

Traineeships- England Only

Guidance Queries and Help

If you are unable to find an answer to a particular question regarding the policy within this guide you must contact the Jobcentre Plus Live Support Advice Line. Do not give the Advice Line number to claimants or outside bodies under any circumstances, it is for the use of Jobcentre Plus staff only. Details of how to contact them can be found on the DWP Advice Line Home Page.

Please do not use the 'E-mail page owner' and 'Page information' links at the bottom of each page of guidance to raise policy queries, these should only be used to report broken hypertext links.

Overview

1. Traineeships is a non mandatory BIS and DfE led initiative, which focuses on young people aged 16-24 years old, living in England and who are interested in work, but need extra help to get and sustain an Apprenticeship or other job.
2. Traineeships are study based programmes combined with work placements, which give young people the opportunity to develop workplace skills and experience; putting them in a better position to compete for future vacancies/opportunities.
3. Traineeship opportunities can last from 6 weeks and up to 6 months, are flexible in nature and designed to:
 - Improve job prospects
 - Improve literacy and numeracy, where appropriate
 - Provide the opportunity to observe the workplace skills and behaviours employers want/expect
 - Show how existing skills can be adapted to the workplace
 - Offer real life work experience
 - Build confidence and overcome problems which can interfere with successful learning
 - Strengthen the CV, to include a work related reference/referee; and
 - Give employers the opportunity to observe trainees at work.
4. Traineeships contain 3 core elements:
 - Employability training
 - English & Maths up to GCSE or equivalent Level 2, where the claimant does not already hold a A*-C level GCSE or equivalent (Where the claimant has the required level of English & Maths qualifications, this element of training is not required); and
 - Work Experience Placement up to 240 hours maximum (this can be extended if an Apprenticeship is accepted) over the duration of the traineeship.
5. From the first Work Focused Interview, Traineeships should be considered as a non mandatory referral option for claimants who are eligible and interested.

Eligibility

6. Benefit claimants should be in receipt of:
 - Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) or
 - Universal Credit (UC) or
 - Employment Support Allowance (WRAG) or
 - Income Support (IS).
7. Non benefit recipients who meet the other eligibility criteria can participate in Traineeships. These customers should be signposted to the National Careers Service.
8. Traineeship participants:
 - must be aged 16-24 years old on the first day of the course, including claimants up to 24 years and 364 days old;
 - must be living in England from August 2013;
 - can have qualifications up to and including a full Level 2 (equivalent to 5 GCSEs, level A-C) for 19-24 year olds, or below a full level 3 (A Level) for 16-18 year olds;
 - must have little or no work history, and:
 - be close to the labour market.

JSA claimants

9. JSA eligible claimants include:
 - Those in Joint Claims
 - Customer and Partner claims where the claimant has a skills need; and
 - Credits only claims.

Universal Credit Claimants

10. Universal Credit eligible claimants include:
 - Working- could do more; or
 - Not working.

Income Support and Employment Support Allowance and WRAG Claimants

11. IS and ESA WRAG Claimants aged 16 – 24 who meet the Traineeship eligibility criteria can participate in a Traineeship.

Claimants with Disabilities

12. Claimants aged between 16 and 24 and subject to a learning difficulty assessment are eligible to participate in Traineeships.
13. This is in line with existing educational opportunities.
14. The DWP Access to Work scheme covers days that a supported intern or Trainee is at an "employer's" premises.
15. Access to Work may be able to provide support for claimants with disabilities for the Work Experience Placement element of the Traineeship only.
16. An Access to Work grant may help pay for travel (where a claimant is unable to use public transport) and workplace support workers, including job coaches.
17. Young people will not have to pay any money back and it does not affect their benefits.

