

My Work Plan booklet instructions

Summary

1. The Claimant Commitment is where key information will be recorded about the claimant's availability for work, the types of work they are most suited to do and the high level regular work search activities the claimant will do to help them find and keep a job.
2. The claimant should build on the regular work search activities within their Claimant Commitment by turning these into individual, personalised plans and specific actions about what they are going to do to look for work and how, when and where they are going to do it. The My Work Plan booklet can help the claimant do this.
3. The purpose of the My Work Plan booklet is to help claimants to plan and record the specific actions they will undertake to look for and find a job. It will also help claimants to manage and review their work search activity. The coach should discuss how to make effective plans with the claimant. The Work Coach should use this booklet to help them to discuss how to make effective plans with claimants.

The My Work Plan booklet

4. The expectation is that the Jobcentre will work with claimants to actively use the My Work Plan booklet. The claimant should be actively encouraged to use their My Work Plan booklet to record their plans as it will help them to better plan, manage and review their work search activity. It will also provide a strong basis upon which it can be determined whether the claimant is meeting their requirements for actively seeking work, and make it easy for the claimant to provide evidence that they are undertaking reasonable steps to secure employment.
5. It is not mandatory for claimants to use the My Work Plan booklet, however Work Coaches must issue them with the booklet as it contains important information about sanctions and appointment times as well as useful information on how to plan.
6. There may be times when the claimant has recorded their activities to the same standard in a different format. In cases like these, the coach should then encourage the claimant to revert to use of the My Work Plan booklet. However, this booklet is not a mandatory product for demonstrating evidence of work search and claimants have the right to demonstrate what they have done to look for work through whichever means they deem suitable and most effective.
7. For example, the claimant may prefer to use Universal Jobmatch to record their activities and their plans for what they will do to look for work or may bring in a CV that they have developed to demonstrate that they have undertaken this activity. Claimants can use their Universal Jobmatch account to show details of:
 - saved jobs
 - saved searches
 - CVs created and saved
 - application history, and

- activity history.
8. There is also a free text area that the claimant can use to record their plans and any specific actions they will undertake. Claimants should still use their planning skills even if they are not using the My Work Plan booklet.
 9. The claimant's planning skills should be encouraged and checked.
 10. During every Work Search Review, these specific actions will be reviewed alongside the Claimant Commitment and evidence provided by the claimant to ensure they remain entitled to benefit. It is therefore crucial that all of the documents – the Claimant Commitment and the My Work Plan booklet - are viewed alongside any the other information the claimant provides to show what they have done.

16/17 year old claimants

11. As the discussion and agreed activities to be undertaken will reflect the requirement for the claimant to look for training as well as work, a separate under 18's My Work & Training Plan has been created.
12. These instructions are still to be used when discussing the My Work & Training Plan booklet with 16/17 year olds.
13. References to 'Work' should be treated as 'Work and /or Training' when using these instructions with 16/17 year olds.

Use of the My Work Plan booklet

14. The booklet will enable claimants to record the how, where and when they will undertake the key activities they have agreed to do in the Claimant Commitment. This detail should be proposed by the claimant, but agreed with the coach to make sure it is stretching and represents all the claimant could reasonably be expected to do.
15. The claimant should complete the booklet themselves, except in circumstances where a skills need means they cannot, for example, literacy or English language skills. It is important the claimant writes their actions down in the booklet themselves because they will be more likely to remember, buy into and carry out a task if they write it down themselves.
16. Having recorded what they are going to do, how, when and where they are going to do it and any evidence they may provide, the claimant should, before their next Work Search Review, record their progress against these actions. They should include what they did and what the result of any action was.
17. At the Work Search Review, the evidence in the booklet, along with the Claimant Commitment and any other evidence the claimant provides to demonstrate what they have done is used to discuss what the claimant has undertaken to look for a job.
18. If the claimant is confident in making plans that adhere to the framework detailed below, they should also plan the next set of activities they will undertake to look for and find a job. In these cases, discuss these with them to ensure they are sufficiently stretching and challenging.
19. If the claimant wishes to use the My Work Plan, but creates plans which do not adhere to the ABCDE framework, they should be referred to an experienced member of staff to help them with their planning.

