



# **UC55 Complex Needs**

Facilitator Led Brief  
V30.0

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## Important Information

Job Role	Learning Required	Duration
Case manager	All except decision maker, work coach and team leader only content	<b>205 minutes</b>
Decision maker	All except work coach only and team leader content	<b>205 minutes</b>
Work coach	All except decision maker and team leader only content	<b>240 minutes</b>
Team leader	All except decision maker and work coach only content	<b>285 minutes</b>



Depending on their own life experiences, some of the issues discussed may create emotional responses from learners.

Learners may wish to discuss personal experiences or details which may become sensitive.

It is important to stress the need for total confidentiality within the group.

In cases of safeguarding and duty of care, there may be occasions when that agreement needs to be broken. For example, a declaration of self-harm from a learner.



Sections are for all job roles unless stated.



The Statement of Fitness for Work (SOFFW) is more commonly known as a fit note.

In this learning, we will refer to it as a fit note.

# Complex Needs

## Module aim and objectives



Show Slide 01 – UC55 Complex Needs



Show Slide 02 – Aim and Objectives

Allow learners time to read through aim and objectives.

## Introduction



What do you think is meant by complex needs?



Show slide 03 – Complex needs definition.

A key part of Universal Credit is making sure that anything we ask the claimant to do is reasonable and tailored to their current needs. This allows their case to move forward correctly and gives them the best chance to move into work.

When a claimant's needs are more complex, we should also identify any extra support they may need.

Throughout this learning, we will discuss different ways of supporting these claimants.

This will help you gain the skills you need to understand how complex needs:

- impact claimants in different ways
- affect a claimant's ability and capacity to engage with Universal Credit
- affect a claimant's availability for work
- affect a claimant's work related requirements
- impacts on how requirements are tailored

### What are complex needs?



What example of life events, personal circumstance, health issues or disabilities can you think of that could affect the claimant's ability to access and use Universal Credit?



Show Slide 04 – What are complex needs?

This slide is animated. There are 21 boxes to reveal.

This list is not exhaustive.

### Identifying complex needs



Allow 5 minutes

Facilitate a discussion on what the learners think possible signs of complex needs are within the following categories.

Written (all job roles)

Visual (work coaches only)

Verbal (all job roles)

Expected answers

#### **Written**

- making errors in the journal
- not responding to our written communications
- asking for repeat information
- not understanding the information provided
- unable to complete forms
- making multiple applications for advances

#### **Visual**

- appearing distressed or frustrated
- avoiding eye contact



- worsening physical appearance
- mood swings, sudden irritability or angry outbursts
- shaking
- lack of concentration
- regularly attends appointments with friends, family or a support worker
- is upset or crying

### **Verbal**

- asking for things to be repeated
- giving inappropriate answers
- one word answers to open questions
- offensive language used (out of character)
- speech issues
- needing an interpreter
- tone of voice
- pace (very fast, erratic or very slow)
- long silences and slow response to questions
- what they say

These lists are not exhaustive.

Some of these signs can be difficult to spot. Physical signs are normally easier to notice.

### Your role and responsibilities

We all have responsibilities to the DWP, the claimants and ourselves.

Let us look at your role.



Allow 10 minutes (5 minutes for the activity and 5 for feedback)

Divide the learners into two groups.

Give each group a piece of flip, a set of cards (UC55 01 activity sheet) and some sticky tac.

Ask each group to split the flip in half. One side should be labelled it is my responsibility to and the other it is not my responsibility to.

Ask the learners to place the cards under the correct heading.

#### **Expected answers**

#### **It is my responsibility to**

- carry out my job role effectively

- signpost the claimant to websites, groups or organisations
- maintain a professional distance
- actively listen to what the claimant tells me
- be alert to possible signs of harm and or abuse
- report a safeguarding issue to the relevant authority, even if you do not have permission
- consult others for advice, where necessary
- respect the claimants wishes on disclosure

### **It is not my responsibility to**

- try to diagnose the claimant
- assume knowledge of the circumstances
- make assumptions about what the claimant can and cannot do
- try to solve or get to wrapped up in the claimant's problems

These lists are not exhaustive.



**We will cover more on consent and disclosure later in the module.**

Complex needs are not always permanent. It is important that we review the claimant's circumstances to make sure the support we are providing is still appropriate.

