

DWP Youth Offer

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Introduction

The DWP Youth Offer has been developed to combat youth unemployment and to ensure that young people have the skills they need to look for, find and keep employment.

All 16-24 year olds in the Intensive Work Search regime are automatically eligible for the Youth Offer and will be supported through the Youth Employment Programme.

The offer is made up of 3 key parts which are:

- Youth Employment Programme
- Youth Hubs
- youth employability coaches

Eligibility

Claimants aged 16 to 24 in the Intensive Work Search regime can be referred to a Youth Hub or a youth employability coach.

In most cases, claimants aged 16 and 17 who are placed in the Intensive Work Search regime will be referred to a youth employability coach. This is because many 16 and 17 year olds claiming Universal Credit are likely to have significant complex needs or vulnerabilities and would therefore benefit from the support of a youth employability coach.

Claimants in other Labour Market regimes are not eligible for the Youth Offer. However, they can still attend voluntary appointments in a Youth Hub to meet with other providers using the Youth Hub space. These claimants will continue to be

supported by Jobcentre Plus and their mandatory interviews will continue to take place with a work coach in the Jobcentre.

Claimants must still participate in the DWP Youth Offer when they have control measures in place due to:

- Unacceptable Customer Behaviour (UCB)
- Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)
- being a prison leaver

A claimant's individual restrictions must always be considered before any referral or participant action is taken.

Exemptions

Claimants are exempt from participating in any part of the Youth Offer if they are:

- deemed to have Limited Capability for Work and Work-Related Activity following a Work Capability Assessment
- gainfully self-employed
- pregnant and participation would pose a serious risk to their health or the health of their child

Claimants expecting to give birth within the next 11 weeks or on maternity leave are exempt. However, they are still able to attend a Youth Hub on a drop-in basis.

Youth Hubs

A Youth Hub is an agreed external provider site where DWP work coaches are based. Youth Hubs have been created to support eligible claimants in addressing barriers to work.

Youth Hubs are not sited within Jobcentres.

Some areas also have virtual Youth Hubs where there is no physical provider site for claimants to travel to.

Some Youth Hubs also offer a drop-in service. Drop-in processes and procedures will differ for each Youth Hub.

Work coaches based in Youth Hubs only operate within the Youth Hub. They do not operate in both Youth Hubs and jobcentres during the same period.

Work coaches within the Youth Hub work alongside DWP's network of external partners to provide intensive support to claimants referred to them. The type of support provided will differ depending on:

- the location of the Youth Hub
- providers that the work coaches are working alongside
- a claimant's individual needs and barriers to work

Work coaches within Youth Hubs have a primary focus of addressing key barriers that are currently preventing claimants from finding and keeping employment. This may be through interventions or referring to appropriate provision.

Youth Hubs provide claimants with access to additional support opportunities through the partnership approach. However, where it is identified that DWP funded provision (such as Restart or District funded training) is the appropriate course of action then the claimant must end their Youth Hub participation. This is to avoid double-funding.

Youth Hub work coaches provide all the necessary support that a claimant would receive through their jobcentre work coach. Once referred, participating and engaging in appointments with a Youth Hub work coach are mandatory.

Support from the Youth Hub can last up to 6 months and during this time the claimant's primary contact will be their work coach within the Youth Hub.

A claimant is referred back to their local jobcentre when:

- the 6 months Youth Hub support comes to an end
- the barriers to work have been suitably addressed by the Youth Hub
- the claimant has failed to attend a mandatory appointment with their Youth Hub work coach and failed to provide good reason, or the claimant has already had three locally allowed good reason decisions.
- the Youth Hub work coach identifies that a place on DWP funded provision is the correct course of action for the customer (i.e. Restart etc)

See: Failure to attend mandatory appointments with a Youth Hub work coach

See: Fail to attend: good reason | DWP Intranet

From this point onwards, the claimant will continue to receive support from DWP and Jobcentre Plus as part of the normal core offer.

When a claimant can be referred to a Youth Hub

Claimants can be referred to a Youth Hub at any time as long as they:

- are aged 16 to 24
- are in the Intensive Work Search regime
- have not already spent 6 months receiving Youth Hub support

Claimants do not need to be taking part in the Youth Employment Programme to be referred to a Youth Hub. They can be referred during the programme or any time after the programme has ended as long as they meet the eligibility criteria.

Suitable claimants will have specific skills and employability barriers preventing them from moving in to work that could be addressed by the support of a Youth Hub work coach.

Claimants who have the necessary skills to look for, find and keep employment on their own are not suitable for Youth Hub support.

Failure to attend mandatory appointments with a Youth Hub work coach

Young people who are caseloaded to a Youth Hub work coach are subject to mandatory interventions and failure to attend may result in a sanction.

Where good reason for failing to attend can be applied the claimant remains allocated to the Youth Hub work coach and continues on the Youth Hub journey.

