

**Work for Your Benefit Pilot
Employment Group**

**Work for Your Benefit Pilot
Equality Impact Assessment**

Version 1 – April 2010

Equality impact assessment for Work for Your Benefit

Purpose and aim(s) of Work for Your Benefit

1. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) have conducted the following equality impact assessment for the Work for Your Benefit Pilot to ensure the Department meets the requirements of the:
 - Disability Equality Duty;
 - Gender Equality Duty; and
 - Race Equality Duty.
2. The equality impact assessment will ensure:
 - The Department's strategies, policies and services are free from discrimination;
 - Due regard is given to equality in decision making and subsequent processes; and
 - Opportunities for promoting equality are identified.
3. The equality impact assessment considers the impact of Work for Your Benefit in terms of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.
4. Work for Your Benefit has been designed to fit within the existing Jobseeker's customer journey, and in particular to follow on seamlessly once the Jobseekers Regime and Flexible New Deal ends.
5. The Department for Work and Pensions has implemented Jobseekers Regime and Flexible New Deal to strengthen the Jobseeker's Allowance regime and provide a tailored, flexible approach to employment support for all jobseekers. Work for Your Benefit is aimed at customers who come to the end of the Jobseekers Regime and Flexible New Deal, those with significant barriers to work such as long term unemployment and disabilities. There is currently no 'follow on' provision from the end of Jobseekers Regime and Flexible New Deal. Instead these customers are simply returned to the earlier stages of the regime (as happens currently with existing New Deals). This can lead to "recycling" of Jobseekers through the Jobseeker's Allowance regime.
6. In 2008 the government set out its desire to help this group of customers through 'Work for Your Benefit'. The principle behind Work for Your Benefit is the longer you are on benefit the more you are required to engage with the support which is available. Investing in additional support by introducing work experience and additional adviser time will continue to support this aim as well

as improving the service we offer our customers. Work for Your Benefit will provide both an increase in conditionality but also an increase in support.

7. The following two initiatives will be tested;

- Work for Your Benefit Provision – Mandatory full time work experience and employment support, for up to six months, aimed at equipping customers with work habits and routines; and
- Enhanced Support Period - An intensive support regime delivered by Jobcentre Plus advisers. This will involve more frequent interventions than the 'supported job search' stage of the revised Jobseeker's Regime with a Personal Support Fund of £500 per participant. The Personal Support Fund is a ring fenced fund of up to £500 which can be used to help customers into sustained employment e.g. paying for interview clothes, travel expenses or training.

8. Work for Your Benefit will be piloted in the following two locations;

- Jobcentre Plus Districts of Greater Manchester Central and Greater Manchester East and West; and
- Jobcentre Plus Districts of Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk.

The above locations were chosen as Jobseekers Regime and Flexible New Deal phase 1 areas. The Districts are located in an urban and rural location and are representative in terms of ethnicity, disability, age and gender.

9. The initiative will be rolled out from two separate dates:

- November 2009 – Customers randomly allocated to either Work for Your Benefit Provision, Enhanced Support period or the Control Group. How random allocation works is detailed below;
- November 2010 – Customers will start to be referred to the Work for Your Benefit provision or commence on the Enhanced Support period. Control Group customers will experience no change from the current Flexible New Deal process.

10. Customers participating in the Work for Your Benefit pilot will either be those that have reached the end of Flexible New Deal and have been selected by the 'Random Allocation Tool' or have been referred by the Personal Advisor through the 'Early Referral' process. The early referral process is detailed below.

Random Allocation

11. Work for Your Benefit customers will be randomly assigned to either Work for Your Benefit Provision, Enhanced Support Period or a control group. The rationale for using random assignment is to robustly evaluate the effect on the three different customer groups and the off flow from the JSA customer group. The evaluation information will provide evidence which will contribute to future strategy and policy development.
12. The random allocation tool is an intranet based spreadsheet which requires users (Personal Advisors) to input the customer's National Insurance number, the tool will then randomly identify which option the customer will be placed on post Flexible New Deal. The random allocation tool will not retain National Insurance Numbers nor any customer details.
13. In terms of equality, the random allocation of customers gives no unfair advantage to any one particular group. In essence the method used will ensure there is no prejudice against any group.

