

Principal Technician - Job Description and Person Specification

Job Title:	Principal Technician
Grade:	PO2
Responsible To:	Principal Surveyor

Role Purpose:

The postholder will provide support to the Principal Surveyor roles and be a flexible resource for both CT & NDR workloads.

- To assist Assessor in maintaining Council Tax List and Valuation Roll .
- To carry out survey, measurement and valuation for Council Tax purposes.
- As a Manager, the post is responsible for the leadership, development and setting the overall standards of an operational service across LVJB and its constituent Councils.
- To provide day to day management of Council Tax Staff and resource allocation
- To undertake the survey, measurement and valuation of non-domestic properties as required.
- To provide support to professional staff.

Key Duties and Activities:

- Valuation of all categories of dwelling for Council Tax purposes.
- Maintaining computer and hard copy files relating to Council Tax.
- Assisting in the development and implementation of IT programmes for Council Tax purposes.
- Analysis of sales evidence to establish Council Tax bands and values.
- Verification of new housing templates, POS cases and other workload.
- Negotiation of banding proposals and appeals with public and agents.
- Preparation of evidence for cases proceeding before the First Tier Tribunal for Scotland
- Appearing as expert witness in domestic cases proceeding before the First Tier Tribunal for Scotland.
- Carrying out reviews of bandings or re-banding exercises where inconsistencies emerge.
- Allocation of workload and tasks to ensure effective running of Council Tax.
- Responsibility for performance of Council Tax in line with agreed targets.
- Decision making and authority on Council Tax Decisions.
- Training/mentoring of Trainee Technicians.
- Supervising the training /mentoring of Trainee Valuers in domestic valuation.
- Providing support and advice to Technicians for complex Council Tax enquiries.
- Identify and provide ongoing training to the Council Tax Team.
- Undertake audit checks on Council Tax assurance reports.
- Reviewing Council Tax procedures through participation in working groups.
- In the event of a council tax revaluation the role holder will have central involvement in that statutory process.
- Provision of advice to professional staff and senior management.
- Survey of all categories of non-domestic property.

- Valuation of non-domestic property.
- Assist with the Revaluation of non-domestic property.
- Maintaining computer and hard copy records for non-domestic property.
- Negotiation of non-domestic appeals involving non-complex subjects within parameters of schemes of valuation.
- Conducting Team Briefings.
- Contribute to LVJB project groups.
- Implementing all LVJB policies relating to employees etc.
- Assisting in implementing programs of IT development.
- Lead project groups where appropriate.
- The postholder should be a member of the technical management group.

Supervision and Management of People:

There is direct line management of staff, and provide training, mentoring and guidance to the group of Technicians, Trainee Technicians and Trainee Valuers when they are undertaking council tax work. (6-15 staff per Principle Technician). They will be responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring the overall workload of a team of staff, consisting of any of the above designations.

The post holder is responsible for developing and communicating a clear vision of what is to be achieved by the Council Tax Team and encouraging and motivating individuals to contribute to the organisation's goals to the best of their ability, creating a sense of unity and common purpose.

The post holder is required to organise and delegate work fairly, identify staff capabilities, set performance standards, identify and implement developmental activity and ensure team members have the support they need to provide a quality service. The post holder should have the ability to positively influence the work standards of the team and provide feedback and guidance to maintain those levels.

The post holder will be required to manage a team who have different work patterns and work locations.

Creativity and Innovation:

- Prioritisation of Council Tax work
- Will work with minimum supervision on any Council Tax based activities
- Exercise of proper judgement in determining Council Tax bands
- Preparation of valuations and reports.
- Investigation of Council Tax matters and authority to make decisions where necessary
- Correspondence with taxpayers, agents and other stakeholders
- Correspondence with local authorities, agents and other stakeholders regarding significant council tax matters
- Preparation and presentation of material before First-Tier Tribunal for Scotland
- Contributing to working group developing Information Technology systems for Council Tax
- Acting in accordance with principles of Best Value
- Role holders are required to exercise their expert judgment making informed decisions on matters pertaining to valuation banding of council tax.
- Role holders are required to exercise expert judgement on matters without reference to senior staff except in the case of significantly complex or consequential decisions.