See Fail to attend: good reason

Where good reason cannot be applied or the claimant has already had three, consecutive, locally allowed, good reason decisions, the claimant is allocated back to a Jobcentre work coach whilst a decision to apply a sanction is made. During this time, the claimant remains on the Jobcentre Plus core offer.

If a sanction is not applied, the claimant is allocated back to a Youth Hub work coach to continue on the Youth Hub journey.

If a sanction is applied the claimant remains allocated to the Jobcentre work coach until the sanction ends.

See Sanctions

If it is deemed appropriate, the claimant can be referred back to a Youth Hub work coach. This is at work coach discretion and there is no set timing for this.

Some claimants may go back straight away while others may not go back at all.

Youth employability coach

Youth employability coaches are based in jobcentres with a maximum caseload of 100 claimants.

They aim to support young claimants with multiple barriers to work and complex needs to develop the skills to look for, find and keep employment.

Depending on the claimant's individual needs, tailored, focused and an intensive level of support is provided for 6 months.

A case conference is required to extend support to 12 months where appropriate.

Youth employability coaches may attend appointments with claimants outside of the jobcentre. This may be with providers or other support organisations.

The types of support that may be provided include:

- in depth face-to-face interventions
- CV, application and interview preparation support
- identifying suitable provision and other opportunities to develop claimant employability skills
- conducting in depth follow-up conversations, reviews of provision and work-based opportunities
- advocating for claimants with employers and providers where appropriate
- up to 6 weeks of 'in work support' when a claimant starts work or a work-based opportunity

This list is not exhaustive.

When a referral to a youth employability coach can be considered

A referral to a youth employability coach can be considered if they meet the following criteria:

- they are unable to look for, find and keep employment
- they have complex needs which cannot be immediately addressed and are likely to be in place for an extended period
- they have barriers to work which they cannot overcome without intensive support

16 and 17 year olds will usually be referred to a youth employability coach.

Claimants who have recently been employed and/or demonstrate the ability to look for, find and keep employment are not suitable for referral.

Claimants are not suitable for referral when they have barriers to work and complex needs that:

- can be quickly addressed
- are likely to only impact the claimant for a short temporary period.

See: Programmes and job schemes: Video | DWP Intranet

Before making a referral to a youth employability coach

Referral to a Youth Hub is always considered prior to the referral to a youth employability coach taking place. The following must apply before referral to a youth employability coach can be considered:

- all initial claim actions must have been completed (for example, verification of evidence)
- a Claimant Commitment must be in place
- a clear understanding of the claimant's barriers to work

- the claimant's suitability must have been discussed with a youth employability coach before referral

Claimant reaches age 25

If a claimant reaches age 25 while participating in the Youth Offer, they will have the option to continue with support from the Youth Hub and youth employability coach.

The claimant can remain placed with the Youth Hub until 6 months have passed since the original referral. They can also choose to return to Jobcentre Plus and receive support in the normal manner.

For information on what happens when a claimant reaches age 25 during the Youth Employment Programme, see Youth Employment Programme

Moving between Labour Market regimes

See Youth Employment Programme to find out how moving between regimes may impact on a claimant's participation in the programme.

When a claimant moves into the Light Touch or Working Enough regime, they are no longer required to participate in any aspect of the DWP Youth Offer.

Claimants may move into the Light Touch or Working Enough regime due to earnings received for work they were undertaking prior to claiming Universal Credit.

In these cases, if the claimant is unemployed or has started work, but are still earning below the Administrative Earnings Threshold, they are still eligible to participate in the Youth Offer providing that they meet all other eligibility criteria.

When a claimant moves into the Intensive Work Search regime from another regime, they cannot take part in the Youth Employment Programme. However, they can be referred to a Youth Hub or youth employability coach where appropriate.

Claimants may move from the Intensive Work Search regime into one of the following regimes:

- Work Preparation
- Work Focused Interview
- No Work-Related Requirements

In these cases, if the claimant is participating in provision or a work-based opportunity, they will have the option to complete this where appropriate. They will also retain access to Youth Hubs and youth employability coaches where appropriate.

If a claimant returns to the Intensive Work Search regime from another regime, they can participate in the Youth Offer as long as they were eligible when they attended their First Commitments Meeting. This is unless the claimant is aged 25 or over.

Easements

The DWP Youth Offer is considered to be a work preparation requirement. If claimants have work preparation requirements switched-on, they can be referred to a Youth Hub or youth employability coach.

If work preparation requirements have been switched-off, no referral should be made until they are switched back on again.

While claimants require English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) level 1 to participate in the Youth Employment Programme, claimants who still need to complete ESOL level 1 can be referred to a Youth Hub or youth employability coach where appropriate. The Youth Hub or youth employability coach will then support the claimant in completing the required ESOL level.

If a Youth Offer claimant is participating in voluntary work during the first 3 months of their claim, their expected hours can be reduced by 50%. After 3 months, any voluntary work must be completed along with their expected hours of work search.