We are now going to look at some of the circumstances that could lead to someone requiring additional support. There is often more than one trigger, and most can affect anybody at any time.

It is important to deal with all claimants with patience, sensitivity and understanding. There may be a hidden complex need.

## Mental health

An important area to understand is mental health,

Mental health can range from good to poor, but poor does not mean mental ill-health.

Poor mental health is about struggling with life, finding it difficult to learn, make relationships and responding to stress.

People with poor mental health are more at risk of mental ill-health. A sign of this could be that they find it more difficult to cope with failing at tasks. This could be something as simple as trying to access the service.

The right treatment and support can help manage a mental health condition.

Even with treatment helping the symptoms, a mental health issue can result in a loss of confidence. This will affect service access and beliefs about employment.



What behaviours are claimants with poor mental health likely to demonstrate?



- anxiety about discussing issues
- anxiety around undertaking tasks
- anxiety about engaging digitally
- thinking in negative ways
- underestimating abilities, low confidence and self esteem
- short attention span, lack of concentration and easily distracted
- low mood and energy, engaging with tasks takes a huge amount of effort
- lack of consistency
- easily irritated, quick to become angry

This list is not exhaustive.



**These behaviours are not just indicators of a mental health condition. A claimant in a range of different circumstances could demonstrate them.**

A claimant who behaves in a strange or unusual way can often produce fear in those who are not used to it. They may feel they are in danger and that the claimant may lash out unexpectedly or violently.

In most cases someone with a mental health condition is not violent or abusive. A history of violence is a much better indication of future violent behaviour.



How can you help where a claimant's behaviour indicates they may find it more difficult to cope with failing at tasks?



- talking to the claimant and asking questions at their level. This will minimise the risk of them believing they are unable to answer the questions
- ask questions sensitively
- summarise regularly using the claimants own words
- make sure tasks are achievable, it is better for claimants with a mental health condition to succeed at a number of small steps
- decisions should be jointly agreed

- help claimants see the benefit for them in completing the task
- help them to reflect on the action and see how they have benefitted

This list is not exhaustive

You are most likely to come across claimants with common mental health conditions including;

- depression
- anxiety
- obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)

This is because individuals with these conditions may be able to look for or be in work.



Show Slide 05 – Sonia

This slide is animated. Do not select enter until instructed.

Allow a couple of minutes for learners to read the slide.



What would we discuss with Sonia?



- the reason she was late
- that punctuality is something employers would expect



Show Slide 05 – Sonia

Select enter

Allow learners time to read the information about Sonia's condition



Allow 5 minutes

Facilitate a discussion with the learners about how we could support Sonia in future appointments.

Ensure the following is covered

- ask what help she needs
- remind her to keep in contact through the journal when having difficulties coming into the office
- arrange telephone appointments, where necessary
- work on small steps to build confidence
- use the DPT and local knowledge to identify suitable provision

This list is not exhaustive



### Decision makers only



**Learners do not need to make a decision on the following scenario.**



Show Slide 06 – Thomaz

This slide is animated.

Select enter 6 times.

Allow learners time to read the information.



Do you need further information from Thomaz about how his anxiety disorder affects him?



Yes

When you contact Thomaz, he discloses his anxiety level rises when asked to do something at short notice.

He needs time to prepare and calm himself using techniques suggested by his counsellor.



Has his complex need been taken into account when looking at his ability to fulfil his labour market requirements?



No



Allow 5 minutes

Facilitate a brief discussion around Thomaz's situation and the actions taken up to the point of the decision referral.

## Learning disabilities or learning difficulties



Show Slide 07 – What is the difference?

This slide is animated.

Select enter twice to reveal the difference between a learning disability and a learning difficulty.

A learning disability affects the overall intelligence quotient (IQ). This means that it affects all aspects of learning.

The average IQ is between 90 and 110, a person has a learning disability when their IQ is less than 70.

Learning difficulties refers to specific issues with learning, for example dyslexia or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).



How can you tell if someone has a learning disability or difficulty?



- they tell you
- they have a statement of special needs, education health and care plan, school action or school action plus
- they may get personal independence payment (PIP) or disability living allowance (DLA)
- they may be unable read or write
- they struggle to retain or process information
- they miss appointments

This list is not exhaustive



Allow 5 minutes

Facilitate a discussion around the extra support we may need to provide.