Contacts and Relationships:

- Reports to the Principal Surveyor
- The general public
- All staff up to Directorate level
- Departmental staff of the four constituent councils
- Professional agents
- House builders
- First Tier Tribunal for Scotland, including clerks, solicitors and counsel acting on behalf of the Tribunal or as required by the Assessor
- Examples of contact with those listed above may be in relation to banding exercises/reviews and impact of widespread changes to multiple properties in a particular area.
- The role holder is required to deal with complex and contentious matters, which have significant implications for stakeholders and the organisation, requiring skilled levels of explanation, persuasion, sensitivity and assurance.
- They will assist the Divisional Valuer in providing an extentional conduit with the Technician/Trainee Technician group, providing feedback and advice in respect of looking to make work processes more efficient and effective with the resources available.

Decisions and Discretion:

- Determining banding levels for Council Tax by accurate analysis and interpretation of sales evidence
- Reviewing and determining appropriate banding increases following domestic property alterations
- Negotiation of Council Tax proposals with taxpayers and agents-
- Valuation and negotiation of non-domestic appeals within scheme parameters and reporting to the Principal Surveyor
- Role holders will be expected to propose and implement procedural changes to make statutory process and engagement with stakeholder more efficient and effective.
- Role holder will make decisions on how to value properties going forward or deal with proposals.
- Role holder will be expected to identify where efficiencies can be made in the banding process by utilising all the statutory powers and mechanisms the Assessors has to perform that function.
- The role holder will similarly be expected to review proposal and appeals protocols and processes to make those more efficient.

Decisions and Consequences:

- Liaising with colleagues in other geographical teams to ensure consistency of practice.
- Investigating and making recommendations to senior colleagues in respect of re-banding exercises or a wider review of Council Tax bandings
- Role holder is responsible for decisions on banding of individual properties, or multiple properties in respect of banding reviews, which affect the customers of the service and accordingly they will be required to appear at the First Tier Tribunal in defence of those decisions.
- the day to day organisation and supervision of team work.

- liaising and making recommendations with other Principal Technicians or Divisional Valuers as to work priority and staff resourcing.
- advising and recommending to the Principal Surveyor where organisational focus and resource is required from other departments.

Resources:

- Will be responsible for a range of IT equipment that is available to employee to enable them to work in accordance with the LVJB's hybrid working policy.
- Will receive their own survey equipment to enable them to carry out the safely when required.
- Will share surveying measuring equipment to enable them to perform that role.

Work Demands:

- The post holder must have the ability to prioritise their work during times where there are competing statutory deadlines and liaise with the Divisional Valuer in suitably planning to ensure that all statutory responsibilities are met.
- Ability to drive/willingness to travel.
- Any other duties pertinent to post.
- It will be a requirement of the post that the post-holder obtains a Basic Disclosure from Disclosure Scotland.
- In the event of a future revaluation of Council Tax, the role holder will have a central involvement in all aspects of that process including but not exclusively, the allocation of significant staff resources to deal with it and the determination of council tax bands in localised areas.

Physical Demands:

Although the post may be exposed to some physical demands these will be predominantly within the range of normal office-based activities and in compliance with any health and safety policy within or outwith the office.

Working Conditions:

Although the post may be exposed to some adverse working conditions these will be predominantly within the range of normal office-based activities and will not be more than the normal required of an LVJB employee in day-to-day activities and subject to any relevant health and safety policy.

Work Context:

The role holder's work involves minimal risk to their personal safety and the environment is unlikely to compromise their health and wellbeing.

Potsholders will be expected to comply with the LVJB's Lone Working Policy and to undertake the necessary risk assessments for lone working.

