

# 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.**

Eligibility for the ESO initiatives are:

- all Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) claimants: pre-Work Capability Assessment (WCA) and those whose WCA outcome places them in the Support Group or Work Related Activity Group (WRAG)
- Universal Credit (UC) claimants have been found to have Limited Capability for Work (LCW) or Limited Capability for Work and Work Related Activity (LCWRA) at their WCA
- UC claimants pre-WCA who are submitting fit notes

Excluded:

- Jobseekers Allowance and Universal Credit claimants not specified above

Claimant participation is voluntary for all ESO provisions.

Additional places have been funded for claimants eligible through ESO for the following existing national provision:

- Specialist Employability Support
- Access to Work Mental Health Support Services
- Work Choice was also given funding for additional places but this has now ended.

In ESO Year 1, new provision was rolled out nationally including:

- Small Employer Offer
- Community Partners
- Journey to Employment was also rolled out nationally but this has now ended.

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 was only available in 50% of districts, to enable its effectiveness to be evaluated against where the payment is not available to employers. Minimal take up of payments has meant that this period has been extended to 24 months.

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. Revise the claimant commitment to include participation on the Small Employer Offer.

## **Community Partners**

We have recruited Community Partners to support the up-skilling of Jobcentre plus 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 staff in a jobcentre 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.

## Table of Enhanced Support Offer initiatives

<b>ESO initiative</b>	<b>Availability</b>	<b>Started</b>	<b>ESO claimant suitability</b>	<b>Access to other ESO initiatives</b>
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.	AtW MHSS
Community Partners	National	July 2017	N/A	N/A

## **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 voluntary unless the claimant reaches 24 months as long term unemployed (and is not already participating in the programme) in which case it is mandatory.

If a programme participant is already on WHP as a volunteer and disengage after the 24 month Long Term Unemployed trigger point they become a mandatory participant at this point and must complete the balance of time left on the programme.

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 [Work and Health Programme](#) for eligibility, suitability and what the programme offers.

## **Fair Start Scotland Programme**

Delivery of the Fair Start Scotland (FSS) programme started on 03 April 2018. FSS is a targeted provision offering tailored support to help eligible claimants to find sustained paid work.

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

Participation on FSS is voluntary, therefore claimants cannot be sanctioned for non-attendance, failure to engage or if they leave the programme early. However, normal conditionality and mandatory work-related activity sanctions still apply.

See the [Fair Start Scotland Programme](#) for eligibility, suitability and what the programme offers.

## **District Provision Tool**

The Personal Support Pack can be accessed via an icon on the District Provision Tool providing links to the ESO initiatives.