Make sure the following is covered

- checking they are not agreeing just to please you
- provide information in easy read format
- referral to money advice

- putting alternative payment arrangements(s) in place, including payments direct to landlord
- is a specialist employment provider needed?
- is a home visit appropriate?
- does the claimant need an appointee?



**We will look at home visits and appointees later in the module.**

## Drug and alcohol dependency



Refer the learners to the Universal Learning guidance on drug and alcohol dependency.

Allow 5 minutes for learners to read.



Show Slide 08 – Leah

Allow learners time to read about Leah. Using guidance, they should answer the following questions.



What is DWP policy to support claimants like Leah with drug and alcohol dependency?



DWP policy is to work with structured treatment and recovery services as part of an active route into work. Partnership working with service providers is how we achieve this.



Leah has provided evidence to show she is recovering in a residential rehabilitation programme. Can we treat her as having limited capability for work?



Yes, as she is recovering as a patient in a hospital or similar institution for 24 hours or more.



What else can we do to support her?



We can switch off her work related requirements for up to six months, as long as she remains in structured recovery orientated treatment for drug and alcohol abuse.

A claimant may only have one such easement in any rolling 12-month period. We calculate this from the last day of any previous drug or alcohol related switch off.

The switch off will need to be reviewed to make sure that she is still attending and to encourage engagement.



**You cannot treat a claimant who is taking part in structured treatment in the community as having limited capability for work. The claimant commitment should be appropriately tailored and the easement can still apply.**

## Claimants who need an interpreter



When might a claimant need an interpreting service?



- when their first language is not English or Welsh
- if they are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired and need to use British sign language (BSL)



Allow 10 minutes (5 minutes for the activity and 5 for feedback.)

Divide the learners into four groups and assign each group one of the interpreting procedures below.

Ask the learners to research using guidance their procedure and record their findings on flip

- claimants own interpreter
- local community based interpreting service
- telephone interpreting service
- contracted face to face interpretation

The purpose of the activity is for learners to be able to locate the guidance.

## Refugees and asylum seekers



Refer the learners to the Universal Learning pages on refugees and asylum seekers.

Allow 5 minutes for learners to read the guidance and use the information to answer the following questions.



What is a refugee?



A refugee is someone forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence and has leave to remain in the country.



Show Slide 09 – Mariana

Allow the learners time to read the information on the slide



How can we identify Mariana as a refugee?



She is an asylum seeker who has leave to remain in the UK.



Why does Mariana's circumstances mean we would consider her to have complex needs?



- she is a refugee
- she does not have friends or family to support her

- she cannot speak English very well
- she has children
- she does not have a bank account



As Mariana has no one to interpret for her what should be done to support her during a telephone call?



The agent should use the big word telephony service. Not offering this could put claimants at risk of being unable to access the service.



Why is it a concern that Mariana does not have a bank account?



She is at risk of not receiving her Universal Credit payments.

As Mariana does not have a bank account, we may need to arrange an alternative method for her first payment.

Her Majesties Government Payment Exception Service (HMG PES) is a short term solution to prevent delay in payment where there is no alternative.

We need to encourage claimants to open a suitable account as soon as possible.



## Domestic violence and or abuse

The government definition of domestic violence and of abuse is 'any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.'



**Before showing the following video advise the learners that it may provoke an emotional response and if they are affected by it they should let you know.**

Show the [domestic violence video](#) from the Universal learning page on domestic violence and or abuse.

Video length 8 minutes 44 seconds



Show Slide 10 – Types of domestic violence and or abuse.

This slide animated – only select enter when instructed to do so as part of the next activity.



Allow 5 minutes.

Slide 10 shows seven types of domestic abuse.

Ask the learners how they think each type is defined, revealing each answer before moving onto the next.



What signs might a claimant display to show they are a victim of domestic violence and or abuse?



Expected answers

- physical signs such as bruising, black eyes or marks on the neck
- covering injuries with heavier than normal make up, sunglasses, long sleeves or scarves
- becoming withdrawn or quiet
- appearing scared or fearful
- isolating themselves from friends or family
- appearing anxious or nervous when away from the abuser
- low self esteem
- being very apologetic or meek
- develop a drug or alcohol problem
- referring to their partner as bad tempered, moody or possessive
- always with a third party such as a partner
- loss of interest in looking for work

- having little or no money available
- partner contacting them often to check up on them
- unexplained changes in behaviour

This list is not exhaustive.



