

Work Programme

Last updated: 12 June 2018 (version 5.0)

Contents

[At a Glance – Work Programme](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Change of circumstances](#)

[Mandatory referrals](#)

[Optional referrals / mandatory participation](#)

[Voluntary referrals / voluntary participation](#)

[Claimant working for 26 weeks or more and treated as an early completer](#)

[Work Programme completers](#)

[Light Touch regime](#)

At a Glance – Work Programme

The Work Programme (WP) gives up to two years of extra support to claimants who need more help in finding and staying in work. The WP provider decides how best to support claimants referred to them, through a 'black box' approach.

The last date for referrals to the WP was 31st March 2017. All claimants referred on or before this date will remain on the WP for up to 104 weeks even if they move into work, unless they complete the WP early.

Claimants were referred to the WP at different points in their Universal Credit claim. A referral could either be mandatory or voluntary.

Some voluntary referrals resulted in the claimant having to participate on a mandatory basis.

A [change in a claimant's circumstances](#) can result in changes to the nature of participation on the WP and to their agreed commitments.

Additional support is provided to claimants in the Intensive Work Search regime when they complete the Work Programme.

Introduction

The WP provides up to two years of extra support to claimants who need more help in finding and staying in work. The WP providers decide how best to support claimants referred to them, through a 'black box' approach.

The claimant's Commitment provided the foundation for referral to the WP and claimants were issued with a new Commitment as part of the referral process. See Claimant Commitment.

Participation in the WP may come to an end earlier than the two years if any of the following apply:

- the provider has claimed all the outcome payments for the claimant
- the claimant moves on to Work Choice or Work First Scotland
- the claimant stays in work (earning over the earnings threshold) for 26 weeks or more - see Claimant working for 26 weeks or more and treated as an early completer
- the claimant dies

In all other circumstances, claimants participating in the WP on a mandatory basis should be referred back to their provider to complete the two years.

Claimants on the WP still need to undertake regular work search reviews. Compliance must be checked with requirements set out in the claimant's Commitment, including work search and availability requirements.

Change of circumstances

When a claimant reports a change of circumstances that affects their participation on the WP, the WP provider needs to be made aware of:

- the change
- what this means for any requirements placed on the claimant

A change of circumstances can result in a claimant moving regimes. This could be discovered as part of reviewing the claimant's Commitment.

Where a claimant returns to benefit and is already attached to the WP, the provider should be notified of the change of circumstances.

The requirements imposed on the claimant and their participation on the WP may need to change, for example when a claimant moves from mandatory participation to voluntary, or from voluntary participation to mandatory.

If the change of circumstances means that the claimant moves to the Working Enough, NWRR and WFI regimes, participation in the WP becomes voluntary. Claimants should be made aware of this and advised that they can continue to participate on a voluntary basis. If the claimant continues to participate on a voluntary basis, this should be clearly set out and accepted in their revised Commitment. See Claimant's Commitment hub.

The tables below show conditionality for claimants at the point they were referred to the WP. A change in their circumstances may change the conditionality.

Mandatory referrals

Labour Market regime	Referral type	Referral to Work Programme point
<u>IWSR</u>	Aged 18-24	9 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR
	Aged 25 and over	12 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR
	Aged 18 and NEET for 6 months or had previously claimed hardship payment when 16 or 17	3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR
	Have claimed Universal Credit (in a conditionality and contract type group which would require a referral to the WP) and/or JSA for 22 out of the previous 24 months	3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR
	Ex Incapacity Benefit (IB) claimants who have been found fit for work and subsequently made a claim to Universal Credit	3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR
	Prison leavers from the day they are released or the day they make their claim to Universal Credit if it is within 13 weeks of their release	Day 1 if benefit claim begins within 13 weeks of leaving prison and is placed in the IWSR
<u>Work Preparation regime</u>	Universal Credit claimants with a 3, 6 or 12 month re-referral period following a Work Capability Assessment (WCA).	From the WCA outcome

	Universal Credit claimants (ex-Incapacity Benefit claimants) with a 3, 6 or 12 month re-referral period following a WCA.	From the WCA outcome
--	--	----------------------

Some claimants in the IWSR also had voluntary early access to the WP. If they agree to be referred, their participation on the WP is mandatory. See 'Optional referrals / mandatory participation' below.

