

Work Clubs

Equality Impact Assessment

Version 2.0 (June 2011)

Equality Impact Assessment for Work Clubs

Introduction

1. The Department for Work and Pensions has conducted the following equality impact assessment for Work Clubs, assessing the proposal in line with the current public sector equality duties.
2. This process will help to ensure that the Department has paid due regard to the need to:
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
 - advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and
 - foster good relations between people from different groups.
3. The equality impact assessment will show how the Department has demonstrated that it has paid due regard when developing new services or processes on the grounds of the protected characteristics. These are; race, disability, gender, age, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships (in terms of eliminating unlawful discrimination only).

Policy description

4. In *Coalition: our programme for Government* the Government set out plans for a number of major welfare-to-work reforms, designed to further its key aims of fighting poverty, supporting the most vulnerable and helping them break the cycle of benefit dependency.
5. These include the Work Programme, launched in June 2011. The Work Programme delivers intensive personalised support to claimants at risk of detachment from the labour market, and modernisation of the way Jobcentre Plus delivers its services; by giving advisers the flexibility to tailor their support to claimants' individual needs rather than being bound by process.
6. Work Clubs form part of a wider menu of additional support options known as the Get Britain Working measures that can be used by Jobcentre Plus to help benefit claimants into work, prior to referral to the Work Programme.

7. Work Clubs was launched across Great Britain on 4 October 2010. The aim of the initiative is to support the development of a network of community based Work Clubs which grow organically, dependant on local circumstances. Work Clubs will provide unemployed people with a place to meet, exchange skills, share experiences, make contacts, and receive support to help them in their search for employment.
8. Jobcentre Plus is encouraging partnership working amongst a wide range of local and national organisations to help design and deliver Work Clubs that make the best use of local resources in offering support to unemployed people.
9. Work Clubs could be set up anywhere in the country and Jobcentre Plus will provide support to those interested in setting up Work Clubs through:
 - An internet based Work Clubs resource providing advice and guidance to all those interested in establishing or supporting a Work Club;
 - Jobcentre Plus Advisers signposting claimants to appropriate local Work Club opportunities where available;
 - Providing access to small amounts of funding to help cover Work Club start-up costs;
 - Jobcentre Plus External Relations Teams working with a range of new and existing local partners to promote and encourage their involvement in the delivery of Work Clubs; and
 - Jobcentre Plus Employer Engagement Division engaging with an established network of national employers to promote their involvement in the delivery of Work Clubs.
10. Although basic advice and guidance is available via the DWP website, there is no fixed delivery model for Work Clubs and we are actively encouraging innovation through partnership working to ensure that Work Clubs deliver support that effectively meets the needs of local unemployed people.
11. Work Clubs are designed and delivered locally by a wide range of organisations, ranging from voluntary sector organisations to local authorities and charities. Work Clubs grow organically and are often run and supported by a range of organisations working in partnership, making the best use of local expertise and resources dependant on local circumstances.
12. In addition, particular efforts will be made by Jobcentre Plus Employer Engagement teams to encourage employers and entrepreneurs to help support local Work Clubs to share their knowledge and expertise which could prove invaluable to jobseekers. Their involvement may also offer a more direct way into work for those involved in the club.

13. Work Clubs are available for claimants from day one of their claim. Work Clubs are expected to appeal most to JSA claimants who have been claiming benefit for less than six months and have existing marketable skills. These claimants might benefit from the mutual support of a Work Club and go on to secure work.
14. Work Clubs will be encouraged to market themselves to potential participants in the community.
15. All claimants are able to access local Work Clubs on a voluntary basis but must continue to meet with the relevant conditionality requirements to receive their benefits from Jobcentre Plus. There is no intention to set targets or gather official statistics for Work Club creation or claimant referral and attendance.
16. The support offered will vary dependent on the Work Club and those involved in delivery will be responsible for ensuring that the support effectively meets the requirements of unemployed people in the community. Where evidence is available to suggest that a particular group requires additional support, a Work Club may be set up to focus on supporting claimants in this group specifically.

Consultation and Involvement

17. There was some consultation with external stakeholders while the initial work of commissioning and defining the measures was being completed. However, consultation involved primarily internal stakeholders (Department for Work and Pensions, Jobcentre Plus).
18. Local engagement commenced in October 2010 with prospective Work Club organisers. This represents a key consultative interface as it is these organisations and groups who ultimately determine how their Work Club operates, within the boundaries of legislation.
 - **Department for Work and Pension (DWP)** – staff involved in developing the policy for the service, and ensuring it is delivered on time and in line with Ministers' preferences.
 - **Jobcentre Plus** – staff involved in design, implementation and delivery. Operational staff and LEAN teams have also been involved in the design of processes
 - **External Stakeholders** – potential Work Club organisers have been engaged by JCP External Relations/Employer Engagement teams with a view to encouraging them to get involved with the delivery of Work Clubs. Stakeholders include voluntary sector organisations, local authorities, community groups, and local/national employers amongst others.