**Whilst these could be signs of domestic violence and or abuse, it is important not to make assumptions, as they could be signs of something else.**



As well as the signs we have discussed, what other issues may sufferers have?



- nowhere to live
- little or no identification
- lack of local knowledge

This list is not exhaustive.



Refer the learners to the universal learning pages on domestic violence and or abuse. Allow the learners 5 minutes to read the guidance.



Show Slide 11 – Gustav

This slide is animated. Do not select enter to reveal the evidence he provides until after you have asked the following question.



What type of evidence should Gustav provide?



Written evidence from a person acting in an official capacity showing that:

- the claimant's circumstances are consistent with those of a person who has had domestic violence inflicted upon them (or has received threats of abuse) during the 6 months before the claimant notifies universal credit
- the claimant has made contact with the person acting in an official capacity in relation to such an incident that happened during that period.



Show Slide 11 – Gustav

Select enter to reveal the evidence Gustav provides.



Other than the police, what other person(s) can act in an official capacity?



- healthcare professional
- registered social worker or social care Wales
- the claimant's employer or trade union representative
- any public, voluntary or charitable body the claimant has had direct contact with in connection with domestic violence and or abuse.



When would we treat Gustav as having notified universal credit?



We would treat him as having notified universal credit on the 2 October and we must switch off his requirements from this date.



**Remind the learners that until written evidence is provided we can only switch off requirements for up to one month.**

## Care leavers



Show the learners the [care leavers engagement video](#).

Video length 4 minutes 45 seconds



Refer the learners to the universal learning page on care leavers. Allow 5 minutes for learners to read the guidance.



What are care leavers more likely to be at risk of?



- poor educational outcomes
- unemployment
- homelessness
- drug and alcohol dependency
- offending
- mental health issues

This list is not exhaustive.



Who provides the evidence of care leaver status?



The local authority.



What support could we offer during a pre-claim meeting?



Support includes

- advance claim preparation

- advance payment
- alternative payment arrangements and money advice
- help with housing costs if they are under 22
- support whilst in full time non advanced education

This list is not exhaustive.

## Modern slavery



Refer the learners to the universal learning pages on modern slavery and human trafficking. Allow 5 minutes for them to read the information.



Allow 10 minutes (5 for the activity and 5 for feedback)

Divide the learners into groups and provide them with UC55 activity sheet 02a and 02b. The activity sheet contains details of a claim and notes for Darrell Cushing-Lee.

In their groups ask the learners to review the claim information and notes and ask them to identify the following

- any information that identifies this as a possible modern slavery case
- what the work coach should look out for at the next appointment

### **Expected answers**

### **Signs it is a modern slavery case**

- employed for no or minimal wages – his wages are exactly minimum wage for his age
- living in communal housing – he is living in shared housing and his landlord and employer are the same person
- all their documents held by landlord or employer – employer has his documents
- always accompanied by a third party – his employer came with him to the interview
- unrelated individuals contact details given – email address is not his own

### **Things to look out for**

- Has his employer or someone else come to the interview with him?
- Does he have access to any documents you need to see or does someone else have them?
- Does he look nervous?
- Is there any fresh bruising?





What should you do if you suspect a claimant, such as Darrell is a victim of modern slavery?



- Gather relevant information
- Discuss your concerns with your manager straight away
- Send a referral and information to Central Criminal Intelligence and Investigation Service Intel (CISS) [HUB.INTELLIGENCEINBOX@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK](mailto:HUB.INTELLIGENCEINBOX@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK)

## Skills Practice



Allow 10 minutes (5 for the activity and 5 for feedback)

The purpose of this activity is to remind the learners to:

- avoid assumptions by identifying potential reasons for claimant behaviours or statements
- reflect on how this would affect their own approach to supporting the claimant – what might they do or say
- start to identify how to support the claimant in accessing DWP services and looking for work

Divide the learners into groups and issue UC55 activity sheet 03.

For each statement the group should discuss their responses to the three questions, putting their responses on flip.

### Recording complex needs



Where would you record information around a claimant's complex needs on the service?



In the claimant history as a profile note.