Optional referrals / mandatory participation

When claimants opted to enter the WP early, participation was mandatory.

Labour Market Regime	Claimant types	Referral to Work Programme point
<u>IWSR</u>	Care leaver aged 18 - 21	From day 1 or thereafter from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR
	Ex-offenders (if claim after 13 weeks from release) and offenders serving a community sentence	3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR
	Disabled person (Equality Act definition)	3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR
	Person with mild to moderate mental health issues	3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR
	Carer	3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR
	Ex-carer	3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR
	Homeless person	3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR
	Former member of HM armed forces personnel	3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR
	Partner of a current or former member of HM armed forces personnel	3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR
	An HM Armed Forces reservist participant	3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR

	Person with either current or previous substance (drug/alcohol) dependency problems that present a significant barrier to employment	3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR
	Claimants affected by the Benefit Cap	3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR
<u>Work Preparation regime</u>	Lone parents and lead carers with a child aged 3 and 4, and with limited capability for work due to a medical condition with a 3 or 6 month re-referral period following a Work Capability Assessment (WCA).	From WCA outcome / when child turns 3
	Ex-Incapacity Benefit Lone parents and lead carers with a child aged 3 and 4, and with a limited capability for work due to a medical condition with a 3 or 6 month re-referral period following a WCA.	From WCA outcome / when child turns 3
	Lone parents and lead carers with a child aged 3 and 4, and with a limited capability for work due to a medical condition with a 12 month re-referral period following a WCA.	From WCA outcome/ when child turns 3
	Limited capability for work due to a medical condition with an 18 or 24 month re-referral period following a WCA	From WCA outcome

Voluntary referrals / voluntary participation

Participation remains on an entirely voluntary basis. A provider may not mandate voluntary participants to undertake activity.

Labour Market regime	Claimant types	Referral to Work Programme point
<u>No Work Related Requirements (NWRR) regime</u>	Lone parents and lead carers – youngest child under the age of 1, or full-time carer (meets the carers test, providing care for over 35 hours per week), and	Optional from WCA outcome or if full-time carer from the Universal Credit entitlement

	given a 3 and 6 month re-referral period following a WCA	
<u>Work Focused Interview (WFI) regime</u>	Lone parents and lead carers with youngest child over the age of 1 but under the age of 3, and given a 3 or 6 month re-referral period following a WCA	Optional from WCA outcome
NWRR regime	Lone parents and lead carers – Youngest child under the age of 1, or full-time carer (meets the carers test, providing care for over 35 hours per week), and given a 3 and 6 month re-referral period following a WCA, and ex - IB	Optional from WCA outcome or if full-time carer from the Universal Credit entitlement
WFI regime	Lone parents and lead carers with youngest child over the age of 1 but under the age of 3, and given a 3 or 6 month re-referral period following a WCA, and ex - IB	Optional from WCA outcome
NWRR regime	Lone parents and lead carers – Youngest child under the age of 1, or full-time carer (meets the carers test, providing care for over 35 hours per week), and given a 12 month plus re-referral period following a WCA	Optional from WCA outcome or if full-time carer from the Universal Credit entitlement
WFI regime	Lone parents and lead carers with youngest child over the age of 1 but under the age of 3, and given a 12 month plus re-referral period following a WCA	Optional from WCA outcome

NWRR regime	Universal Credit claimants with limited capability for Work Related Activity	Optional from WCA outcome
NWRR regime	Universal Credit claimants who are ex- IB, with limited capability for Work Related Activity	Optional from WCA outcome
NWRR regime	Universal Credit claimants over State Pension Credit Age	Optional from 12 months (from being placed in the NWRR group)
NWRR regime	Universal Credit claimants over State Pension Credit Age with a self-declared health condition.	Optional from time when placed in the NWRR group

Claimant working for 26 weeks or more and treated as an early completer

Claimants remain attached to the WP for up to 104 weeks even when going on and off benefit or into work.

