

Keyword: Chartered Institute Of Environmental Health

STUDENT'S CAMPAIGN GIVES BENEFITS TO SINGLE PARENTS

A campaign launched by a university student in Greater Manchester has notched up a legal victory for single parents.

University of Salford student Tim Baggaley, a single parent studying environmental health, started the campaign after discovering that he would not be able to claim income support while on his three-week work experience with his local authority.

A change in the law meant that Mr Baggaley would not be able to claim income support and, because he was not "making himself available" for work, he would also be ineligible for Jobseekers' Allowance.

Mr Baggaley took up the issue with his local MP, Joan Walley, and the senior education officer at the [Chartered Institute for Environmental Health](#), Tony Lewis, after becoming disgruntled that he was being financially penalised for getting experience that would further his career.

Both wrote to the former Secretary of State for the Department of Work and Pensions, Yvette Cooper, who defended the change in the law.

Further lobbying by Mr Baggaley, Mr Lewis and the president of the University of Salford's Students' Union, Matt Webber, helped the campaign to grow in momentum.

The issue was referred back to the Department for Work and Pensions, and the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Helen Goodman, accepted that the regulations were "an obstacle" to single parents who are improving their education and skills.

The White Paper, *Building Britain's Recovery: Achieving Full Employment*, announced the intention to allow full-time students with a child aged below 16 to claim income support in the summer holidays, enabling Mr Baggaley and other students to support their families while undertaking work experience or other university-related activities such as exam re-sits or courses.

Mr Baggaley said: "I am delighted that the campaign has worked and it goes to show that it is possible to bring about a change if you make the effort.

"It is great that I can still provide for my child while building a better future for us."