Impact of Work Clubs

19. Work Clubs will be available to all benefit claimants who are interested in moving into work. Due to the universal eligibility, there is no risk that the eligibility rules will have a differential impact on particular groups within the population of benefit claimants. Where available, the administrative data has been used to assess the breakdown of the eligible group by equality strand.
20. Work Clubs provide a supportive environment for members, to meet, exchange skills, share experiences, make contacts, and receive support to help motivate them in the search to secure employment.
21. Work Clubs will aim to provide the same outcome for all claimants. Job centre Plus and voluntary organisations will be seeking to involve all interested claimants as a way of improving their employment prospects.
22. Proposals for Work Clubs that cater for particular disadvantaged groups will be sought and welcomed in order to help them overcome obstacles they encounter in the jobs market.
23. If any issues arise from the support a claimant receives at a local Work Club, these can be discussed with Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers. Where serious complaints are made advisers should work with Partnership Managers to address the matter with the Work Club organisers.
24. While it will not be possible for every Work Club to cater for the needs of every disadvantaged group, it is intended that for all those who wish to receive support through Work Clubs, it will be made available as the network of Work Clubs develops, Work Clubs is one of the many options of support available to them.
25. Work Clubs will be designed and delivered locally by a range of organisations with some support from Jobcentre Plus. This will include highlighting matters they should consider in developing their Work Club.
26. The Department for Work and Pensions has produced some practical advice and guidance to aid those interested in establishing Work Clubs in the design process. This advice highlights relevant statutory provisions they should be aware of when designing their proposed model for delivery. This is for information purposes only and offers practical advice and guidance to those organisations interested in establishing or supporting a Work Club. This will not replace the need for the organisations involved in Work Clubs to seek separate advice, including legal advice.
27. Where a claimant is not satisfied with support offered by a Work Club they are free to raise the issue with Jobcentre Plus. Although Work Clubs are not run by Jobcentre Plus where it appears the support offered by a particular Work Club is

consistently failing to meet expectations then Jobcentre Plus is able to review its relationship with the club and if necessary, stop signposting claimants to the opportunity.

28. Where a Work Club is awarded financial support which is not then used in a manner consistent with the agreed parameters of the funding award, a recovery process in place and Jobcentre Plus will review the relationship with the Work Club.

Disability

29. There is no data on the disability status of all benefit claimants who will be affected by Work Clubs. All ESA and incapacity benefits claimants are assumed to be disabled Table 1 shows the proportions of JSA and lone parent claimants that are disabled.

Table 1: benefit claimants by disability status

	JSA¹	Lone Parent²
Disabled	20%	13%
Non-disabled	80%	87%

30. Claimants will be referred to Work Clubs irrespective of disability. As the aim of Work Clubs is to provide additional support in the search for employment, efforts will be made to ensure that disabled jobseekers are not excluded from provision. For example Jobcentre Plus will seek prospective Work Clubs organisers who can cater for a wide range of claimants including those with disabilities.

Gender

31. Table 2 shows the breakdown of working age benefit claimants by statistical group and gender. Seventy per cent of JSA claimants group are men. While Work Clubs are likely to be most suitable to jobseekers, any potential impact will be limited because all claimants may access Work Club provision.

¹ Source: DWP Information Directorate: National Benefits Database, October 2010

² Source: DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study, November 2010

Table 2: Benefit claimants by claimant group and gender³

	Statistical Group		
	JSA	ESA and incapacity benefits	Lone Parent
Female	30%	43%	97%
Male	70%	57%	3%

32. There is no fixed delivery model for Work Clubs which we hope will help encourage innovation in delivery to ensure that the support offered effectively addresses local needs.
33. We envisage the majority of Work Clubs will offer support to all benefit claimants, however where there is evidence that a particular group of claimants would benefit from extra support then these groups may be specifically targeted by those interested in setting up a Work Club.
34. It is unlikely that Work Clubs will restrict their support for unemployed people on the basis of gender. Were this to be the case then Jobcentre Plus District Managers would use their discretion in deciding whether or not to continue signposting to the particular opportunity.
35. It is not anticipated that there will be a negative impact from Work Clubs on the basis of gender because all claimants will have access to Work Clubs.

Ethnicity

36. There is no data on the ethnicity of all benefit claimants who will be affected by Work Clubs. Table 3 shows that 13% of the proportion of those on JSA and IS lone parents are from an ethnic minority.