Certain participating WP providers have agreed that when a claimant has stayed in work over the earnings threshold for more than 26 weeks, these claimants will be categorised as early completers.

Early completers are claimants that have:

- been helped and supported by the provider into work or finding work
- worked any weeks over the earnings threshold that add up to 26 weeks during their 104 weeks allotted time on the WP

Participating providers and payment restructure offer

Work Programme Contract Package Area	Business As Usual Offer	Payment Regime restructure offer
1 – East of England	Ingeus	Seetec
2 – East Midlands	Peopleplus Ingeus	
3 – West London	Ingeus	Reed

		Maximus
4 – East London	Peopleplus	Seetec Shaw Trust
5 – North East	Peopleplus Ingeus	
6 – Merseyside, Halton, Cumbria and Lancashire	Peopleplus Ingeus	
7 – North, West and Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Warrington	Peopleplus G4S	Seetec
8 – Scotland	Ingeus	Working Links
9 – Thames Valley, Hampshire and Kent	Peopleplus	Maximus
10 – Surrey, Sussex and Kent	Peopleplus G4S	
11 – Devon, Cornwall, Somerset and Dorset		Shaw Trust Working Links
12 – Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and West of England	Learndirect	Rehab
13 – Wales		Working Links Rehab
14 – Birmingham, Solihull and Black Country	Peopleplus APM NCG	

15 – Coventry, Warwickshire and The Marches	Serco	Interserve
16 – West Yorkshire	Ingeus	Interserve
17 – South Yorkshire	Peopleplus Serco	
18 – North East Yorkshire and the Humber	G4S	Maximus

Work Programme completers

Claimants who have completed the WP must be supported by Universal Credit in accordance with their Labour Market regime.

Claimants in the IWSR who complete the WP should be interviewed to determine the post-WP support that is suitable for them. The Work Programme Completer Interview is conducted on a face-to-face basis and is based on information gathered from the claimant and the Work Programme Exit Report (if available). This will determine which of the three post-WP support options from Help to Work are most suitable:

The three modes of support on Help to Work are:

- the Mandatory Intervention Regime (MIR) for 6 months - for claimants with multiple or complex barriers to work (more time is made available to spend with claimants, and other support such as referring to training, local provision and using the flexible support fund can be used)
- Daily Work Search Reviews (DWSR) for 3 months - for claimants who would benefit from regular support with looking for jobs, including those who need to build motivation, momentum and engagement
- Jobcentre Plus standard offer – for claimants who have already benefited from their time on the WP and require lighter touch support in moving in to work. This could include:
 - flexible work focused interviews with different frequency and duration depending on what activity the claimant is asked to do
 - access to a flexible menu of back to work support
 - access to the flexible support fund

The time claimants spend on MIR will be limited to 6 months for those referred on or after 1 April 2016. Claimants who have completed 6 months on MIR or 3

months on DWSR on or after the 1 April 2016 and who have still not found a job, will be referred to the JCP standard offer for the remainder of their claim.

A WP completer must not be re-referred to the WP at any time or under any circumstances.

When participation in the WP ends, any open ended sanctions imposed for failing to participate in the WP end on the day before the date on which the claimant's participation ends. The appropriate fixed period related to that failure is then applied and will run until it has been served. If the claimant comes off benefit whilst there is an outstanding reduction period, the period continues to run as if a daily reduction were being applied and if the claimant becomes entitled to a new award before that period expires the remainder of the fixed period sanction will be applied to the new award automatically.

Light Touch regime

Claimants in the Light Touch regime were not eligible for the WP at the point of referral.

If claimants find work while on the WP they enter the relevant conditionality regime (Light Touch or Working Enough) if their earnings are above either the Administrative Earnings Threshold or Conditionality Earnings Threshold. Whilst on Universal Credit and in the light touch regime the claimant will remain attached to the WP if they had already been referred before moving into light touch. Provider support will become relevant and mandatory again if they return to the intensive work search regime.

[Back to contents](#)