You should update the claimant history with the details of the complex need and how it affects their ability to access the service. Profile notes must:

- be clear, concise and free of jargon or text speak
- contain recognised abbreviations only
- not contain defamatory information
- use opening words that make it easy to identify, for example 'homeless' or 'non-digital'
- reflect any adjustments a claimant may need, for example 'more time to complete to-dos as claimant has no access to digital technology and relies on public access points'

- meet General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018 standards

A way to remember this is to use 'FRANC', this stands for

- Factual (personal opinions must not be recorded)
- Relevant
- Accurate
- Not excessive (to the point)
- Current (this can include events that happened years ago but still affect the claimant today)



**Adding \*\* to the beginning and end of a profile note will help it to stand out.**



Refer the learner to the universal learning guidance on using the claimant profile to record complex needs. Allow 5 minutes for them to read the information before completing the activity.



Allow 15 minutes (10 for the activity and 5 for feedback)

Provide the learners with UC55 activity sheet 04 that has the case studies we have looked at within the learning.

- Sonia – mental health

- Leah – drug and alcohol dependency
- Gustav – domestic abuse
- Mariana – refugee
- Darrell – modern slavery

Ask them to use guidance to provide an example of a profile note for each claimant.

Example answers

### **Sonia**

**\*\*Mental health – can find it difficult to leave the house.  
Consider some appointments being by telephone\*\***

### **Leah**

**\*\*Drug/alcohol misuse – in residential treatment for the next couple of months. Requirements turned off for 2 months\*\***

### **Gustav**

**\*\*Domestic abuse – letter from the police provided as evidence. Easement applied whilst he secures a place to live. Signposted to male advice (and enquiry) line\*\***

### **Mariana**

**\*\*Refugee – interpreter required. HMGPES needed for initial payment. Referral for ESOL course made. Support to open a bank account provided\*\***

### **Darrell**

**\*\*Modern slavery – maybe unavailable for work search. Reported to CISS. Easement applied.\*\***

During feedback, ask the groups why they have provided the information they have.

## Reviewing complex needs

A claimant's complex needs are likely to change. Support may be in place on a one-off basis or for short, medium or long periods. It is important to review the profile notes to see if the complex needs are still relevant. If not, review the tailored support or easements and remove the pinned notes.

## DWP visiting



When is a home visit appropriate?



A home visit is appropriate when a claimant:

- Has been identified as having complex needs
- Is unable to access our services themselves or with the help of a family member or third party.



Show the video [‘Day in the life of a visiting officer’](#)

We are now going to watch a short video (6min 21secs) and introduce you to two visiting officers.



Show the video [‘How to make a visiting referral’](#)

We are now going to watch a video (7mins 31secs) on how to make a successful referral for a home visit.



We will now create a to-do for a home visit for William.

William has a fit note because he is housebound after an operation. We need to verify his circumstances.

We will now complete the to-do and the Agent Led Process (ALP) action in the training service.

Learners will need to:

- Select William’s claim and choose ‘create an agent to-do’ from the dashboard
- Select ‘refer for a home visit’ from the drop down menu
- Input today’s date and select ‘create to-do’
- Select ‘refer for a home visit William’ link, this will open the ALP

Ask the learners to complete the relevant sections of the ALP using the information provided on the claimant information sheet.

Once the to-do has been completed, ask the learners to leave the ALP open to answer the following questions.



Which section has detailed instructions on how to refer a claimant for a home visit?



Section 2.5 or 2.6 if in Northern Ireland



If a claimant does not have enough evidence to verify their identity, what must they do?



They must answer biographical questions.



Which section of the ALP can you find the biographical questions?



Section 4



Refer the learners to the guidance on home visits and allow 5 minutes for them to read and then answer the following questions.



If a claimant does not have a Universal Credit account, how do we refer them for a home visit?



A 'refer for a home visit (pre gather claim) ALP is used. This determines a claimant's suitability for a home visit and takes you through the steps needed for a referral.

## Appointees

Claimants may need someone else to manage their affairs for them. This could be because of complex needs, a disability or a health condition.

An appointee can be either an

- individual – also known as a Personal Acting Body (PAB)

Or

- an organisation – also known as a Corporate Acting Body (CAB)

The responsibilities of an appointee are the same regardless of whether they are a PAB or a CAB



### Personal acting body

Personal acting bodies (PAB) can be appointed by either the

- court of protection
  - office of the public guardian
- or
- secretary of state

If a claimant requires a PAB, we need to make a referral for a home visit using the 'Verify Appointee (Personal Acting Body)' to-do.



