

Enhanced Support Offer

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Introduction

The Enhanced Support Offer (ESO) provides access to a range of additional support to help eligible claimants prepare for and move into work. **Participation in the ESO is voluntary.** Claimants eligible for the ESO initiatives are those:

- who make a claim on or after 3 April 2017 and are part of the UC Work Preparation group (because of their limited capability for work)
- whose Work Capability Assessment (WCA) outcome places them in the UC Work Preparation group (because of their limited capability for work) from 3 April 2017.

The date to be used for eligibility in these cases is the date of the WCA Outcome Decision.

This includes anyone who:

- after appealing a previous Fit for Work decision is placed in the Work Preparation group (because of their limited capability for work)
- at their work capability reassessment they are moved from the Limited Capability for Work and Work Related Activity group (LCWRA) to the Work Preparation group (because of their limited capability for work)
- is already in the Work Preparation group (because of their limited capability for work) and their Work Capability reassessment keeps them in the UC Work Preparation group (because of their limited capability for work)

Additional places have been funded for claimants eligible for the Enhanced Support Offer for the following existing national provision:

- Work Choice
- Specialist Employability Support
- Access to Work Mental Health Support Services

There is new provision being rolled out nationally as part of the Enhanced Support Offer:

- Small Employer Offer
- Community Partners
- Journey to Employment

There is a new option added to the District Provision Tool called 'Personal Support Pack', which contains all of the local Enhanced Support Offer opportunities.

Small Employer Offer

Small employers (with 25 employees or less) and claimants participating in the ESO will benefit from access to Work Trials and Work Experience provision to allow them both to gauge whether moving to employment is a viable option.

The Small Employer Offer recognises the value of in-work support by building on existing in-work support opportunities and by introducing a Small Employer Payment (SEP) to smooth the transition into work, to increase sustained employment. The SEP is paid where a claimant works for 16 hours or more a week for 12 continuous weeks.

Note: for the first 12 months of the Small Employer Offer the SEP is only available in 50% of districts, to enable its effectiveness to be evaluated against where the payment is not available to employers.

Small employers will be supported to apply for Access to Work where they need to make adaptations to overcome work related obstacles resulting from a health condition or disability.

The claimant may receive help from the Flexible Support Fund to pay for fares and childcare to meet the employer and during Work Trials or Work Experience. The claimant commitment should be revised to include participation on the Small Employer Offer.

Community Partners

Community Partners have been recruited to support the up-skilling of jobcentre staff, to increase awareness of the effects that health conditions and disabilities can have on employment. Community Partners have a professional or lived experience of disability. Each district will have a Community Partner team.

Community Partners work with jobcentre staff and employers to build on their understanding of disability and encourage more employment opportunities for claimants with a health condition or disability. This will also help to identify suitable claimants for the ESO.

The specialisms of the Community Partners will vary dependent on the needs of claimants in the local area. Districts will develop their own plans for how to best use the expertise of Community Partners.

Journey to Employment

Journey to Employment (J2E) are pan-disability job clubs for ESO claimants only. Participation on J2E is entirely voluntary and is available in England, Scotland and Wales. Disabled people's user led organisations and local voluntary sector organisations deliver the J2E job clubs.

A specialist adviser leads the job clubs and is employed by these delivery organisations, not DWP. The specialist adviser has a lived experience of disability or knowledge of finding and staying in employment.

Each J2E will run for 12 weeks for up to 15 claimants and the J2E provider will deliver 8 job clubs during the year.

J2E delivers a friendly provider led, peer supported job club that offers a mix of activities to enable individuals to:

- make the journey towards employment
- increase confidence levels
- obtain and improve work ready skills
- participate in the local community to prevent social isolation

These are examples, not a full list.

J2E activities include:

- employment ready activities
- volunteering and work placements
- peer support – mentoring and challenge
- confidence & team building social activities
- relationship building with local employers

These are examples, not a full list.

J2E also provides in-work support and mentoring for claimants they have helped enter employment, addressing concerns and enabling them to manage the change.

If a claimant starts the J2E and their circumstances change and it takes them out of the Work Preparation group (because of their LCW) they can choose whether to continue on the job club.

If their circumstances change **before** they have started they will **not** be eligible to start the job club.

Claimants who have started a job club but a change of address takes them out of that J2E catchment area, can remain on that job club if it is practical for them to travel. Alternatively they may be referred to the J2E in their new jobcentre's catchment area.

The claimant commitment should be revised to include participation on the J2E.

Other than the appointment details in the diary, communications with the J2E specialist adviser must be verbal, not in writing or sent electronically, J2E providers are not DWP security accredited. No referral forms are to be used for this purpose, to do so will be a breach of DWP data sharing agreements and could result in disciplinary action.

Table of Enhanced Support Offer initiatives

ESO initiative	Availability	Starting	ESO claimant suitability	Access to other ESO initiatives
Additional places on Work Choice	National in England and Wales. Not available in Scotland.	3 April 2017	The claimant doesn't have to be able work any set number of hours before they start Work Choice, but they must aspire to work 16 hours or more at the end of it. There is an offer of a guaranteed place for claimants who volunteer and are eligible.	Normal Work Choice rules apply
Additional places on Specialist Employability Support (SES)	National	3 April 2017	The claimant doesn't have to be able work any set number of hours before they start SES, but they must aspire to work 16 hours or more at the end of it.	Normal SES rules apply
Additional Places on Access to Work Mental Health Support Services (AtW MHSS)	National	3 April 2017	For claimants with mental health conditions who want to work but might need support to remain in work.	Normal Access to Work rules apply
Small Employer Offer (SEO)	National	June 2017	All ESO claimants who aspire to work. Note: For the Small Employer Payment to be applicable the claimant must be employed for 16 hours or more for 12 continuous weeks.	Journey to Employment and AtW MHSS
Community Partners	National	July 2017	N/A	N/A
Journey to Employment	71 sites nationally	June 2017	ESO claimants who are more than 6	Claimants can access SEO if

			months away from the Labour Market	J2E is their primary provision. They can apply for AtW MHSS if they find employment
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Work and Health Programme

The Work and Health Programme (WHP) is DWP's new contracted employment provision that will help eligible claimants to find sustained work. WHP is available from November 2017 for claimants who have a disability or have early access priority. Referral to WHP is voluntary.

WHP tackles barriers to work by linking up with health and social care providers and other local services aimed at getting people into work. WHP offers more intensive, tailored support than can be provided by the standard Jobcentre Plus offer, or through other available services and provision.

See the Spotlight on Work and Health Programme for eligibility, suitability and what the programme offers.

Further guidance will be developed in due course.

District Provision Tool

A new Personal Support Pack icon has been added to the District Provision Tool containing links to the available Enhanced Support Offer initiatives.