10.

If you have very little knowledge of the benefit system we recommend that you attend our welfare benefits overview course first (see page 6 for details).

what this course is about:
A successful dla and aa claim can provide people with anything from an extra £17.10 to over £150 per week in benefits, but filling in the form can be time consuming and confusing. Often the results are disappointing with people receiving either negative decisions or low awards. This is mainly due to the information (or lack of it) on the application form. This course will help you ensure that your clients put the relevant information on that form.

We can’t guarantee you a 100% success rate for claims but this course will give you the practical skills and knowledge you need to make a claim. You will learn about the type of care needs and mobility problems that are relevant for these important benefits and the rules for the different rates of dla/aa. We will look at what questions you need to ask clients and who can provide supporting evidence. You will also learn about the positive effects successful claims have on other benefits, and who needs to be told what and when in order to maximise your clients’ incomes.

advising ill/sick or disabled people?
Check these courses – income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance, housing benefit, claiming benefits as incapable of work, community care and benefits, dla caselaw and effective form filling.

dla/aa for people with drug and alcohol problems

who this course is for:
Staff who work in an advisory or supportive role with people who have drug and alcohol problems and who may be entitled to disability living allowance/attendance allowance. Please note that there is some cross-over material in each of the dla courses. This course concentrates on the evidence and information required for people with drug and alcohol problems.

If you have very little knowledge of the benefit system we recommend that you attend our welfare benefits overview course first (see page 6 for details).

what this course is about:
Many people with substance misuse problems are eligible for dla/aa but helping them make effective claims is often problematic.

Not only are there difficulties in presenting the information and collecting the necessary evidence, but for many support workers there are also concerns that a successful claim and more cash in clients’ pockets will lead to a deterioration rather than an improvement in their condition.

This course will not only help you develop the necessary skills and knowledge to make a successful claim, but will also give you the opportunity to consider the larger issues around income maximisation when working with this client group.

This course deals with all these issues and will give you the skills needed to help you make an effective claim.

advising ill or disabled people?
Check these courses – income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance, housing benefit, claiming benefits as incapable of work, community care and benefits, dla caselaw and effective form filling.
**Dla/aa for people with mental health problems**

**Who this course is for:**
Staff who work in advisory or supportive role with people who have mental health problems and may be entitled to disability living allowance/attendance allowance. Please note that there is some cross-over material in each of the dla courses. This course concentrates on the evidence and information required for people with mental health problems.

*If you have very little knowledge of the benefit system we recommend that you attend our welfare benefits overview course first (see page 6 for details).*

**What this course is about:**
Claiming dla or aa is always problematic, but when it comes to people with mental health problems there’s an added set of complications. Clients often fail to acknowledge there are any issues for them or do not have an insight into their problems.

This course examines ways to discuss mental health problems in a way that encourages full disclosure and to help people "stay on board" while collecting information and completing the form. We will also look at where to get supporting evidence (particularly if your client is not in contact with mental health services) and communication techniques that will help you “draw” information from your client without making clients feel worse about their condition.

We will also look at the knock on effects that a successful disability living allowance/attendance allowance claim has on other benefits.

**Advising ill or disabled people?**
Check these courses – *income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance, housing benefit, claiming benefits as incapable of work, community care and benefits and effective form filling.*

**Benefits and young people**

**Who this course is for:**
Staff who work with young people (16/17 year olds) in an advisory or supportive role. Experienced advisers who want to increase their benefit knowledge for this client group.

*If you have very little knowledge of the benefit system we recommend that you attend our welfare benefits overview course first (see page 6 for details). As part of the course you will be asked to complete exercises that are based on your knowledge of the benefit system.*

**What this course is about:**
The rules covering benefits for young people are often completely different from those for over 18s. Advisers confident about advising other client groups are often unsure of the rules for this group. Support workers specialising in working with young people are often not confident about advising on benefits. So young people, desperately in need of advice, often fall through the gaps in the system and in an adviser’s knowledge.