20. In cases where a claimant has not completed or created plans independently, discuss future plans with the claimant.
21. Before the claimant is given the My Work Plan booklet, it should be explained to them that the main purpose of the booklet is to help them look for work by allowing them to:
- consider and discuss the details of the specific actions they have agreed to take. These specific actions will move the claimant closer to completing the regular work search activities agreed and recorded on their Claimant Commitment
 - easily keep a record of what they have done to complete those actions, including details of the results of any of those actions, and
 - keep track of the actions needed to start and continue their journey from benefit to work
22. It also includes:
- a reminder of their responsibilities and the penalties for not meeting them
 - details on where to find suitable vacancies
 - changes in their circumstances they must notify DWP about
 - a section to complete when they want to close their claim, and
 - details of their attendance at the Jobcentre

Completing the My Work Plan booklet

23. The activities included in the My Work Plan booklet should follow the ABCDE framework and should be:
- Ambitious
 - Behavioural
 - Challenging
 - Detailed, and
 - Evidence embedded

My Work Plan booklet front page

24. The front page of the My Work Plan booklet contains basic information about the claimant's identity and information about what the booklet contains. The claimant should complete this information. It also includes a statement reminding the claimant of their responsibilities, which the claimant should read, sign and date.

My work search journey

25. The 'My work search journey' section should be completed by the claimant as they work through the steps to finding and keeping a job. The claimant should continue to refer back to this section as they go through their journey, as it will help them to realise the progress they are making, as well as keep them focused on moving forward. It may help them work out what else they could be doing to look for work, should they need it.
26. It also has details what the claimant should do if they need to stop their claim for any reason.

