

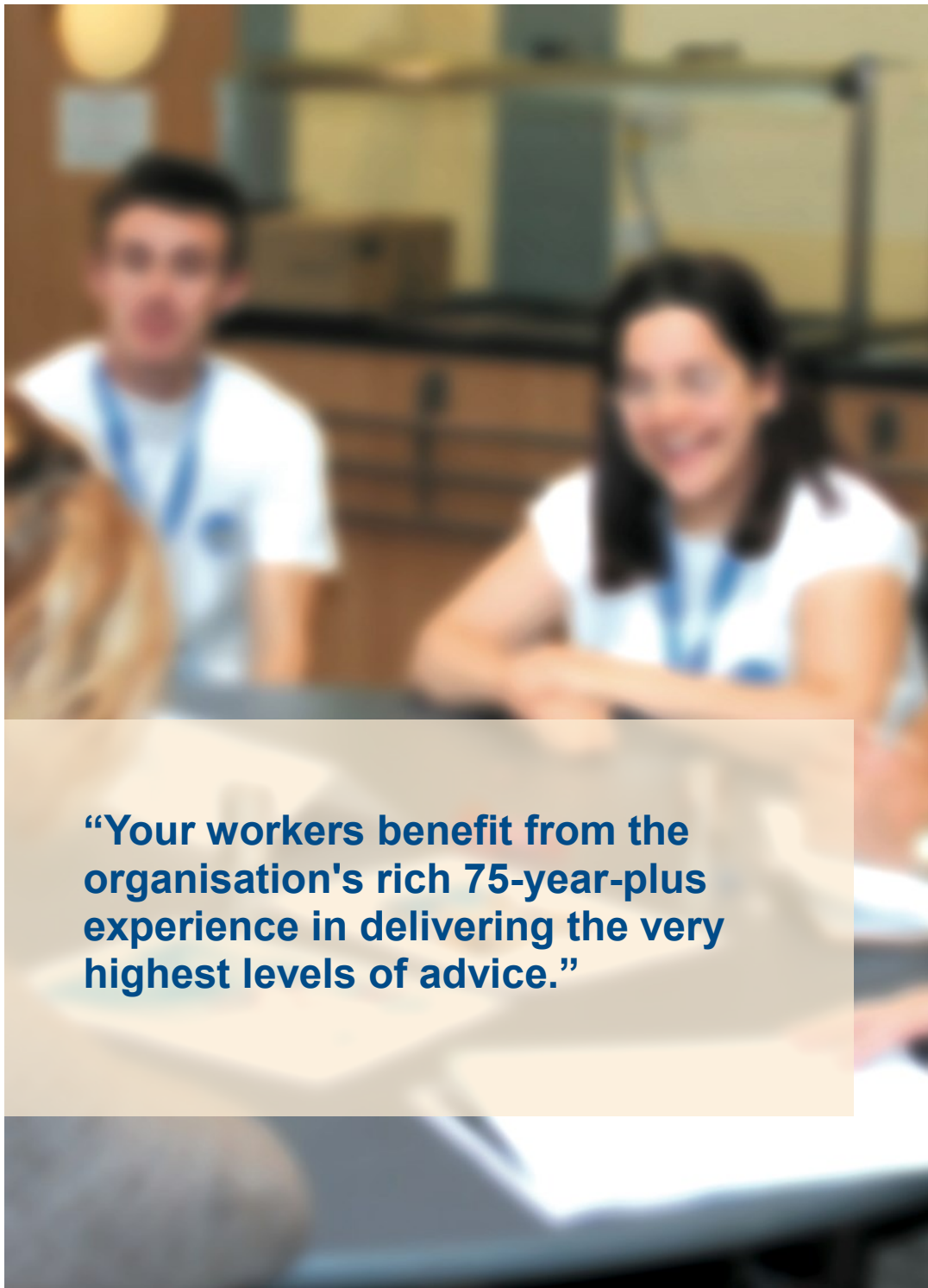


Training Brochure

November 2017—March 2018

Benefits





“Your workers benefit from the organisation's rich 75-year-plus experience in delivering the very highest levels of advice.”