This course is a step towards rectifying that. You will learn the eligibility conditions young people face when claiming is/jbjsa and severe hardship payments, and how to advise them to make a valid claim, including the roles the different organisations (e.g. Connexions) play in making a claim. We look at the importance of accessing other money, including applications to the Social Fund. You will also learn about housing benefit restrictions for young people and how discretionary housing payments can sometimes help and how to apply for them.

**Working with young people?**
Check these courses – *housing benefit, the social fund, the Children Act and benefits, domestic violence and benefits and introduction to debt advice.*
the Children Act and benefits – help with improving children’s lives

who this course is for:
Advisers, family placement workers, support workers and other people working in a supportive/advisory role who work with children and need to know more about welfare benefits and the implementation of the “Every Child Matters” framework.

what this course is about:
The “Every Child Matters” framework is aimed at improving the lives of children; ensuring that families and children are receiving the correct welfare benefits can be crucial to their health and well-being.

This course will guide trainees through the relevant legislation and policies connected with the Children Act, it will enable advisers to identify relevant benefits and understand how financial support and good benefits advice can help support parents, foster carers, and potential adopters and can help support placement stability for looked after children.

The course includes:
- how to spot benefit (including disability living allowance for a disabled child) and tax credits entitlement
- how to advise foster carers on benefits, tax credits and tax allowances
- the effect that residence orders, adoption and special guardianship orders have on benefits
- potential benefit entitlement for 16 and 17 year olds leaving care.

working with families?
Check these courses – the social fund, tax credits, income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance, housing benefit, maternity rights and benefits and domestic violence and benefits.

dates
- Thursday 17th May
- Tuesday 16th October

- Level: Introductory
- CPD Hours: 5

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domestic violence and benefits

who this course is for:
Benefits advisers, social services staff, housing officers, helpline workers, counsellors/therapists, medical professionals and anyone who works in a supportive or advisory role with people affected by domestic violence. The course assumes a basic knowledge of the benefits system.

what this course is about:
This course looks at some of the financial considerations of a domestic violence situation and what benefit options may be available. Reducing the levels of domestic violence is one of the Government’s key objectives; providing the correct benefit advice can be crucial in enabling people affected by domestic violence to make informed decisions about leaving violent relationships and what steps to take.

The course will include looking at what help is available in an emergency: what help is available to help to pay rent, council tax and a mortgage – and what happens if as a result of temporary absence, payments need to be paid on more than one home.

We will look at what benefits are available when a person (and their children) has fled domestic violence and the impact on any existing claim. If it is the child or young person who has had to leave home: we will look at the potential problems and what support is available. The course also looks at help with setting up a new home and the longer–term decisions that need to be examined – what help is available with going into work and better-off calculations.

working with families?
Check these courses – tax credits, the social fund, income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance, housing benefit, young people and benefits, the Children Act and benefits and maternity rights and benefits.

dates
- Tuesday 22nd May
- Tuesday 25th September

- Level: Introductory
- CPD Hours: 5

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PLEASE SEE PAGES 24 & 25 FOR COSTS AND BOOKING DETAILS • www.rightsnet.org.uk/training
who this course is for:
Benefit advisers, housing support workers, social services staff and anyone who works in a supportive or advisory role with people who need help to live independently in the community.

what this course is about:
There are many different ways in which care and support can be provided in the community. Some of these are free but some may be charged for.

This course helps you to identify what care is available, who can provide it and what can be charged for. It explains how to request community care assessments and, if necessary, how to challenge them.

Charging can vary enormously from one area to another. The course examines the guidance covering charging policies and some of the reasons for local variation. It looks at the different benefits available to help maximise a client’s income and how these may be taken into account when assessing charges. It also considers ways to effectively challenge charges.

working with ill/disabled people?
Check these courses — disability living allowance/attendance allowance courses, housing benefit, the social fund, pension credit, claiming benefits as incapable of work and income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance.

who this course is for:
Advisers, housing support workers, drug and alcohol support workers, social services staff, probation services staff, youth offending team staff and anyone who works in a supportive or advisory role with offenders and their families.

what this course is about:
Going into prison has a major impact on prisoners and their families’ situations: imprisonment often affects a family’s financial situation and can impact on what welfare benefits people are claiming/can claim.

The interaction of the benefits system and sentencing has a wide variety of effects upon the money available to offenders and to their families.