18. For more information, visit the Access to Work homepage or the government Access to Work Overview website.

Part Time Workers

19. The Traineeship Delivery Framework states that Traineeship participants should not be working. A claimant may still be eligible for Traineeships if they are undertaking work for a few hours a week and claiming an appropriate benefit; where they meet the eligibility requirements.
20. The Skills Funding Agency classification of “not working” covers those who are working less than 16 hours per week.

Young People and approved Training

21. Existing benefit rules apply in respect of Young People on non advanced education and approved training.
22. Traineeships are legally classed as non advanced education.
23. For further information on types of courses which are classed as approved training, visit the HMRC Further Education website.
24. Claimants who are moved onto IS under severe hardship rules (Qualifying Young People) are still eligible to participate in Traineeships.

Traineeships and other provision

Work Programme

25. Traineeship referrals should only be made where it's likely that the Traineeship will be completed prior to entry to the Work Programme.
26. Existing Work Programme deferral criteria applies.

Work Programme Participants

27. Work Programme participants are eligible for Traineeships where a Traineeship provider confirms suitability with a Work Programme provider.
28. Where Work Programme providers feel a Traineeship may be a suitable option for a Work Programme participant, they should discuss this with a Traineeship provider.
29. Jobcentre work coaches should not refer Work Programme participants to Traineeships.

Work Programme Returnees

30. Traineeships are not appropriate for claimants who complete the Work Programme and who are assigned to the Jobcentre Plus Offer regime. They are deemed to have recent work experience and should have no significant challenges in securing employment.
31. Traineeships may be appropriate for those assigned to the Mandatory Intervention Regime.

Sbwa and Work Trials

32. Traineeships are unsuitable for claimants who would benefit from a sbwa or a Work Trial. Claimants suitable for these opportunities do not require the level of support offered by Traineeships.

Mandatory Work Activity

33. Traineeships are unsuitable for claimants for whom **Mandatory Work Activity** is deemed appropriate.

Youth Contract

34. Traineeships is a DfE/BIS funded programme whereas DWP work experience programme is funded by the Youth Contract. Therefore the work experience placement of a Traineeship cannot be classed as work experience under GBW/Youth Contract measures.

Apprenticeships

35. Claimants who are suitable for Apprenticeships are not suitable for Traineeships. Traineeships are designed to give extra support to young people who are not at the level required to participate in an Apprenticeship.

More complex support required

36. Traineeships are unsuitable for claimants with complex needs, e.g. ESOL or Basic Skills or who are further away from the labour market. This is because work experience placements may start from the first week of the Traineeship.

Benefit considerations whilst on Traineeships

37. JSA and UC claimants aged 16-19 can participate in a traineeship for more than 12 hours a week without losing their benefit entitlement. The Qualifying Young Person (QYP) rules do not apply to Traineeships.
38. JSA and UC claimants aged 19-24 will retain their benefit entitlement when participating in training for more than 16 hours a week. The 16 hour training rule does not apply to Traineeships. There is no requirement to transfer the claim to a Training Allowance.
39. All JSA claimants participating in Traineeships are treated as being available and actively seeking work, but must continue to sign fortnightly.

Traineeship composition

40. A Traineeship is likely to total approximately 30 hours a week comprising:
- Employability/Work Preparation training
 - English and Maths (where appropriate)
 - Any ad hoc training included within an individual Traineeship offer and
 - A work experience placement for up to 240 hours (or more if the offer of an Apprenticeship place is accepted), for a maximum of 30 hours a week. This can be done over the duration of a traineeship.
41. The 240 hours work experience limit does not apply to Universal Credit or IS claimants.