Introducing Advice House: The right training at the right time

It is essential that people receive the right help. We all know that. But today, more than ever, there are myriad legislative changes that need to be understood inside out. From your point of view, that means making sure that your workers receive up-to-date learning that interprets law impartially, evaluates strategy intelligently and, above all, delivers results for end users.

But where to turn?

Well, Advice House delivers a huge range of programmes for an affordable cost, at an easily accessible location near you. In short, it's Citizens Advice Staffordshire North and Stoke-on-Trent's one-stop-shop for training. Your workers benefit from the organisation's rich, 75-year-plus experience in delivering the very highest levels of advice and the expertise in our specialist areas.

So in the short term, we'd advise you to look through what's on offer in this brochure at your leisure. And you'll soon see why we call ourselves The Home of Effective Training.



Course Descriptions

Full Courses are 3 hours long unless otherwise stated and provide a good grounding for front-line advice staff.

Bite size courses are 90 minute courses

- For people who need a basic understanding of benefits
- For people who need to signpost clients rather than giving in-depth advice

OR

- For benefits which don't need a full course to cover everything that you need to know

B - indicates that the course appears in the current brochure

I - indicates that the course is not in the current brochure but can be

(B) Attendance Allowance – bite size

The disability benefit claimed by people aged 65 and over is quite different to PIP. This short course for all levels of experience explains the claims process, qualifying conditions and potential impact on entitlement to other benefits for older people.

“Excellent course, highly enjoyable. Well explained.”

(I) Benefits after a death—bite size

This session is suitable for social workers and support workers who work with the bereaved. We will look at what a widow, widower or bereaved family member needs to do following the death of a loved one and entitlements to social funeral payments and bereavement benefits.

“Tina is a very informative and articulate trainer.”

(B) Benefit Cap – bite size

Originally justified as a measure to peg benefit entitlement at no more than the average wage, the ‘Benefit Cap’ is due to be reduced substantially. This course, for advisers of all levels of experience, looks at who is exempt, which benefits count towards the Cap and some options that can help if you are affected.

“Very easy to understand. Clear and friendly approach.”

(I) Benefit Update – bite size

With so many changes happening to social security benefits and tax credits, it's easy to lose track. This session summarises key elements of recent legislation and explains how it affects claimants, or will do so in future. Ideal if you need to keep up-to-date but can't regularly attend Lunch Club.

“Clear, concise update, well presented.” “Very enlightening, (I) now know more about benefits”

(I) Benefits for Carers - bite size

This bite size session looks at benefit options for those who are carers of adults or children with a disability. The session will look at Carer's Allowance and income-related benefits that carers may be able to claim and whether carers are better off in or out of work. This session is suitable for anyone working with carers or people with disabilities who have carers.

“Enjoyable course - delivered well” “Brilliant as usual”



(I) Benefits for families with children

This session is suitable for social workers and support workers who need to have an overview of the benefits that are available for families with children. The session will also take a look at maternity and paternity benefits.

(B) Benefits for jobseekers and sanctions

This half-day course covers conditions for entitlement to contribution-based JSA, income-related JSA and Universal Credit for jobseekers; jobseeker agreements, claimant commitments, and jobseeker directions; the sanction regime and how to appeal sanctions. The course is suitable for advisers who are working with jobseekers and for those who need to know more about the challenges which face jobseekers.

*"Effective training. Very useful for my role as an employment adviser."
"Very informative and covered everything. Examples are really useful."*

(B) Benefits for Pensioners

This session will cover entitlements to Pension Credit and State Retirement Pension including changes introduced in April 2016

"The exercises that we did helped to get a better understanding." "The explanations from (the) trainer were excellent. She showed empathy and patience and was very articulate."

(I) Benefits for people going into hospital or a care home - bite size

This session will cover what happens to benefits entitlement when a claimant enters hospital or a care home. This will be suitable for anyone working with benefit claimants who are likely to enter hospital or a care home and who needs to know the impact this will have.

"Holistic course on fairer charging, direct payments and how benefits fit into the whole picture"

(B) Benefits for Self-employment

With rising numbers of workers classed as 'self-employed', this course considers how this affects their benefit entitlement, looking at the extra conditions which apply to claims for benefits and tax credits and the implications of Universal Credit's introduction. Some existing knowledge of means-tested benefits and tax credits will be useful.

