

Generic Template

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Key:

Mandatory information

Optional information

* Field visible to users

KM Team Only – field used internally by KM team only – no field required in Knowledge Base

Category name*

Delivering Universal Credit

Sub-category*

Agent actions

Content item name*

Work preparation activities overview

Alternative names (enter any other names that staff or public might use to refer to this item)

Summary*

An overview of work preparation activities

Content*

Work preparation requirements

Mandatory work preparation activities apply to those claimants who are in the All Work Related Requirements (AWRR) and Work Preparation (WP) conditionality groups.

Setting work preparation requirements

Work preparation requirements are activities that prepare the claimant for work and make it more likely, in the opinion of the work coach (WC) that the claimant will obtain paid work, more work, or better-paid work. These work preparations activities should be specific one-off mandatory activities that the claimant must complete.

These may include, for example:

- attending a skills assessment
- improving personal presentation
- taking part in training
- taking part in programmes or provision including Mandatory Work Activity
- undertaking work experience or a work placement

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- developing a business plan
- researching or registering for local childcare provision

This is not an exhaustive list.

The WC must consider the following prior to setting work preparation activities:

- self perception – the claimant believes that they can work, find specific jobs, has the capability to do those jobs, and is confident of being able to gain and keep employment
- specific job requirement – the claimant knows their job requirements
- local Labour Market – that specific work is available in the local market
- knowledge skills and experience – the claimant has the knowledge, skills and experience that match their job requirements
- commitment to undertake work search – the claimant is committed to carry out effective and sustained work search
- resources for work search – the claimant knows how to access the resources required to undertake sustained work search
- demonstrating capability for a specific job – the claimant is able to demonstrate their capability effectively to employers
- presenting themselves to an employer – the claimant is able to present themselves effectively to potential employers
- managing personal circumstances – the claimant is able to successfully manage, anything that makes it harder to get and keep paid work
- keeping a job – the claimant could keep a job offered by an employer and ensure that steps are taken to address anything that makes it harder for the claimant to get and keep paid work.

Specific work search actions

Specific, one-off work search activities such as creating an account and uploading a CV in Find a job or attending a jobs fair must be recorded on the system as a work preparation activity and will feature in the 'Specific actions I will take' section of the claimant's 'My work search' and preparation plan in their claimant commitment.

The reason one-off work search actions must be recorded as a work preparation activity is that both these activities attract the same sanction level, this means a lower level sanction. Failure to undertake a regular work search activity attracts a medium level sanction.

The requirement to use Find a job is a regular work search activity and should not be recorded as a work preparation activity. See [Find a job](#) and [Work Services Platform](#).

When completed, the time and effort taken to undertake work preparation and one-off specific work search activities will count towards the claimant's overall weekly work search hours.

If a claimant fails to comply with a work preparation activity this attracts a low level

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sanction. A low level sanction has two elements :

- an open-ended period equal to the number of days from the date of failure until the day before the requirement or alternative requirement is met or lifted, followed by
- a fixed period of 7, 14 or 28 days (dependent on whether there are any previous failures in the 365 days before the current failure)

When setting a work preparation requirement the WC must explain that if the claimant fails to do that activity Universal Credit will be cut for a period equal to the number of days between the date of failure until they do so or until they undertake an alternative activity decided by the WC. Their payments will then be cut for a further fixed period of up to 28 days (depending on how many requirements they failed to meet and when).

When setting the work preparation requirement the WC must tell the claimant and record what the claimant must do if they fail to meet the requirement on time. Where the requirement is an on-going task for example, create a CV by a set date and if the claimant does not do this, their Universal Credit payments may be cut for the number of days from the failure date until they meet the requirement (they create a CV).

If the requirement set is time or otherwise limited, for example - to attend a forklift truck driving course on 8 March, once 8 March has passed the claimant cannot meet the requirement.

It is essential when setting a requirement the WC must consider and tell the claimant what alternative action they can take if they do not undertake the original requirement. This (alternative requirement) must also be recorded in the work preparation activity section in WSP so that it is included on the Claimant Commitment.

Example:

"By (dd/mm/yyyy) I will create an account and upload a CV in Find a job. I will achieve this by using the public access computers in Oldham Library. Otherwise I shall use the public access computers in Oldham Jobcentre to achieve this. If I am unable to complete this action by the date specified above, I will contact my work coach."

Claimant in the All Work Related Requirements Light Touch regime

For claimants in the AWRR Light Touch regime, work preparation requirements are not mandatory but the claimant should be encouraged to complete these voluntarily but will not be subject to sanctions if not completed.

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Voluntary activities for claimants in the All Work Related Requirements Intensive Work Search, Work Preparation and Work Focussed interview only regimes

With regard to claimants in the AWRR Intensive Work Search, Work Preparation and Work Focussed Interview only regimes, where Universal Credit has set voluntary activities that will prepare the claimant for work - these should be included under 'Other work-related activities'. See [Other work-related activities - setting requirements on the Work Services Platform](#).