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for Work &
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The Baroness Brinton

30th March 2023

Dear Sal,

I am writing to you to clarify, and elaborate on, points that I raised in my response during the repeat of the Urgent Question on the Health and Disability White Paper in the House on 20th March.

In my remarks responding to you, I alluded to the fact that there was much still to do between now and commencing the rollout of our proposals for the support available to disabled people. This is due to the degree of change in our proposals that require primary legislation which we will aim to take early in a new Parliament. These reforms would then be rolled out to new Universal Credit claimants only on a staged, geographical basis, from no earlier than 2026-27, rather than 2027-28 as I said on the day.

I also mentioned the Department's investment in employment support for disabled people and people with health conditions, and the recruitment of additional work coaches. This includes Additional Work Coach Support which is a new offer providing disabled people, and people with health conditions, with increased one-to-one personalised support to help them move towards, and into, work.

This support is already live in one third of Jobcentres. It will be available in more Jobcentres from spring 2023 and will scale up nationally in 2024-25. The Chancellor's Spring Statement announced increased investment in this support, which will build on the current offer set out in the Health and Disability White Paper. This will enable more Universal Credit and ESA claimants with health conditions and disabilities to access this support.

Finally, you asked about the role of mandatory and voluntary work-related activities as part of our proposals. DWP's new conditionality approach will be tailored appropriately to each claimant's needs and focussed on what people can do, rather than what they can't. Introducing a more tailored approach will allow work coaches to build a relationship with an individual and determine what, if any, work-related activities they can participate in. This also means that, where work or work-related-

activity is not possible or appropriate for someone, they will not be expected to participate in these activities to receive their benefit entitlement.

In this new personalised approach, both voluntary and mandatory work-related requirements may be set for health and disability benefit claimants, where this is appropriate, with requirements added at a pace that is appropriate for the individual. The Department is engaging with our work coaches to develop these proposals and ensure they have the right training and support needed to fulfil this change in their role.

I hope that this letter clarifies matters.

I am placing a copy of this letter in the House Library.

*With best wishes,
James*

**VISCOUNT YOUNGER OF LECKIE
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WORK AND
PENSIONS (LORDS)**