



UCFS25 GEN Sanctions and FTA Part 3 – Failure to Attend

Facilitator Brief
v15.0

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LDO Information:



As usual, encourage learners to find the relevant Universal Learning sections themselves.

They can use the search function.

For your information, the ‘Labour Market’ section contains links to ‘Fail to attend’ and ‘Fail to attend – good reason’.

Module Aims and Objectives



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First, we will find out what happens if the claimant fails to attend meetings at the beginning of their claim.



Refer learners to the ‘Fail to Attend’ section in Universal Learning and ask them to read the following:

- **Introduction**
- **Failure to attend Personal Security Number appointment**
- **Failure to attend Initial Evidence Interview**
- **Failure to attend Habitual Residence Test interview**
- **Failure to attend an Initial Commitments Meeting**

Allow 5 minutes for this activity.



Discuss what we need to consider when the claimant has failed to attend and has complex needs.

Expect learners to consider the following:

- **contacting the claimant, using their preferred method, to find out the reason for their failure to attend (FTA), including FTA of an initial meeting**

- **offering a meeting for face to face support in the Jobcentre at any point in the process where it is deemed necessary**
- **asking a visiting officer to call on the claimant where it is required**
- **if the claimant has complex needs and/or requires additional help to access DWP services for the purpose of FTA, you must add it to the FTA record notes**

Meetings are important for claimants. Some help us collect evidence to support accurate payments. Others allow us to provide claimants with personalised help and tailored support to improve their employment prospects.

We have identified that failing to attend a work-focused interview with no good reason is a sanctionable failure.



Before finding out more about sanctions and FTA, lead a discussion about what we can do to prevent claimants from failing to attend.

Expect the discussion to include the following:

- **building rapport**
- **establishing a good relationship with the claimant**

- **let the claimant know what to do if they are unable to attend**
- **ensure claimants know the importance of attending meetings**
- **make sure claimants understand their meeting details and where to find them on their account**
- **explain the consequences of failing to attend**
- **explain the importance of letting us know if they cannot attend**
- **ensuring the meetings are meaningful, by focusing on what the claimant can do and by keeping their commitments updated**
- **If the claimant contacts us to re-arrange a meeting, we should agree to it unless it is unreasonable or the claimant has a history of such requests or failing to attend**

This list is not exhaustive.



Summarise the discussion by acknowledging that failure to attend is the most common reason for sanctions.

If we can encourage claimants to attend, we will ensure that they are engaging in activities to move them closer to, and into, work.

Claimant contacts to rearrange meeting



If a claimant makes contact to advise they are unable to attend their mandatory meeting, before the time of the meeting, the claimant must tell us why.

We can only rearrange it if the claimant's reasons are acceptable.



Can you give examples of what an acceptable reason for rearranging a meeting could be?



Acceptable reasons are usually those based on facts that can be checked, for example:

- **attending court**
- **a job interview**
- **an extra shift at work**
- **hospital appointment**

When we consider whether to rearrange a meeting, we should check claimant history, to see if there are trends in the claimant's behaviour that we may take into account.

If we cannot accept the reason provided by the claimant as reasonable, the meeting must remain in place. Advise the claimant that they are still required to attend and that, if they do not, a sanction may be applied if they do not have a good reason for not attending.

Claimant Fails to Attend Subsequent Mandatory Meetings



Show Slide Deck 1, slide 15 – Subsequent Meetings

When the claimant fails to attend, the work coach generates the **Failure to Attend** to-do and opens the ALP. They follow the instructions on the ALP to attempt to make contact with the claimant. Before making the call the work coach should review their account to identify any changes that would remove the need for the meeting, or any reasons why the claimant may not have attended.

If they get through, they gather the claimant's reasons for not attending and their current circumstances. This could result in a change of regime meaning a meeting is no longer necessary. If it is still appropriate to the claimant, they rearrange the meeting. This ensures their continued engagement to find work.

During this contact, you also need to record the claimant's reasons for not attending their meeting on the **Failure to Attend ALP**.

You also need to consider whether documentary evidence is required and ask the claimant to provide it. For example, court documents or a hospital letter to support what they have told you.

If the work coach cannot get through, they set a to-do asking the claimant to make contact within 7 days (with day 1 being the day after the FTA). If the claimant contacts within 7 days, we take the same action as if we had made successful contact on day 1.



Remember: all information recorded must be relevant to the contact, accurate, current, and for DWP business use only. This will ensure we meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

Once the claimant gives you the reasons for failing to attend, check the reason is on the prescribed good reason list. You must be aware of all the relevant information about the claimant's circumstances.

If the claimant's reason is on the prescribed good reason list you may make a simple decision to allow.



Ask the learners to refer to Universal Learning.

They should read the section Failure to Attend – Good Reason.



Allow 5 minutes for the learners to discuss what they have read. Encourage them to reflect on how they will use communication skills to find out the reason for failure to attend.

Check whether there are any concerns about making simple failure to attend – good reason decisions.

Remind them that if the case is not simple it should be referred to the decision maker.

Practical Experience on the Training Service



Direct the learners to access the training service.

Ask learners to work together in groups of 3 or 4, as before.

Ask 1 member of each group to access the claim for Algernon, 1 should access Griselda and the other should access Terry's claim.

(If there are 4 learners in the group the 4th can choose which one of those to access.)

Direct the learners to generate a Failure to Attend to-do for their claimant.

They can do that by accessing Create an agent to-do and inputting the due date.