This course will enable you to:
- identify what benefits are available to offenders and their households
- understand the different types of sentences
- understand the impact of different types of sentences on benefit entitlement
- maximise income for prisoners.

working with prisoners and their families?
Check these courses — income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance, housing benefit, tax credits and the social fund.
maternity rights and benefits

who this course is for:
Midwives, health visitors, Sure Start Children’s Centre staff, staff working in a supportive or advisory role with pregnant women or new families. The course does not assume any prior knowledge of benefits or employment rights.

what this course is about:
This course covers the basics of employment rights for pregnant women and new parents and provides an introduction to the benefits available before and after the birth of a child (eg Sure Start Maternity Grants). The course looks at employment rights during pregnancy (including rights to time off for ante-natal care), financial help in pregnancy, maternity leave and pay and paternity leave and pay.

The course also covers options for non-working parents (including the role of the CSA) and if someone is returning to work we look at what benefits are available and their employment rights regarding flexible working, parental leave and time off for dependants.

working with families?
Check these courses – tax credits, the social fund, income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance, housing benefit, young people and benefits, domestic violence and benefits and the Children Act and benefits.

introduction to debt advice

who this course is for:
Staff working in an advisory or supportive capacity with clients who need advice on dealing with debt.

what this course is about:
Do the people you work with need help to deal with their debts? Are you worried whether the advice you are giving is correct? Do your clients often have multiple debts and low incomes? This course will give you the knowledge you need to help people out of the mess debt puts them in. The course will provide you with a money advice model to help get to grips with debt, including the knowledge to correctly identify priority and non-priority debts. You will learn what steps creditors can take when people don’t pay their debts and how clients can respond. You will also have the opportunity to draw up a financial statement and write a money advice letter to a creditor using real case studies.

providing basic advice?
Check these courses – welfare benefits overview, income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance, housing benefit and the social fund.
who this course is for:
Staff advising people completing disability living allowance/attendance allowance forms and the incapacity for work questionnaires (IB50).

what this course is about:
People claiming disability living allowance/attendance allowance or claiming benefits as incapable of work often fail at the first attempt. This is usually a result of how the application form has been completed, people can often over (or under) estimate their capabilities.

We will look at the communication skills needed to ensure your client gives an accurate and full picture of how they are affected by their illness or disability.

We will look at the basic conditions of entitlement for these benefits and some examples of how not to complete forms! You will also be kept busy with lots of practical exercises and will come away feeling confident about helping people to make effective claims.

advising ill/sick or disabled people?
Check these courses – income support and income-based jobseeker’s allowance, housing benefit, claiming benefits as incapable of work, disability living allowance/attendance allowance and community care and benefits.

developing your interviewing skills

who this course is for:
Anyone who is either new to interviewing, or people who wish to refresh and enhance their current level of skill.

what this course is about:
A large part of advice and support work depends on how effectively the adviser manages the interview and communicates with the client. This practical short course will help advisers develop the skills required for effective interviewing. It will cover the following:

● preparing for and structuring interviews
● creating the right climate and framework
● getting the information – questioning and listening skills
● using clues in body language
● closing the interview
● managing difficult emotions (such as anger, or distress)
● practical exercises.

Please note: this course is not suitable for people wanting to develop recruitment and selection interviewing skills.
in and out of work

who this course is for:
Experienced advisers working with clients who want to return to work or are being encouraged into work.

People attending this course will be expected to have a working knowledge of the benefit system and the ability to carry out calculations for all means tested benefits including tax credits. You will be asked to complete exercises that will be based on this expectation.

what this course is about:
The last few years have seen unemployment fall and a growing emphasis on the “benefits” of working. This course looks at all aspects of working and benefits – how working impacts on “out of work” benefits; how to use linking rules to protect benefit levels for people who move in and out of work; what schemes and help are available when starting work; what benefits people can claim while working and how to do a “better off calculation.

We will provide you with a calculation sheet for doing better off calculations and consider the non-benefit issues that affect people’s decision to return to or start working.

working with families and/or people who work?
Check these courses – housing benefit, the social fund, tax credits, the Children Act and benefits and introduction to debt advice.

tax credits – the problem areas

who this course is for:
Experienced advisers already familiar with the eligibility criteria and the tax credit calculation.