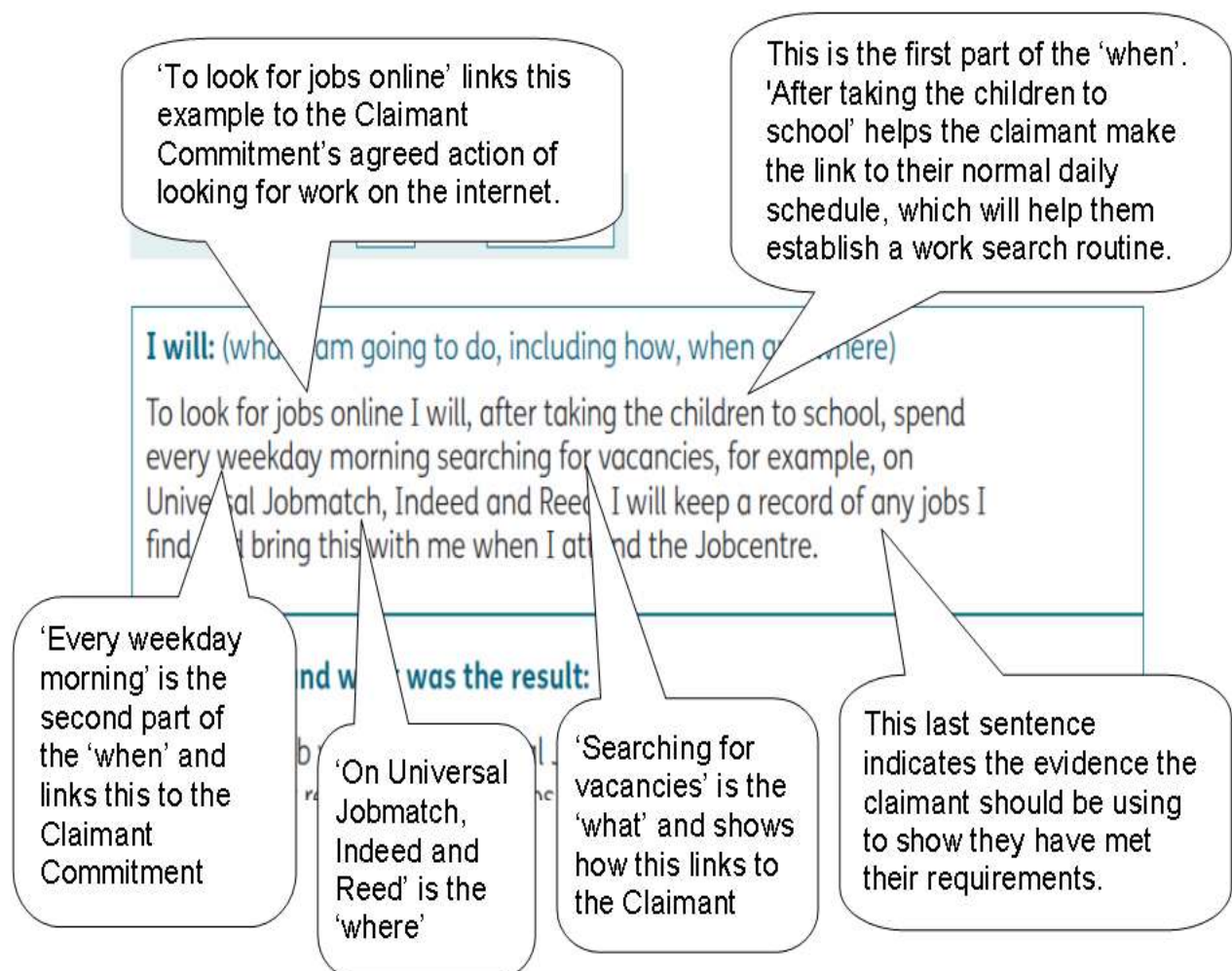
Preparing for my Work Search Reviews

27. This section makes clear to the claimant what their responsibilities are in terms of providing evidence of what they have done. It is the claimant's responsibility to prove that they have done everything they reasonably can to look for a job.
28. It should be made clear to the claimant that they can use whatever evidence they deem to be suitable to show what they have done. This can include the My Work Plan booklet, giving us access to their Universal Jobmatch account or providing print-outs of that information if they don't want to give us access or any other information they wish to provide.

What I will do and record

29. This section explains to the claimant how they should use the booklet, how it will help them and what they should record on it. It is important that the claimant understands how the booklet will help them to plan and structure their work search activities, as this understanding will enable them to use it to maximum effect.
30. In this section there are some good examples of what specific work search activities should look like. It is important to explain to the claimant how these specific activities should be linked to and underpin the regular work search activities they have agreed in their Claimant Commitment. It will need to be explained how the claimant needs to turn the regular work search activities they agreed on their Claimant Commitment into realistic, challenging and specific actions to record in their My Work Plan booklet.
31. For example, the claimant has agreed that one of their regular work search activities on their Claimant Commitment will be to look for work on the internet at least three times a week. The specific action that needs to be included in their My Work Plan booklet should underpin this by explaining the detail of what they will do, how they will do it, when they will do it and where they will do it.

32. The screenshot below uses the example as laid out in the My Work Plan booklet to show how it underpins this regular work search activity.



33. It is important the claimant is as specific as possible when completing these actions, as this will help them to focus on what it is they need to do. Making a plan and agreeing to undertake specific actions can help them to find a job more quickly.
34. Planning and recording specific actions also breaks a large goal, like finding a job, into more manageable chunks. For many claimants though, the thought of undertaking the actions required to find work can seem very daunting. Helping them to see the immediate actions they can take today, tomorrow and next week to move closer to this large goal can help manage this stress and focus their activities. For example; To look for jobs on-line, I will, spend every weekday morning after breakfast searching for vacancies on job boards, such as Universal Jobmatch, Indeed and Reed.
35. In instances where a claimant has a restriction on their availability take this into account when agreeing specific actions. For example, if the claimant is responsible for taking their children to school and is therefore restricting their availability to 9:30am to 2.30pm, their specific action in their My work Plan booklet should not say they will look for work online between 9am and 11am. It should say they will look for work online after they have taken the children to school.