**There is a different process for appointees in England and Wales and Scotland.**

**Learners should make a note to find out who is involved in their location.**

### Corporate acting body

Examples of CAB's are:

- a firm of solicitors
- the local authority
- a specialist organisation, for example age concern

The secretary of state or the courts can appoint a CAB. If appointed by the courts they are immediately accepted to act for the claimant without further action.

A CAB can delegate their authority to a named representative who has daily working contact with the claimant. These act as a third party.

### Requests to be a corporate acting body

A CAB may request to act as an appointee for a claimant in the following ways

- by letter or via the claimant's journal
- by telephone to an agent or to SERCO when booking an appointment
- in person at a jobcentre

When a request to be an appointee from a CAB is received you must create and follow the 'verify existing appointee (Corporate acting body) ALP' and to-do to obtain details of the CAB.



Refer the learners to the Universal Learning on Appointees, Personal Acting Bodies and Corporate Acting Bodies.

Ask them to read the sections on

- Appointees

- Eligibility
- Personal Acting Bodies (PAB)
- Corporate Acting Bodies (CAB)

Allow 5 minutes



When might an appointee be appropriate?



When a claimant is incapable of managing his or her own affairs because of mental incapacity or severe physical disability



What are the types of appointees?



- deputy
- power of attorney



What is the difference between a deputy and someone with power of attorney?



- A deputy administers a claimant's affairs
- Power of attorney means they act on the claimant's behalf.



What is an example of a PAB?



A child, a friend, a sibling or a spouse.



Who appoints an appointee for DWP?



The secretary of state for work and pensions



What do we need to consider when deciding if an appointee is appropriate?



- the appointee must be over the age of 18
- the claimant must be incapable of managing their benefit affairs because of mental incapacity or severe physical disability
- the claimant must not have another person of equal or higher authority appointed to act for them
- an appointee is not appropriate if the claimant is simply unable to collect their benefits or no longer wishes to manage their own affairs
- claimants who can manage their own affairs but are unable to go to the bank, building society or post office

may be able to arrange for a person they know and trust to withdraw their universal credit payment for them.

### Appointees and universal credit

Although a claimant may have requested an appointee for UC, you should be aware that the claimant might have an existing appointee for another benefit.

Where this is the case, the action to take is the same as above for a new appointee.

An appointee can be appointed at any stage in the claimants Universal Credit journey.

You should make a referral to DWP visiting for a home visit if a claimant requests an appointee. The visiting officer (VO) will authorise the appointee if:

- An appointee is appropriate
- The person to be the appointee is suitable

The VO will inform the appointee of their responsibilities,

If an appointee is not appropriate, the VO records the reasons for refusal on a BF56.

If the person who was going to be the appointee has access to the claimant's online account, the password is reset and secured.

A case manager completes the remainder of the 'verify appointee (personal acting body)' to-do and ALP.



**The following activity is specific to the training service. The full process cannot be replicated as a separate tool is used to make the visiting referral.**



Ask the learners to log into the training service and

- Select Griselda
- Select create agent to-do
- Select verify appointee (Personal acting body) from the drop down menu
- Set a due date of today
- Select create to-do

Allow the learners 5 minutes to read the ALP. They should understand that the VO completes sections 2 – 4 during the home visit. A case manager will then complete sections 5 and 6 of the ALP after the appointee has been verified.

- Save and upload the verify appointee ALP

As Griselda has an online account, the referral can be made using the to-dos and associated ALPs.



What action would you take if Griselda did not have an online account?



You would use the relevant ALPs in the resources section of Universal Learning.

These are attached to the 'home visiting referral form' available from the DWP Visiting referral tool and sent electronically to DWP visiting.

## Consent and disclosure



Refer the learners to the consent and disclosure bite size within Universal Learning and allow 10 minutes for them to work complete the learning.



**Further information on safeguarding can be found in vulnerable people.**

**If they have not already completed it ask the learners to add 'safeguarding children and adults' learning, available through civil service learning, to their ILNA.**

# Switching off requirements

## For work coaches only



The learners should already be aware of this topic from the module UC05a 'Switching Off Requirements'.

The intention for this skills practice is for the learners to practice the type of coaching conversation they will have with the claimant when switching off their work related requirements.

We must tailor claimant's commitments by taking full account of a claimant's current capability and circumstances.

