

Dear Mr Hub,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 21 September 2017. You asked:

Some providers of the Jobcentre Plus Work Programme and other workfare schemes have used in-house job search engines such as Aptem (formerly MyWorkSearch) and Avanta Jobs. Apparently these were not mandatory and a claimant could refuse to use them without incurring a sanction.

With respect to the new Work and Health Programme starting autumn 2017:

- 1. Please provide the information you hold that explains if there any in-house job search engines which claimants may be asked to use on this scheme and if so what are they called and which provider uses which.*
- 2. Please provide the information you hold that explains whether it is mandatory (in the sense of a doubt being raised against the claimant if they refuse to use them) for a claimant to use any of these in-house job search engines and if so which ones and with which provider.*
- 3. If usage of these in-house job search engines is mandatory please supply all the information you hold that explains why they are mandatory.*
- 4. If the in-house job search engines are not mandatory please supply all the information you hold that explains why they are not mandatory.*
- 5. Can a provider mandate a claimant to use Universal Jobmatch (UJM) for the purpose of job searching and/or providing job search evidence with that provider:*
 - a) where the claimant is not registered with UJM*
 - b) where the claimant is registered with UJM Again, please provide the information you hold that justifies your responses.*

In respect of your questions 1 – 4, the Department does not currently hold the information you have requested. We are in the very early stages of implementation/mobilisation and the Work and Health Programme (WHP) providers, who were only confirmed on 03 October, have yet to fully develop their systems and solutions to deliver WHP. Therefore at this stage we are

unable to confirm the nature of individual search engines to be used; however this will become clearer as implementation develops.

WHP providers will have the authority to mandate long-term unemployed participants (Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants and Universal Credit (UC) claimants in the Intensive Work Search Regime (IWSR)) to undertake activity which would help them find and retain work.

- In JSA, *Section 17A of the Jobseekers Act 1995* enables the Secretary of State to make regulations requiring claimants to participate in schemes of prescribed description that are designed to assist them to obtain employment. For the purpose of the WHP, the DWP will be making amendments to the *Jobseeker's Allowance (Schemes for Assisting People to Obtain Employment) Regulations 2013* ('SAPOE') which will give:
 - (i) the DWP the power to mandate JSA claimants onto the WHP (which will be described in the SAPOE Regs).
 - (ii) providers of the WHP the power to 'require' LTU customers to participate and carry out certain activities as they deem appropriate and reasonable to assist them into employment.
- In UC, the powers to mandate claimants in the Intensive Work Search Regime ('IWSR') to participate in the WHP are in sections 16 and 22 of the Welfare Reform Act 2012, as supplemented by Part 8 of the Universal Credit Regulations 2013. This authority is delegated to WHP providers under section 29 of the Welfare Reform Act 2012.

In respect of your request 5a, I can confirm that the current policy is WHP providers will not be able to mandate a long term unemployed participant to create a profile and public CV in Universal Jobmatch (UJM) where the participant had not done so already.

In respect of your request 5b, subject to meeting the requirements and principles outlined below, and provided the participant has already created a profile and public CV on UJM prior to joining the WHP, a WHP provider would therefore have the option to mandate a long term unemployed participant to use UJM for jobsearch and request evidence that the activity had been completed.

This is subject to the provider:

- ensuring that the activity is reasonable in the participant's circumstances
- ensuring that the participant understands the activity and is aware of the sanctions consequences of failing to carry out a mandated activity
- identifying if a JSA participant has an Extended Period of Sickness and consider accordingly
- identifying if a UC participant has any restrictions on their work search requirements and considering accordingly
- notifying the participant in writing on the appropriate Mandatory Activity Notification (MAN) of:
 - the fact that the action is mandatory
 - the specific action that they are required to undertake
 - when or by when they must undertake it

- what evidence, if any, they must supply to demonstrate completion
- the sanction consequences of non-compliance and what the participant would need to do to re-comply and minimise the length of any sanction

The provider must be either hand the MAN directly to the participant or send it by post. They must also keep the rationale on why they are mandating the participant to an activity and record the information above (the MAN) along with all other ongoing mandatory requirements in a single action planning document.

Where the long term unemployed participant is mandated to use UJM, the provider must also give the participant an option to use an internet enabled device on which UJ cookies have been accepted for the participant to use. They must inform the participant of the reasons why they are giving the participant an option to use the alternative device (due to non-essential cookies being placed on the participant's device) and issue a cookies factsheet which is available in English and Welsh. This factsheet allows the participant to make a fully informed decision about their choices relating to cookies and the provider must explain that the participant can use one of the providers devices should the participant not wish to accept cookies on the participants own computer/device by the UJ website.

The factsheets can be found can be found on www.gov.uk at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-jobmatch-what-you-need-to-know-about-cookies>

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

DWP Strategy Fol Team

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing freedom-of-information-request@dwpgsi.gov.uk or by writing to DWP, Central Fol Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, SW1H 9NA. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF www.ico.gov.uk