36. Once these specific actions have been discussed and agreed with the claimant, the Work Coach should put their initials in the box above, next to the date. The date box should show when the claimant will start to undertake the specific action detailed in the box beneath it.
37. The claimant should record what they did and what the outcome of that action was in the box underneath the specific action. Again, they should be as detailed as possible about what they did to achieve what they set out to do. Once they have reviewed the evidence the claimant has brought to their Work Search Review, the Work Coach should fill in the 'completed' and 'initials' boxes, if they are content that it shows proof the claimant has done all they could be reasonably expected to do to achieve the specific action.
38. Claimants can also use these specific actions boxes to record any work preparation activities they intend to undertake to help them improve their chances of finding work. Some of these specific actions will be:
- activities that have been included on the Claimant Commitment
 - activities the claimant has been required to do under a Jobseeker's Direction
 - mandatory activities such as referrals to mandatory provision as part of the Jobcentre Plus offer
 - additional voluntary activities the claimant has chosen to do
39. Pages 6-38 contain blank sections for the claimant to record their specific actions, what they did and what the result was. Once the claimant has completely filled the booklet, they should be issued with a new one. If the claimant would like an electronic copy of the blank 'My Actions for Getting Work' pages to record their activities on, this can be provided by accessing the products part of the JSA Claimant Commitment guidance pages.

Your responsibilities

40. The 'your responsibilities' section starts with a summary of the things the claimant needs to do to keep getting Jobseeker's Allowance. This makes it clear to the claimant the consequences they will face if they do not meet their requirements to receive benefit.
41. It also gives the claimant details of what they can do if there is a disagreement about their Claimant Commitment, or a dispute about their benefit.

Looking for work

42. This section gives the claimant information about where they can look for work. It explains briefly how they can use the Universal Jobmatch service to look for a job or match their CV or skills against employers' vacancies.
43. It also provides details on other ways the claimant can look for work, or find further information about benefits.

Attending the Jobcentre

44. This section sets out what the claimant must bring with them when they attend the Jobcentre. It also reminds the claimant of their responsibilities in order to get Jobseeker's Allowance in terms of attending when they are asked to.

Changes you must tell us about

45. This section reminds the claimant that they must tell us immediately if their circumstances change and provides a list of example situations. It also contains a box where the Work Coach should record the telephone number the claimant can ring if they need to ask anything about their Jobseeker's Allowance, or tell us that their circumstances have changed.

Stopping your claim

46. This section explains how the claimant or their partner starting work impacts on their claim and how they should notify the Department that they or their partner has started work.

About your benefit

47. This page gives the claimant some information about how Jobseeker's Allowance is paid, as well as information about tax and National Insurance contributions. It also reminds the claimant that they should tell us immediately if they change their account details.

My appointments

48. The back page of the booklet contains the information the claimant needs to know about their next Work Search Reviews and work search interviews. The claimant must bring this booklet with them every time they attend, as details of the claimant's next attendance needs recording.
49. The Work Coach must also include contact details for themselves and provide a number the claimant can ring should they need to let us know they cannot attend at the day and time shown.

Handling English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) claimants and claimants with a skills need

50. Although claimants should be actively encouraged to complete the My Work Plan booklet, not all claimants will have a level of written English that will enable them to effectively do this.
51. In these circumstances, as long as the claimant understands that they still have a responsibility to demonstrate what they have done to look for work and what they are going to do to look for work that can be understood by their Work Coach then they may provide evidence by a method that suits them better.
52. However, Work Coaches have an overall responsibility to help prepare these claimants for work and as part of this should provide all the necessary help and support needed to enable these claimants to effectively plan their work search (using the My Work Plan booklet if they wish to do so). This may involve making use of local providers who conduct basic skills training and/or mandating the claimant to undertake ESOL training to the appropriate level.
53. In addition to all of the above, where possible, ESOL claimants should also be encouraged to ask a friend or family member to translate the outcomes of their work search activities into their plans for a Work Coach to review, and/or attend the intervention with the claimant so that they can translate on their behalf.

54. If the claimant fills in their My Work Plan booklet in a non-English language then they need to bring evidence of their jobsearch in English. This will allow their Work Coach to assess whether or not they have met their requirements for actively seeking employment