We recommend that advisers who are not confident in either of the above attend the introductory tax credits course first.

what this course is about:
Do you find yourself unable to approach the Revenue with the confidence you feel when dealing with the DWP? We are not going to claim that we can change that but this course does begin to address some of the issues that advisers are wrestling with.

We will help you to offer clients more proactive advice, examining tactical issues on what and when to notify changes of circumstance in order to maximise income and reduce overpayments. You will learn how to do pro-rata calculations and understand the impact of in-year changes in circumstances. We also consider underpayments and overpayments, how they occur and how to ask for a write off.

This course will give you an opportunity to explore the practical implications of a system that brings new responsibilities for claimants and the potential for both income maximisation and relieving financial hardship.

taking on difficult cases?
Check these courses – challenging benefit decisions, preparing a case for an appeal, housing benefit overpayments, backdating benefit awards and representation at appeal tribunals.
who this course is for:  
More experienced advisers working with people who are “subject to immigration control” (including asylum seekers).
People attending this course will be expected to have a working knowledge of the benefits system.

what this course is about:  
Immigration status and benefits can be (and often is) hugely complicated. This course addresses and answers many of the queries we hear from advisers on this subject. Who is “a person subject to immigration control” and what counts as “public funds”? What are the exceptions to the rules? And what happens when families have mixed immigration status?

The course then looks at the position of asylum seekers including what support is available for unaccompanied minors – and what rights these young people have when they become “care leavers”.

We will cover challenging refusal and the ending of support, “hard cases” support and what happens when a person finally becomes eligible to claim benefits through gaining residence or other status.

By the end of the course you should understand who is subject to immigration control for benefits and feel confident advising people who have family members subject to restrictions, asylum seekers including unaccompanied minors, overstayers and others. For advising residents from the EU please see our EU law, the right to reside and habitual residence tests course (page 17).

EU law, the right to reside and habitual residence tests

who this course is for:
More experienced advisers working with clients from the European Union.
People attending this course will be expected to have a working knowledge of the benefits system.

what this course is about:
Your client’s EU status has allowed them to enter, work or study and live in the UK. Problems often arise when they fall sick, have children or only earn very low wages and need to claim benefits to survive.

This course covers:
- the right to reside and habitual residence test; how these tests operate for different benefits and who is exempt from them
- what restrictions apply to accession state nationals
- how changes in circumstances impact on residence rights and benefits.

We will look at current case law and the possible arguments that can be used to help your client establish a right to reside and habitual residence.

This course will ensure that you are able to correctly advise clients from the EU on their rights to benefits and identify and challenge incorrect decisions.

dates
- Level: Intermediate
- CPD Hours: 5

• Wednesday 9th May
• Thursday 12th July
• Monday 24th September

dates
- Level: Intermediate
- CPD Hours: 5

• Thursday 14th June
• Monday 20th August
• Monday 15th October

PLEASE SEE PAGES 24 & 25 FOR COSTS AND BOOKING DETAILS – www.rightsnet.org.uk/training
challenging benefit decisions

who this course is for:
Staff working with people who claim benefits and who help them deal with problems and need to challenge benefit decisions.
A working knowledge of benefit rules is required.

what this course is about:
So you identified what your client can claim and helped complete the necessary forms, but it’s not gone according to plan. Your client has returned to you with a letter from the DWP/local authority that says something you disagree with. Your client could have been turned down on grounds you think are incorrect or the dates or amount of benefit seems wrong. We all know that the benefit system makes mistakes but how do you go about challenging them?
If you are sometimes unsure on what steps to take – for instance whether to ask for a revision or a supersession – then this course will help. You will learn how to deal effectively with poor decision-making by the DWP and local authorities by first knowing how to check whether a decision is correct and then selecting the most appropriate procedure to challenge the decision. We also cover what information will ensure the best possible outcome for your client.
By the end of the day you will be confident that you know the correct procedures for challenging decisions, how to get poor decisions changed and how to maximise clients’ incomes.