Ask the learners to download and view the ALP.

Allow time for the learners to read the ALP. Draw attention to the different sections.



Ask the learners in their groups to decide who will be the first:

- work coach/case manager
- claimant
- observer



Ask the learner who is the work coach/case manager for Algernon to access UCFS25 Illus Example 05a.

The learner who is the work coach/case manager for Griselda should access UCFS25 Illus Example 06a.

The learner who is the work coach/case manager for Terry should access UCFS25 Illus Example 07a.



Issue the relevant Illustrative Example (part b) to the learner who is the ‘claimant’ in each case. They should not show it to the person who will interview them.

Advise the observers that they should make notes about what the work coach/case manager did well, as the previous skills practise.

Each claimant has failed to attend their work search review. You have contacted (been contacted by) the claimant so you must gather the reasons they failed to attend and complete the **Failure to Attend** ALP.

If the claimant has good reason, you will also record the decision.



Remember, the purpose of this exercise is to practise your skills in a safe environment.

If you want to take a break, to consider how to progress the conversation, you can call a ‘Time Out’.



This exercise is designed to allow you to practise the correct skills, so if you feel you’re going off track pause and gather your thoughts.



Check for understanding and go around each group to check that the learner who is taking the part of the work coach/case manager is interviewing the ‘claimant’ and gathering the evidence.

The learner practising their role should generate the relevant ALP and complete it during the interview, as they need to read it back to the 'claimant'.

They should also demonstrate engagement with the claimant while completing the ALP.

During feedback, ensure that the observer is feeding back constructive comments in a helpful way.

(The exercise is designed to build confidence in gathering evidence and completing the ALP, negative comments may not produce the required outcome.)

Allow 15 minutes for the interview, completion of ALP and another 5 minutes for feedback.



Briefly discuss the outcome of the exercise.

If any good questions or techniques were observed discuss those.



Once the learners have discussed the first example, ask the group to decide who wanted to demonstrate their skills next. The learner should interview the person representing the claimant, recording the evidence on the ALP, as above.

Continue until all of the learners have had a chance to demonstrate their skills.



Allow 20 minutes for each Example.

Illustrative Example 06 – Griselda and Illustrative Example 07 – Terry are designed so the learners can make simple decisions.

Griselda has a job interview and it was not reasonable for her to attend both the job interview and her meeting.

Terry was temporarily looking after children full time, because his sister was ill and he could not arrange alternative care.

Encourage the learners to discuss the cases and make a decision, guided by the ALP, if they feel they have enough evidence.

Illustrative Example 05 – Algernon should be referred to the decision maker.



Ask the learners to access Algernon and create a Refer to Decision Maker (Failure to attend) to-do and download and view the associated ALP. Use the following information to draw attention to sections of the ALP so they complete it to support the decision maker.

Complete all parts of Section 1 before completing the section that relates to their reason for their failure to attend. Only use section 6 “other reasons for failure to attend” if none of the others apply as the specific sections ask for far more useful information.



Remember if the claimant has complex needs these and their impacts should be recorded to allow the decision maker to make their decision appropriately.

It is important that as much information is gathered as possible for the decision maker. This helps to avoid cancelled decisions or the decision maker asking you to obtain further information. You should consider whether you need to ask further questions to obtain information for the decision maker.

Each section has a free text box allowing you to record any other information/reasons given by the claimant that you establish.



Done must be pressed on the to-do after the updated ALP has been uploaded so that a Make a decision to-do is created.

When the claimant makes contact after failure to attend, depending upon the reason provided we will:

- rearrange the original meeting
- book a new meeting
- not book any further meetings

If the claimant does not have good reason for failure to attend, the decision maker will apply a sanction to their claim.

Attending the rearranged meeting is the compliance condition. The length of the sanction will depend on the date of failure and the date they complied.

You will find out more about sanction length and compliance conditions soon.



If the claimant fails to attend the re-arranged meeting, the open-ended part of the sanction continues.

You will not make a second decision maker referral in these circumstances.

No Claimant Contact after Failing to Attend

We have found out what happens when the claimant fails to attend and the work coach contacts them.

If we cannot contact the claimant and they do not get in touch within 7 days the case manager applies a low-level sanction unless the claimant has complex needs. In those cases a referral to a decision maker for a decision is still made.



Remember to review the claimant's journal as some claimants may only use this to provide their reasons. The claimant's circumstances may have changed resulting in the original meeting no longer being required.

The legislation does not allow us to end an award because of a missed meeting.

If the claimant fails to make contact within 7 days, the case manager/you will make a sanction decision or refer it to the decision maker.

No Claimant Contact after Failing to Attend – Case Managers Only



This additional training service practice is for case managers only.



Direct the learners to access Griselda's account.

She has failed to attend again, but this time there has been no contact.

Ask them to generate the to-do: Failed to Attend and download the ALP for this doubt.

Ask them to read the ALP to see what happens when we have attempted to make contact but there has been no contact.



The work coach would have attempted to call then set a claimant to-do asking the claimant to contact us.

On the 8th day after the missed meeting, if the claimant has not been in touch, you will take further action.

You will refer the case to the decision maker if the claimant has complex needs. If no complex needs, you make a decision to impose a sanction.



Direct the learners to take the action to record a sanction for this FTA, by following the ALP.

Griselda does not have complex needs.



Ask the learners to input the date of failure as 2 weeks ago and the date of decision as 2 working days ago.

They will find out more about the 'Date of compliance' later.

Module Summary



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