Early Referrals

14. Personal Advisers using their own discretion can select a jobseeker for early referral onto Work for Your Benefit. Customers who can be considered for early referral must satisfy the following criteria:
 - Have not had recent experience of work, if ever (there are no time restrictions when considering recent work experience); and
 - Are poorly motivated and would benefit from mandatory full time engagement; and
 - Need a specific type of work experience which cannot be obtained through existing initiatives or Provision such as Work Trials.
15. Lone Parents in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance will **not** be considered for early referral to Work for Your Benefit and will continue to work with their Jobcentre Plus Adviser to help them to return to work. This is in acknowledgment of the more progressive nature of the journey to work for many lone parents, and the particular barriers to work that they may face.
16. DWP expect those who are referred early to Work for Your Benefit will be those who are most likely to benefit. The early referrals will be monitored closely to ensure no particular group of customers have been unfairly targeted.

Who will benefit from the change?

17. The Work for Your Benefit initiative will benefit the long term unemployed by:

- Providing practical work experience which will equip customers with relevant habits and routines in readiness for employment;
- Ensuring those customers who reach a duration of two years on Job Seekers Allowance receive enhanced support in finding employment, and avoid having to return to less intensive stages of the jobseeker's regime;
- Helping customers to overcome some of the barriers to work which are likely to exist after two years of unemployment;
- Improving customer prospects of finding a job. Evidence from previous work experience initiatives show that providing a period of full-time work-focused activity can help long-term jobseekers find employment;
- Ensuring customers are equipped with the key employability skills which they need to effectively engage with the labour market.

Consultation and involvement

18. The Work for Your Benefit project team consulted and worked closely with key stake holders during the design and development phase. Stake holders were asked to consider all impacts including equality issues when reviewing project documentation and processes. All findings were included in the policy decisions for Work for Your Benefit.

19. The key stake holders included:

- Staff including advisers, contract management, payment, Financial Accounting & Managing and Third Party Provision Managers and their expert policy domains.
- HR;
- Occupational Psychologists; and
- Risk Assurance.

20. Before any decision is made to roll out Work for Your Benefit nationally, consultation will take place with the specific groups who will be able to provide detailed information on how this will affect equality groups.

Equality impact of Work for Your Benefit

21. Work for Your Benefit is a "follow on" provision for those customers who come to the end of the Jobseekers Regime and Flexible New Deal. Jobseekers Regime and Flexible New Deal have completed and published an equality impact assessment for these customers and established there are no significant impacts on equality.

22. The Work for Your Benefit equality impact assessment will focus on the impacts for those customers undertaking the Work for Your Benefit Provision of work experience and the Enhanced Support Period. Customers in the control group will experience the same journey as existing Jobseekers Regime and Flexible New Deal customers.
23. This information is based on the variables of ethnicity, gender, disability and age. It will be used to inform the fundamental basis for this change initiative and together, with analysis of the new provision will determine whether we meet our obligations under Equality and Diversity.

Disability

24. It is anticipated there will be no negative impacts on the basis of disability. Advisers and providers will offer support tailored to the individual needs of all customers. The measures being introduced are expected to benefit customers by supporting them further than existing Jobseekers Regime and Flexible New Deal, helping them find and sustain employment.
25. The table below provides the numbers of disabled JSA customers both nationally and from the pilot districts:

Percentage of disabled customers claiming Jobseekers Allowance nationally.	12%
Number of disabled customers reaching the end of Flexible New Deal stage 4 in Greater Manchester Central & Greater Manchester East & West District.	282
Number of disabled customers reaching the end of Flexible New Deal stage 4 in Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk District.	215

NB: The percentages/numbers captured within the table are based on figures obtained from NOMIS for June 2009.