"Very useful information provided and examples."

(B) Benefits for Under 25s

"We are currently waiting for detailed regulations concerning the changes to benefit entitlement for young people proposed in the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2015. However, young people are already often at a disadvantage when claiming benefits, sometimes facing extra qualifying conditions and lower rates of payment. This course, for people with a good basic knowledge of the benefits system, looks at the conditions for claiming benefits for young people, both as part of a parent or guardian's household or independently, their entitlement in and out of full-time, non-advanced education and as a young person estranged from family, and how this is changing due to new legislation."

This course was previously delivered as benefits for under 21s.



(I) Case Law for use in PIP and ESA appeals

This will be a practical course in which trainees will learn how to access the Tribunal Service Database of Upper Tribunal decisions and use appropriate cases to support example appeals. This is a course for very experienced advisers who are preparing cases for Mandatory Reconsideration and First-Tier Tribunal. We would expect attendees to have previously completed, ESA level 2, PIP level 2, and the Challenging and appealing decisions full course or both the Challenging & appealing decisions bite size sessions. Please contact us if you need further guidance as to whether the course is suitable for you.

"Excellent and very helpful with a specific case." "Informative and well structured with mixed activities to apply the knowledge."

(B) Challenging and Appealing Benefit Decisions

What can you do if you disagree with a benefit decision? This course looks at the options for claimants and their advisers faced with a decision they wish to change or challenge, including a thorough explanation of 'mandatory reconsideration' and the appeal process, the time limits for taking action, weighing up the risks of challenging decisions and other options, such as requesting a revision or supersession. There is also a section on challenging allegations of benefit fraud and how the social security appeals process affects a criminal law case. Illustrated with examples and practical exercises, the course assumes a good working knowledge of a range of social security benefits.

"very informative and useful, thank you." "Nice pace of delivery" "Great training as usual. Very informative." "Sarah gave good advice / tips on how to complete submissions and how to conduct oneself at a tribunal" "Will definitely recommend this course to my colleagues" "As Sarah has attended tribunals I found her experience useful" "I have a good understanding from the session today of how the appeal process works at tribunals and assisting clients about the process"

(I) Cohabitation & Benefits – Bite Size

A short course for anyone advising on benefit claims to counter widely-held misunderstandings such as 'as long as you don't spend more than three nights a week together, you aren't cohabiting!' with the real questions to determine if a couple are 'living together' for benefit and tax credit purposes.

"(I was) looking for a general overview. Good to know what questions to ask to delve deeper in to reasons and circumstances."

(I) Contribution Based Benefits

Benefits which are based on National Insurance contributions will still remain as part of the benefits system even after the introduction of Universal Credit. This session will look at the qualifying conditions for Contributions-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Contributory Employment Allowance, State Retirement Pensions and Bereavement Benefits and how these benefits link into the rest of the benefit system. This session is suitable for anyone who needs to know more about these benefits, no experience is necessary.

(B) Council Tax Support—bite size

This session is an overview of the different Council Tax Support schemes operated by local authorities in this area and exemptions and discounts available for students, single people and people with disabilities.

"Very good detailed overview."



(B) Disability Benefit Form Filling

This course, developed from the experience of our benefits team both in completing forms and representing at appeals, explains how accurate evidence on the claim form can be the crucial factor in securing the correct benefit entitlement for your clients. We consider how the right approach to the claim form can better prepare a claimant for their face-to-face assessment and we look at how the quality of the claim form impacts on decision-making and appeals. We also discuss some common misconceptions about completing claim forms held by both claimants and advisers. The principles from this course are equally applicable to claims for ESA, PIP, Attendance Allowance and DLA for children.

This course replaces ESA level 2 and PIP level 2

(I) DLA for under 16s—bite size

Although working-age people cannot make new claims for DLA, it is still the benefit to claim if you are responsible for a disabled child. This course looks at how to claim, the qualifying conditions and how these differ to those which used to apply to adult claims. We will discuss supporting evidence for claims, reconsiderations and appeals, and the impact of a successful claim on awards of means-tested benefits, including Child Tax Credit and Universal Credit, and the Benefit Cap. We will also look at the potential repercussions of having to claim PIP at 16.