Referral to Traineeships

42. Where a claimant is identified as eligible for a Traineeship:
- Arrange an appointment with the Traineeship provider
 - Record the referral on the LMS Traineeship opportunity
 - Issue (non mandatory) system generated LMS letter to claimant
 - Send referral details to the provider using locally agreed process

- Consider alternative signing arrangements or advanced signing if the hours of the Traineeship will make it difficult for the claimant to attend
- Record Traineeship participation details on the JSAG for JSA claimants, the Claimant Commitment for Universal Credit claimants and Action Plan for IS and ESA claimants
- Issue the updated JSAG or Claimant Commitment or Action Plan.
- Explain that where appropriate, travel, childcare and reasonable adjustment costs will be met by the provider
- Explain that benefit will not be affected whilst participating subject to the claimant undertaking all activities as agreed with the work coach
- Explain that during the placement, existing benefit rules apply.
- Confirm that attendance at the Jobcentre for fortnightly Jobsearch reviews is still required to maintain the JSA claim or discuss and agree alternative/advanced signing arrangements. For non-JSA claimants consider appropriateness of WFIs while undertaking voluntary support.
 - Jobsearch Review is conducted in line with the guidance.
 - Signing dates and times can be re-arranged where appropriate to accommodate provision attendance times.
 - Amending signing arrangements to a later date will change the date when the claimant's benefit payment is made by the same amount of days. In these cases, consider forward signing ES88X action.
 - If the hours and location of the claimant's training make it impossible for them to attend the office for a Jobsearch Review, Postal signing OR excused attendance arrangements may be considered for the duration of provision.
- Describe general attendance, time keeping, behaviour, appearance, hygiene and adherence to health and safety requirements; and
- Explain that claimants may be expected to attend an interview with the employer and/or provide a CV, depending upon the employer's selection criteria.

Follow Up/Updating LMS opportunity

43. Providers have been advised that they must inform Jobcentres of attendance outcomes. Upon receipt of provider attendance notification:
- Update the LMS opportunity
 - For JSA claimants, update the JSAG to show the claimant is taking part in Traineeship Activity
 - For Universal Credit claimants, the Claimant Commitment should be noted that the claimant is participating in traineeship activity;
 - For IS and ESA claimants update the Action Plan following the Action Plan guidance.
 - If the claimant FTA their appointment, no DMA action is required.

Travel, Childcare and Replacement Care costs

Training element

44. Costs should be funded by Traineeship providers via the Bursary Fund for 16-19 year olds and the Discretionary Learner Support arrangements for 19-24 year olds.

45. DWP should only consider providing support with Travel, Childcare and Replacement Care costs out of existing Flexible Support Fund (FSF) budgets where the training provider will not pay the costs.
46. As all FSF expenditure is at District discretion, all requests for funding must be approved prior to payment as per existing arrangements.
47. Existing process applies for the payment of costs.
48. There is no indication that providers will not pay to cover expenses. Mechanisms and funding are available which allow them to do this.

Work Experience placement element

49. Employers are not required to pay young people for the work experience placement of a Traineeship as they are exempt from the National Minimum Wage.
50. Employers are encouraged to support claimants with costs, for example reimbursing travel fares.
51. Existing benefit rules apply in respect of income should a provider support the claimant with financial help.
52. Where employers do not provide help with costs, providers should cover any expenditure via the Bursary Fund for 16-19 year olds and the Discretionary Learner Support arrangements for 19-24 year olds.
53. DWP should only consider providing support with Travel, Childcare and Replacement Care costs out of existing Flexible Support Fund (FSF) budgets where the training provider will not pay the costs.
54. As all FSF expenditure is at District discretion, all requests for funding must be approved prior to payment as per existing arrangements.
55. Existing process apply for the payment of costs.
56. There is no indication that providers will not pay to cover expenses. Mechanisms and funding are available which allow them to do this.
57. Disabled claimants may be able to receive support via the Access to Work scheme.

Data Sharing/Informed Consent

58. Providers are responsible for obtaining participant's informed consent to share data with Employers for the duration of the Traineeship.
59. DWP are not required to gather informed consent as existing data sharing arrangements apply with providers.

Further information

60. More information about Traineeships can be found in:
 - the Traineeships section of the Partnership Manager's Guide (England) within the Skills Guide; and
 - the Traineeships Delivery Framework document.