26. Access to a Disability Employment Adviser and a range of specific assistance will be available for all customers with disabilities referred to the Work for Your Benefit pilot.
27. Work for Your Benefit will have no adverse impact on disabled customers. Customers with disabilities are not excluded from participating in Work for Your Benefit. However, Personal Advisers in partnership with providers will ensure we have a clear idea of the barriers and circumstances an individual faces and this will act as a safeguard to ensure only those customers who are capable of working will be referred onto Work for Your Benefit.

28. As part of the contract process with providers we will gain their assurance that any Provision they supply meet existing Health and Safety standards, DWP also expect suppliers to meet their duties under the Disability Equality Duty.

29. Where required Work for Your Benefit customer facing forms and leaflets will be made available in the appropriate format including Braille and large font. Changes introduced by Work for Your benefit will be communicated in the appropriate format and per existing procedures.

Gender

30. It is anticipated there will not be any negative impacts on the basis of gender. Advisers and providers will offer greater support tailored to the individual needs of customers. The measures being introduced are expected to benefit customers by supporting them further than existing Jobseekers Regime and Flexible New Deal, helping them find and sustain employment.

31. The table below provides information on the gender breakdown of JSA customers both nationally and from the pilot districts:

	Male	Female
National total of customers claiming Jobseekers Allowance.	1,106,140	393,370
Number of customers reaching the end of Flexible New Deal stage 4 in Greater Manchester Central & Greater Manchester East & West District.	440	135
Number of customers reaching the end of Flexible New Deal stage 4 – Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk District.	355	135

NB: The percentages captured within the table are based on figures obtained from NOMIS for June 2009.

32. Any areas where advisers can apply discretion, or allowable variance in the standard process, will be applied equally to men, women and transgender customers. Advisers will take into account the customer's individual needs, including any specific to their gender; this principle will also be applied to consideration of good cause during any sanction action.

33. For transgender customers advisers will ensure customer confidentiality as per existing guidance.

34. It is anticipated that a higher proportion of customers on Work for Your Benefit will be men, due to their greater likelihood of being on JSA long term – however the service being put in place has a positive effect on this group by encouraging them back into employment.
35. Customers with caring responsibilities are more likely to be female, advisers will consider the individual needs of each customer before referring the customer to Work for Your Benefit. Providers are responsible for ensuring that participants have access to the appropriate childcare as part of their contract with the Department for Work and Pensions.

Ethnicity

36. Work for Your Benefit will offer consistent support tailored to the individual needs of customers from all backgrounds, evidenced via the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) and individual Action Plans.
37. Ethnic minorities are disproportionately more likely to be impacted by the Work for Your Benefit process because they are more likely than white customers to reach long-term unemployment. The Work for Your Benefit measures to be introduced are expected to benefit participants by improving basic work skills, habits, and helping customers find and sustain employment. Therefore even though the impact may be disproportionate, it is positive.
38. The table below provides information on the percentages of JSA customers from an ethnic background both nationally and from the pilot districts:

National percentage of customers claiming Jobseekers Allowance from an ethnic minority.	30%
Percentage of customers reaching the end of Flexible New Deal stage 4 from an ethnic minority in Greater Manchester Central & Greater Manchester East & West District.	20%
Percentage of customers reaching the end of Flexible New Deal stage 4 from an ethnic minority in from an ethnic minority – Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk District.	8%

NB: The percentages captured within the table are based on figures obtained from NOMIS for June 2009.

39. There is no evidence that the implementation of Work for Your Benefit will have a disproportionate or adverse impact on any specific racial group. It is anticipated that any language barriers will be identified and removed during Flexible New Deal. Where language remains a barrier Work for your Benefit provision will provide interpreters and work towards improving language.

40. Where required customer facing Work for Your Benefit forms and leaflets will be made available in the appropriate languages.

Age

41. The Jobseekers Regime and Flexible New Deal equality impact assessment identified the largest customer group reaching the end of two years claiming Jobseekers Allowance without moving into work are those aged 25 to 49. Customers aged 18 to 24 represent 38 per cent of JSA customers, but only 9 per cent of those whose claims reach two years.

