



Academy Self Service Benefits

Academy Self Service Benefits provides benefit claimants with online access to details of individual benefit claims, reducing the burden on authorities' call centres and front office staff.

Using Academy Self Service Benefits citizens can:

- Access full details of awards, payments made, payment schedules and overpayments, along with assessment and circumstances used in the calculations. This allows citizens to check their details without calling the authority.
- Access information directly through a council website. Alternatively the service may be accessed by the Citizen's Advice Bureau or other agencies authorised to assist the claimant empowering third parties to assist and advise individuals.
- View notifications and other correspondence – claimants no longer need to call the contact centre for reprints when they mislay important correspondence, and there is no need for the authority to reprint it.
- Review history of past payments and details of future payments – claimants know when they will receive payments as well as how much giving them the information they need to budget.
- Examine assessment details – claimants can check that their current claim assessment reflects their present circumstances.
- View current award and calculation details – the authority is seen to be open about calculations for benefit, allowing claimants to understand how their benefit was reached.
- View overpayments – providing claimants with visibility of how much they have been overpaid and allowing them to budget accordingly.

Where data protection legislation allows, information can be provided to other parts of the council either over the intranet or through a CRM in a corporate call centre environment. This improves the flow of information throughout the authority and the quality of service that the corporate contact centre can offer.

Key benefits

- Reduced burden on front line staff – benefits claimants have access to detailed benefits claim information without the need to speak directly with front line staff, enabling staff to focus on other important matters.
- Compliance with Priority Outcome R17 – online facilities to be available to allow citizens, or their agents, to check their availability and calculate their entitlement to housing and council tax benefit.
- Accessible to all including those with disabilities - the system complies with W3C requirements for web accessibility.

The service may be extended further through provision of a log in to landlords and other trusted third parties.

“Up to 46% of the adult population of England are ready and waiting to use local authority e-channels.”

e-citizen National Project Team.