(I) DLA to PIP - Bite Size

With most people claiming DLA due to be 'invited' to claim PIP instead, this course looks at the similarities and differences between the two benefits, when and how the change-over happens and the options for a claimant unhappy with their PIP award.

"Explained in simple terms - understood the transition."

(B) ESA Level 1

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) was introduced in October 2008 to replace Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance and Income Support for people who are unable to work due to ill-health or disability. This session will examine the ESA assessment criteria and who should be exempt from assessment.

"Varied learning materials - video / case studies" "Really great training. Thank you."

ESA level 2 has been replaced by our new Disability Benefit Form Filling course.

(B) Housing Benefit

This course will look at who is entitled to Housing Benefit and the impact of welfare reforms on HB entitlements including deductions for spare rooms (Bedroom Tax), the Local Housing Allowance and the Benefit Cap. The course is suitable for advisers who are working with Housing Benefit claimants and for those who need to know more about the impact of cuts to Housing Benefit.

"Good overview of the Housing Benefit and how this is calculated" "The handouts were very beneficial and easy to follow."

(I) Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit - bite size

Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit is payable to people who have either had an accident in their work place or suffer from a prescribed industrial disease. This session will cover the qualifying conditions for IIDB and look at the advantages of claiming this benefit, for example people receiving IIDB will be exempt from the benefit cap. This session is suitable for anyone who wishes to know more about this benefit, no experience is necessary.

"Very good as usual. Lots to take in."



(B) Introduction to benefits

This session is suitable for social workers and support workers who do not have specialist knowledge of the benefit system. It will give an overview of the benefit system and who is entitled to claim which benefit.

"All very interesting. I had limited knowldege and this has given an overview of benefits available." "Good refresher and update of changes"

(I) Overview of Welfare Reform

This session is suitable for social workers and support workers who do not have specialist knowledge of the benefit system. It will give an overview of the welfare reforms which have been introduced by the Welfare Reform Act 2012, including Personal Independence Payment, Universal Credit, the under-occupancy deductions for social tenants ('bedroom tax'), changes to the social fund, Council Tax Support, and the benefit cap.

"I felt the delivery was excellent. Pitched at the right standard for the lay person to understand." "Very knowledgeable trainer." "Good overview for me as I am relatively new to the role."

(B) PIP Level 1

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) was introduced in April 2013 to replace Disability Living Allowance for claimants aged 16-64. This session will look at who is entitled to claim PIP and examine the assessment criteria used to determine entitlement. The course is suitable for experienced advisers with little or no knowledge of PIP and support workers who do not normally give benefits advice.

"Excellent delivery of course material. Easy to follow and good pace."; "Great facilitator"

PIP level 2 has been replaced by our new Disability Benefit Form Filling course.

(B) Tax Credits Level 1

Introduction to Tax Credits and other HMRC benefits.

"Very helpful course and very useful. Also good to keep up to date with future changes and affects"

(B) Tax Credits Level 2

The introduction of Universal Credit will mean that people who are transferring from Tax Credits to Universal Credit part way through a tax year may receive a demand for repayment of a Tax Credit overpayment. This session will cover dealing with Tax Credit overpayments and how to dispute or appeal Tax Credit decisions.

"I found the whole course informative and helpful. It has given me a broad understanding of (timing) for information giving, complaints, disputes, appeals and calculations."

(I) Universal Credit – Bite Size

An introduction for non-specialists to the benefit due to replace most existing means-tested benefits and tax credits, looking at the implications for claimants and who the 'winners' and 'losers' are likely to be when Universal Credit is introduced.

"Presentation was effective, questions answered comprehensively and clearly."

(B) Universal Credit Level 1

This half-day course is suitable for advisers with some experience of giving benefits advice and will examine the Universal Credit Regulations, how entitlement to Universal Credit is calculated, the conditionality rules and work-related activities that claimants will be expected to undertake.

"Found session very educational" "learnt a lot." "I feel better equipped to deal with UC cases now." "Trainer knows her stuff!"