taking cases to appeal?
Check these courses – preparing a case for an appeal, housing benefit overpayments, backdating benefit awards and representation at appeal tribunals.

preparing a case for an appeal

who this course is for:
This is an intermediate level practical course for advisers who are ready to prepare cases for appeal and have a good working knowledge of the benefit system.
This course does not include representation skills (see course on page 21).

what this course is about:
Do you feel daunted by the thought of preparing a case for appeal, sorting through all the information and then putting together a written submission? This course will increase your confidence and give you the necessary skills to identify the relevant legal questions to be answered and the facts to prove the case. This practical course uses a real case to develop the techniques for pulling together the facts and the law into a coherent written submission for the appeal. You will look at how to obtain and evaluate evidence and who to obtain it from. By the end of the course you will be able to plan and prepare a written submission for an appeal tribunal.

taking cases to appeal?
Check these courses – challenging benefit decisions, housing benefit overpayments, backdating benefit awards and representation at appeal tribunals.
equality: the law – delivering services to diverse communities

who this course is for:
Staff and managers who are involved in service delivery to diverse communities: who need to know their legal responsibilities in terms of equality legalisation.

what this course is about:
The course will cover how equality legalisation impacts on and affects service delivery. We will look at the legislative framework and the responsibilities of organisations and workers. We will also look at the issues involved in delivering services to different communities and methods to improve cross-cultural communication and understanding.

This course will not deal with welfare benefits, but will look at service delivery as a whole.

training for trainers

who this course is for:
This practical and enjoyable 3 day course will enable those new to training to develop both the skills and confidence required for training others in a supportive atmosphere. For those who are more experienced, the course will enable you to reflect on and further develop your training skills and abilities.

what this course is about:
This course will cover the following:

- how adults learn
- how to plan a course
- making your subject matter interesting
- styles, methods and techniques that get information across
- dealing with difficult situations and people
- using visual aids and written materials effectively
- practical work (delivering a short training session).

It is essential that participants attend all three days.

level: Intermediate
CPD hours: 15
housing benefit overpayments

who this course is for:
This course is aimed at advisers who challenge housing benefit overpayment decisions.

what this course is about:
All of the current legislation and the most important case law in this subject area will be covered. The course will also look at how to identify the key facts and evidence in each case.
Topics covered will include:
- the legal test
- establishing the facts and the onus of proof
- the correct calculation of the overpayment.
The course will be both participatory and practical.

taking cases to appeal?
Check these courses – challenging benefit decisions, preparing a case for an appeal and representation at appeal tribunals.

dla caselaw: alcohol and mental health

who this course is for:
This course is aimed at advisers who want to keep up to date with the changes in disability benefits caselaw in relation to alcohol and mental health.

what this course is about:
The course will cover all of the recent tribunal of commissioners decisions and the most important unreported decisions on these issues.
Key issues that these decisions raise include:
- is communication a bodily function?
- the effects of alcohol consumption and entitlement to dla/aa
- determining disability and the need for a diagnosis
- motivation and prompting in relation to attention.
We will be looking at these decision in the context of dla/aa and mental health and dla/aa and alcohol use. The course will be both participatory and practical.

taking on difficult cases?
Check these courses – housing benefit overpayments and backdating benefit awards.
backdating benefit awards

who this course is for:
This is a practical and participative course that aims to ensure that advisers know the rules on backdating for all benefits and can confidently argue for backdating of a range of benefits in a variety of situations.

what this course is about:
The course will look at both the legislation and relevant case law related to backdating and use a number of case studies to help participants gain experience in arguing for the maximum backdating possible in each case.

taking cases to appeal?
Check these courses – challenging benefit decisions, preparing a case for an appeal and representation at appeal tribunals.

representation at appeal tribunals

who this course is for:
This course is for experienced advisers who are ready to prepare and represent cases at appeals or for people who already represent but would like to increase their confidence, skills and success rate. A good working knowledge of the benefits system will be assumed as exercises are based on understanding conditions for benefits and the administrative system.

It is essential that participants are able to attend the full two days.

what this course is about:
Representing at appeal tribunals can make even experienced advisers feel nervous. This course will increase your confidence by providing you with a structure for preparing cases allowing you to practice the skills necessary for presenting a case at tribunal.

