

# **Universal Credit Health Offer: Guidance**

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## **Introduction**

The Universal Credit Health Offer aims to support claimants with a disability or health condition and helps them towards and into work.

Work coaches will encourage claimants following the health journey to engage in suitable programmes and provision which provide the necessary skills to improve their chances of finding sustainable employment.

## **Support for work coaches**

To support claimants in gaining the necessary skills and experience for moving closer to work, there are various tools and initiative available to work coaches including:

- line manager support: case conferencing, quality observations, coaching and advice
- Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs): coaching and advice, claimant support, skills support
- Community Partners (CPs): coaching and advice, identifying local support for claimants

- case conferences: chance to share, seek feedback and advice with peers, DEAs and CPs
- District Provision Tool: providing access to provision and support available for claimants (including Help to Claim)
- work psychologist: support and advice, voluntary customer contact
- Universal Learning: supporting the work coach's own learning needs
- Health and Work Conversation Techniques: Bitesize learning, tools when dealing with health journey claimants
- external organisations: local charities or organisations offering claimant support and services
- Flexible Support Fund: a facility for providing items and expenses connected with work – for example, tools, work clothing and travel expenses
- employer adviser: job alerts, provision information, liaison with employers

## **Support for health journey claimants**

### **Work and Health Programme and Pioneer**

The Work and Health Programme and Pioneer (WHP) helps eligible customers in England and Wales to find sustainable work. The Programme aims to remove barriers to work by linking up with health and social care providers and offers intensive tailored support.

### **Connect to Work**

Connect to Work is a voluntary programme for anyone with a disability, health condition and other complex barriers to employment. It is available to both claimants on Universal Credit (UC) and those not in receipt of DWP benefits.

Connect to Work services will be delivered by Local Authorities (Accountable Bodies) across England and Wales. The support provided may vary across each local area.

Universal Credit claimants can be signposted to Connect to Work opportunities through Manage Jobs and Opportunities (MJO).

Those not in receipt of DWP benefits should be directed to their local Accountable Body to discuss support.

For more information and the eligibility and suitability criteria see:

Connect to Work - England: Guidance

Connect to Work - Wales: Guidance

## **Access to Work**

Access to Work is a grant scheme intended to help people with a disability or health condition to take up or remain in work. An Access to Work grant can pay for special equipment, adaptations or support worker services and help with getting to and from work.

Claimants are eligible if they are:

- aged 16 or over
- disabled or have a health condition that has lasted for or is likely to last for more than 12 months that impacts their ability to work
- already in or about to start employment (including self-employment) or have an agreed job or work trial

For more information, see [Access to Work](#).

## **Fair Start Scotland**

The last referrals for this was on 30 March 2024.

Fair Start Scotland is an employment support service for people who are unemployed, have a disability, health condition or complex barriers that may be preventing them from finding work.

The service provides eligible participants the right level of support needed to help them overcome any challenges they may face and to achieve their potential.

Fair Start Scotland is completely voluntary and participants must be:

- living in Scotland and eligible to work in the UK
- 18 years old or over and out of work, or
- aged 16 or 17 years old and are either disabled or in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit

## **Other generic provision**

### **Drug and alcohol dependency voluntary referral**

If agreed with the claimant, a voluntary referral to a local treatment provider to discuss their dependency issues and treatment options should be made.

Use the District Provision Tool to access a range of provision and specialist partner organisations that are available to advise and support people with drug or alcohol dependency.

## **Help to Claim**

Help to Claim is a service provided by Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland to help people to make a new Universal Credit claim and to get their first full and correct payment.

### **Multi-channel ‘no wrong door’ access**

This service will be available face-to-face, by phone and online through web-chat and online advice content to allows claimants to access support in the way that’s right for them. They can be signposted or referred (post initial application) by DWP, signposted from third parties or self-referred.

### **Help to Claim check**

A check will be made that Universal Credit is the right benefit for the claimant to apply for.

### **Individual needs assessment**

By whatever method a claimant accesses the service, their individual needs will be assessed to make sure they can get the right level of support in the way that’s right for them.

### **Support to start a Universal Credit claim**

Depending on the claimant’s level of need, this might include help to:

- set up an email address or a Universal Credit account
- work through claim to-dos
- access the Universal Credit phone claim service
- access DWP home visit support

### **Completing a claim and getting ready for the first payment**

Depending on the claimant’s level of need, this might include help to:

- verify their identity
- provide additional evidence
- prepare for the practicalities of their first monthly payment
- access adaptations such as direct payments to landlords and conditionality easements
- apply for Advance payments and access additional financial support

Any claimant who requires support to make a new Universal Credit claim or is moving from a Legacy benefit to Universal Credit following a change of circumstances, can access Help to Claim.

Help to Claim can be accessed any time until the first full and correct payment of Universal Credit is made.

There are no specific eligibility criteria for the type of claimant who can access support. Instead, this is focused on the types of help that an individual claimant needs.

For more information, see [Help to Claim](#).

## **Money Advice**

Some claimants will need money advice for a short period of time and others for longer. Different levels and types of money advice are offered based on the claimant's needs.

For more information, see [Money guidance and Alternative Payment Arrangements](#).

## **Pre-employment training**

Pre-employment training is any training that helps the claimant to move closer to the Labour Market.

It can be full or part-time depending on the claimant's needs and could include literacy and numeracy skills training, ESOL, ICT training or vocational skills for a sector or job employability skills.

Pre-employment training is often part of a Sector-based Work Academy programme in England and Scotland or a traineeship in England.

For more information, see [Pre-employment training](#).

## **Movement to Work**

This is an employer-led approach for helping young people aged 18 to 24 years who are not in education, employment or training.

The Movement to Work programme aims to move individuals closer to the world of work and claimants aged 18-24 are eligible from day 1 of their claim.

For more information, see [Movement to Work](#).

## **Skills to Succeed**

The Skills to Succeed Academy is an online employability skills training site specifically designed to help claimants choose the right career as well as build the key employability skills they need to find and keep a job.

It is designed to help younger claimants (aged 18–24) and they are eligible from day 1 of their claim.

For more information, see [Skills to Succeed Academy](#).

## **Voluntary work experience**

Work experience placements cover a range of sectors and provides claimants who have little or no work-related skills with the opportunity to gain valuable experience within the workplace.

Work experience gives claimants the opportunity to show that they have both job role specific skills and core employability skills such as:

- time management
- organisational skills
- communication skills
- team working skills

It can be added to their CV.

Eligibility is from day 1 of a claimant's Universal Credit claim.

For more information, see [Work experience](#).

## **Skills screening**

Having the correct skills is essential for claimants when they are looking for work or progressing in their current employment. Therefore, it is important that they are screened from day 1 of their universal Credit claim for:

- essential skills
- maths
- English (spoken and written)
- digital capability / information and communications technology

The information gathered will help determine whether the claimant has any potential skills gaps and/or whether they need to reconsider their job goals and enable a referral to appropriate provision.

For more information, see [Supporting claimants with their essential and employability skills needs and digital capabilities](#).

## **Useful links**

There is a National Provision Tool and each jobcentre has a District Provision Tool.

National DPT  
District Provision Tool  
Universal Learning programmes and provisions  
Health and Work Conversation Techniques