

## Work preparation regime

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### Aim

To keep the claimant motivated by preparing them to return to work as soon as they are able, while taking into account their capability. There is a stepped increase in support to return to work as the youngest child reaches 5 years old.

### Characteristics

This regime includes:

- claimants who are a nominated responsible carer (lead carer) of a child aged 3 or 4
- claimants deemed to have or can be treated as having limited capability for work (LCW) following the outcome of a work capability assessment (WCA)

## Requirements

Claimants determined as having LCW following the outcome of their WCA agree set requirements which help the claimant's motivation by preparing them to return to work as soon as they are able, taking into account their capability.

The policy intent for responsible carers with a youngest child aged 3 or 4 is to offer them a stepped increase in support to enable them to be ready to return to work. This is important for responsible carers in the year before they move to the Intensive Work Search regime when their youngest child turns 5. Responsible carers are not expected to be available for or to look for work, although they can do so voluntarily.

The table below sets out the 2 main types of work-related requirements that can be made compulsory for claimants within this regime:

<p><b>Work focused interview requirements are for any or a combination of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• assessing prospects for remaining in or finding paid work</li><li>• coaching claimants to remain in or find work</li><li>• identifying training or educational opportunities</li></ul>	<p><b>Work preparation requirements include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• attending a skills assessment</li><li>• improving personal presentation</li><li>• participating in an employment programme</li><li>• developing a business plan</li></ul>
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## Framework for lead carers with child aged 3 or 4 in this regime

The claimant is supported in this regime by the following:

[Claimant commitment interview](#)

[Regular coaching reviews](#)

### Claimant commitment interview

The aim of the Claimant Commitment interview is to ensure that claimants fully understand the responsibilities and requirements they have to meet and what they are expected to achieve.

The claimant attends a face to face interview. The interview covers 3 core parts, leading to a set of requirements to be recorded in a Claimant Commitment (CC), these are:

- diagnosis of claimant capability and circumstance
- establishing which preparation requirements should apply
- establishing on-going contact requirements

## **Diagnosis of claimant capability and circumstance**

Determine a claimant's capability and personal circumstances (including exploring work history, qualifications, health and caring responsibilities).

Encourage claimants to view a move into work positively, for example, by explaining the benefits of the earnings taper under Universal Credit. Determine if the claimant would like to undertake other work-related requirements on a voluntary basis.

Assess claimants for basic skills gaps and especially English Language using skills screening with subsequent mandating to basic skills training including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) where appropriate.  
Establishing which work preparations should apply

Establish clear work preparation activities, reflecting the claimant's capability and circumstances; and for carers - to address skills gaps or confidence issues providing they are reasonable and take into account caring responsibilities

Ensure the claimant understands the steps they must take to prepare for a return to work and the consequences leading to potential sanction action of a failure to comply with work preparation requirements.

Ensure the claimant is motivated and positively commits to complying with the actions and expectations.  
Establishing on-going contact requirements

This consists of a tailored level of contact - by digital, telephone or face to face - to check progress and that a claimant is meeting their requirements. Assist the claimant in meeting their requirements through coaching and support and encouraging the claimant to commit and comply with their requirements.

Develop a relationship where claimants feel they can discuss issues as they emerge, helping to ensure requirements remain reasonable and appropriate.

In addition to on-going contact and discretionary ad-hoc support, the following mandatory interventions must be applied (unless requirements have been switched off):

## **Regular coaching reviews**

There should be considerable discretion allowed in order to schedule interviews as flexibly as possible. Claimants should also be able to request discussions and interviews.

Interviews are typically mandatory but flexibility exists. Where interviews are mandatory the requirement to attend is clearly communicated, together with a clear summary of failure to attend, for example, the sanction action.

Coaching reviews must be accommodated around childcare availability as far as possible and mandatory work preparation activity should normally be restricted to the hours when the claimant's child is in the care of a responsible adult.

Claimants must feel supported to comply with their requirements with timely interventions providing help and direction. They are given access to help them overcome issues, as and when they are identified.

Undertake claimant activity monitoring to determine if they are complying with their accepted CC and the conditions of their regime.

Claimants are required to keep an update of work preparation activity in to allow a claimant's activity to be monitored. Their progress against mandatory requirements must be checked to support coaching interventions and conversations.

## **Work Programme**

Claimants can be voluntary referred to the Work Programme. Please refer to the Work Programme content (in development)

## **Framework for claimants with limited capability for work in this regime**

The claimant is supported in this regime by the following:

[Claimant Commitment interview](#)

[Regular coaching review](#)

## **Claimant Commitment interview**

The aim of the CC interview is to ensure that claimants fully understand the responsibilities and requirements they have to meet and what they are expected to achieve.

The claimant will usually attend a face to face interview. However, it is important for claimants who are assessed as LCW that facilities and reasonable adjustments are offered to accommodate health needs, including home and telephone interviews as appropriate.

The interview covers three core parts leading to a set of requirements to be recorded in a CC. These are:

- diagnosis of claimant capability and circumstance
- establishing which preparation requirements should apply
- establishing on-going contact requirements

### **Diagnosis of claimant capability and circumstance**

Determine a claimant's capability and personal circumstances, exploring their work history, qualifications, health and caring responsibilities.

Encourage claimants to view a move into work positively for example, by explaining the benefits of the taper under Universal Credit. Coaches must establish if the claimant would like to undertake other work-related requirements on a voluntary basis.

Assess claimants for basic skills gaps and especially English Language using skills screening with subsequent mandating to basic skills training including ESOL where appropriate.

Establishing which work preparations should apply

Establish clear work preparation; any work preparation requirements must be appropriate to their physical and mental capability and personal circumstances

Ensure the claimant understands the steps they must take to prepare for a return to work and the potential sanction of any failure to comply with work preparation requirements.

Ensure the claimant is motivated and positively commits to complying with the actions and expectations.

Health conditions must be considered in determining what the claimant can do to prepare for work as well as understanding what their experience, knowledge and

skills are. Understanding of every type of health condition is not required, it is more important to listen to the claimants needs and abilities as that will help inform the Claimant Commitment.

## **Work Programme**

Claimants with a LCW prognosis of three, six, and 12 months will be required to attend the work programme. It is important that the claimant understands that this is a mandatory requirement, the benefits of attending and action if they don't. More information can be found in the Work Programme content (in development).

## **Regular coaching review**

There is a large amount of flexibility to best use review time to drive results for claimants in this regime.

Claimants can request reviews and interviews. Interviews are usually mandatory but there is flexibility over this. Where interviews are mandatory the requirement to attend should always be clearly communicated together with a clear summary of the consequences of failure to attend, for example the sanction that applies.

Claimants must feel supported to comply with their requirements via timely interventions to provide encouragement and direction. They are given access to support to help them overcome issues as and when they are identified.

Monitoring of claimant activity must take place to determine whether they are complying with their accepted Claimant Commitment and the conditions of their regime, for example, if the claimant has attended a training course.

Claimants will be required and encouraged to keep an update of work preparation activity for monitoring the level of a claimant's activity and in particular their progress against mandatory requirements and to support coaching interventions and conversations.

Claimants must be able to engage with Universal Credit through a variety of communications channels for variable durations and frequencies.

It is important for claimants who are assessed as LCW that facilities and reasonable adjustments are offered to accommodate health needs, including home and telephone interviews as appropriate and any work preparation

requirements must be appropriate to their physical and mental capability and personal circumstances.

The next WCA is at 18 and 24 months.

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