A practical course, it is highly participative and gives you the opportunity to develop your analytical abilities and practice your presentation and advocacy skills. You will spend the two days learning the skills needed to prepare and present a case from beginning to end. You will look at how the law is structured, how to use reference materials, weigh up evidence and the balance of probabilities through to the appeal system procedures including adjournments. You will also have the opportunity to take part in a mock tribunal.

The course is both very demanding and hugely enjoyable. At the end of the two days you will feel confident when advising on the appeal system and procedures, you will know how to use the law and the necessary reference books, and how to prepare and present a submission including obtaining and using evidence.

taking cases to appeal?
Check these courses – challenging benefit decisions and preparing a case for an appeal.

Monday 4th and Tuesday 5th June
Tuesday 23rd and Wednesday 24th October

• Level: Advanced
• CPD Hours: 10
taking cases to the commissioners

who this course is for:
This advanced level course is for advisers who represent at appeals and are unsure about how to take a case to the commissioners or for people who take cases but would like to increase their skills and confidence.

what this course is about:
In order to take a case to the social security commissioners advisers need to be able to identify an error of law in the statement of reasons provided by the tribunal.

Taking a case to the commissioners can seem quite daunting. This course is designed to give you practice in identifying errors of law, develop your understanding of what an error of law is and increase your confidence.

The course will cover the procedure for appealing to the commissioners but it will focus upon practicing identifying errors of law using statements of reasons, case papers and lots of discussion.

AIMS, the client enquiry recording system for voluntary and statutory advice organisations of all sizes

AIMS will enable your service to accurately record and report on all the issues, work and outcomes relating to your client services. It is an essential tool in the effective management of your organisation and client casework.

For a free trial of AIMS, please email aims@lasa.org.uk to request an AIMS Demo CD

Starting at less than £300 it is also very affordable.

dates

Monday 11th June

Level: Advanced
CPD Hours: 5
still not sure what course is for you?

If you are new to benefits or returning to benefits after a break we recommend the welfare benefits overview course (page 6): this course is suitable for all advisers whether you specialise or provide general advice and will give you a good basic understanding of the benefit system. We have grouped our other courses to help you decide which are right for you.

General advice/all client groups
Practical solutions to common benefit problems
Income support & income based jobseeker’s allowance
Pension credit
Housing benefit
Introduction to debt advice
Social fund
Tax credits
Disability living allowance/attendance allowance
Developing your interviewing skills
Equality; the law – delivering services to diverse communities

Working with clients with disabilities/health problems
Income support & income based jobseeker’s allowance
Pension credit
Housing benefit and housing benefit overpayments
Social fund
Tax credits
Disability living allowance/attendance allowance courses and the dla caselaw update
Community care and benefits
Tax credits – both courses
Challenging benefit decisions
Preparing a case for an appeal
Representation at appeals tribunals

Working with families/young people
Income support & income based jobseeker’s allowance
Pension credit
Housing benefit and housing benefit overpayments
Social fund
Tax credits – both courses
Maternity rights and benefits
Challenging benefit decisions
Preparing a case for an appeal
Representation at appeals tribunals

Working with older people
Pension credit
Housing benefit and housing benefit overpayments
Social fund
Disability living allowance/attendance allowance courses and the dla caselaw update
Community care and benefits
Challenging benefit decisions
Preparing a case for an appeal
Representation at appeals tribunals

Working with people in low paid employment
Housing benefit and housing benefit overpayments
Social fund
Disability living allowance/attendance allowance courses and the dla caselaw update
Tax credits – both courses
Maternity rights and benefits
Challenging benefit decisions
Preparing a case for an appeal
Representation at appeals tribunals

Working with people from abroad
Benefits for people subject to immigration control
EU law, the right to reside and habitual residence tests
how to book
Some courses fill quickly so if possible please give an alternative date in case your first choice is not available. You can check availability by calling the training team on 020 7377 9981.

Please note, we cannot take telephone or e-mail bookings.

Please use the booking form on page 22, photocopy the form and fill in one form for each person attending each course. You can return the completed form(s) to us by post, by fax to 020 7247 4725 or you can send your booking via the website www.rightsnet.org.uk/training.