(B) Universal Credit Level 2 – The tricky bits

This session will look at some of the complications that can arise for UC claimants, including changes of circumstances, claimants who are self-employed, payments at the end of employment, the benefit cap, in-work conditionality, deductions from benefit and transitional protection issues.

“Course was brilliant. Answered all my questions.”

“Great training tutor. Very knowledgeable and approachable.” “Handout is excellent and Tina know her stuff.”

This is now a 2 hour course charged the same as our bite size sessions.

(I) Welfare benefits and Immigration

Social Security law is constantly changing, but for EEA Nationals and other people coming to the UK, recent changes have been particularly dramatic.

With reduced entitlement to income-based JSA, Housing Benefit and Tax Credits, many EEA citizens and their families face severe financial hardship and the risk of homelessness. It is therefore important for advisers to understand the circumstances in which these claimants might be eligible for support and how they acquire a permanent right of residence in the UK.

This course will look at how immigration status affects benefit entitlement, concepts such as ‘habitual residence’ and the ‘right to reside’, and the changing rights of EEA Nationals and other ‘People Subject to Immigration Control’.

“A thorough explanation of the various scenarios involving benefits and immigration. Well presented. Plenty of opportunities allowed for questions. Good hand outs.”



Other services from Advice House

Lunch Club

- Bitesize Benefit Training
- Latest Benefit Updates
- Networking

Lunch Club is for front-line staff and volunteers working with people affected by Welfare Reform. **Free** to everyone but if demand is high we will give priority to voluntary and statutory organisations in North Staffordshire.

People who already have a good working knowledge of the benefit system will get the most out of Lunch Club but attendance is open to all.

Usually held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month from 1-2pm at Advice House but please check with us first as we sometimes have to vary the date or venue. Invitations are sent each month to everyone on the Advice House mailing list.

Trainer Biographies

Tina Mendolia, BA (Hons), PTLLS, is a Training Officer at North Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Citizens Advice. She has worked in the advice work field for more than 25 years in a variety of roles, including Money Adviser at Cambridge CAB, Manager at Kidsgrove CAB and Training Manager at Stoke-on-Trent CAB. She is an experienced trainer now specialising in delivering training courses on welfare benefits and welfare reform.

Sarah Honeysett, BA (Hons), is a Training and Network Development Officer at Staffordshire North and Stoke-on-Trent Citizens Advice. She has worked for a number of benefits advice and housing projects since 1985, including seven years as an adviser at Stoke-on-Trent Citizens Advice Bureau carrying out specialist casework on benefit appeals, and is experienced in providing welfare benefits training to both advisers and non-specialists.

North Staffs Advice Network Meetings

These are strategic planning and networking meetings

- **Free** to all staff and volunteers who work with clients affected by Welfare Reform.
- Held several times a year
- Meetings will be advertised to everyone on the Advice House mailing list .

Staff and volunteers from organisations outside of North Staffordshire are welcome to attend but we may have to restrict the number of delegates each organisation can send.

Advice House Benefits Newsletter

Our **free** monthly benefits newsletter, containing all the latest information on the benefits system, is sent out to everyone on the Advice House mailing list. Also available to download from our website.

www.snscab.org.uk/who-are-we/reports

Advice House Webpage

Information about all our services including benefits and other training are available on our website.

www.snscab.org.uk/how-you-can-help-us/buy-our-training

Advice House mailing list

Telephone Deborah Williamson on 01782 408 668 or email deborah.williamson@snscab.org.uk to be added to the mailing list.



Dates, Times and Venues

November 2017 to March 2018

Date	Course	Time	Trainer	Venue
Monday 27th November 2017	Universal Credit level 1	10am-1pm (3 hours)	TM	AH
	Universal Credit level 2	1.30pm-3.30pm (2 hours)	TM	AH
Mon 4th December 2017	PIP level 1	10am-1pm (3 hours)	TM	AH
Wednesday 24th January 2018	ESA level 1	10am-1pm (3 hours)	TM	AH
	Disability benefit form filling	1.30pm-4.30pm (3 hours)	SH	AH
Thursday 15th February 2018	Universal Credit level 1	10am-1pm (3 hours)	TM	AH
	Universal Credit level 2	1.30pm-3.30pm (2 hours)	TM	AH
Tuesday 20th February 2018	Challenging & appealing benefit decisions	10am-1pm (3 hours)	SH	AH
Tuesday 13th March 2018	Universal Credit level 1	10am-1pm (3 hours)	TM	AH
	Universal Credit level 2	1.30pm-3.30pm (2 hours)	TM	AH

Trainers

TM—Tina Mendolia

SH—Sarah Honeysett

We reserve the right to substitute a different trainer than advertised.