There are certain times when we might need to apply 'switching off requirements' to a claim due to the claimant's circumstances. It is vital that you continue to support a claimant during this time and tailor their commitments.



Allow 20 minutes (15 minutes for the activity and 5 minutes for feedback)

Split the learners into groups. Allow each group to decide who will take the role of the work coach, the claimant and the observer and provide them with UC55 activity sheet 05a, b and c.



The learners should discuss the coaching conversation the work coach had with the claimant within their group.

At the end of the activity bring the group back together. Ask them how they felt about the activity.

## Suicide and self-harm

A claimant may say that they intend to harm or take their own life. This can be distressing for you and the claimant.

There are important processes in place within all Department for Work and Pension offices to help you in this situation. Being prepared can minimise distress and lead to outcomes at the time of need.

It is crucial everyone knows what to do in these situations.



Do you know what the 6 Point Plan is?



The Department for Work and Pensions have a National 6 Point Plan to follow and all actions around this are based on the assumption that it is a real possibility the claimant will take this action.

Everyone must ensure they know how to access the plan quickly in an emergency. You should also refresh your memories on this guidance regularly so that you are prepared if you are ever in this situation for real.



Show the '6 Point Plan' video (6 minutes 34 seconds)

['6 Point Plan'](#)

The aim of this video is to provide a high level overview of the 6 Point Plan.



Refer the learners to the guidance for Claimant suicide or self-harm.

Ensure the learners:

- read and understand this guidance
- identify local site plans on Declaration of Intent to Attempt Suicide or Self Harm



What would the next steps be after finishing the call or the face to face meeting?



The agents should complete a 'Record of declaration of intent to attempt suicide or self-harm form.' They could also fill in an Unacceptable Customer Behaviour (UCB) form if they feel threatened.



What do you think should be included in your 'Record of customer declaration of intent to attempt suicide or self-harm' form?



- time and duration of contact with the customer

- what the claimant said or did
- the claimant's behaviour
- key information you provided to the claimant
- any actions the claimant said they would take

An 'Incident Review Template' needs to be completed following a conversation with a colleague. This is an opportunity for the colleague and line manager to reflect on the incident and discuss any further support required.



Show Slide 12 – Declaration of intent – Leah

This slide is not animated.



Allow 10 minutes

Facilitate a discussion around what action they might take if they receive this journal entry on a Monday morning?

### **Suggested answers**

Actions should include:

- speak to your line manager or colleague
- assess the level of risk to the claimant and to decide an appropriate response
- consider whether the declaration is specific and urgent

- try and contact the claimant
- if you consider that there is a specific risk that the claimant may attempt suicide or self-harm you must consider the Six Point Plan and what is appropriate and reasonable in the circumstances
- if you cannot get in contact with the claimant and you are sufficiently concerned about the claimant, you should discuss your concerns with the team leader
- where you feel that the outcome might be self-harm or death, you should contact:
- Local Mental Health Crisis Team and if customer known to them
- police on their non-emergency number, ask for a welfare check and explain why

## Dealing with your emotions

### All job roles

You have to maintain an empathetic and professional distance to protect yourself. However, some circumstances may affect you and you need to take the time to reflect on what has happened and reach a sense of closure.



Show Slide 13 – Dealing with your emotions

This slide is animated – do not select enter until after the learners have given their answers to the question.



What can you do after a distressing interview to help you manage your emotions?



Show Slide 13 – Dealing with your emotions

Select enter 6 times to reveal the expected answers

This list is not exhaustive.

If you decide to talk it through you may want to discuss

- what happened
- why it happened
- how you felt
- what you have learned from the experience
- any support you may need

### Supporting your team

#### Team leader only

It is important that your team members deal with claimants appropriately and professionally at all times, keeping the claimant at the heart of everything they do.

After a difficult conversation, your team member may need your support.

There are no hard and fast rules about how your team member deals with the effects of a distressing or stressful conversation.

Allow them time to recover and then discuss the situation with them. Use your listening and coaching skills to support them.

Give them the opportunity to think about what has happened and inform you of any support they feel they need.

It is important that you are aware of the number of complex needs cases your team members have on their caseload.

They should be checking the journal and notes to identify these cases to bring to your attention.

These cases need to be monitored more closely to try to prevent claimants from reaching a point where they can no longer effectively manage their circumstances.

### Options

There are several options available to support claimants. Your team member may not always know how to support this claimant.



