

# Work focused interview regime

## Contents

Aim

Characteristics

Requirements

Framework

Claimant's commitment's initial interview: Face to Face

Flexible coaching support interview

Flexible Support Fund

## Aim

The Work focused interview regime encourages the claimant, to think about work now and in the future, through a series of interviews and to consider the steps they could take to prepare for work.

Any action other than participating in interviews is entirely voluntary.

At the initial work focused interview, the claimant is made aware of these expectations and the claimant's commitments include the requirement to participate in interviews.

## Characteristics

Claimants who are expected to work in the future but are currently the nominated lead carer for a child or children.

This includes:

- a nominated lead carer of a youngest child aged 1
- a single foster carer / main carer in a fostering couple where:
  - a foster child under 16 is placed with them
  - a qualifying young person's care needs would make it unreasonable for the claimant to comply with a work search or work availability requirement.
- a foster parent (not the main carer in a fostering couple) of a child or qualifying young person, where the child or young person's care needs would make it unreasonable for the claimant to comply with a work search requirement or work availability requirement
- the foster carer has fallen into one of the above categories in the last 8 weeks, is between placements and shows evidence of intent to continue fostering a child
- a family and friend's carer, also known as a kinship carer, for the first year that a claimant is the responsible carer for a child under 16

## **Requirements**

A claimant is required to attend interviews and report all change of circumstance. They must:

- fully understand the effects of the regime requirements, including a possible sanction action if they do not attend Work Focused Interviews
- notify Universal Credit of any changes of circumstances, for example, when a child joins or leaves the household
- provide evidence, if they are a family and friend's carer, to ensure they are in the correct regime

For claimants with young children, childcare availability must be taken into account when arranging interviews.

Claimants should also understand they can re-arrange interviews if they have a good reason why they cannot attend, for example, rescheduling appointments around childcare, social services or medical appointments.

## **Framework**

The claimant is supported in this regime by the following interviews and reviews:

Claimant Commitment Interview

Flexible Coaching Support Interview

## **At all interviews**

The following are discussed: caring responsibilities, childcare options and availability must be identified to ensure interviews and voluntary work preparation activities are arranged at suitable times.

Identifying suitable childcare helps carers, who choose to consider returning to work, as this prepares them for the transition to the Work Preparation regime when their youngest child reaches their second birthday.

For help with childcare see: [Childcare costs and the related content on this page](#)

## **Claimant's commitment's initial interview: face to face**

Claimants at these interviews will have children aged 1 years old.

We will:

- enquire what skills, experience, and knowledge the claimant has
- help the claimant to focus on the work they can do in the future
- consider what can be done now to help them to get work ready
- encourage claimants to take voluntary actions, setting their commitments from the outcome of the discussion

The interview includes:

- Claimant Commitment

- developing a detailed plan of work-related activity, on a voluntary basis
- assessing claimant needs and voluntary referral to provision

### **Flexible Coaching Support Interview**

Contact with the claimant is through digital or face to face depending upon diagnostic outcomes. There is a requirement for the claimant to be seen face to face, if deemed necessary.

These are held at minimum of at least one interview every 3 months. Interventions are recommended as a guide, there is flexibility to have them more often. Discretion exists to use interview time appropriately to achieve outcomes for these claimants and the aim is to schedule interviews as flexibly as possible.

Claimants are also able to request discussions and interviews.

These interviews can include:

- reviewing and discussing activities
- identifying support needs including childcare
- transitioning to the Work Preparation regime once youngest child is aged 2 years

We will:

- consider how to gradually increase the support offered in the months before the claimant's youngest child turns 2
- explain what requirements the claimant is expected to meet and the support available as part of the Work Preparation regime
- also consider offering more frequent Work Focused Interviews during this period.

### **Flexible Support Fund**

The Flexible Support Fund is a locally managed budget to supplement existing services and tailor support to the needs of individuals in the local area. Awards are discretionary and aimed at improving a claimant's job prospects subject to eligibility.

Claimant allocated to the Labour Market regime; Work Focused Interview only can be considered for Flexible Support fund. Other regimes are also eligible, see the guidance on Flexible Support Fund and Childcare and Flexible Support Fund