Venues

AH—SNSCAB, Advice House, Cheapside, Hanley, ST1 1HL



Course Fees

Full courses (3 hours):

£40 + VAT (£48) per training place

1¹/₂ hour and 2 hour courses (including bite size courses):

£20 + VAT (£24) per training place

All courses must be paid for in advance

Special offer

Book 2 or more places on the same course and get them at a discount.

Full courses: £30 + VAT (£36) per place

Bite size courses: £15 + VAT (£18) per place

Places do not have to be booked at the same time to qualify for the discount but please note if you later cancel all but one of the places you will be charged full price for that place.

In-house sessions

we can deliver any of the Welfare Benefits Courses in the brochure at your venue for groups of up to 15 people. Or we can create a bespoke course for you.

Half day course - £300 + VAT (£360); Full day course - £500 + VAT (£600) plus travel costs if outside of North Staffs. Please enquire about discounts for booking more than one course.

Concessions

We have no funding to provide free or discounted training places at present other than the special offer above.

Return your completed booking form to:

Deborah Williamson at deborah.williamson@snsCab.org.uk

Or post to:

SNSCAB, Advice House, Cheapside, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 1HL

Please indicate on your form if you are enclosing a cheque or if you would prefer to be invoiced for your order. Payment can be made by cheque or BACS.

Cheques should be made payable to:

Staffordshire North & Stoke-on-Trent Citizens Advice Bureaux

Cancellations

If you need to cancel

Please note that fees are non-returnable for cancellations made less than 5 working days before the session.

Contact Deborah Williamson on 01782 408 668 or deborah.williamson@snsCab.org.uk

If we need to cancel

We reserve the right to cancel any course if we do not have enough bookings to make the course viable. We will notify you as soon as possible and refund any course fees you have paid.



Booking form

Please use this form to book advertised courses.

If you would like us to deliver training at your organisation please use the in-house booking form overleaf.

ADVICE HOUSE



<p style="text-align: center;">Contact Details</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Address (Training certificates will be sent to this address)</p> <p>Telephone:</p> <p>Email:</p>	Name of your organisation:				
	Attendee Name (optional)	Course Title	Course Date	Concession Code	Fee
<p>Contact for invoicing (if different)</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Address:</p> <p>Telephone:</p> <p>Email:</p>	Please note that fees must be paid in advance and are non-refundable for cancellations made less 5 working days before the session			SUBTOTAL	
				VAT	
				TOTAL to pay	
<p>OFFICE USE ONLY</p> <p>PASSED TO FINANCE DEPT</p> <p>DATE:</p> <p>TEAM:</p> <p>MANAGER SIGNATURE:</p> <p>.....</p>	..	I enclose a cheque made payable to: Staffordshire North & Stoke-on-Trent Citizens Advice Bureaux			
	..	Please invoice me for the amount shown. (Your Purchase Order No or other Ref No if applicable			

Booking form – In-house training

Please use this form if you would like us to deliver training at your organisation. Fill in any details you have and one of our trainers will contact you to discuss your requirements further

Contact Details	Training topic	Date(s) you would like the training	Length of session
Name:	Give title or a brief description if you would like a bespoke course		Eg full day, half day or other
Organisation:			
Address:			
Tel:			
Email:			
Concessionary rates and discounts for multiple bookings may be available. See brochure or contact us for further details.			

Completed forms should be emailed to Sue Garside (sue.garside@sncab.org.uk) for Refugee and Asylum sessions or Deborah Williamson (Deborah.williamson@sncab.org.uk) for Welfare Benefits sessions or posted to SNSCAB, Advice House, Cheapside, Hanley, S-o-T, ST1 1HL