Work Programme

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, No Work Related Requirements and Work Focused Interview 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Labour Market regime</th>
<th>Referral type</th>
<th>Referral to Work Programme point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intensive Work Search regime (IWSR)</td>
<td>Aged 18-24</td>
<td>9 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aged 25 and over</td>
<td>12 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aged 18 and NEET for 6 months or had previously claimed hardship payment when 16 or 17</td>
<td>3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>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</td>
<td>3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ex Incapacity Benefit (IB) claimants who have been found fit for work and subsequently made a claim to Universal Credit</td>
<td>3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>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</td>
<td>Day 1 if benefit claim begins within 13 weeks of leaving prison and is placed in the IWSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Preparation regime</td>
<td>Universal Credit claimants with a 3, 6 or 12 month re-referral period following a Work Capability Assessment (WCA)</td>
<td>From the WCA outcome</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Labour Market Regime</th>
<th>Claimant types</th>
<th>Referral to Work Programme point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IWSR</td>
<td>Care leaver aged 18 - 21</td>
<td>From day 1 or thereafter from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ex-offenders (if claim after 13 weeks from release) and offenders serving a community sentence</td>
<td>3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disabled person (Equality Act definition)</td>
<td>3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Person with mild to moderate mental health issues</td>
<td>3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carer</td>
<td>3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ex-carer</td>
<td>3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Homeless person</td>
<td>3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Former member of HM armed forces personnel</td>
<td>3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partner of a current or former member of HM armed forces personnel</td>
<td>3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An HM Armed Forces reservist participant</td>
<td>3 months from the date the claimant is placed in the IWSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour Market regime</td>
<td>Claimant types</td>
<td>Referral to Work Programme point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Work Related Requirements (NWRR) regime</td>
<td>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</td>
<td>Optional from WCA outcome or if full-time carer from the Universal Credit entitlement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Voluntary referrals / voluntary participation**

Participation remains on an entirely voluntary basis. A provider may not mandate voluntary participants to undertake activity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regime</th>
<th>Eligibility</th>
<th>Referral Period</th>
<th>Outcome Working Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work Focused Interview</strong></td>
<td>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</td>
<td>Optional from WCA outcome</td>
<td>WFI regime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NWRR regime</strong></td>
<td>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</td>
<td>Optional from WCA outcome or if full-time carer from the Universal Credit entitlement</td>
<td>NWRR regime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WFI regime</strong></td>
<td>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</td>
<td>Optional from WCA outcome</td>
<td>WFI regime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NWRR regime</strong></td>
<td>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</td>
<td>Optional from WCA outcome or if full-time carer from the Universal Credit entitlement</td>
<td>NWRR regime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WFI regime</strong></td>
<td>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</td>
<td>Optional from WCA outcome</td>
<td>WFI regime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWRR regime</td>
<td>Universal Credit claimants with limited capability for Work Related Activity</td>
<td>Optional from WCA outcome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWRR regime</td>
<td>Universal Credit claimants who are ex- IB, with limited capability for Work Related Activity</td>
<td>Optional from WCA outcome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWRR regime</td>
<td>Universal Credit claimants over State Pension Credit Age</td>
<td>Optional from 12 months (from being placed in the NWRR group)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWRR regime</td>
<td>Universal Credit claimants over State Pension Credit Age with a self-declared health condition.</td>
<td>Optional from time when placed in the NWRR group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Programme Contract Package Area</th>
<th>Business As Usual Offer</th>
<th>Payment Regime restructure offer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 – East of England</td>
<td>Ingeus</td>
<td>Seetec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – East Midlands</td>
<td>Peopleplus</td>
<td>Ingeus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Provider 1</td>
<td>Provider 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 – West London</td>
<td>Ingeus</td>
<td>Reed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maximus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – East London</td>
<td>Peopleplus</td>
<td>Seetec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shaw Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – North East</td>
<td>Peopleplus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ingeus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – Merseyside, Halton, Cumbria</td>
<td>Peopleplus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Lancashire</td>
<td>Ingeus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 – North, West and Greater</td>
<td>Peopleplus</td>
<td>Seetec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester, Cheshire and</td>
<td>G4S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warrington</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 – Scotland</td>
<td>Ingeus</td>
<td>Working Links</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 – Thames Valley, Hampshire</td>
<td>Peopleplus</td>
<td>Maximus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Kent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 – Surrey, Sussex and Kent</td>
<td>Peopleplus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G4S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 – Devon, Cornwall, Somerset</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shaw Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Dorset</td>
<td></td>
<td>Working Links</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 – Gloucestershire, Wiltshire</td>
<td>Learndirect</td>
<td>Rehab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and West of England</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 – Wales</td>
<td></td>
<td>Working Links</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rehab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 – Birmingham, Solihull and</td>
<td>Peopleplus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Country</td>
<td>APM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCG</td>
<td>Serco</td>
<td>Interserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 – Coventry, Warwickshire and The Marches</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 – West Yorkshire</td>
<td>Ingeus</td>
<td>Interserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 – South Yorkshire</td>
<td>Peopleplus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Serco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – North East Yorkshire and the Humber</td>
<td>G4S</td>
<td>Maximus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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.