42. The table below provides the numbers JSA customers by age range both nationally and from the pilot districts:

	<18	18-24	25-49	50+	Total
Number of customers by age range claiming Jobseekers Allowance nationally.	8295	432,155	823,485	235,580	1,699,555
Number of customers by age range reaching the end of Flexible New Deal stage 4 in Greater Manchester Central & Greater Manchester East & West District.	0	55	305	205	565
Number of customers by age range reaching the end of Flexible New Deal stage 4 in Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk District.	0	35	265	190	490

NB: The information captured within the table are based on figures obtained from NOMIS for June 2009.

43. The age group 50 years and over shows the biggest increase proportionally and hence the Jobseekers Regime and Flexible New Deal process is likely to have a significant effect on older customers. However, it is expected to help reduce long-term customers' barriers to finding employment, thereby having a positive impact on employment prospects.

44. As Work for Your Benefit offers provision and support in addition to Jobseekers Regime and Flexible New Deal further positive impacts to barrier removal and job prospects are anticipated.
45. Work for Your Benefit will not segment customers on the basis of age, therefore no negative effects relating to Work for Your Benefit are expected.
46. The proposed changes do not apply to 16/17 year old customers. These customers will receive a comparable level of support from the existing Connexions Service/Careers Service.

Sexual orientation

47. The Jobseekers Regime and Flexible New Deal equality impact assessment identified a lack of robust data on sexual orientation of our customers. However, the Work for Your Benefit project do not expect the proposed changes to have any impact on the basis of these factors. None of the Work for Your Benefit processes or staff delivering the initiative will discriminate on these grounds and the benefits expected for the customer will in no way be prejudiced.

Religion or belief

48. The Jobseekers Regime and Flexible New Deal equality impact assessment identified a lack of robust data on religion or belief of our customers. However, the Work for Your Benefit project do not expect the proposed changes to have any impact on the basis of these factors. None of the Work for Your Benefit processes or staff delivering the initiative will discriminate on these grounds and the benefits expected for the customer will in no way be prejudiced.
49. Advisers and providers will offer support tailored to the individual regardless of their religion or belief. Any work experience considered will take into account the customers religion/belief and the limitations it may place on their working patterns or environment.

Monitoring and evaluation

50. The Work For Your Benefit equality impact assessment has been agreed by the project manager and will be regularly reviewed. This will ensure any impacts identified will be monitored and are as anticipated.
51. The Work for Your Benefit pilot is due to last for two years, the equality impacts will be monitored as part of the pilot's evaluation at the end of this period. All complaints received from Work for Your Benefit

customers will be monitored to establish if they are in relation to equality. Any customer feedback which impacts diversity will be fed into the process of implementing nationally, should the national roll out of Work for Your Benefit be agreed.

52. The Work for Your Benefit initiatives will be delivered by four Jobcentre Plus districts and is a pilot for evaluation purposes.
53. The customer data and its analytical interpretation has shown that our initial customer base before random allocation will be a fair representation of the population as a whole. There is a fair correlation between the forecasted project sample and Great Britain for each of the customer groups, including those of race, gender and age.
54. The Random Allocation process will not unfairly target or provide preferential selection to any one particular group. The Random Allocation Tool has been developed not to select from particular groups.
55. The findings of this report will be used to help support any implementation issues related to Diversity & Equality.

Conclusion and next steps

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Contact details

Name of Strategy/Project/Change	Work for Your Benefit (Work for Your Benefit)
Person(s) Responsible for Assessment	Lisa Bancroft
Senior Owning Officer	Pat Ferguson
Geographical Location of Change	Two Jobcentre Plus Districts: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jobcentre Plus Districts of Greater Manchester Central and Greater Manchester East and West; and• Jobcentre Plus Districts of Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk.
Contact Details	Lisa Bancroft Email: lisa.s.bancroft@dwp.gsi.gov.uk Telephone Number: 0114 240 8621