We reserve the right to refuse bookings.

transfers and cancellations
Please carefully check the dates you wish to book – transfers are not possible once a place is booked.

If a participant cannot attend on the day a colleague from the same organisation can take their place. Otherwise transfers are not possible once a course is booked.

Cancellations must be made in writing; we are unable to refund course fees for cancellations received within 28 days of the course date. If cancellations are received within 28 days of the course the full fee remains payable.

Occasionally we are forced to postpone a course, for instance due to sickness. If so we will advise you as soon as possible and try our best to rearrange another date that suits you. If you are unable to attend an alternative date you are entitled to a refund. However we are not able to refund travel costs.

course costs per person attending

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Voluntary organisations 1–10 full time members of staff (in the whole organisation)</th>
<th>Voluntary organisations 11–50 full time members of staff (in the whole organisation)</th>
<th>Voluntary organisations 51+ full time members of staff (in the whole organisation)</th>
<th>Other organisations e.g. statutory/local authorities, lawyers etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One day</td>
<td>£110</td>
<td>£150</td>
<td>£200</td>
<td>£200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two days (RAT course)</td>
<td>£190</td>
<td>£280</td>
<td>£370</td>
<td>£370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three days (training for trainers course)</td>
<td>£240</td>
<td>£340</td>
<td>£450</td>
<td>£450</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please do not send payment with your booking. We will invoice you.

how to pay
The course cost depends on the type and size of the organisation you work for. Tick the box that matches your organisation on the booking form, and enter the corresponding amount.

Please do not send payment with your booking. We will invoice your organisation as soon as we confirm availability and cost. If there is a problem with the course(s) or the cost, we will contact you. Otherwise we will send you an acknowledgement and invoice within a week.

Upon receiving our invoice we would appreciate payment as soon as possible.

Joining details and a map to the venue are sent to participants one week before each course – please ensure we have the best address for contacting participants.
Please photocopy this booking form for each participant, and for each course. Please complete in block capitals. Alternatively you can send your booking via our website at www.rightsnet.org.uk/training.

Name of participant: 

Job title: 

Organisation: 

Address: 

Tel: Fax: Contact tel if different: 

E-mail: 

Invoice name & address: 

course title 

date (1st choice): date (2nd choice): 

Which borough does your organisation serve? 

Do you have any access requirements? Yes* No 

*We will contact you to discuss. 

your organisation Please tick one 

1–10 staff 11–50 staff 51+ staff others 

Do you intend to claim Law Society accreditation for attendance? (only applicable to lawyers) 

Yes No (Law Society ref: BMKL/LASA) 

transfers and cancellations 

If a participant cannot attend on the day a colleague from the same organisation can take their place. Otherwise transfers are not possible once a course is booked.

Cancellations must be made in writing; we are unable to refund course fees for cancellations received within 28 days of the course date. If cancellations are received within 28 days of the course the full fee remains payable.

Occasionally we are forced to postpone a course, for instance due to sickness. If so we will advise you as soon as possible and try our best to rearrange another date that suits you. If you are unable to attend an alternative date you are entitled to a refund.

Please invoice my organisation for the amount of: 

£ 

Purchase order no: 

Post or fax this form to: 

Rightsnet Training 

Lasa, Universal House 

88–94 Wentworth Street 

London E1 7SA 

Fax: 020 7247 4725 

If you do not want to receive future mailings from us, please tick. 

For office use only 

Invoice no: 

Invoice date: 

Database ref: 

Date entered: 

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If you do not want to receive future mailings from us, please tick. 

For office use only 

Invoice no: 

Invoice date: 

Database ref: 

Date entered:
www.rightsnet.org.uk
the welfare rights website

With millions of visits every year from advisers across the UK, rightsnet – lasa’s welfare rights website – provides access to the most up-to-date welfare benefit and tax credit information on the web.

Updated daily, rightsnet offers –

● **News** – more than 800 news stories are published to the site each year, with links, within 24 hours of their issue, to new legislation, case law and court decisions, official guidance, and policy documents

● **Discussion** – dedicated forums where advisers across the country meet to share their experience and expertise, and access support with their cases

● **Resources** – hundreds of leaflets and factsheets, free benefit calculators, claim forms, summaries of the latest commissioners’ decisions, benefit rates, advice related job vacancies … and more!