Knowledge and Skills:

- HND or HNC (or above) in General Surveying or have completed the LVJB Trainee Technician Pathway, or have attained equivalent training, or have acquired the necessary skills and attributes from relevant work experience over a number of years.
- Organisation of Council Tax work.
- Strong knowledge and understanding of the local housing market.
- Ability to survey all categories of domestic property.
- Sufficient competence to survey all non domestic property.
- Ability to analyse and accurately interpret domestic sales evidence.
- Determining levels of value for Council Tax.
- Preparation of values and reports.
- Providing recommendations to senior staff.
- Correspondence with taxpayers, agents and other stakeholders.
- Negotiation with taxpayers and professional agents in respect of proposals and appeals.
- Preparation and presentation of material before First-Tier Tribunal for Scotland.
- Maintenance of hard copy and IT based record systems.
- Maintenance of effective contacts with the four constituent councils.
- Training and mentoring or subordinate staff.
- Member of office working group to develop Council Tax systems.
- Acting in accordance with principles of best value and awareness of organisational performance Standards.
- Detailed knowledge of Council Tax legislation.
- Awareness and understanding of guiding Council Tax Case Law.
- The role holder will be required to demonstrate the appropriate management and leadership skills to undertake the mentoring and guidance of Technicians and Trainee Technicians.
- The post holder shall be confident and self-motivated. They shall have excellent communication skills.
- Ability to prepare and present reports.

Health and Safety:

Protecting the health and safety and welfare of our colleagues, and our third parties including members of the public, contractors and service users.

All employees are responsible for:

- Taking care of their own health and safety and welfare, and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions;
- Co-operating with management and following instructions, safe systems and procedures;
- Reporting any hazards, damage or defects immediately to their line manager; and
- Reporting any personal injury and work related ill health, and accident or incident (including ‘near misses’) immediately to their line manager, and assist with any subsequent investigation, including co-operating fully with the provision of witness statements and any other evidence that may be required.

Line managers have additional responsibilities for ensuring all health and safety risks under their management are identified, assessed and controlled, with specialist input from the Health and Safety Committee and HR Manager, including Occupational Health where required. Where the risks cannot be adequately controlled the activity should not proceed.

Additional information can be found at [LVJB Health and Wellbeing](#).

Attributes	Person Specification – Essential	Person Specification – Desirable
PROFESSIONAL/ EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HND or HNC (or above) in General Surveying or have completed the LVJB Trainee Technician Pathway, or have attained equivalent training, or have acquired the necessary skills and attributes from relevant work experience over a number of years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AssocRICS
RELEVANT WORK/ OTHER EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in the survey of all categories of domestic property. • The ability to survey all categories of non-domestic property • Experience of collation and analysis of evidence in relation to Council Tax in accordance with statutory regulations. • Thorough understanding of the procedures in respect of the disposal of proposals and appeals for First-Tier Tribunal Service • Experience in the discussion of council tax proposals and appeals with taxpayers or their representatives and the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in non domestic rating • Experience in the application of standard schemes of non domestic valuation • Experience in the negotiation of non-domestic proposals and appeals • Experience in the presentation of evidence in hearings before the First Tier Tribunal for Scotland • Experience of working with and promoting education of trainees.

	<p>preparation of evidence for hearing before the First Tier Tribunal for Scotland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of involvement and implementation of office-wide projects • Knowledge and understanding of non-domestic rating • Understanding of Best Value practice and LVJB performance targets. 	
<p>PARTICULAR SKILLS/ ABILITIES (eg technical ability, computing skills, other work related skills)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough knowledge and understanding of Council Tax legislation in Scotland. • Competent in use of Microsoft packages including Word and Excel, and a thorough understanding of in-house IT valuation and work management systems • Strong oral and written communication skills including the ability to conduct research, collate information and produce meaningful reports and recommendations to senior managers. • Ability to communicate effectively on behalf of the organisation at external meetings, including as an expert witness at Tribunal hearings • Ability to work under pressure and meet statutory deadlines. • Working with and promoting skills in trainees • Compliance with best value requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working knowledge of Valuation & Rating legislation in Scotland.
<p>PERSONAL QUALITIES (eg inter-personal skills, attitude, adaptability, motivation, presentation)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enthusiastic team player. • Self motivated with ability to use own initiative. • Well developed interpersonal and communication skills • Appreciation of benefits of establishing and maintaining good relations with officials, elected members and other stakeholders. • Ability to deal positively with and promote organisational change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to adopt a flexible approach to working hours.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of responsibilities under the Joint Board's Health & Safety Policy. 	
<p>ANY ADDITIONAL JOB RELATED REQUIREMENTS (eg ability to work irregular hours, shifts)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full current driving licence • It will be a requirement of the post that the post holder obtains a basic disclosure from Disclosure Scotland 	