How can you support them to identify different options?



- talk the case through with them
- use case conferencing as required to generate ideas.



Which colleagues can you talk to for support?



- DWP disability employment advisor
- Employer and partnership teams
- External partner providers
- Team leader colleagues

### Scenarios

The following scenarios will help you to consider how to support your team members.



Facilitate a 5-minute discussion on what should be included in this conversation. Ensure the following is covered as it will be used in the following exercise. Record on flipchart.

### Expected answers

- ask how they are feeling
- find out what support networks they already have. If required suggest other support available, for example, the Employee Assistance Programme
- review how they handled the incident
- identify any gaps in knowledge then discuss and agree how this will be addressed
- agree next steps
- identify any gaps in processes and lessons learned. These may need to be carried forward to the local site plans.



Allow 20 minutes for this activity. 10 minutes for the exercise including feedback from observers and 10 minutes for a group discussion after the exercise.

Split the learners into groups of 3 taking the roles of team member, team leader and observer. The scenario will only be run once so the learners will not swap around roles.

Issue 'UC55 06 a, b and c team leader activity to each group. The instructions are on each sheet.



After the activity, bring the groups back together. Ask the team leaders how they felt about the conversation and the case managers if they felt listened to and supported.

Then ask the observers to share an example of what they thought went well in the debrief conversation.

This could be a question and the response from case manager or how they agreed the next steps. All feedback must be factual.

It's important to follow up the debriefing at intervals appropriate to the individual to see how they are doing.

For example, this might initially be the next day or a couple of times a week over the next fortnight.

Take the lead from your member of staff as to what level of support they require.

## Who and what can support you?



Show Slide 14 – Who and what can support you?

This slide is animated – do not select enter until instructed.

Supporting claimants with complex needs can be difficult. Along with your team leader there are other sources of support available to you.

These include



Show Slide 14 – Who and what can support you?

Select enter to reveal

### People

- Disability Employment Advisor (DEA) – can provide help and support when dealing with complex needs around health conditions and disabilities.
- Work Psychologist – can provide case conferencing and one to one support on hard to help cases.
- Customer Services Manager (CSM) – are the point of contact for homelessness and domestic abuse issues (job centres only)



**The CSM role in relation to homelessness is only a requirement in England.**



Show Slide 14 – Who and what can support you?

Select enter to reveal

### Sources of information

- District provision tool (DPT)
- Complex needs toolkit.



Show Slide 15 – Complex needs toolkit

The toolkit has been developed to help job centres and service centres deal with claimants with complex needs more effectively.

This standard template supports colleagues to identify, own and take appropriate action to support claimants with complex needs.

The toolkit includes a link to Help to Claim - a service for claimants making a new Universal Credit claim or moving from a legacy benefit to Universal Credit because of a change of circumstances.

Universal Credit Service Design and Transformation own the complex needs toolkit and its overall design. Each jobcentre has responsibility for their own toolkit.

Service centres are no longer required to have their own tailored toolkit. Instead, they work closely with their linked jobcentres.

A nominated jobcentre single point of contact (SPoC) is responsible for maintaining the toolkit, for example adding hyperlinks to provision/DPT, ensuring action points are progressed and the calendar is updated.

# Successes – illustrative examples



Allow 20 minutes (10 minutes for the activity and 10 minutes for feedback)

The aim of this activity is to show some illustrative examples of successful interactions between work coaches and claimants with complex needs.

Divide the learners into small groups and hand each group the sheet titled 'UC55 07 Illustrative Examples'.

Ask learners to read the examples together and think about:

- what the work coaches did well?
- what other support do you think we could have provided to the claimants?
- is there anything you have read which you are going to take away and apply to your role?

### **Suggested answers**

Things the work coach did well could include:

- Pat built up trust and understanding with Debbie
- Pat looked through the disability guidance and contacted the potential employers with Debbie

- Peter's support was tailored to support him with his literacy difficulties
- the work coach promoted to Jane how work can be good for her health and wellbeing
- the work coach identified coping strategies Annabelle could use so she could go ahead with plans she makes

Other support could include:

- signposting to relevant provisions using the DPT
- case conferencing with your colleagues
- contacting the claimant's work coach or case manager depending on your role to keep them informed and deliver one service

These lists are not exhaustive.

## Module summary



Show Slide 16 – Module summary

Allow the learners time to read the summary.