"By far the fastest, cheapest and most user-friendly way to keep right up to date … a brilliant way of sharing information, resources and solutions to problems”

“As essential to the job as the Welfare Rights Handbook – I can’t imagine being without it”

“Transforms welfare rights advice … It’s absolutely brilliant”

“Seems to get better each week”
other Lasa services

**AIMS:**
See page 22.

**Circuit Riders in the UK:**

ICT development and support for the voluntary sector

Circuit Riders are technology development and support workers, each of whom supports a caseload of organisations the same way a development worker might. In the UK we have more than 360 subscribers to the ukriders list interested in Circuit Riding or are a Circuit Rider themselves.

**Website:** [www.lasa.org.uk/circuitriders](http://www.lasa.org.uk/circuitriders)

**Lasa's Information Systems Team:**

Lasa’s Information Systems Team provides Information and Communication Technology (ICT) advice to voluntary organisations including:

- ICT Hub Knowledgebase – a free, comprehensive online source of independent information on ICT – [www.icthubknowledgebase.org.uk](http://www.icthubknowledgebase.org.uk)
- ICT Hub Suppliers Directory – a free directory lists suppliers of ICT goods and services to the voluntary and community sector in England – [www.directory.icthub.org.uk](http://www.directory.icthub.org.uk)
- Publications including computanews and guides to using ICT
- ICT Health checks and consultancies
- Training – commissioned courses to help you use ICT to improve your services.

*For further information see:* [www.lasa.org.uk/it](http://www.lasa.org.uk/it)

**Multikulti:**

The Multikulti website aims to support citizenship through the delivery of culturally appropriate and accurately translated information in 12 community languages in the following areas of welfare law: debt, employment, health, housing, immigration, racism & discrimination and welfare benefits.

**Website:** [www.multikulti.org.uk](http://www.multikulti.org.uk)

**Review:**

Lasa’s bi-monthly welfare benefits and tax credit publication.

**Website:** [www.lasa.org.uk/review](http://www.lasa.org.uk/review)

**Rightsnet:**

See page 26.

**Specialist Support Project:**

In addition to our welfare benefits advice line the Specialist Support Service provides casework support to English organisations with a CLS General Civil Law Contract or a Quality Mark.

Having discussed your client’s case on our advice line, you can send us copies of relevant documents so we can:

- advise you on the merits of your client’s case
- identify relevant legislation and case law
- help you with more complex cases
- draft appeal submissions to tribunals and the Social Security Commissioners.

**Website:** [ssp@lasa.org.uk](mailto:ssp@lasa.org.uk)

**Advice line:** 020 7247 8935

(Wednesday 2.00–4.00, Thursday 10.30–1.00, Friday 2.00–4.00)

**Welfare Benefits Advice Line:**

For advice workers only:

020 7247 1735

Monday & Tuesday 10.30–12.30 and Thursday 2.00–4.00
how to get here

Universal House is at the Brick Lane end of Wentworth Street.
Please come to the 3rd floor. There is a lift to the left of the staircase as you come in the entrance.

By tube/train
From ALDGATE EAST tube (Hammersmith & City and District lines) – take the WHITECHAPEL ART GALLERY EXIT. Turn left into Whitechapel High Street, take the first left into Osborn Street and then left into Wentworth Street. Look for the brown doors first on the left.

From LIVERPOOL STREET tube (Central, Circle, Metropolitan, Hammersmith & City lines) and mainline station – take the BISHOPSGATE EXIT, turn into Middlesex Street (opposite the main station entrance), left into Wentworth Street, cross Commercial Street (at the traffic lights) and continue along Wentworth Street. Look for the brown doors on the right just before the Osborn Street junction.

By bus
There are a number of buses that stop at Liverpool Street station (from north and south London) e.g. 149, 35 & 47 and buses that stop at the Whitechapel Art Gallery e.g. 254, 25 & 40.
The 67 bus stops on Commercial Street at the junction of Wentworth Street.