Table 3: benefit claimants by ethnicity⁴

	JSA	Lone Parent
White	78.0%	75%
Mixed	1.8%	2%
Asian or Asian British	5.5%	4%
Black or Black British	6.4%	8%
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group	2.0%	2%
Prefer Not to Say	4.9%	-
Unknown	1.4%	9%

³ Source: DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study, November 2010.

⁴ Source: DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study, November 2010

37. The data also shows that 7 percent of ESA claimants are from an ethnic minority, compared with the 93% who have a white background.⁵
38. There is no fixed delivery model for Work Clubs which we hope will help encourage innovation in delivery to ensure that the support offered effectively addresses local needs.
39. We envisage the majority of Work Clubs will offer support to all benefit claimants, however where there is evidence that a particular group of claimants would benefit from extra support then these groups may be specifically targeted by those interested in setting up a Work Club.

It is not anticipated that there will be a negative impact from Work Clubs on the basis of ethnicity because claimants from all ethnic backgrounds will have access to Work Clubs.

Age

40. Table 4 shows the breakdown of each working age benefit claimant statistical group by age. It shows that the jobseeker group has a higher percentage of young people than any other statistical group. While Work Clubs are likely to be most suitable to jobseekers, any potential impact is limited because all claimants may access Work Club provision.

Table 4: Benefit claimants by statistical group and age⁶

	Statistical Group		
	JSA	ESA and incapacity benefits	Lone Parent
Under 18	0.3%	0.2%	0.8%
18-24	27.8%	6.0%	26.5%
25-34	24.5%	12.8%	42.0%
35-44	21.4%	21.7%	24.8%
45-49	10.3%	14.6%	4.3%
50-54	8.1%	15.6%	1.2%
55-59	6.3%	17.6%	0.4%
60-64	1.2%	11.5%	0.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

⁵ Source: Family Resources Survey 2006/07, 2007/08, 2008/09

⁶ Source: DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study, November 2010.

41. Access to Work Clubs is unlikely to differ by age; Jobcentre Plus will work with local organisations to ensure Work Club opportunities are available for all age groups. There is no fixed delivery model for Work Clubs which we expect that this will help encourage innovation in delivery to ensure that the support offered effectively addresses local needs.
42. We envisage the majority of Work Clubs will offer support to all benefit claimants, however where there is evidence that a particular group of claimants would benefit from extra support then these groups may be specifically targeted by those interested in setting up a Work Club.
43. Certain Work Clubs might choose to target young people or elderly claimants for example. It is not anticipated that there will be a negative impact from Work Clubs on the basis of age because all claimants from all age groups will have access to Work Clubs.

Sexual Orientation

44. There is no data on the sexual orientation of claimants who will be impacted by Work Clubs. It is, however, not anticipated that the claimants' sexual orientation will affect their eligibility or take-up. Claimants will be treated fairly and equally regardless of their sexual orientation.

Gender Reassignment

45. There is no data on the sexual reassignment of claimants who will be impacted by Work Clubs. Claimants will be treated fairly and equally regardless of their gender.

Religion and Belief

46. There is no data on the religion or belief of claimants who will be impacted by Work Clubs; it is, however, not anticipated that the religion or belief of claimants will affect their take-up. They will not be asked to undertake any activity which goes against their beliefs, and allowances will be made to reflect religious holidays and practices.

Pregnancy and Maternity

47. No data is available to assess if Work Clubs will have an impact relating to pregnancy and maternity; it is not anticipated that pregnancy and maternity will affect claimants' eligibility for a work club.

Monitoring and Evaluation

48. Although Work Clubs are not delivered through Jobcentre Plus and will be non-contracted provision, claimants will be able to raise issues arising out of the support they are receiving at a local Work Club with their Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser. Where serious complaints are made advisers should work

with External Relations Managers to address the matter with the Work Club organisers.

49. Jobcentre Plus External Relations teams lead on engagement with Work Clubs locally and play a key role in establishing relationships between Jobcentre Plus offices and individual Work Clubs. If it becomes apparent that there are any issues raised by claimants about any particular Work Club then the External Relations teams will be able to raise these issues with those responsible for delivery and if necessary stop Jobcentre Plus advisers signposting claimants to a particular Work Club.
50. The project does not involve increased handling of personal data about individuals or changes in the handling of personal data about large numbers of individuals and is likely to see a reduction in the amount of data supplied to Jobcentre Plus. It is intended that there will be no transmission or sharing of personal information by Jobcentre Plus with Work Clubs or reporting back to Jobcentre Plus by Work Club organisers of claimant details.

Next steps

51. This EIA will be reviewed and updated where necessary.

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